

***EUGÈNE GIGOUT (1844-1925):  
PERFORMER AND PEDAGOGUE***

*By*

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EUGÈNE GIGOUT (1844-1925):

PERFORMER AND PEDAGOGUE

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*I hereby recommend that the thesis prepared under my  
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## PREFACE

The purpose of this project is to recount the extensive teaching and performing career of Eugène Gigout. Though remembered primarily as a composer of organ music, Gigout achieved fame as an organ virtuoso, improviser, educator, and critic. In addition to teaching at the Niedermeyer School and the Paris Conservatory, he operated his own organ school from 1885 to 1911, training countless musicians for church positions throughout France.

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## CHAPTER 1

### THE EARLY YEARS

#### Earliest Musical Education

Eugène Gigout was born on 23 March 1844 in the French town of Nancy. Early in life he exhibited interest and talent in music. His parents, Catherine Thierry and clockmaker François Gigout,<sup>1</sup> owned an old but solidly built piano on which he attempted to reproduce melodies he had heard during Mass. Around seven years of age he entered the boys' choir that trained at the Cathedral in Nancy, where he used "his beautiful voice in the solos that he had the honor of singing at the Cathedral."<sup>2</sup>

Under the guidance of Maurice Basile, maître de chapelle and one of the well-known musicians of the area, Gigout was given a thorough grounding in basic musical skills, training that would spark an interest in pedagogy that would remain with him throughout his life. Gigout recounted with fondness the memories of his earliest musical instruction:

In order to teach us pitch names and the rudiments of solfege, he made use of the five fingers of the hand

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<sup>1</sup>La musique d'église 3 (April 1924): 31.

<sup>2</sup>Gabriel Fauré, Hommage à Eugène Gigout (Paris: André Floury, 1923), 12-13.

that represented the musical staff, and on the blackboard he wrote with chalk some scraps of simple melodies, beginning with intervals, pitches, and rhythm. Being compelled to beat the pulse in order to perform these examples greatly worried the majority of my peers; and often, at the signal of the teacher, I was called to correct the gestures of my classmates. This was the beginning of my teaching!<sup>3</sup>

This passage reveals that Gigout received a very traditional schooling in the rudiments of ear training and sight-singing, and early on he possessed the desire to lead others with his innate gifts. In the only published installment of his memoirs, Gigout recognized the importance of this training for the strengthening of a cathedral choir program:

The practical goal of this teaching was to be able in a short period of time to bolster the weak voices of this little group for the performances of the choir school and thus reinforce the small number of children in the choir. Has this particular practice changed much since that time?<sup>4</sup>

Maurice Basile took an interest in the young chorister and helped to further his training through private lessons in his studio. Throughout his life Gigout clearly remembered the older master, puffing heavily on his pipe, as he explained the principles and development of harmony. It was in these sessions that Gigout received his first

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<sup>3</sup>Eugène Gigout, "Mes souvenirs: premières années musicales," L'orgue et les organistes, no. 7 (15 October 1924): 1-2. My translation. Hereafter all quotations of French texts are given in my translation (unless otherwise indicated).

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 2.



lessons in improvisation at the piano. He credited Basile with a wider influence than just musical. "I loved these little sessions in a smoke-filled room; moreover, it had the advantage of alienating me from ever wanting to smoke [sic]." <sup>5</sup>

At ten years of age, he began seriously to study the piano with a graduate of the Conservatory in Nancy, not mentioning her by name. He credits her with introducing him to the works of Czerny, Cramer, and Dussek. During this period, Gigout began to study the organ with Henri Hess and to accompany the principal chants of the Gregorian office from memory. He remained in contact with Hess throughout his life, later writing that he was "the inspiration for my artistic career." <sup>6</sup>

Gigout's participation in the Cathedral music program did not go without notice. He writes that

my presence alternated from the main organ to the choir organ, where I played each Sunday evening for the office of the Archiconfrérie, having earned with much affectionate attention the support of Monsignor Menjaud, Bishop of Nancy, a music enthusiast who was chaplain to the Emperor. At the onset, he had supported the school of religious music founded four years earlier by Louis Niedermeyer that I entered at the age of thirteen, already in possession of a certain facility in performing and improvisation. <sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 3.

With the encouragement and support of Hess, Basile, and Monsignor Menjaud, Gigout left Nancy for Paris in 1857. The next six years provided the intense training that helped launch his far-reaching musical career.

#### Gigout and the Niedermeyer School

Gigout was fortunate to have begun his professional training in Paris in a favorably changing musical environment. The deplorable state of church music in France during the first half of the 19th century was largely the result of conditions that followed the Revolution, a change in public musical taste toward the secular. Organ and choral music within the Church had for the most part been a response to the public desire for secular entertainment.

Attempting to reverse this trend, the government entrusted Alexandre Choron, a Director of the Paris Opéra, with the reorganization of the Cathedral choir training schools in 1811, and six years later he established a school for the study of sacred music in France. André Coeuroy explains that even though Choron's attempts were progressive and he obviously "recognized in sacred music a magnificent form of art . . . he was also Director of the Opéra and in his mind sacred music could not as yet

differentiate itself from the theatrical forms."<sup>8</sup> The school ceased to function after his death in 1834.

Swiss-born Louis Niedermeyer (1802-1861) was the first long-lasting influence in the attempts to restore the once-glorious French sacred musical tradition. He had impressive credentials, having studied piano with Ignaz Moscheles in Vienna and composition with Niccolo Antonio Zingarelli in Italy. Niedermeyer had attempted a career as an opera composer in Paris, but his works in this genre failed miserably.

In the 1850s Niedermeyer turned his attention toward the establishment of a State-supported institution devoted to training musicians for careers in sacred music. Petitioning the help of M. Fortoul, minister of public instruction and worship, and Monsignor Sibour, Archbishop of Paris, Niedermeyer sought the financial endorsement of the State. Through the insistence of Niedermeyer's long-time friend Prince Moskowa, Napoleon III supported the project and State assistance was granted in December 1853. A stipend of 18,000 francs per year made it possible for the Ecole de Musique Religieuse et Classique to open its

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<sup>8</sup>André Coeuroy, "Present Tendencies of Sacred Music in France," trans. Theodore Baker, The Musical Quarterly 8 (October 1927): 587.

doors the following year, with a number of scholarships made available to the students.<sup>9</sup>

From its inception, the school<sup>10</sup> addressed the need for a well-rounded education. There was a triple thrust in its curriculum: the study of religion, music, and the liberal arts formed a solid background in preparing young men for their entry into professional careers in sacred music. The clergy of Saint-Louis d'Antin were responsible for general studies and religious education. A weekly course load included three lessons in French language and literature, two in Latin, and one each in geography, history, and arithmetic, as well as a smattering of Italian. Religious studies were mandatory each evening, as was attendance at Mass on Thursdays and Sundays.<sup>11</sup>

Gabriel Fauré, one of the more illustrious graduates of this institution, commented near the end of his life about the value of the education received at the Niedermeyer School:

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<sup>9</sup>Gustave Lefèvre, "L'Ecole de musique classique Niedermeyer," in Encyclopédie de la musique et dictionnaire du Conservatoire, ed. Albert Lavignac and Lionel de La Laurencie, part 2, vol. 6 (Paris: Delagrave, 1930), 3617.

<sup>10</sup>Its official title after 1908 was the Ecole Niedermeyer.

<sup>11</sup>Jean-Michel Nectoux, Gabriel Fauré: His Life through His Letters, trans. J. A. Underwood (London: Marion Boyars, 1984), 15.

Within the boarding system, a major factor in the organization of the school was that the teaching of the humanities was placed on the same level as the teaching of music. This situation offered the double advantage of assisting students of all ages and maintaining this characteristic airtight education, which reinforced clear concepts in the minds of the young students . . . I profoundly felt these benefits.<sup>12</sup>

The importance of this comprehensive training cannot be underestimated. These ideals remained the cornerstone of the Niedermeyer School throughout its existence. As late as 1914 Arthur de Guichard commented that the school's "chief ambition is to give to its pupils solid instruction in every branch of their art and to perfect them in their 'classical' musical studies, so that according to their aptitudes, they may become composers, organists, pianists, and experienced teachers."<sup>13</sup> It provided a background which enabled Gigout to become a critic, editor, composer, and music historian in addition to his long career as a performer and teacher.

Though Niedermeyer understood that the best-equipped church musicians were those who could also boast of a comprehensive education in the liberal arts and religious studies, he did not forget the initial raison-d'être of the school. In addition to being exposed to Gregorian chant in Rome, he had also come to know the works of

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<sup>12</sup>Gabriel Fauré, "Souvenirs," La revue musicale, no. 22 (1 October 1922): 198.

<sup>13</sup>Arthur de Guichard, "Ecole Niedermeyer," The Musician 19 (June 1914): 370.

Palestrina. The purity of style and simple beauty of both genres stood in sharp contrast to the music that Niedermeyer had heard in Parisian churches. The first issue of La maîtrise (1857), the musical journal published with the support of the Niedermeyer School, reflects the aesthetic goals of its music curriculum:

We are establishing a journal uniquely devoted to the interests of church music. By church music, we mean all of the music which is heard there: polyphonic music, plainchant, and organ music. For plainchant, we are speaking of Gregorian chant; for polyphonic music, Palestrina; for the organ, J. S. Bach.

We are concerned with all of the questions that are connected with Gregorian chant, from its essential elements to its tonality, history, and application in specific liturgical uses.

Secondly, we are concerned with the style that has been given the name of religious music. We are searching for those instances where music will be worthy of this distinction.<sup>14</sup>

The school offered practical courses in solfege, plainchant and its accompaniment, harmony, score reading, orchestration, improvisation, composition, music history, singing, and ensemble music. Under the direction of Louis Dietsch, professor of harmony and maître de chapelle at the Madeleine, all students met three times per week to sing the works of masters from the 15th through the 19th

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<sup>14</sup>Louis Niedermeyer, fils, Vie d'un compositeur moderne (1802-1861) (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1893), 139-40.

centuries, including works by Janequin, Palestrina, and Bach:

Niedermeyer himself composed numerous motets for the school choir, which accompanied the services at Saint-Louis d'Antin church and performed in one or two concerts of old religious music. Even as old men Fauré, Gigout, and Messager loved to recall those choral-singing lessons by giving a rendition, whenever they met, of Janequin's La bataille de Marignan or Costeley's Mignonne, allons voir si la rose. . . . This familiarity with the Renaissance polyphonists . . . in the mid-nineteenth century was truly exceptional.<sup>15</sup>

The influence of the Niedermeyer School on generations of French musicians is a topic of huge proportions which deserves a full-length scholarly study. I have tried here only to place in perspective the workings of the institution which helped shape Gigout's musical philosophies. It will not be necessary to date chronologically all the events of his education in a detailed manner, but it is necessary to recount events from his tenure at the Niedermeyer School in order to understand the developments of his career.

His six-year tenure at the Niedermeyer School provided more than a basic education. One cannot claim that life there was rosy in all respects, but, despite the drawbacks, the boarders developed a camaraderie which, for many, lasted a lifetime. Marguerite Long relates from her contacts with Fauré that

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<sup>15</sup>Nectoux, Fauré: Life, 14-15.

discipline at the Ecole Niedermeyer was strict, comfort was unknown there, and working conditions were somewhat of a paradox--the piano was studied in groups, with fifteen instruments playing at the same time! But, minds and spirits were forged there.<sup>16</sup>

This last statement represents a recurring theme in the memoirs of many of its students. Fauré himself said that "it was a hard life, but what a delightful one!"<sup>17</sup>

It was in these years that Gigout formed lasting friendships with Fauré, André Messager, Albert Périlhou, and Camille Saint-Saëns. Emile Vuillermoz described these friendships as possessing a "consistent and irreproachable loyalty."<sup>18</sup> The friendships with Fauré and Saint-Saëns would influence Gigout's nomination as Professor of organ at the Paris Conservatory upon Guilmant's death in 1911.

Despite the cramped facilities and strict discipline, Gigout and Fauré, inseparable as friends, managed to entertain themselves. At times this involved bypassing the rules and regulations of the school. One such occurrence involved a performance of Gounod's Faust:

We were very young when Gounod's Faust upset the musical world. We wanted desperately to hear this masterpiece. Since we were boarders at the school, we were prohibited from leaving during the evening. What to do?

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<sup>16</sup>Marguerite Long, At the Piano with Fauré, trans. Olive Senior-Ellis (New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., 1981), 19.

<sup>17</sup>Nectoux, Fauré: Life, 12.

<sup>18</sup>Emile Vuillermoz, Gabriel Fauré, trans. Kenneth Schapin (Philadelphia: Chilton Book Co., 1969), 4.



On Mardi Gras evening the work was being performed at the Théâtre Lyrique. . . . We were careful to warn the director of the school that we were eating at the home of our boarding school parents and that we would spend the night there. . . . We had some savings which when put together offered us a place in the "crow's-nest" [gallery]. We did not eat that evening and after the performance . . . we found ourselves on the streets of Paris for the rest of the night . . . a café welcomed us. There were six of us, including Fauré and Périlhou.

At two-thirty in the morning, the waiter threw us out because we were not eating anything. . . . We were compelled to spend the remainder of the night outside, walking up and down the boulevards, exhausted, resting on one bench, then on another until we reached the gates of the Madeleine, where we waited until a decent hour to return to the school.<sup>19</sup>

Another anecdote that Gigout enjoyed relating involved a late-night jaunt through Montmartre:

The panorama of Paris always fascinated us and someone brought up the bold idea of staying in Paris upon graduation. To that end, we distributed amongst ourselves some organist positions. Fauré was to have the organ at the Madeleine, Périlhou that of the Invalides,<sup>20</sup> and I would have the new organ at Saint-Augustin.

Within ten years these dreams became reality. Gigout added that these escapades were endless; in spite of the rigorous day-to-day existence he and Fauré never forgot these happy memories.

One of the far-reaching benefits from Gigout's stay at the Niedermeyer School was the opportunity given to him

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<sup>19</sup>Eugène Gigout, "Gabriel Fauré à l'Ecole Niedermeyer," Le courrier musical 26 (15 November 1924): 540.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 540-41.

to teach at the school. Jean-Michel Nectoux explains that a

notable feature of the Ecole Niedermeyer was its use of pupils for teaching, with the more advanced ones providing part of the sol-fa and piano tuition. Similarly, the most brilliant among them were appointed full-time teachers as soon as they completed their own schooling.<sup>21</sup>

Gigout had a natural gift for teaching, especially theoretical exercises and keyboard harmony. Just as he had assisted his classmates during his choir training in Nancy, he quickly established himself at the Niedermeyer School as a competent teacher of part-writing, harmony, and other subjects:

Gigout later became the corrector [grader] for the entire school. M. Messenger related to us with delight, in a story that was heard at the Conservatory, how the musical studies were carried out in this training school for organists.

Of the innumerable pianos, many were placed in the same room, being of service to the young men's work, and, at the same time, the most different pieces were sounding all day. It was in this uproar that the harmony exercises, counterpoint, sonatas, motets, and fugues were studiously worked out. . . .

From one time to another, a laboratory assistant appeared and called: "Gigout!"

The little Gigout left his piano or his table. Always happy, full of life, slender, with curly blond hair and blue eyes, he went to some corner of the room, where there was harmony or counterpoint homework to correct. Armed with a little pencil--well-known at the school, it seemed, this little pencil--Gigout marked the sheets that were pre-

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<sup>21</sup>Nectoux, Fauré: Life, 15.

sented to him. The little pencil flew about [on the paper].<sup>22</sup>

"Le petit crayon" remained Gigout's trademark for many years. It seemed that Gigout displayed a concern for his fellow men, but never compromised his musical standards when working with a student or peer:

Always smiling and of a good nature, Gigout was nevertheless unmerciful. He saw everything, hearing mentally the mistakes of harmony that offended his ear in the midst of the uproar of the raging piano noise there.

In an instant, the exercises became full of the crosses and strokes of technical corrections: parallel fifths, false relations, . . . hidden octaves, implied six-four chords . . . and other things that it is necessary to avoid in order some day to obtain a supple writing style, free and easy as that of Saint-Saëns, Fauré, Messager . . . and of Gigout.<sup>23</sup>

From 1857 to 1861, Gigout studied organ with Clément Loret. Loret had studied with Jacques Lemmens, the great Belgian master whom many hailed as the teacher of the "true Bach tradition." Niedermeyer had sought to have Lemmens as his professor of organ at the Niedermeyer School, but Lemmens declined, recommending Loret. Loret remained a professor at the school for over forty years and also achieved some fame as a composer and performer. He helped carry the teachings of Lemmens to Paris, but never received the same recognition or success as did his

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<sup>22</sup>Jean Huré, "Eugène Gigout," L'orgue et les organistes, no. 21 (15 December 1925): 5.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

contemporaries Charles-Marie Widor and Alexandre Guilmant. Loret's teaching must have had an impact at the school. Its effectiveness is evidenced by a review of the school's awards ceremony in 1858. It was reported that

the examination jury, composed of MM. Prince Poniatowski, president, J. d'Ortigue, L. Dietsch, Allaire, Loret, Niedermeyer, Emilien Pacini, secretary, was not able to keep from showing their admiration in seeing the very young men, seeming more childlike than adolescent, bravely facing at the organ all of the difficulties of the roughest compositions of J. S. Bach, and playing them with a truly extraordinary agility of the feet and hands.<sup>24</sup>

In addition to his duties as administrator, Niedermeyer also taught piano until his death in 1861. Shortly thereafter, Saint-Saëns became professor of piano. With Saint-Saëns on the faculty, a significant change occurred in the standard repertoire that was taught. Niedermeyer had been concerned with a high standard of repertoire, but

it was Saint-Saëns who introduced . . . pupils at the Ecole Niedermeyer to the "modern" music of Schumann, Liszt, and Wagner at the piano, which they otherwise would not have known, for the official teaching repertoire did not go beyond Beethoven and Mendelssohn and was mostly concerned with music written before 1750.<sup>25</sup>

Though Saint-Saëns's duties mainly included piano instruction, Gigout began organ study with him at this time. This would provide a great contrast to his work with Loret; in Huré's words, "Clément Loret truly worshipped

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<sup>24</sup>Le ménestrel 25 (25 July 1858): 4.

<sup>25</sup>Robert Orledge, Gabriel Fauré (London: Eulenberg Books, 1979), 8.

Lemmens. In contrast, Saint-Saëns was not able to tolerate the great Belgian master."<sup>26</sup>

The dichotomy that existed in 1860 between the French and German styles of playing would be lessened in the decades that followed with the influence of Lemmens's disciples Widor, Guilmant, and Loret. Lemmens was a virtuoso whose fluid pedal technique, manual legato, and inventive registrations caused many to rethink their technical approach to organ playing.

Jean Huré aptly describes the French school at this time:

The art of the organ at this time, officially represented in France by Lefébure-Wély, Batiste, Benoist, Saint-Saëns, was held in paltry esteem. None of the organists were well known, except perhaps Lefébure-Wély, who was a pitiful player, it is said, but who improvised well and had a few original ideas.

Another organist, unrecognized and dismissed from Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, asserted himself (Saint-Saëns delighted in repeating) as the model of the classical organist. This was Boëly, author of some charming Noëls and Fugues written in the purest style.<sup>27</sup>

Gigout gratefully worked with both Loret and Saint-Saëns. It is unfortunate that there has surfaced no direct communication from Gigout to substantiate his allegiance to either school. He did review a concert by Lemmens during the Universal Exposition of 1878 and admired his inter-

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<sup>26</sup>Huré, "Gigout," 6.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

pretative abilities: "It is a pleasure to observe this surety of attack, solid rhythm, remarkable vigor, and at the same time this spirit and accuracy so difficult to command at the organ."<sup>28</sup> He adopted the technical ideas of Lemmens's method, as most French organists eventually did in the latter half of the 19th century.

In 1920, Gigout edited Lemmens's organ method, the Ecole d'orgue.<sup>29</sup> A comparison with the original edition reveals that Gigout made slight changes in printed format, rearranged the order of some of the compositions in the literature section, added two pieces of Lemmens's and removed several others; however, he made no alterations in Lemmens's fingering, pedalling, or pedagogical approach. The preface that he included (in addition to reprinting Lemmens's original preface) indicates his approval of the basic ideas.

What did Gigout gain from his study with Saint-Saëns? Increased technical prowess must certainly have been one result of his contact with a pianist of Saint-Saëns's caliber. Huré believes, however, that the greatest benefits were in the areas of style, registration, and improvisation. Gigout's introductions to the works of Franck,

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<sup>28</sup>Le ménestrel 44 (22 September 1878): 347.

<sup>29</sup>Jacques Lemmens, Ecole d'orgue [Paris: Schott & Sohne, 1862], rev. Eugène Gigout (Paris: A. Durand & Fils, 1920).

Boëly, and others was a direct result of this contact.<sup>30</sup> It is my belief that Gigout was one of the last to receive the early-19th-century French stylistic tradition in an unadulterated form. He developed an appreciation for this style, but through the influence of Lemmens and his disciples, he began to synthesize the two schools. Saint-Saëns's influence, however, continued to dominate in Gigout's technical practices:

From a technical point of view, Gigout changed nothing in the method of Lemmens. Nevertheless, he advocated not abusing the use of the heel in pedal playing and favored the use of crossings, submitting therefore to the influence of Saint-Saëns and of the old masters.<sup>31</sup>

Through Saint-Saëns's influence and Gigout's growing appreciation of the Lemmens/German tradition, Gigout developed a finely wrought sense of inventiveness and classical balance in his performing and improvisational skills. Early in his training he showed a natural ability and a creative finesse in his improvisations:

In his youth, he revealed himself as an improviser full of truly ingenious innovation, drawing new effects from his instrument. These effects were dazzling.<sup>32</sup>

Gabriel Fauré has received from historians the distinction of being the most illustrious graduate of the

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<sup>30</sup>Huré, "Gigout," 6-7.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 26.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 7.

Niedermeyer School, a reputation that rests primarily on his fame as a composer and as Director of the Paris Conservatory (1905-21). In 1861 Fauré obtained the premier prix in piano, an area in which he truly excelled. In the following years he received several first prizes and other awards. Fauré was not, however, as successful as Gigout during their student years at the Niedermeyer School. Gigout tells us that he was "scatterbrained" and the "pet" of Niedermeyer.<sup>33</sup>

In contrast, Gigout remained the model student. His performing and improvisational skills were envied not only by his classmates but by the faculty and supporters of the institution. Fauré recounted that Gigout's progress after entering the school was so great that when asked to perform at the end-of-the-year ceremony held in the Salle Pleyel in 1858, he raised quite a furor:

He played at the school's awards ceremony . . . the famous Fugue in D Major by Bach, which has not ceased to be the "warhorse" of virtuoso organists. This fugue, performed with an admirable control on the new pedal piano at the celebrated concert hall, did not fail to draw attention to the young student. The solemnity of this occasion drew . . . a spectacular audience. One noted among other artistic and worldly celebrities the presence of Rossini, Prince Moskowa, and Prince Poniatowski, longtime friends of the school's founder.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Gigout, "Fauré," 540.

<sup>34</sup>Fauré, Hommage, 13-14.



Huré adds that "Rossini, who had applauded him as a virtuoso after the impeccable execution of the Fugue in D Major of Sebastian Bach, loved to hear improvising and voluntarily provided Gigout with fugue subjects and sonata or fantasia themes."<sup>35</sup>

After Gigout received first prizes in 1861, he officially joined the faculty of the Niedermeyer School as professor of harmonium, plainchant, and solfege.<sup>36</sup> When Le ménestrel reported the prizes awarded by the school's academic jury in 1863, the following account also appeared:

Separate from the competitive examinations . . . there was an outstanding performance devoted to the selection of a candidate for the organist diploma.

M. Gigout, former student, today organist at the church of Saint-Augustin and professor at the Niedermeyer School, was last year already awarded the diploma of maître de chapelle by the jury, having undergone the various examinations in a very satisfactory manner; he played the Passacaglia by Bach, sightread a sonata, and, upon a theme given by the jury, he improvised in a manner that completely merited their approval.

The committee unanimously declared his worthiness to receive the organist's diploma that the minister of justice and culture only awards to young people whose work shows a genuine and serious talent.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Huré, "Gigout," 7.

<sup>36</sup>Le ménestrel 30 (9 August 1863): 288.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

This article is significant in that it is the first published account of Gigout's performing ability as a professional other than the listing of various prix. He had now obtained all possible prizes directly relating to his chosen field. Not yet twenty years old, he had laid the groundwork for his successful professional career.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE BEGINNING OF GIGOUT'S PROFESSIONAL CAREER

#### Organist at Saint-Augustin

In the winter of 1863 the Marquis de Lambertye offered Gigout the position of organist in his château on the outskirts of Nancy. Aristide Cavaillé-Coll had recently completed an organ with three manuals and pedal at the château. As Arthur Pougin describes the situation, it was a seductive offer for one so strongly identified to his native town.<sup>1</sup> After considerable deliberation, Gigout declined this opportunity in order to remain in Paris on the faculty of the Niedermeyer School.

In the same year, he assumed the only church position that he would hold during his life; his appointment as organist at the newly formed parish of Saint-Augustin would become an association of sixty-two years. From 1861 to 1863, he had assisted Saint-Saëns in one of Paris' elite parishes, the Madeleine, which had fully prepared him for the new position.

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<sup>1</sup>François-Joseph Fétis, Biographie Universelle des musiciens--supplément et complément, tome premier, publiés sous la direction de M. Arthur Pougin (Paris: Librairie de Firmin-Didot et Cie., 1878), 380.

Substantial population growth in the eighth arrondissement between 1830 and 1850 had resulted in the organization of the parish of Saint-Augustin.<sup>2</sup> The Basilica began in the humblest fashion when a "temporary church with a spire . . . constructed on a site between the rues de la Pépinière and de Laborde, opened on 2 September 1851."<sup>3</sup> The early parish tolerated its first building for less than ten years; Huré comments that this structure was a simple shed offering limited protection which would not have been suitable as a garage for automobiles.<sup>4</sup> The parish must have grown significantly in those early years, as plans were begun within the decade to replace this first structure:

It soon became necessary to plan the construction of a more substantial church building of the grandeur and opulence that was in keeping with the development that had happened in the quartier in the first years of the second Empire. The architect Baltard was entrusted with the construction; from 1860 to 1871 he built a church that was in a style recalling the Italian Renaissance with a blending of Byzantine details.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Eugène Duplessy, Paris religieux (Paris: A. Roger & F. Chernoviz, 1900), 103.

<sup>3</sup>Harold P. Clunn, The Face of Paris (London: Spring Books, 1960), 175. (Clunn adds that "all this district was once covered with windmills . . . the Moulin des Prés on the site of the present church of St. Augustin," 206.)

<sup>4</sup>Huré, "Gigout," 18.

<sup>5</sup>Duplessy, 103.

Frederic B. Stiven described his impressions of the structure on a visit to Paris in the 1920s:

If the church of Saint Augustin stood in an American city, it would undoubtedly be known as the "Flatiron" church. The architect has planned the church to fit the plot of ground between Boulevard Malesherbes and Avenue Portalis, which diverge from a small square in front of the church, and very skillfully has he erected a beautiful building. The structure is of modernized Romanesque architecture, and like practically all of the churches of Paris, the interior is in the shape of the Holy Cross. The chapels on either side of the nave are somewhat triangular in form, the first ones being no more than irregular shaped niches, in which monuments have been placed; the succeeding ones increase in size as they approach the transept, until the exterior walls of the last chapel join the extremes of the arms of the transept. A ground-plan of the building would quite resemble the form of an old-fashioned kite in its outline. A huge dome of noble proportions rises above the crossing of nave and transept, and it is directly under this that the beautiful altar is placed, with marble steps leading up to it,--the whole being covered with a sumptuous canopy.<sup>6</sup>

Gigout's appointment was a triumph because he had struggled against "fearsome competitors."<sup>7</sup> Georges Schmitt, formerly organist at Saint-Sulpice, was his most worthy opponent. Gigout's academic credentials, his fluid improvisational skills, and his highly refined interpretations of the classical literature secured his appointment. Up to that point he had demonstrated an unswerving devotion in all the tasks that he had undertaken. No less loyalty would be shown to the parish of Saint-Augustin.

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<sup>6</sup>Frederic B. Stiven, In the Organ Lofts of Paris (Boston: The Stratford Co., 1923), 34-35.

<sup>7</sup>Fauré, Hommage, 19.

He began his duties at Saint-Augustin in the spring of 1863. His first instrument was only a small harmonium, but "in making the best of the situation, that is, being punctual to Mass, and moreover, successfully getting along with the people, his virtuoso development was so quick that he became the favorite of the parishioners and the clergy."<sup>8</sup>

Within the first few years of his tenure, Gigout began planning for the installation of the grand orgue. His selection of a builder led to an interesting series of developments with regard to organ construction. In the mid-19th century Cavaillé-Coll was considered to be the finest builder of mechanical-action organs in France. Since the 1840s, Cavaillé-Coll had employed the Barker lever in his instruments. Invented by the Englishman Charles S. Barker (1806-1879), this device provided a pneumatic assistance that performed a variety of functions, not the least of which lightened keyboard touch. The advantages of the Barker lever are explained further by Fenner Douglass:

Unquestionably Barker's invention expanded the organ's previous limitations in terms of size, sonority, and wind supply. But its utility was not limited to operating pallets in the wind chests. The pneumatic motors were put to work moving sliders, operating combination pistons, and even moving swell shades gradually. Without the Barker machine or some comparable innovation, Cavaillé-Coll would not have

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<sup>8</sup>Huré, "Gigout," 18.

been able to develop his famous harmonic stops, which provided the basis for a new approach to tonal design. His system of multi-pressure bellows would not have been feasible, nor the use of sub- and super-octave couplers, nor the reverse position console. The simple pneumatic pouches, tripped by the action of the keys, the stop-knobs, or pistons, were operated by the same wind that fed the pipes, and they apparently fulfilled the need of the medium.<sup>9</sup>

At that time other organ builders began to experiment with the application of electricity to the windchest pallets in an attempt to further lighten touch and increase the organ's flexibility, but no attempts were successful before 1860. Cavaillé-Coll did not deny that it was possible to apply batteries and magnets to organ action, but

he himself rejected the idea politely but firmly, on the basis of principle. The pneumatic machines were to be preferred because they drew energy from the organ's own source of energy, the wind, which also fed the pipes. Expense, inconvenience, lack of dependability, or the danger of fire were sufficient reasons for anyone to avoid electricity in those early days.<sup>10</sup>

It was announced in 1865 that the newly formed partnership of Albert Peschard and Charles S. Barker would build the first large electric-action organ in France for the church of Saint-Augustin. For this instrument Barker and Peschard applied electricity directly to the pneumatic

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<sup>9</sup>Fenner Douglass, "Cavaillé-Coll on Electricity in Organ Building," Visitatio Organorum I: Feestbundel voor Maarten Albert Vente (Buren, The Netherlands: Frits Knuf, 1980), 105.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 107.

machines instead of to the windchest pallets.<sup>11</sup> It was hoped that this approach would be a more dependable means of perfecting the principle of electric action, but its chance of success was anyone's guess at that time.

Gigout was familiar with Cavaillé-Coll's instruments and remained faithful to this aesthetic throughout his life.<sup>12</sup> Since there had been no successful attempts to build a large electric-action organ in France, it seems odd that Gigout would have jeopardized his chances to obtain a satisfactory installation. On the other hand, it is entirely possible that he was impressed with a smaller electric-action organ that had been built in Salon (Bouches-du-Rhône) by Barker<sup>13</sup> and felt that the first successful large electric-action organ in France would bring fame to Saint-Augustin.

The organ was begun in 1866 and dedicated on 17 June 1868. The inaugural recital was played by Gigout, Edouard Batiste, and Georges Schmitt. The following review appeared in Le ménestrel:

The inauguration of the organ at the church of Saint-Augustin took place last Wednesday in the presence of a large audience, who expressed a spirited interest in the concert that was offered to them. The instru-

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 110.

<sup>12</sup>Huré, "Gigout," 4.

<sup>13</sup>John William Hinton, Story of the Electric Organ (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., 1909), 56.



ment in question is distinguished by completely having electric action, the Peschard-Barker system. It has 42 stops that are strongly similar in power and tone quality. . . . The organist of the parish is M. Eugène Gigout, the considerably distinguished young professor associated with the school of religious music. For assistance, he had called some artists of high merit, MM. Edouard Batiste, excellent organist of Saint-Eustache, and Georges Schmitt, the former organist of Saint-Sulpice, particularly remarkable in his pedal technique. All showed their talent beautifully and the concert was most complete.<sup>14</sup>

From the available sources it is not known to what degree the organ received approval; at the very least, it aroused curiosity. It was given a lengthy review two weeks before its dedication. The reviewer takes considerable space to praise the architect Baltard, to applaud the "enterprising work" of Barker and Peschard, and to give a detailed account of the electrical workings of the instrument; this assessment might be taken as an indication that the public response to the instrument was also favorable:

Without meaning to upset the faultless and complete modern builder, there are some interesting innovations and elements of progress with regard to construction ideas and the scientific prejudices of our time in the application of electricity to organ action. This opens a new way for the construction of keyboard instruments, worthy in all instances of drawing attention to and meriting the commendations and the support of the friends of science, the arts, and progress.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Le ménestrel 35 (28 June 1868): 247.

<sup>15</sup>Em. Mathieu de Monter, "Application de l'électricité aux grandes orgues: le grand orgue de la nouvelle église Saint-Augustin, à Paris," Revue et gazette musicale 35 (7 June 1868): 181.

The reviewer felt that the organ possessed an extraordinary power and praised Gigout's adeptness in handling it: "One admires . . . the different timbres of the stops skillfully employed by the excellent organist of this church."<sup>16</sup>

At the conclusion of this lengthy and favorable article, however, the reviewer presents his reservations concerning the upkeep and durability of an electric-action instrument:

At present, will not the upkeep of this complicated instrument be difficult or expensive? Will not the necessity of cleaning or repair occur too frequently? Invariably, will not the responsiveness to the regulation of the action, and the energy from the electric source, the very core of this instrument, be altered under the influence of certain weather changes? Will the general construction [of the instrument] meet the service demands of a parish without essential alterations? These are questions that are only answered by time, that great monitor and corrector without equal.<sup>17</sup>

These apprehensions unfortunately became reality. From the year of its completion, problems with the electric action were evident. These resulted from the use of strong electrical currents which tended to magnetize permanently the large electromagnets needed to operate the system. John W. Hinton, a general proponent of electric-action instruments in England, points out that this could

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

result in ciphers, "or if the magnetising were but transient, at least a failure of repetition."<sup>18</sup> Armand Vivet, maître de chapelle at Saint-Augustin, related that the electric-action organ at Saint-Augustin had caused some irritation and frustration during Mass:

In the midst of the liturgical office, the ciphers sounded forth from manual or pedal stops, one after the other or at the same time, often immobilizing two or three manuals, causing the organist to discard all written music and to improvise "filler" [la remplissage] with the help of a few stops only. A virtuoso other than the master Gigout would have refused to play an organ whose flaws made it inoperable and undervalued the talent of the titular instead of showing it off.<sup>19</sup>

Into the 1890s, Peschard continued to defend this instrument's viability through his claims that the "eminent organist" Gigout championed his work. He includes in his publication Les premières applications de l'électricité aux grandes orgues a letter of reference that Gigout had written, presumably at Peschard's request. Dated 26 November 1890, it reads:

Monsieur,

The electric-action organ of Saint-Augustin in Paris was inaugurated in 1868.

In spite of some problems, unavoidable, moreover, in the first application [of electric action], this instrument, soon to be under the service of

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<sup>18</sup>John William Hinton, Organ Construction (London: The Composers' & Authors' Press, 1900), 102.

<sup>19</sup>Armand Vivet, "Eugène Gigout," L'orgue et les organistes, no. 23 (15 February 1926): 25-26.

Cavaillé-Coll . . . has functioned adequately after twenty-two years of very frequent use.

To this day, it is still the most genuinely interesting example ever completed of the système électrique.

Eugène Gigout<sup>20</sup>

Though tolerant of Peschard's work, this letter does not seem totally to support his ideals. It simply states that (1) the organ continued to function after twenty-two years of frequent use, (2) the Cavaillé-Coll firm would take over the service contract, and (3) the organ at Saint-Augustin remained the most notable example of an instrument of this type. A sense of regret seems evident in Gigout's phrase "unavoidable, moreover, in the first application"; he may have regretted not having waited for the system to be perfected at a later time.

Much to Peschard's surprise, the Cavaillé-Coll firm was given a contract in 1898 to rebuild and expand the grand orgue at Saint-Augustin. Twelve new stops were added, but more shattering to Peschard's ego was the conversion of the organ to mechanical action with the use of Barker levers. The organ was reinaugurated on 30 May 1899; Le ménestrel reported that

a veritable festival took place on this occasion, of which the program was splendid. The instrument is marvelous. . . . M. Gigout is one of our most dis-

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<sup>20</sup>Albert Peschard, Les premières applications de l'électricité aux grandes orgues (Paris: Impr. Larousse, 1890), 27.

tinguished organists; he interpreted in a masterful way the Sonata in F Minor by Mendelssohn, the Concerto in D Minor by Handel, [and] the admirable Prelude and Fugue in E Minor by Bach. . . . As for the Toccata in F Major, with pedal solos, it is a charming work of an overpowering vitality. M. Gigout made the most of his phenomenal artistic talents by improvising in a Gregorian style on two liturgical chants Ave maris stella and Iste confessor; finally, he played three of his own outstanding works, Toccata, Communion, and Grand chœur dialogue.<sup>21</sup>

After thirty-five years in residence at Saint-Augustin, Gigout finally had a dependable instrument at his disposal. In many ways, it seemed inevitable that Cavaillé-Coll would eventually have influenced the rebuilding of the organ at Saint-Augustin; he had been given the contract in 1866 to build the small nave organ that accompanied the choir. According to the original contract, he built an instrument of ten stops at the cost of ten thousand francs.<sup>22</sup> The problems and repair costs of the grand orgue were surely seen to be in contrast to the dependability of the orgue du chœur.

#### Professional Musician

The years 1868-78 show evidence of Gigout's increasing authority as a leader in the Parisian organ scene. While continuing to fulfill his duties at Saint-Augustin,

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<sup>21</sup>Le ménestrel 65 (4 June 1899): 184.

<sup>22</sup>Cavaillé-Coll, firm--organ-builders, Paris. Marchés, 28 février 1863-15 juin 1878 [vol. 10]. Microfilm at Oberlin College, Ohio.

his responsibilities at the Niedermeyer School steadily increased and broadened. Accounts of the school's activities show that in addition to teaching plainchant (written and accompanied) and solfege, he also taught harmony, fugue, and piano.<sup>23</sup>

His associations with the school were not limited to his professional obligations. In 1869 the announcement of his marriage appeared in the Revue et gazette musicale:

On Friday, July 29th at the church of Saint-Louis-d'Antin, was celebrated the marriage of Mathilde Niedermeyer, daughter of the founder of the school of religious music, to Eugène Gigout, one of the professors of this institution and organist of Saint-Augustin.<sup>24</sup>

The daughters of Niedermeyer seemed to profit from their father's influence; Niedermeyer's successor Gustave Lefèvre married his second daughter Eulalie-Louise-Suzanne Niedermeyer.

During the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71) many musicians were forced to continue their activities outside of Paris. Most of the students from the Niedermeyer School spent the year in Lausanne, Switzerland, studying under

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<sup>23</sup>Revue et gazette musicale 36 (8 August 1869): 263; 39 (4 August 1872): 246; 42 (1 August 1875): 244; 46 (3 August 1879): 253.

<sup>24</sup>Revue et gazette musicale 36 (8 August 1869): 263.

the direction of the school's new leader Lefèvre.<sup>25</sup>

Gigout remained in Paris during this time.

Though Gigout was not officially teaching organ at the Niedermeyer School, his fame as an organist continued to increase following the war. Most of his musical activities were confined to Paris in the 1870s, but he occasionally performed in other cities. When he was called to dedicate the new Merklin organ for the consecration of the Basilica of Saint-Epvre in Nancy in 1875, Le ménestrel reported that he had "great and legitimate success."<sup>26</sup> During two masses he played the chorale variations from Sonata VI by Mendelssohn, a Toccata and Air by J. S. Bach, a Prélude and a Pastorale by Niedermeyer, the Andante transcribed from Symphony no. 2 by Saint-Saëns, and the Prélude in B Minor by Gigout. The Bach Toccata was most likely either BWV 540, in F Major or BWV 565, in D Minor; Gigout performed both of these works frequently on concerts in the following decades. The Air was Gigout's transcription of the soprano aria "Mein gläubiges Herz" from Bach's cantata Also hat Gott die Welt geliebt, BWV 68, for Pentecost, which Durand published in 1883 along with Gigout's transcription for organ of the final chorus of Saint-Saëns's Christmas Oratorio. Le ménestrel reported

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<sup>25</sup>Henry Février, André Messager: mon maître--mon ami (Paris: Amiot-Dumont, 1947), 23.

<sup>26</sup>Le ménestrel 41 (18 July 1875): 262.

that Gigout "completely showed off the Merklin organ by means of charming improvisations of varied character."<sup>27</sup>

Throughout his life, Gigout was asked to adjudicate, along with Paris' most well-known musicians, in the filling of various church posts in France. For example, he helped choose the organist for Notre-Dame-des-Champs in Paris in 1877. Other participants in this decision-making process were Gounod, Franck, Widor, and Guilmant.<sup>28</sup> It is significant to note that with the exception of Gounod, this committee comprised those musicians who are recognized as the core of the late-19th-century French Romantic organ school.

In this same year, Gigout was nominated to the commission that approved organ installations in Paris:

M. Eugène Gigout, organist of Saint-Augustin, was named by a recent decree from the city administrator [le préfet de la Seine], given through the proposal of M. Alphand, director of public works [les travaux de Paris], to become a permanent member of the commission charged with the process of approving organs constructed for the benefit of the city of Paris. This nomination will be rightly welcomed since the talent of M. Gigout and his competence in all matters concerning the organ and church music are highly regarded.<sup>29</sup>

Not only did this appointment represent the further acceptance of Gigout into the Parisian music scene, but it

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Le ménestrel 43 (14 January 1877): 53-54.

<sup>29</sup>Le ménestrel 43 (21 January 1877): 63.



indicates once again that his work had thus far not gone unnoticed.

Most young composers must take it upon themselves to promote their own compositions, and Gigout did not hesitate to do this either. He took part in one concert for the Société Nationale de Musique on 30 March 1878 which featured the violinist Eugène Isaye and the composer Vincent d'Indy, among others. Gigout played his Prélude, and the Andante et Allegretto con moto from a set of six pieces published by Costallat in 1872. One reviewer commented: "Of a lofty style and compositionally well written, these pieces must be counted among the best ones that the Société Nationale de Musique has heard."<sup>30</sup> (An Intermezzo is also listed in the review; this could possibly have been the Fantaisie or the Andantino included in Costallat's publication.) Lacking an organ in the hall, Gigout was forced to perform these works on the piano. The Revue et gazette musicale reported that these compositions were "full of inventive details, but lost their effect when performed on the piano."<sup>31</sup>

Without question, Gigout's reputation rests today on his accomplishments as a composer and an organist; however, his work in the 1870s gives evidence that he was

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<sup>30</sup>Le ménestrel 44 (7 April 1878): 151.

<sup>31</sup>Revue et gazette musicale 45 (7 April 1878): 109-10.

also well regarded in other areas. This is shown clearly by his efforts to reinstate modal harmony in liturgical music. His earliest inspirations in this regard had come from Niedermeyer, who, with the help of Joseph d'Ortigue, had written the Traité théorique et pratique de l'accompagnement du plain-chant in 1861. It not only provided a common-sense manual about the use of harmonized chant in the Mass, but it also called for the return of modal accompaniments, which were no longer used owing to the firm hold of 19th-century tonality. In 1875 Gigout published three volumes of chant harmonized in four voices, applying the principles set forth in the Niedermeyer/d'Ortigue treatise.<sup>32</sup> This publication was important since it provided the cathedral maîtrise an accessible and more authentic rendition of chant. During the Universal Exposition of 1878 Gigout was awarded a gold medal for the educational merits of this publication.<sup>33</sup> That same year he edited Niedermeyer's original treatise, including additional examples of chant harmonizations and instructions for transposition.

Modal harmonies began to affect Gigout's own harmonic palette substantially. A set of his Antiennes, published

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<sup>32</sup>Eugène Gigout, Chants du graduel et du vespéral romains (Paris: Heugel, 1875).

<sup>33</sup>Le ménestrel 44 (3 November 1878): 395.

in the Journal des organistes in 1878, gave practical illustrations for the use of modality in modern liturgical organ music. A reviewer for Le ménestrel hoped that, because of Gigout's influence, many composers would follow his example in providing more fitting music for use in the church:

Many organists, anxious to carry high the flag of the distinguished organ school, certainly would perform antiphons or Gregorian versets in church, if a variety of choices existed. Oh, that the example of the skillful organist of Saint-Augustin . . . be followed by his colleagues, so versatile and skillful as composers! This would profit not only the art, but especially church music, which will regain from these distinctive compositions the appropriate traits that had previously contributed to its splendor.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Le ménestrel 44 (7 July 1878): 255.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE MATURE YEARS

#### The Trocadéro Concerts

Following the musical impoverishment that marked the year of the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71), there was a resurgence of musical activity in Paris in the later 1870s. The Universal Exposition of 1878 occurred at the climax of the activities of this decade. A great hall was constructed in the Palais du Trocadéro in honor of this event. The Salle des Fêtes, seating five thousand people, was the location of a concert series which featured both Parisian and visiting artists.

Alexandre Guilmant was the chairman who organized a series of organ concerts that presented fifteen renowned organists there. The series was seen as the premier event of the festival, placing the performers in the limelight of the Parisian musical world. One might argue that the record crowds attending the organ events came because of the free admission, which was not the case for the other events. Whatever the reason, the series generated within the middle class an interest in attending organ concerts and helped to establish the organ as a concert instrument. At the close of the Exhibition, the hall continued to be a

popular location for concerts. Since the concerts were without charge, almost all of the performances were played to a full house. The record number of attendees and the vast coverage in the journals of the day gave the participating organists wide publicity.

Between 1878 and 1880 Gigout was the soloist in a number of these performances. Just as his appointment as organist at Saint-Augustin had signaled the beginning of his artistic career, this series of concerts and related activities at the Trocadéro firmly established his importance as a member of the French Romantic organ school. Reviews of these concerts not only give clear evidence of the general repertoire that he performed during this period and the public response he elicited, but they provide some clues to his interpretative ideas as well.

His first appearance on the series occurred on 13 August 1878. The program included:

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|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Prelude in E Minor               | J. S. Bach          |
| 2. I. Intermezzo                    | Gigout              |
| II. Gavotte (Sonata III)            | Martini             |
| III. Andante religioso (Sonata IV)  | Mendelssohn         |
| 3. Fugue in D Minor                 | Niedermeyer         |
| 4. Prélude (Trois Pièces)           | Gigout              |
| 5. I. Prelude in G Major (op. 37)   | Mendelssohn         |
| II. Vivace (Sonata II)              | J. S. Bach          |
| 6. Fantaisie en mi bémol            | Saint-Saëns         |
| 7. Prélude and Pastorale in D Minor | Niedermeyer         |
| 8. Andante and Allegretto con moto  | Gigout              |
| 9. Improvisation                    |                     |
| 10. Finale (Concerto in G Minor)    | Handel <sup>1</sup> |

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<sup>1</sup>Le ménestrel 44 (11 August 1878): 295.

The performances of Mendelssohn's works were received with mixed feelings by the reviewer for the Revue et gazette musicale. Some insight into Gigout's interpretation can be gained by the reviewer's comments about them:

After a most successful performance, the audience demanded that he repeat the tuneful "Andante" from Mendelssohn's Sonata IV. The use of the vox humana and certain other stops revealed a little of the virtuoso artist trying to impress; of course, it can not be denied that these effects were charming. We would have hoped for less rallentando and a less studied performance of the second prelude (opus 37) by the same composer.<sup>2</sup>

The reviewer points out other details from the performance that he found objectionable. The Bach Prelude in E Minor "appeared to be a little confused [acoustically] because of a sound that was too muddled by the organist's choice of stops." The fault may not have been totally Gigout's since the acoustics in the hall were notoriously difficult to deal with. Philippe Jullian described the Salle des Fêtes as being famous for its "deplorable acoustics."<sup>3</sup> Thus, with limited practice time, Gigout may not have made the most advantageous choices in his forte registrations.

The reviewer favorably mentions that Gigout "searched for and found certain new effects from the organ" in Saint-Saëns's Fantaisie. Unfortunately, he does not provide further details. Gigout's improvisation on this

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<sup>2</sup>Revue et gazette musicale 45 (18 August 1878): 261.

<sup>3</sup>Philippe Jullian, The Triumph of Art Nouveau (New York: Larousse & Co., Inc., 1974), 142.

occasion was described as using a short theme which was then fully developed. The reviewer goes on to say that

M. Gigout sought above all to introduce intelligently the various resources of the organ of Cavaillé-Coll; he was very musical and took nothing away from the reputation of the French school of organ playing, where improvisation is held today in honor above all else.<sup>4</sup>

Guilmant had written to Cavaillé-Coll the week before that "Gigout's concert will be most interesting. He will play a beautiful improvisation for us; he is the inspiration for all French organists and none of us should ever forget that."<sup>5</sup> The reviewer for Le ménestrel does not provide as much detail in his critique, but describes Gigout as the "young and remarkable organist of Saint-Augustin, known by his scholarly publications and above all by his virtuosic talent."<sup>6</sup>

In 1878 Gigout added to his list of credentials the distinction of being a contributor of articles and concert critiques to Le ménestrel. The earliest such contributions seem to have been free-lance reviews of the Trocadéro concerts. His reviews of concerts by Widor, Loret, Saint-Saëns, Lemmens, and Franck demonstrate a

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<sup>4</sup>Revue et gazette musicale 45 (18 August 1878): 261.

<sup>5</sup>Cécile Cavaillé-Coll, Cavaillé-Coll: ses origines, sa vie, ses oeuvres (Paris: Fischbacher, 1927), 128.

<sup>6</sup>Le ménestrel 44 (18 August 1878): 305.

lively and flowing writing style.<sup>7</sup> He concentrates in these reviews on the positive qualities of each musician. For example, he speaks glowingly of Widor: "Have you not seen, indeed, M. Widor bring about tempestuous bravos with Bach's Fugue in D Major? It is true that his virtuosity is now considered legendary."<sup>8</sup>

Throughout his life, Gigout endorsed the efforts of his peers and students through kind words and heartfelt support. He would have no part in the back-biting attitudes that have destroyed so many musical circles through the centuries:

Eugène Gigout has gone through the sixty years of his career without the strength of his talent, his creativity, or the greatness of his soul ever waning. All who have known him would agree with me if I add that the charm of his character, his seriousness, the goodness of his heart, and his unbelievable modesty have remained the same. I personally affirm that intellectually and morally he is today the same hard-working, exemplary, refined school friend of yesterday: Gigout has never changed.<sup>9</sup>

A critic who does not concentrate on negative aspects is sometimes questioned, but all who knew Gigout noted his keen sense of critical evaluation; his creed was simply a positive one.

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<sup>7</sup>Le ménestrel 44 (15 September 1878): 342; (22 September 1878): 347; (6 October 1878): 363.

<sup>8</sup>Le ménestrel 44 (15 September 1878): 342.

<sup>9</sup>Fauré, Hommage, 10.



The summer of 1879 proved to be one of the busiest for Gigout. He was asked to perform again for the second season of the Trocadéro series. His first concert of the summer took place on 3 July. The Revue et gazette musicale reported that

the organ concert series continues at the Trocadéro, and these interesting performances always draw a number of spectators. M. Eugène Gigout, organist of Saint-Augustin, followed last Thursday's recital of M. Guilmant; Gigout's talent, very pure and very correct, was no less appreciated than that of the able organist of the Trinité [Guilmant]. He played with a clean technique and an excellent style the second sonata by Mendelssohn, a fugue by Niedermeyer, a very charming piece by Boëly that the audience demanded that he play again, a religious march of a learned character and solid craftsmanship by Gigout, two other pieces written by the performer, one being a charming Allegretto, Bach's great Toccata in F Major, a transcription from Saint-Saëns's Christmas Oratorio, [and] a very difficult Scherzo of Lemmens. . . . His delightful improvisation employed many new and varied sounds.<sup>10</sup>

A reviewer for Musica sacra wrote that he employed in this improvisation all of the resources of his imagination, using a pavane from the 16th century as his theme.<sup>11</sup> The remainder of the concert was representative of the repertoire that Gigout would program in the following years for the musical soirées in which he took an active part:

Mozart's celebrated larghetto for clarinet, with the accompaniment arranged for organ and piano (played by MM. Gigout and Messager) was interpreted with a true

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<sup>10</sup>Revue et gazette musicale 46 (6 July 1879): 223.

<sup>11</sup>Musica sacra 5 (January 1880): 84.

superiority by M. Charles Turban; an adagio and an allegro by Bach (for flute and organ), both admirable pieces, were wonderfully played by MM. Taffanel and Gigout; the oboe of the organ could not have blended better with the flute.<sup>12</sup>

The following week, Gigout shared his second and last concert in the series with several of his illustrious peers. The reviewer for the Revue et gazette musicale did not hesitate to place Gigout's name at the forefront of the audience's interest:

The great festival hall of the Trocadéro was literally full last Thursday at two-thirty for the organ concert of M. Eugène Gigout; more than a hundred people who had neglected to get their tickets in advance were refused entry. The talent of the organist for this day optimized this problem; the names of Camille Saint-Saëns, Mlle Vergin, Paul Viardot, etc., also contributed in provoking this renewed eager interest on the part of the public.<sup>13</sup>

The popularity of the concert was also duly noted by the reviewer for Le ménestrel:

The fame brought about by the last concert of M. Gigout drew in an enormous crowd in the festival hall. An estimated seven thousand people (sloping up the steps of the stage, the steps of the staircases, crowding in the exits and up to the presidential box), remained impressed and attentive to the end.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Revue et gazette musicale 46 (6 July 1879): 223. Arrangements and transcriptions of works for piano and organ duet became popular in the 19th century. Gigout frequently performed in later years Franck's Prélude, fugue, et variation, arranged for piano and organ duet. When an organ was not available, a harmonium was substituted.

<sup>13</sup>Revue et gazette musicale 46 (13 July 1879): 230.

<sup>14</sup>Le ménestrel 45 (13 July 1879): 263.

Gigout again received a rave notice for performing a varied selection of works on the organ and piano:

First of all, let us say that M. Gigout was as noteworthy and as much applauded as all of the artists in the concert which he had assembled. He performed various solo works of Niedermeyer, Mendelssohn, the excellent finale of the third Concerto of Handel, [and] a fantasy and fugue of Bach (this was the last piece on the program and we regret to say that three-fourths of the audience left the hall at the moment he was going to begin the work); furthermore, he performed a prelude and fugue, and a funeral march of his own composition, all written in a very beautiful style, [and] a skillfully successful improvisation. In addition, he accompanied M. Paul Viardot in various works for piano and violin . . . the Andante of the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto, the Andante of the third Concerto of Saint-Saëns, a scherzo, and Rouet d'Omphale by the same author.<sup>15</sup>

Concerts of this nature, given in a more intimate setting, would become the staple of Gigout's secular performances.

Gigout's performance of the organ part in the transcription of Saint-Saëns's Rouet d'Omphale--a popular work on his programs--moved the reviewer for Le ménestrel to comment on his expertness in handling the instrument:

Understanding the innumerable resources of the organ, M. Gigout has succeeded in finding not only a pleasing rendition of the musical score through the intelligent blending of stops and by means of certain combination pedals, but a faithful reproduction of the orchestral parts as well. The result surpassed all expectations. And what an ovation! . . . Perhaps the concert organ can be considered now as an orchestral instrument, without harming the reputation of the church organ.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Revue et gazette musicale 46 (13 July 1879): 230.

<sup>16</sup>Le ménestrel 45 (13 July 1879): 263.

In spite of the number of transcriptions which appear on these concerts, Gigout was acutely aware of the influence that the organ works of Bach and Handel had exerted upon the French school of organ playing. In addition, he acknowledged the importance of the concert series organized for the Trocadéro:

Our objective in organizing these musical concerts (totally new in France) is an attempt to introduce into our country the particular type of music that uses the organ the way it has been used for a long time already in England and Germany, the homeland of Handel and Sebastian Bach. These two colossal giants . . . would be astounded, I believe, by the slowness of our progress and the longtime indecision of the public in this regard.<sup>17</sup>

It seems difficult to believe that Gigout and Bach would be compared in the same context. Nevertheless, Marie-Joseph Erb, an Alsatian who came to the Niedermeyer School in 1874, relates an amusing story from the time of his first acquaintance with Gigout, when he was publicly quizzed by the school's piano teacher Casimar Baille concerning his knowledge of Paris' most well known musicians:

"Did you know of Saint-Saëns?" "Yes," I simply replied. "I have heard his Danse macabre in Strasbourg."

"Why yes!" said another student (certainly a favorite of Baille, seeing that he was allowed to speak). "You say yes, how so? Do you not know that

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<sup>17</sup>Eugène Gigout, "A travers les lettres autographes mises en vente en 1983 [a letter dated 9 August 1879 written by Gigout to Achille Vogue]," Revue internationale de musique française, no. 17 (June 1985): 132.

Saint-Saëns is a second father Bach?" (He pronounced it 'Back,' which seemed humorous to me at that time). All of the students laughed at my ignorance.

"Do you know Gigout?" questioned the same.

Timidly I said, "No."

"You do not know Gigout? But then you do not know that Gigout is a second father Bach also."

The entire group of students was going to poke fun at me when Casimar's voice boomed:

"Enough of your blundering. Gigout is very good, Saint-Saëns again better. Father Bach is above us all."<sup>18</sup>

Erb goes on to relate that Gigout's supporters at the Niedermeyer School considered him a contrapuntist, whereas, for example, they considered Guilmant a melodist.

In addition to their participation in the summer series at the Trocadéro, Gigout and Saint-Saëns took part on 14 July 1879 in a benefit concert there for a shelter house for widows and orphans called Jeanne d'Arc. The program essentially repeated much of the repertoire from the concerts of the previous weeks. The reviews were extravagantly complimentary of the musicians' efforts:

Except for a few selections, it was mostly an organ concert. Moreover, it was a very interesting program, the success of which was assured by the talent of two artists: MM. Camille Saint-Saëns and Eugène Gigout. Saint-Saëns played his grand fantasy and the Fugue in G Minor from Book IV by Bach; Gigout played a religious march of his own composition, a piece by Boëly already heard at former concerts, and the sym-

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<sup>18</sup>Pierre de Bréville, Marie-Joseph Erb: sa vie et son oeuvre (Strasbourg and Paris: Editions F. X. le Roux & Cie., 1948), 44.

phonic scherzo and concertante of Lemmens; both performers displayed skillful technique, musical feeling, [and] a correct style. They improvised excellently, M. Gigout at the beginning of the concert, M. Saint-Saëns at the end. They returned to play together . . . the arrangement of Rouet d'Omphale.<sup>19</sup>

Gigout's performance of his Marche religieuse, Lemmens's Scherzo, and the piece by Boëly were warmly received by the public: "The orchestral effects realized at the Cavaillé-Coll organ by M. Gigout were truly astonishing."<sup>20</sup> The reviewer for Le ménestrel notes that the concert made a good profit, but more money would have been made if the publicity had been started earlier and the concert had not followed so closely at the heels of Gigout's last concert at the Trocadéro.<sup>21</sup>

At this time Gigout broadened his responsibilities as a collaborator for Le ménestrel by contributing several articles which discussed modal elements in 19th-century liturgical music. One such commentary appeared on 6 July 1879 in an article entitled "Du plainchant associé à notre musique":

Our music is able to borrow from the modes their most original effects. With that in mind, let us add that musical variety is one of the valuable advantages that will certainly have the most influence in the restoration of ancient liturgical chant.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Revue et gazette musicale 46 (20 July 1879): 239.

<sup>20</sup>Le ménestrel 45 (20 July 1879): 270.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup>Le ménestrel 45 (6 July 1879): 253.

Gigout's desire to apply the use of modal harmony more strictly to plainchant accompaniment subsequently affected his own practices in writing for the organ. He writes concerning the restoration (or "tardy rehabilitation," as he also termed it)<sup>23</sup> of chant that

in view of the position attained in these times by musical education, and in the expectation of still further progress, an organist or a choirmaster will no longer be permitted to ignore what has a direct bearing upon his art, and which may be said to constitute one of its most essential as well as interesting elements.<sup>24</sup>

Not only was Gigout one of the first to employ modal harmony in 19th-century organ music but, more importantly, he was one of the first to evaluate such practices and place them in perspective. In addition to writing several articles on this subject, his critical coverage of musical events for Le ménestrel increased after 1879. He evaluated the premieres of works of Parisian composers and other musical performances while continuing to teach, perform, and fulfill his duties at Saint-Augustin. Without doubt, this period in his life saw the greatest diversity in his activities; his name appears frequently as both a participant in and a critical observer of the

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<sup>23</sup>Louis Niedermeyer and Joseph d'Ortigue, Gregorian Accompaniment: A Theoretical and Practical Treatise upon the Accompaniment of Plain-song, rev. Eugène Gigout and trans. Wallace Goodrich (N.Y.: Novello, Ewer, and Co., 1905), 60.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, 61.

musical events of the day. In fact, on the cover of the 28 March 1880 issue of Le ménestrel, his name appears as collaborateur du journal.<sup>25</sup> These activities kept his name before the Parisian public and helped to advance his musical reputation.

By the time the third year of concerts began at the Trocadéro, Gigout's reputation as one of the leading concert organists of Paris was firmly established ("Behold the one who is well known for making the concert organ popular in our country," wrote one reviewer).<sup>26</sup> He participated in a presummer concert of vocal and instrumental music at the Trocadéro on 16 May 1880 which included selections from his standard solo repertoire (Fanfare, Lemmens; Prelude in Eb Major, Bach; Marche religieuse, Gigout; Air de Pentecôte, Bach-Gigout). He did not feel at all embarrassed about repeating the same repertoire, for these works appear time and time again in concerts through the years. In addition to these works, an assortment of transcriptions for various instrumental combinations was also performed, including the piano and organ arrangement of Saint-Saëns's Rouet d'Omphale (with Louis Diémer) and transcriptions of works for violin and organ (with Marcel Herwegh of Zurich): the Air on the G

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<sup>25</sup>Le ménestrel 46 (28 March 1880): 129.

<sup>26</sup>Le ménestrel 46 (23 May 1880): 200.



String by Bach and an Andante by Mendelssohn. Sacred and secular vocal works rounded out the program. Even though a great variety of vocal and instrumental repertoire was performed, the organ remained the focal point of this concert:

Far from detracting from the success of the concert, the organ, and therefore M. Gigout, played a very important role in the program. In the second half of the concert encores were requested on four of the pieces: a Marche religieuse and an Andantino by M. Gigout, a Prélude by Clérambault, and the Fanfare by Lemmens; but with a modesty showing his good taste, the virtuosic composer only played the last two. It was again the organ that opened and closed the proceedings.<sup>27</sup>

His two concerts for the summer series were scheduled on 24 June and 1 July. With the announcement in Le ménestrel that "M. Gigout gave last Thursday [24 June] his first organ concert to a large and attentive audience,"<sup>28</sup> one would assume that it was a solo recital. This was rarely the case with Gigout, however his name was probably used here as elsewhere as the drawing card for such events. Both of the programs of the 1880 Trocadéro series included numerous artists--Viardot, Diémer, Baille, Hasselmans, and Auguez--some of whom had appeared with Gigout on other programs. Gigout performed the bulk of the accompanying duties and also played a number of solo organ works on the concert given on 24 June:

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<sup>27</sup>Revue et gazette musicale 47 (23 May 1880): 165.

<sup>28</sup>Le ménestrel 46 (27 June 1880): 239.

The skillful organist of Saint-Augustin played with true talent the sixth sonata of Mendelssohn, the witty Sicilienne of P. Martini, a piece in the form of a canon by R. Schumann (for pedal piano), the beautiful Fugue in D Major by Bach that seemed difficult because of the speed of his tempo, and three works of his own: Marche religieuse, Andantino--of a style that was pure and pleasing--and a brilliant Finale.<sup>29</sup> He was applauded and called back many times.

The warmest applause welcomed the eminent artist who has become known through some of his compositions that testify to a simple elegance and profound learnedness. An Andantino for organ was particularly good. The beautiful performance of the Fugue in D Major by Sebastian Bach took off in a very quick tempo and was played with a clean technique.<sup>30</sup>

Gigout's second concert involved solo organ and solo vocal-choral repertoire; instrumental works were noticeably absent. Again, familiar names appear among the performing artists--Mlle Hasselmans and Mme Vicini sang the soprano and contralto duet from Rossini's Stabat Mater, Mme Vicini sang an aria from Meyerbeer's Le prophète, and M. Auguez performed a "Pater Noster" and "Ronde du Sabbat" by Niedermeyer. The chorus from the Niedermeyer School sang two Renaissance works, O Jesu Christe by Van Berghem and Adieu, mon frère by Waelrant. However, the organ remained the featured instrument:

M. Gigout obtained a brilliant success by playing the beautiful Toccata and Fugue in D Minor from Book IV by Bach, the charming allegretto from Sonata IV by Mendelssohn, a pretty allegro cantabile by Widor in

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<sup>29</sup>Revue et gazette musicale 47 (27 June 1880): 207.

<sup>30</sup>Le ménestrel 46 (27 June 1880): 239.

the pastoral style, a brilliant fantasy by Saint-Saëns, a vivace by Bach--full of originality, warmth, and ingenuity--a beautiful finale by Mendelssohn, and two excellent pieces of his own composition, Marche funèbre (with the piano part played by M. Casimar Baille) and Andante symphonique. . . . All of these works were . . . interpreted in the best style.<sup>31</sup>

Eugène de Goyon wrote that

it is after hearing the Toccata and Fugue in D Minor of Sebastian Bach that I express these comments. No one could have performed this great work with more majesty than did M. Gigout.<sup>32</sup>

Edouard Garnier, a musician from Nantes was prompted several years later to write that

M. Eugène Gigout stands out in the first rank among our most educated and distinguished organists. He upholds and propagates the wholesome and pure traditions of the School of Religious Music founded by Niedermeyer, of which he was a preferred student before becoming the son-in-law of the founder. His praise cannot be spoken enough. His interpretations of the various works of Bach, Handel, Schumann, and Lemmens bear witness to a perfect virtuosity and the purest classical style. His skills in improvisation are marvelous; his musical knowledge has been thoroughly examined.<sup>33</sup>

From such reviews, it can be observed that Gigout was considered the torchbearer of the traditions of the Niedermeyer School. The training there had emphasized the study of the great works of the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Throughout his life he performed organ compositions of moderate length that displayed a finely wrought

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<sup>31</sup>Revue et gazette musicale 47 (4 July 1880): 214.

<sup>32</sup>Le ménestrel 46 (4 July 1880): 247.

<sup>33</sup>Le ménestrel 48 (12 March 1882): 118.

sense of structural balance, instead of the more lengthy works that were a result of developments within the Romantic school. Huré writes that even though Saint-Saëns encouraged him to perform the organ works of Franz Liszt, he would not do this, perhaps finding these gigantic forms too rambling for his taste. Huré believed that

Gigout did not seek the power of sonorous effects. He disliked tempos that were too slow [and] he hated the emphasis on affectation and mannerisms. Sentimentality disgusted him. . . . He was, as I wrote recently, an anti-Romantic. This same inclination alienated him from some Schumann pieces; however, there were some Schumann works that charmed him.<sup>34</sup>

Gigout had performed the "Allegro cantabile" from Widor's Symphonie V at the Trocadéro on 4 July 1880, but there is no evidence to suggest that he performed any other movements of Widor's symphonies during his career. These works obviously represented an aesthetic with which he was not comfortable.

#### Organ Dedications

Gigout's involvement in various musical activities had steadily increased since his student days at the Niedermeyer School. His participation in the Trocadéro concerts, his association with Saint-Augustin, and his appointment to the organ commission of Paris were all important factors in this expanded activity after 1878. By the late 1870s he had also established a reputation for

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<sup>34</sup>Huré, "Gigout," 16.

his expertise in testing or dedicating new organs. During his sixty-year career he inaugurated or took part in inaugurating over fifty instruments by many of the known and lesser-known builders of the day: Cavallé-Coll, Merklin, Debierre, Puget, Stoltz, and others.<sup>35</sup>

Gigout participated in the dedication of the organ for the church of Saint-Merry in Paris on 29 October 1878. Originally constructed by Clicquot, the organ was rebuilt and enlarged by Cavallé-Coll. Gigout shared the program with César Franck and Paul Wachs. Franck played his newly composed Cantabile; Wachs, titular of Saint-Merry, performed Mendelssohn's Sonata in A Major, Bach's Fugue in G Minor (BWV 542), and an improvisation; and Gigout performed works by Boëly and Chauvet, his own Allegro and Allegretto con moto (from Six Pièces), Bach's Toccata in F Major (BWV 540), and an improvisation.<sup>36</sup>

The winter of 1879 saw the completion of a Merklin organ for Saint-Eustache and an organ by Fermis and Persil for Saint-François-Xavier. Gigout sat on the committees that approved both installations. The two inaugurations were festive events that featured a variety of artists. Gigout, Widor, and Franck were the guest musicians at the

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<sup>35</sup>Norbert Dufourcq, Eugène Gigout, Cahiers et mémoires, no. 27 (Paris: L'Association des Amis de l'Orgue, 1982), 16.

<sup>36</sup>Le ménestrel 44 (10 November 1878): 405.

dedication of the organ for Saint-François-Xavier.

Le ménestrel reported: "Is it even necessary to mention the indisputable authority with which MM. Franck, Widor, and Gigout played the organ?"<sup>37</sup> Accompanied by an orchestra directed by Edouard Colonne, Gigout performed the finale of an unspecified Handel concerto with an improvised cadenza. Several weeks later, he took part in the inauguration of the organ at Saint-Eustache. Sharing the program with Franck, Théodore Dubois, Guilmant, and Henri Daller, he "performed his Marche funèbre and transcription of the aria for Pentecost by Sebastian Bach, and improvised on plainchant themes with much facility and great purity of form."<sup>38</sup>

Gigout and Franck shared the dedication of a new organ by Debierre on 15 December 1881 at the church of Saint-Léonard in Fougères, near Rennes. Gigout carried the weight of the program; Le ménestrel's correspondent in Rennes wrote that

before the beautiful improvisations of these two eminent artists, many of their own works were heard. M. Franck performed his Pastorale and a charming piece entitled Prélude, fugue, et variation. M. Gigout played his Marche religieuse, Communion, Grand chœur dialogué, and . . . his brilliant paraphrase of the final movement of the Christmas Oratorio by Camille Saint-Saëns. He then performed the Fugue in D Major of Sebastian Bach, which by itself

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<sup>37</sup>Le ménestrel 45 (15 March 1879): 118.

<sup>38</sup>Revue et gazette musicale 46 (30 March 1879): 101.

fully demonstrated the organ of Debierre. This musical event drew an enormous audience.<sup>39</sup>

Just as Gigout was frequently called upon to perform a number of dedication concerts in churches, it was not uncommon for him to test instruments in the builders' shops. One such event took place in Merklin's shop on 23 July 1879, when he played a demonstration concert for a two-manual organ destined for the Conservatory in Madrid. Satisfied with Gigout's performance, Merklin asked him to play the inaugural recital on a new instrument of twenty-two stops in the church of Saint-Spire in Corbeil on 20 June 1880. Le ménestrel reported that this concert affirmed once again that Gigout was most worthy of the reputation that he had earned as a performer and improviser.<sup>40</sup>

Despite Peschard-Barker's having obtained the contract for the grand orgue at Saint-Augustin, a healthy relationship remained between Cavaillé-Coll and Gigout. Cavaillé-Coll did not hesitate to call upon him for various services, and Gigout went to his workshop on several occasions to test newly completed instruments destined for other cities. One such concert on 10 May 1881 was performed on an organ which was later sent to the island of Martinique. The repertoire was similar to that

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<sup>39</sup>Le ménestrel 48 (25 December 1881): 30.

<sup>40</sup>Le ménestrel 46 (27 June 1880): 239.

played in previous concerts: some solo organ works, some vocal music (sacred and secular), and some instrumental transcriptions with the orchestral parts reduced for organ accompaniment. Assisting him were Mme Vicini and M. Diémer.<sup>41</sup>

Gigout rarely passed over the opportunity to play a dedication recital for a known or lesser-known builder. During his vacation to Vendée on the Bay of Biscay in August 1883 Gigout played concerts for the inauguration of an organ built by Jacquot-Jean-Pierre et Didier in the church of Saint-Dié in Plombières. Though the work of this firm has been long forgotten, Gigout's performances on this instrument created quite a stir at that time:

The great attraction of the day was the desire to hear M. Eugène Gigout, the illustrious organist of Saint-Augustin in Paris. His help having been engaged . . . for the 8 and 11 o'clock masses and the evensong, M. Gigout inaugurated this impressive new organ by playing with all the perfection of his refined artistry selected works from the repertoire of the great masters, by allowing his stimulating artistic temperament to inspire his brilliant improvisations, and by accompanying with astonishing versatility the meditative and expressive cello of M. Hekking and the pure and melodious voices of M., Mme, and Mlle Hamon and Mlle Alice Martin.<sup>42</sup>

The benefits that Gigout received through his active concert schedule and his contacts with organ builders resulted in his exposure to the latest innovations in

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<sup>41</sup>Le ménestrel 47 (15 May 1881): 191.

<sup>42</sup>Semaine religieuse de Saint-Dié, quoted in Musica Sacra 8 (August 1883): 95.



organ construction. For example, in January 1894 he and Guilmant each played successful recitals in Poitiers for the inauguration of a new organ built by the firm Anneessens for the church of Sainte-Radegonde. This instrument of forty stops used tubular-pneumatic action,<sup>43</sup> which was still quite novel in France.

### French Musical Festivals

As Gigout's reputation increased in the 1880s he began to appear with some regularity on various festival programs in France. For example, he was invited to participate in a musical festival in Bar-le-Duc on 22 and 23 May 1880. This event displayed his talents for both service playing and concert work:

During high mass in the church of Notre-Dame, the most important role had been assigned to M. Gigout, who commanded the main organ with the greatest authority. His improvisation was above all remarkable.<sup>44</sup>

Assisting him during a concert on the evening of 23 May was Casimar Baille, professor of piano at the Niedermeyer School. Baille played three piano works of Gigout, most likely a set of three pieces entitled Staccato-Etude, Rêverie, and Bagatelle that had been published twelve years earlier by J. Hamelle.<sup>45</sup> Saint-Saëns's piano-and-

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<sup>43</sup>Le ménestrel 60 (4 February 1894): 40.

<sup>44</sup>Le ménestrel 46 (30 May 1880): 206.

<sup>45</sup>Fauré, Hommage, 33.

organ transcription of his Rouet d'Omphale, which had become a popular work among audiences, was then repeated by Gigout for the fourth time in less than a year, with Baille playing the piano part.

Gigout was also invited to participate with violinist Paul Viardot (son of opera singer and salon hostess Pauline Viardot) in an orchestral concert sponsored by the Association Artistique of Angers in 1882; the orchestra in Angers supposedly rivaled the best orchestras in Paris.<sup>46</sup> This concert represented a new field of activity for Gigout. The featured work was his Méditation for violin and orchestra, one of his few orchestral works. He also conducted the performance, one of his few such attempts apart from conducting the choir at Saint-Augustin in the early days of the parish. The contributor to Le ménestrel reported that he conducted perfectly, adding that "the audience did not even wait for the final chord before eagerly applauding."<sup>47</sup> As was Gigout's practice on these occasions, he presented a solo recital that evening in the church of Saint-Joseph:

Playing the magnificent Cavaillé-Coll organ, the young celebrated organist again equalled his glorious success in the Trocadéro as he displayed his triple thrust as composer, improviser, and virtuoso.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Le ménestrel 48 (5 March 1882): 110.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

The audience was thoroughly satisfied by the performance of Bach's Fugue in D Major, the transcription of the Air for Pentecost, and several of Gigout's own compositions, prompting the Revue in Angers to report that

the organ concert given by M. Gigout was most interesting. In describing his technique, it is difficult adequately to praise his virtuosity, and concerning his musical skill we understand why M. Gigout, whose work has been notably significant, stands out in first place among our young organists.<sup>49</sup>

Three years later Gigout returned to conduct his Méditation for the second time. On the same concert, he also conducted Léon Boëllmann's Fantasie sur des airs hongrois.<sup>50</sup>

It is entirely possible that Gigout's successful performances in Angers had been influential in the decision to schedule six concerts by Parisian organists there for the 1888-89 series. Jules Bordier, president of the association in Angers, announced that Widor, Franck, Gigout, Dubois, Boëllmann, and Fauré had been invited to perform. The success of the series was questioned at first when in December 1888 Franck played to an almost empty house. Total receipts for his concert amounted only to 34.50 fr.!<sup>51</sup> Gigout performed on 27 January 1889.

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<sup>49</sup>Musica sacra 7 (April 1882): 46.

<sup>50</sup>Le ménestrel 51 (29 November 1885): 416.

<sup>51</sup>Le ménestrel 54 (30 December 1888): 420.

Either this portion of the series was more publicized or his reputation preceded him, since the favorable reviews show no want of public interest in him:

As always, his success was very complete, especially in his remarkable interpretation of the Concerto in D Minor by Handel. . . . He improvised two times in the same concert with comparable success on the same theme. . . . M. Mendels, the excellent violinist who accompanied M. Gigout to Angers, was given a warm reception from the public in Gigout's Méditation for violin, orchestra, and organ, and in the Gavotte de Mignon arranged by Sarasate.<sup>52</sup>

#### The Concerts in England and Spain

The decade of the 1880s also witnessed Gigout's first international concerts. He made his first trip to England in June 1882 to participate in a festival sponsored by the French musical societies in London. Paul Viardot and Casimar Baille were also participants in this festival, as were artists from the Paris Opéra, the Opéra Comique, and the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire. From reviews of the opening ceremony, one begins to question how favorably the French guests were received at this festival:

The meeting of the French Orphéonistes--or, as it is officially termed, the Grand Musical Festival--held at the Albert Hall on the 20th and 21st ult., is an instance of "vaulting ambition that o'erleaps itself." The general public refused to take the slightest interest in the matter, and the very opening meeting at the Albert Hall took place before empty benches. The poor foreigners had not even the satisfaction of seeing "Le Lord Maire" in all his splendour . . . that dignitary being engaged in more important business in the City. . . . Sir Jules

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<sup>52</sup>Le ménestrel 55 (3 February 1889): 40.

Benedict, equally ready with lips, pen, or fingers, delivered a French address, in which he wished for the genius of Victor Hugo to celebrate the occasion in befitting terms; and other orators followed who, speaking in French and with their backs to the audience, were inaudible to the reporters.<sup>53</sup>

According to the reviewer for The Musical Standard, Gigout participated in the events of the Festival, but no specific details are provided.<sup>54</sup> It would be five years before he would return to England.

From 1887 to 1890, however, Gigout made yearly trips to England, playing in Hampstead, Dewsbury, Manchester, Mirfield, Hanley, and at the Bow and Bromley Institute in London. In Hampstead he inaugurated the new organ at the Conservatory in March 1890.

Of his tour in 1887 The Musical Times reported:

On Saturday evening, the 23rd ult., the celebrated French Organist, Mr. Eugene Gigout, gave a very successful Recital at the Bow and Bromley Institute. There was a large attendance, who gave the artist a hearty reception. The programme was of very high class character, including amongst other of Mr. Gigout's own compositions, a Religious March, a Communion, and an arrangement of Bach's well-known aria "My heart ever faithful"; Mendelssohn's Sonata in D Minor, Dubois's "Marche des Rois Mages," Lemmens's Fanfare, and Bach's Fugue in G Minor formed also part of the programme. An improvisation on a Theme given by one of the audience was most cleverly worked out in various styles. Mr. Gigout was enthusiastically applauded after each piece and had to bow his acknowledgments several times.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>The Musical Times 23 (1 July 1882): 383.

<sup>54</sup>The Musical Standard 22 (24 June 1882): 389.

<sup>55</sup>The Musical Times 28 (1 May 1887): 297.

On this same tour Gigout also performed recitals in Mirfield and Bolton. At the Mirfield concert he played on "the great four-manual organ at the private residence of Mr. T. W. Pilling, in the presence of at least a hundred organists and other professional men; his playing excited the greatest admiration."<sup>56</sup>

A comparison of these concerts indicates that Gigout's programming not only consisted of the repertoire from his continental recitals, but that he tended to repeat much of the same literature year after year. One could almost expect to hear one or more of the following: Mendelssohn's Sonatas I, III, IV, or VI; Bach's Toccatas in D Minor (BWV 565) or F Major (BWV 540); or Gigout's Grand chœur dialogué. Though somewhat limited in the quantity of literature that he performed, the programs always represented a well-balanced selection of works from the French and German schools. He always included an improvisation, generally on a popular English folksong theme given to him during the concert. The following account very thoroughly describes his improvisational prowess:

In his treatment of the theme Mr. Gigout did not attach himself to any severe form, but after the introduction of the key by a few simple chords, he played the air ["The fierce wind howls about the hills"] by itself upon the diapasons, then with harmony and went straight away off into a free style,

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

after the manner of the fantasia. Only once did he give the suggestion for fugal treatment, for which the theme is well adapted. For nearly twenty minutes the performer played upon this theme, never letting it go from his grasp, turning it over as it were, pulling it to pieces, putting it together, showing it in all varieties of tone, now in its naked simplicity, then clothed with varied harmonies, at one time with the filling up tone below it, at another time played upon the pedals with the filling up above it. The audience followed every change and every movement with the greatest interest, and emphatically demanded an encore. An encore under such conditions was not merely a compliment, but somewhat of a tax. However, nothing daunted. Mr. Gigout again took his place at the organ, and for a further period let his musical genius free to work upon this theme. The exhibition was masterly.<sup>57</sup>

Despite the negative atmosphere conveyed by The Musical Times about the 1882 French festival, Gigout's performances there in the following years were well received, as were those of his contemporaries Widor and Guilmant, who also appeared in England during this decade.

By the end of the decade, Gigout played his first concerts in Spain, where he was called to perform at the Universal Exposition in Barcelona in September 1888. Other French musicians participating in this festival included Massenet and Widor. During this visit Gigout played two concerts on the new five-manual organ built by Amezua for the Palace of Fine Arts. His programs included works by Bach, Boëly, Mendelssohn, Boëllmann, Lemmens, Dubois, and himself.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>The Musical Standard 36 (11 May 1889): 378.

<sup>58</sup>Dufourcq, Gigout, 7.

Though Le ménestrel reported that his performances were well received,<sup>59</sup> this was somewhat of an understatement for the audience's reception of the forty-four year old musician. After his second concert, Gigout wrote to his wife that his success was much more than perfunctory:

Sunday 30 September

Yesterday, the audience cried "Viva Gigout" for two or three minutes, giving a superb ovation that called me back on stage three times. Since the hall is quite large and I was not able to hear what they were shouting, I thought that I was being asked to play an encore; and, since it was very hot, I left abruptly without bowing. It was necessary to come back out so that the uproar would cease.<sup>60</sup>

Three days earlier Gigout's first concert had elicited from the audience much the same response:

A beautiful concert yesterday evening (27 September), in spite of the absence of any orchestra whatsoever. Nevertheless, the repertoire was very mixed and the public was satisfied. This kind public recalled me four or five times after my first number and as far as I was concerned, before I had even played the best pieces of my repertoire.

He candidly adds that

it was said to me afterward that it would be desirable that I play some other pieces. But, frankly, I preferred to go eat some cake.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>Le ménestrel 54 (7 October 1888): 326.

<sup>60</sup>Eugène Gigout, "Autour de l'école d'orgue française: lettres de Gigout à sa femme adressées de Barcelone," L'orgue, no. 78 (January-March 1956): 22.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 21.



Gigout was confident that he had helped to create "a veritable organistic revolution" in Barcelona.<sup>62</sup> From a letter to his wife, dated 3 October, however, one gets the impression that he was dissatisfied with the press coverage of his performances:

Judging my success through the superficial acknowledgement by the two journals of the opposition concerning my "eminent," "celebrated," and "interesting" personality, the journals found one thing to criticize in my performance, this was the absence of expression.<sup>63</sup>

Feeling thus highly insulted by the press, he goes on to say that "the other journal insinuated that if my heart responded to my marvelous technique, I would be a Saint-Saëns."<sup>64</sup> In any event, Gigout was the only French organist to be invited repeatedly to Barcelona in subsequent years.

His second series of concerts in Barcelona took place on 21 and 25 June 1891. Le Figaro took pride in announcing that

last Saturday at the Palace of Fine Arts, for the closing of the international exposition of painting and sculpture, we had a beautiful concert by organ and orchestra. The eminent organist Gigout, invited by the municipality to give this concert, obtained the most brilliant success, which does as much for the honor of the artist as for the French art.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 22.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>Le Figaro 37 (23 June 1891): 3.

Le ménestrel proudly announced the following week that Gigout had returned from Barcelona "laden with honors," and that "a magnificent crown had been presented to him in the name of the artists and of the municipality."<sup>66</sup> This recognition occurred at a crucial point in Gigout's life. Barely a year before, his wife, Caroline Mathilde, had died suddenly at age fifty-two. Gigout took great solace in his musical career and never remarried.

He had become a favorite performer with both the organizers and audience of the Exposition of Fine Arts in Barcelona and was again invited to perform two concerts there in June 1894. On one concert, works by Bach (Fantasy and Fugue in G Minor, BWV 542), Gigout (Toccata and Scherzo), Boëly, Lemmens, Saint-Saëns, and Boëllmann, a concerto by Handel, the Méditation by Charles Lefebvre, and the Fantaisie triomphale for organ and orchestra by Théodore Dubois<sup>67</sup> were played to an audience of eight-thousand people.<sup>68</sup> Gigout returned in 1896, 1899, 1907, and 1917 to perform similar programs encompassing solo works and works for organ and orchestra.

He appeared throughout his life in concerts in France and travelled at various times to Switzerland and Italy,

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<sup>66</sup>Le ménestrel 57 (5 July 1891): 216.

<sup>67</sup>Le ménestrel 60 (17 June 1894): 190.

<sup>68</sup>Le ménestrel 60 (8 July 1894): 214. Dufourcq, Gigout, 8, has mistakenly given this date as May 1894.

but his concerts in England and Spain were the most significant international appearances that he made. More importantly, these performances attest to Gigout's popularity with audiences at the time.

## CHAPTER 4

### GIGOUT AS TEACHER-PERFORMER

In 1884, Gigout celebrated over twenty years of service to Saint-Augustin and the Niedermeyer School. His talents as a performer had become known through the sheer number of concerts he had played in Paris and throughout France. At this time he had begun to attract international attention and in addition was recognized as a critic, writer, and educator. He had achieved success in all of his endeavors. What more could this forty-year-old musician hope to gain from his musical career?

#### Salle Albert-le-Grand

On Tuesdays throughout March 1884 Gigout played a series of four concerts on the Merklin organ at the Salle Albert-le-Grand, 222, rue Faubourg Saint-Honoré, which, it was hoped, would become a home for beautiful organ music,<sup>1</sup> attracting the "enlightened connoisseur."<sup>2</sup> The final concert of this four-week engagement prompted the most lengthy and informative review of Gigout's efforts in this series:

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<sup>1</sup>Le ménestrel 50 (9 March 1884): 119.

<sup>2</sup>Le ménestrel 50 (24 February 1884): 103.

Last Tuesday at the Salle Albert-le-Grand, a large audience attended the final organ and improvisation concert of M. Gigout. [He played his own] Introduction et Thème fugué, Boëllmann's Marche du Synode d'Henry VIII (very skillfully transcribed by the composer), the very expressive Cantabile by César Franck, [and] a piece in the form of a canon by Schumann that the audience insisted he repeat. . . . Finally, a very skillful improvisation by this eminent organist on the air of three notes by J. J. Rousseau and the outstanding Fugue in G Minor by J. S. Bach, clearly registered and performed with rare clarity, made for the most favorable demonstration imaginable for the organizer of these remarkable concerts, in which M. Gigout proved himself most worthy as a virtuoso, composer, and improviser. The Merklin organ itself responded valiantly; it produced a very beautiful effect in the Salle Albert-le-Grand, which is spacious and perfectly suited to music.<sup>3</sup>

For these concerts Gigout programmed familiar repertoire (Bach, Mendelssohn, Franck, Saint-Saëns, and Gigout), with the addition of works by Boëllmann; on the 18 March 1884 program, he performed Boëllmann's Offertoire sur deux noëls.<sup>4</sup>

The following year, Gigout appeared in two concerts at the Salle Albert-le-Grand. On 14 February he was guest

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<sup>3</sup>Le ménestrel 50 (30 March 1884): 143.

<sup>4</sup>Boëllmann, a name newly encountered in this decade, was a star pupil at the Niedermeyer School who had studied with Gigout. Boëllmann's life had a profound influence on Gigout by the turn of the century. Boëllmann married the daughter of Gustave Lefèvre and Eulalie-Louise-Suzanne Niedermeyer. Upon the premature death of Boëllmann in 1897 and his wife the following year, Gigout adopted their daughter Marie-Louise. Gigout's wife Mathilde had died in 1890, so this was somewhat of an undertaking for a fifty-three-year-old widower.

performer in a benefit for the Association des Artistes Musiciens:

The program . . . was performed perfectly by the choirs and orchestra, directed by M. Guillot de Sainbris. Great success was achieved by Mlle Terestri, M. Giraudet, and above all M. Gigout, who performed works by Bach and Handel on the great Merklin organ. A delightful piece in the form of a canon by Schumann was repeated at the request of the audience.<sup>5</sup>

On 12 May Gigout returned to Salle Albert-le-Grand as guest artist in a concert to raise money for the Bazar de la Charité. Under the direction of Widor, the choral group Concordia performed Gigout's setting of Ave verum, along with works by J. S. Bach, Handel, Gluck, and Boëllmann. The reviewer for Le ménestrel wrote that "the eminent organist of Saint-Augustin did not hold back in any way, and it was a real delight to hear him. M. Gigout is to be applauded as a composer, improviser, and performer."<sup>6</sup>

#### Beginnings of the Ecole d'Orgue

From 1860 to 1885 Gigout had taught harmony, solfege, plainchant, fugue, and even piano at the Niedermeyer School. One can imagine his frustration at having to teach all of the skills of his field except the organ at

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<sup>5</sup>Le ménestrel 51 (1 March 1885): 103.

<sup>6</sup>Le ménestrel 51 (17 May 1885): 191.

the school, since Loret had remained on the faculty as professor of organ. At the graduation and awards ceremony for the Niedermeyer School in 1885 Loret received the palmes académiques for his distinguished service to the school.<sup>7</sup> Gigout was happy for Loret, but this only substantiated in his mind that the time was ripe for him to begin his own organ-teaching enterprise.

Thus in 1885 Gigout sought and received financial help from the government to subsidize an organ school of his own. A formal announcement was made in July 1885:

M. Gigout is going to open a complete course for organ, improvisation, and plainchant at the Salle Albert-le-Grand which, when directed with the leadership and the experience for which he is known, before long will produce inestimable results for the musical art.<sup>8</sup>

The curriculum was divided into elementary and superior levels:

The first level comprises manual and pedal technique, the principles of improvisation, accompaniment of figured bass, harmonization of plainchant according to the theories of Niedermeyer, and the study of Gregorian rhythm; in the second level comes the interpretation of classical and modern masters, the study of registration, improvisation (chorale preludes, church modes, development of themes in fugal form and of free themes), and finally the accompaniment of plainchant.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Le ménestrel 51 (2 August 1885): 278.

<sup>8</sup>Le ménestrel 51 (19 July 1885): 264.

<sup>9</sup>Le ménestrel 51 (11 October 1885): 360.

In addition to producing competent organists to help fill church positions in France, Gigout sought to mould his students into solid and well-rounded musicians. The tenets of this school were grounded in the principles that he had received from his training and subsequent teaching experience at the Niedermeyer School. Though his curriculum essentially mirrored the courses he had taught there, it was recognized that "there is no need to explain further that this is a traditional and complete instruction and that the talents of the professor guarantee its success."<sup>10</sup> Thus, the earliest accounts of activities at Gigout's Ecole d'Orgue recognize the importance of his influence.

Even though the Ecole d'Orgue was favorably received in the press, had obtained a government subsidy, and had a studio of eager students ready to begin work, the situation at first was not financially stable. Gigout organized a series of concerts spirituels to help raise additional funds. Le ménestrel gives an account of one typically programmed concert from 15 April 1886:

The hall was full and a number of artistic and fashionable people were present at the celebrated concert spirituel of M. Gigout at the Salle Albert-le-Grand. After the brilliant results obtained by the eminent professor at a recent recital of his students, it was interesting to hear the teacher himself. Very much applauded, chiefly after his remarkable improvisation, M. Gigout exhibited a

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid.



refined taste in the way that he interpreted the Passacaglia of Sebastian Bach. Mmes Castillon and Storm, MM. Miguel, Auguez, and Paul Viardot shared the success of M. Gigout. Let us mention the splendid choirs directed by M. Boëllmann and the famous names of some celebrated soloists who graciously allowed themselves to be overshadowed in order to assist in the artistic work of M. Gigout.<sup>11</sup>

The appearance on these programs of familiar names (Viardot, Auguez), together with those of younger artists (Boëllmann), represents the chief musical associations that Gigout cultivated during this period. These concerts included the most well known and fashionable singers and instrumentalists of the day. Most importantly, they helped to establish the organ as a popular instrument in salons and smaller recital halls. The repertoire was a mixture of the older classics for the organ and music by modern French composers.

Gigout had opened a private school without a formal building; thus, the location of the Ecole d'Orgue was not confined to one place. It was not possible to use the facilities at Saint-Augustin for nonecclesiastical functions, and the Salle Albert-le-Grand was not always available, so performances also took place in several other locations, including the workshop of Cavaillé-Coll. Of one such concert a reviewer wrote:

The concert, given in the large workshop of Cavaillé-Coll by M. Gigout so that the students of his organ course could be heard, obtained the greatest success

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<sup>11</sup>Le ménestrel 52 (25 April 1886): 170.

before the distinguished audience that had been invited by the eminent organist of Saint-Augustin. Easily confirmed was the progress achieved by the students of this course since the two recitals given this past winter at the Salle Albert-le-Grand. Through the study of improvisation and plainchant, which completes the serious teaching given to his students, M. Gigout assures our churches of having talented artists. Among those young organists who performed last Saturday, we cite M. Macry, whose brilliant and clean playing particularly attracted the attention of the astute listeners, and MM. Vivet and Terrasse, who demonstrated their appreciable talents. In the middle of the program, Mlle Soubre, MM. Boëllmann and Gigout, and the choir of M. Georges Blondel were warmly applauded.<sup>12</sup>

This account also points out that even though the school had been in operation only a short time, able musicians were already being produced. Aristide Macry received favorable reviews for an inaugural recital for the restoration of the organ in the parish of Fontainebleau:

M. Aristide Macry, a young student in the organ course at the Salle Albert-le-Grand founded by M. Eugène Gigout, was entrusted with showing off the instrument. M. Macry showed his more positive talents as a performer and improviser. He will bring great honor to his teacher in the years to come.<sup>13</sup>

The concerts given in connection with the Ecole d'Orgue occurred on an average of three times per year (early winter, early spring, and early summer). In an attempt to present his students in regular concert appearances, Gigout realized several goals. He created opportunities for them to gain performing experience,

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<sup>12</sup>Le ménestrel 52 (25 July 1886): 276.

<sup>13</sup>Le ménestrel 52 (27 December 1885): 31.

introduced the Parisian audience to new talent, and brought his efforts to the attention of the public. The concert opportunities that he thus created did not always consist of the mélange of vocal and instrumental music commonly heard in Parisian soirées. An end-of-the-year recital in 1888 displayed solely the talents of his organ students:

M. Gigout closed this year's organ, plainchant, and improvisation course with a very beautiful recital that presented some of his finest organ students. We cite specifically M. Vivet in the Fantasy by Saint-Saëns and the finale of a sonata by Mendelssohn; M. Pickaërt in a fugue by J. S. Bach and a very tricky Scherzo-caprice by M. Emile Bernard that the young man played brilliantly; M. Lacroix in a concerto by Handel and the Fantasy by M. Gigout; finally, MM. MacMaster and Maillot played various pieces by M. César Franck, M. Guilmant, and J. S. Bach, winning the commendations of a number of artists present at the concert.<sup>14</sup>

#### Hôtel rue Jouffroy

In the late 1880's these concerts were moved from the Salle Albert-le-Grand to the hôtel at 63 bis, rue Jouffroy, where Gigout lived with his adopted nephew Léon Boëllmann and family. Paul Locard writes that "the two families decided to live together under the same roof. This was for many years an intimately charming life, without cares or unpleasantness."<sup>15</sup> These "amiable and

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<sup>14</sup>Le ménestrel 54 (29 July 1888): 248.

<sup>15</sup>Paul Locard, Biographies alsaciennes: Léon Boëllmann (Strasbourg: J. Noiriel, 1901), 2.

pleasant hours"<sup>16</sup> undoubtedly constituted one of the most peaceful living arrangements that Gigout ever experienced. The situation provided not only a cordial family atmosphere that allowed him and Boëllmann to compose and teach without distraction, but it also brought together some of Paris' most promising musical talent:

The frequent musical gatherings at the Rue Jouffroy took place around a charming instrument by Cavaillé-Coll. Side by side on these programs could be seen the names of such worldly personalities, connoisseurs of the art, as Eugène d'Harcourt, Albert Roussel, Claude Terrasse, Armand Vivet, Georges Krieger, Amédée de Montrichard, who each, in their various ways, brought honor to the teaching of their dear master.<sup>17</sup>

An examination of the various music journals reveals that Gigout was one of the most widely publicized private organ teachers in Paris. It seems that no other organ performer-teacher (outside of the Conservatory or, later, the Schola Cantorum) achieved such prominence:

An impeccable virtuoso with a solid, elegant, and impressive performance style, an erudite musician, liberated from a thousand difficulties and an expert in all of the contrapuntal artifices, M. Gigout is counted among the eminent professors in whom we can take pride. He founded an organ school which has taken upon itself daily to mould professional organists and, in a more valuable sense, a great number of young men and women sincerely taken by the spirit of music, who impart unto the illiterate world a little musical truth and beauty through

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<sup>16</sup>Hugues Imbert, Médailleurs contemporains (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1902), 56.

<sup>17</sup>Fauré, Hommage, 27.

these annual recitals. . . . His teaching is of an admirable clarity, full of examples, [and] free from redundancy.<sup>18</sup>

Countless opportunities were made available to Gigout's students to become familiar with a wide variety of repertoire, as is clearly illustrated by the excerpts from programs listed in Le ménestrel:

M. Verdeau opened the program with the famous Prelude in E Minor by Bach. . . . M. Guittard then played a very expressive Andantino by Chauvet, and four short pieces in Gregorian tonality from a nice collection by M. Gigout. The larghetto cantabile was particularly expressive. . . . M. Pickaërt played the Toccata in D Minor by Bach. . . . M. Vivet played a choral by César Franck, no. 1 of three chorals recently published, a work of a very great style which brought out much feeling of expression. . . . A prelude and fugue by Mendelssohn was played by M. Rousse. This recital ended with a beautifully written choral by Boëllmann, played by M. Vivet.<sup>19</sup>

Clarence Eddy, a leading figure in the American organ school of the late 19th century who travelled to Paris in this decade, describes his contact with Gigout and his organ school. Furthermore, he implies that many of the performing opportunities that Gigout provided were rare in other Parisian studios at that time:

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<sup>18</sup>Paul Locard, Les maîtres contemporains de l'orgue (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1901), 22.

<sup>19</sup>Le ménestrel 58 (17 April 1892): 128. Paul Verdeau and Armand Vivet received favorable comments for their performances during this decade. In 1897 it was officially announced that Gigout would have Verdeau and Vivet as his assistants, fulfilling the positions as organiste accompagnateur and maître de chapelle at Saint-Augustin. Vivet remained maître de chapelle there for several years after Gigout's death in 1925.

M. Gigout has in his house a very charming two-manual organ which he uses for his own pupils, and he has what he calls an organ school, and his pupils practice there when there is an opportunity. He frequently gives recitals with his pupils at his studio, which other teachers cannot do for lack of the opportunity. In Paris you are not allowed to give recitals in a church, and the only other private organ I know of in Paris is that of M. Widor, which is in his studio and is never used for anything else than lessons. . . . In reply to your question as to the repertoire he [Gigout] plays, I would say that it embraces the finest class of organ music of all schools, a great deal of Bach and of all the best modern composers. He is very conscientious and a very fine musician. He has made a number of tours on the continent, especially in Spain, and is extremely well known.<sup>20</sup>

Eddy's account attests to Gigout's earnestness in presenting a high quality of music for the benefit of his students, the public, and his art. According to Eddy, he was third in rank among the organists who were active in Paris at this time, Guilmant and Widor heading the list.<sup>21</sup>

Gigout was extremely familiar with the salon-soirée scene in Paris. His earliest contacts with it had come soon after his arrival there, and, under the guidance of Saint-Saëns, he made his entry into it in the salon of, among others, Pauline Viardot.<sup>22</sup> The soirées presented through the Ecole d'Orgue at the hôtel on the rue Jouffroy

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<sup>20</sup>Clarence Eddy, "Clarence Eddy on French Organists," Music 13 (March 1898): 593.

<sup>21</sup>Clarence Eddy, "Leading Organists of France and Italy," Music 11 (December 1896): 166.

<sup>22</sup>Fritz Morel, "Camille Saint-Saëns, organiste," L'orgue, nos. 160-61 (October-December 1976 and January-March 1977): 104.

were events which thoroughly pleased his supporters. As was the practice of the day, these soirées were by invitation only. Hugues Imbert relates a rather amusing anecdote about his first encounter with Gigout and his musical family:

The drawing room on the first floor was always packed; Mme Boëllmann employed every resource to find a seat for you. The first time that we were invited there by Boëllmann at the express desire of his uncle, a very amusing occurrence took place. We presented ourselves to Gigout and the welcome that we received was more than cold. We were a little astonished since Boëllmann had declared that his uncle had a great desire to meet us. The following day, we received this little note from Boëllmann:

"Dear Monsieur, I said to my uncle how kind it was that you had devoted your afternoon to him. But my uncle is annoyed with himself that he did not understand your name when you introduced yourself to him. He thought he heard M. X but, since he had never invited this M. X, he was greatly surprised. This explains the coolness with which he greeted you. Regretting that he had confused M. X with Imbert, he asked me to take it upon myself to express his regrets and sincerest apologies."

The hostility of Gigout with regard to M. X explains this error all the more since the name of M. X was very similar to my name in sound.<sup>23</sup>

As Imbert states, these musicales were fashionable events that drew a large portion of Parisian society. The concerts served various purposes, not the least of which was to promote the works of Gigout's friends, including his young protégé Boëllmann. On 26 March 1887 guests gathered chez Gigout to hear vocal and instrumental works

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<sup>23</sup>Imbert, Médaillons, 56-57.

of Boëllmann performed by their composer, singer Anna Soubre, violinists Lefort and Bernis, and cellist Salmon.<sup>24</sup> This represents only one instance of Gigout's devotion to the works of Boëllmann. (Following Boëllmann's untimely death in 1897, Gigout faithfully continued to promote his works on countless recitals, including one concert on 19 May 1901, which featured the young Pablo Casals performing the Variations symphoniques.)<sup>25</sup> In 1890 Boëllmann officially became Gigout's assistant at the Ecole d'Orgue. Boëllmann would also replace him during his frequent absences to play concerts outside of Paris:

The recitals that the master organist gives frequently in England each year in the month of March will be given in April this year. M. Gigout will be in Bordeaux on the 14th and 16th of March, in Nantes on the 19th, and has promised to go to other towns for charity benefits. M. Boëllmann will fill in for M. Gigout during his absence.<sup>26</sup>

As with the works of Boëllmann, it was not uncommon at this time for Gigout to champion the organ works of Franck. Gigout had first made Franck's acquaintance in 1867 and had shared programs with him, including the organ dedications at Saint-Merry in Paris (1878) and Saint-Léonard in Fougères (1881).

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<sup>24</sup>Le ménestrel 53 (3 April 1887): 144.

<sup>25</sup>Locard, Biographies alsaciennes, 11.

<sup>26</sup>Le ménestrel 57 (8 March 1891): 79.



Following Franck's death in 1890, Gigout was asked to play for the funeral and was later entrusted with the task of proofreading and preparing for publication the manuscript of Franck's last compositions, the three Chorals for organ.<sup>27</sup> Franck had originally dedicated Choral no. 1 in E Major to Guilmant, no. 2 in B Minor to Dubois, and no. 3 in A Minor to Gigout. Before publication, the original dedications were altered by Franck's brother Georges: Gigout's name was joined to no. 1, that of the publisher Auguste Durand to no. 2, and Augusta Holmes, Franck's student, friend (and, as some have theorized, mistress) to no. 3.<sup>28</sup> The Choral in A Minor was first performed by Gigout in 1892 and soon became one of his signature pieces. He had seen the originally unaltered manuscript and knew that Franck had attached special significance in dedicating it to him. Of the three works, it is the only one that Gigout performed in public.

Gigout's students frequently performed the organ works of Franck at the rue Jouffroy soirées. In April 1892 Vivet first performed the Choral in E Major.<sup>29</sup> In December 1892 Le ménestrel reviewed another of Gigout's

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<sup>27</sup>Fauré, Hommage, 17.

<sup>28</sup>Léon Vallas, César Franck, trans. Hubert Foss (London: George G. Harrap & Co., Ltd., 1951), 232.

<sup>29</sup>Le ménestrel 58 (17 April 1892): 128.

musical soirées, listing Vivet as the performer of one of the Chorals, most likely again the Choral in E Major:

M. Gigout gave at his home last Tuesday a very interesting matinée musicale so that the students of the superior class of his organ school, more brilliant than ever, could be heard. The program of ancient and modern music was perfectly executed by the young students Verdeau, Guittard, Rousse, Guivier, Vuillame, and Vivet. This last student is already an organist of talent. He brilliantly played one of the three new chorals of César Franck and the Rhapsodie sur des Noëls by M. Gigout.<sup>30</sup>

Of the remaining organ works of Franck, Gigout and his students most often performed the Pastorale, the Cantabile, the Andantino, and the Prélude, fugue, et variation. In contrast to the music of Saint-Saëns, there is no evidence to suggest that any of Franck's chamber works were performed on these programs.

It was not unusual that one composer's compositions would occupy an entire one of these programs. On several occasions Gigout devoted his musicales to performances of the works of Saint-Saëns, thus suggesting the homage that he owed to his friend. Several weeks after the festival celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the first public concert in Saint-Saëns's musical career, Gigout presented such a musical soirée on 12 June 1896. Even the reviewer for Le ménestrel commented that,

understandably proud to have been a student of Saint-Saëns, M. Gigout learned from him the art of improvisation by assisting him during services at the

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<sup>30</sup>Le ménestrel 59 (1 January 1893): 6.

Madeleine; in order to honor him, Gigout invited his own students to play [for him] many of Saint-Saëns's beautiful organ compositions, some recently composed.<sup>31</sup>

The organ works on this concert included Trois préludes et fugues, opus 99 (number 3 dedicated to Gigout); the Fantaisie, opus 101; and the Rhapsodies sur des cantiques bretons. Referring to the fine performances given by Gigout's students, Le ménestrel reported that "these young people, especially MM. Joseph Rousse, Levatois, Paul Verdeau, and Aymé Kune, have truly demonstrated the integrity of M. Gigout's teaching."<sup>32</sup> The second half of the concert was devoted to vocal and instrumental works by Saint-Saëns. During this program, the composer performed the primo part of his Sonata for four hands, opus 75, with Albert Geloso performing the secondo part.

By the turn of the century, Gigout's fame had made him one of the most sought-after organ teachers in Paris. The hundreds of lives that he touched throughout his sixty-plus years of teaching is truly impressive. Besides having the friendship of such masters as Fauré, Saint-Saëns, Franck, Gounod (who entrusted Gigout with the musical education of his son),<sup>33</sup> and Chabrier, Gigout was also Albert Roussel's first teacher in Paris.

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<sup>31</sup>Le ménestrel 62 (21 June 1896): 199.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Huré, "Gigout," 15.

Roussel had begun his musical studies with Julien Koszul, director of the Conservatory in Roubaix. Upon Roussel's move to Paris in 1894, Koszul recommended that he continue his musical studies with Gigout. Pleased by his initial impressions of Roussel, Gigout wrote to him in May 1894 offering some kindly advice:

Monsieur and dear future student,

Your manuscripts show an exquisite artistic nature. In order to pursue our technical studies completely, you will read through and hear much music, music of all styles and from all periods; you will develop a number of favorite composers. It will be necessary for you to guard your ears from being satisfied with fleeting artistic trends. The old, the very old masters will become the object of your special admiration; through this, it will become possible for you to think clearly and remain young in spirit.<sup>34</sup>

This four-year period of study with Gigout helped Roussel to perfect his compositional skills. The works of Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, and Handel formed the basis of Gigout's pedagogical approach with him.<sup>35</sup> Roussel went on to study and later to teach at the Schola Cantorum. Though he could count among his illustrious teachers both Charles Bordes and Vincent d'Indy, he would acknowledge the positive influence that Gigout had had upon his development. Coming from a highly respected composer

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<sup>34</sup>Eugène Gigout, "Lettres d'Eugène Gigout à Roussel," Cahiers Albert Roussel 1 (1978): 38.

<sup>35</sup>François Lesure, Catalogue de l'oeuvre d'Albert Roussel (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1947), 9.

whose reputation was established by his symphonic and chamber music, the following testimony takes on special significance:

The eminent organist Gigout welcomed me with open arms at the little hôtel that he shared with his adopted nephew Boëllmann . . . and under his direction I began the study of piano, organ, harmony, and counterpoint. I cannot attest more highly to the sureness and strength of his teaching. Of a tremendous insight, free from scholastic prejudice, precise in his remarks, and from a purely musical point of view on a level above the rules of academia, I remember him as being the most perfect teacher that a young musician could have for the purpose of refining his art. It has been said what a wonderful organist and marvelous improviser he was; if one adds the simplicity of the artist, the kindness and devotedness of the man, one is at a loss to recall a more noble person of which music can be proud.<sup>36</sup>

Jean Huré substantiated these impressions, writing that "he was enlightened and opened endless horizons to all, having none of this empty liberalism that gives equal praise to the good and the bad, the beautiful and the ugly."<sup>37</sup>

#### The Final Years of the Ecole d'Orgue

Major changes occurred infrequently in Gigout's life. He celebrated his thirty-seventh year at Saint-Augustin in 1900, and in his forty-year teaching career he held only

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<sup>36</sup>Ladislav Rohozinsky, Cinquante ans de musique française de 1874 à 1925, 2 vols. (Paris: Librairie de France, 1925), 400.

<sup>37</sup>Huré, "Gigout," 35.

two positions, at the Niedermeyer School and in his own Ecole d'Orgue.

In 1900 he changed residence from the rue Jouffroy to 113, Avenue de Villiers; the hôtel on the rue Jouffroy thus ceased to house his concerts spirituels. Regular presentations of his students in recital began in March of that year in the studio of the sculptor Edmond de Laheudrie, 139, Boulevard du Montparnasse, where Gigout continued for the next eleven years to educate students through his Ecole d'Orgue.<sup>38</sup> Once again, the music journals attest to the continued effectiveness of his efforts:

This beautiful recital was a complete success. . . . An extensive program of early and modern works (Bach, Mendelssohn, Saint-Saëns, Boëllmann, Franck, Gigout, Périlhou, etc.) has given us the opportunity to admire proudly the teaching of this master.<sup>39</sup>

The full and varied program . . . inspired an affluent and select audience as much through the musical interest of the chosen works as through the appeal of a faithful, intelligent, and warm interpretation. . . . The conscientious and superb

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<sup>38</sup>This study has found no evidence to confirm the specific circumstances surrounding the financial arrangements under which Gigout used these facilities, nor has any research suggested the ties of any close friendship between the two artists. It can be assumed that the Cavaillé-Coll organ used at the hôtel rue Jouffroy [Fauré, Hommage, 27] was the property of Gigout and was moved to the studio of de Laheudrie in 1900. This organ remained in the home of Marie-Louise Boëllmann-Gigout until her death in 1977.

<sup>39</sup>Le ménestrel 71 (28 May 1905): 175.

teaching of M. Gigout triumphs once again with his remarkable disciples.<sup>40</sup>

M. Gigout presented the most outstanding students of his organ school in a very brilliant musical matinée which took place on 10 July in the artistic studio of the sculptor de Laheudrie. Works of J. S. Bach, Mendelssohn, Niedermeyer, Saint-Saëns, Boëllmann, Gigout, and Guy Ropartz were interpreted with intelligence, surety, and style by the young artists.<sup>41</sup>

The benefits that his students received from their recital experiences were shown not only through the variety and quality of the repertoire they played, but also through their interpretations of works "with intelligence, surety, and style." Gigout's loyalty to high standards produced well-prepared musicians who were trained to fill various organ positions in France. It goes without saying that he was the Ecole d'Orgue. Gigout's efforts at that time were widely acknowledged; the reporter in Le ménestrel observed:

We are pleased to see that the administration of the Beaux-Arts supports an institution as serious and eminently artistic as that which has been founded and directed with the competence that comes from the well-trained and capable organist of Saint-Augustin.<sup>42</sup>

The importance of the school was overlooked after Gigout's death. Since the Conservatory and the Schola Cantorum produced a number of outstanding graduates, it

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<sup>40</sup>Le courrier musical 10 (1 July 1907): 428.

<sup>41</sup>Le ménestrel 68 (20 July 1902): 232.

<sup>42</sup>Le ménestrel 54 (29 July 1888): 248.

is no surprise that these institutions eventually overshadowed Gigout's efforts. Even though his accomplishments as a performer and teacher were either largely unknown or forgotten outside of France, it must be emphasized that he almost single-handedly educated countless numbers of students through his institution.

### The Popular Concerts

Gigout had worked diligently to perfect his art since his early days in Nancy. When he founded the Ecole d'Orgue he already had many years of successful teaching and performing experience to his credit. He sat regularly on committees that filled the most illustrious organ positions in France and served on the biannual jury that evaluated the students and awarded the various organ prizes at the Paris Conservatory. Just as he had been a featured performer on the Trocadéro series from 1878 to 1880 and toured repeatedly outside of France, he began in the 1890s to appear on the roster of several fashionable "popular" concert series that became the rage in Paris around that time.

The first series that occupied a goodly portion of Gigout's talents was the Concerts d'Harcourt (also known as the Concerts Eclectiques Populaires), which were given at 40, rue Rochechouart. Eugène d'Harcourt was a musical entrepreneur and former student of Gigout who sought to



bring to the public the same high level of programming in his concerts that was being offered by the Concerts Pasdeloup, Concerts Colonne, and Concerts Lamoureux.

Gigout began a regular association with this series in 1893, when he participated in eight concerts. From then until 1898, his frequent participation in these concerts represented the greatest number of concerts he ever performed in one series. The Concerts d'Harcourt provided an opportunity for him to perform many works for organ and orchestra; the 1893-94 season was without doubt the busiest for him in this regard. On 19 November 1893 he performed Handel's Concerto no. 14 in F Major:

The eminent organist of Saint-Augustin revealed in this inspired work a majestic style that approached the most brilliant virtuosity. The cheers that M. Gigout received are only the beginning of the triumphs that await him in this same concert hall, where we will hear him again in a series of organ recitals.<sup>43</sup>

On 3 December he played the organ part in a performance of Saint-Saëns's Symphony no. 3. Works for organ and orchestra were the focal point of a concert on 21 February 1894:

Last Thursday's concert revealed a rich artistry, due specifically to the reputation of the composers who came to direct their own works. First, we mention M. Théodore Dubois, who brought off his Fantaisie triomphale for organ and orchestra with great success. This piece, which was composed for the Chicago Exposition, is characterized by fresh ideas, rhythmic spirit, and rich instrumentation. M. Gigout, who played the organ part with the authority that is identified with him, performed the same function as

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<sup>43</sup>Le ménestrel 59 (26 November 1893): 383.

soloist in a Méditation by M. Lefebvre, also for organ and orchestra, that is of a stately and subdued nature.<sup>44</sup>

Several weeks later, "Gigout put his greatest talents to work in a Hymne for organ and orchestra of M. Emile Bernard."<sup>45</sup>

Gigout's most worthy contributions to the Concerts d'Harcourt were the numerous concerts spirituels in which he participated. Several of the artists who appeared with him on these occasions, including Viardot, Boëllmann, and Auguez, had participated with him in many programs through the years. Additionally, the newly formed Chanteurs de Saint-Gervais, directed by Charles Bordes of the Schola Cantorum, shared some of the same programs.

Gigout's participation had received such acclaim that a reviewer for Le ménestrel expressed the following desire:

The season for the Concerts d'Harcourt will end on 20 April. These concerts have accomplished a worthwhile purpose and the next season is equally promising. Encouraged by the complete success of the concert spirituel on Good Friday, which was an especially brilliant success for M. Gigout, the director of these concerts should think about regularly scheduling a series of organ recitals in which M. Gigout, who has ensured the crowded attendance thus far, would play along with sacred organ works, unpublished or little-known compositions from our young and very interesting pléiade of organists.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Le ménestrel 60 (25 February 1894): 62.

<sup>45</sup>Le ménestrel 60 (11 March 1894): 77.

<sup>46</sup>Le ménestrel 59 (9 April 1893): 120.

The following year, Gigout helped organize this related series of recitals that essentially spotlighted his talents as a solo performer. On these concerts he programmed solo literature from his standard repertoire, including Bach's Passacaglia in C Minor and Mendelssohn's Sonata VI in D Minor, as well as compositions of Boëly and Martini. He also programmed works that rarely appeared on his other concerts, including Bach's Fantasy in G Major, two Prières by Alkan (arranged for organ by Franck), and the Toccata cromatica and a Capriccio by Frescobaldi.<sup>47</sup>

The organ used for these programs had been built by Merklin and dedicated on 28 February 1893. It was by all descriptions an unsuccessful instrument; various indirect references to its problems reflect either an imperfect design or less-than-desirable craftsmanship. Several accounts indicate, however, that Gigout was able to draw the most satisfying results from this instrument, despite its limitations:

(14 January 1894)--M. Gigout rounded out this tour de force by drawing unheard-of effects from a detestable organ.<sup>48</sup>

(27 January 1895)--The remainder of the program consisted of . . . three organ works by M. Gigout, wonderfully interpreted by the composer, who was

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<sup>47</sup>Dufourcq, Gigout, 7-8; Le ménestrel 64 (27 March 1898): 101; Gustave Robert, La musique à Paris (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1898), 4:289.

<sup>48</sup>Le ménestrel 60 (21 January 1894): 21.

nevertheless working with an instrument of insufficient resources.<sup>49</sup>

Gigout continued to perform in a number of series, even in his latest years. On 18 April 1905<sup>50</sup> he appeared with Marguerite Long, pianist, and Lucien Capet, violinist, on the Bach Society series in the Salle de l'Union. The program included Bach's Fantasy and Fugue in G Minor (played by Gigout); the Sonata in B Minor (played by Capet and Long); two chorale preludes from the Orgelbüchlein-- "Das alte Jahr vergangen ist" and "In dir ist Freude" (Gigout); the Preludes and Fugues in F Minor and C# Major from the Well-Tempered Clavier, book 1 (Long), and the Toccatina and Fugue in D Minor (Gigout).<sup>51</sup> This program was one of the rare occasions when Gigout performed organ preludes based on Lutheran chorales. The following year he returned to perform Bach's Toccatina in F Major on this series.<sup>52</sup>

Gigout had the opportunity of performing under the baton of numerous conductors in these different series. The Concerts Berlioz, another well-established series in Paris, brought together his and Pierre Monteux's talents

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<sup>49</sup>Le ménestrel 61 (3 February 1895): 37.

<sup>50</sup>Dufourcq, Gigout, 10, has mistakenly given the year of this concert as 1904.

<sup>51</sup>Le ménestrel 71 (16 April 1905): 127.

<sup>52</sup>Le courrier musical 9 (15 June 1906): 417.

on 24 April 1906. The highpoint of the evening was a performance of Guy Ropartz's transcription for organ and orchestra of Gigout's Grand chœur dialogué. He also performed his Marche religieuse and Boëllmann's Suite gothique on the same program: "The marvelous style, as well as the masterly and expressive playing of M. Gigout was particularly acknowledged by the audience, who equally applauded . . . the excellent orchestra of M. Pierre Monteux."<sup>53</sup>

A performance of Handel's Concerto in D Minor at the Concerts Lamoureux (Salle Gaveau) on 5 January 1908 produced some of the most glowing reviews of this period in Gigout's life. Jean d'Udine reported that

we had the joy of hearing a Handel concerto for organ and orchestra, the solo part interpreted marvelously by M. Gigout. It could not have been played with more style, clarity, and logic, or with a more lively humor, serene poeticism, or impressive charm. This is what music is all about: the pleasure taken from it, not from the structure but from the spirit, for the feelings that it represents, from blissful euphoria to unrestrained delight. M. Gigout chose satisfying registrations that brought together clean and precise sonorities that were imaginative without being affected and gave contrast without abruptness! What excellent rhythm in all of this! How the audience justifiably acknowledged their approval after the beautiful Sarabande for organ solo that he phrased with as much care and nuance as delicacy.<sup>54</sup>

The critic for the Mercure musicale commented that

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<sup>53</sup>Le courrier musical 9 (1 May 1906): 323.

<sup>54</sup>Le courrier musical 11 (15 January 1908): 56.

M. Gigout chose a simple and prudent registration. His cadenzas . . . were in the proper style for the period; the sarabande, written by Handel for organ solo (ad libitum), was enhanced by an even and accurate rendition, full of technical display.<sup>55</sup>

In the following months, Gigout performed Handel's Concerto in G Minor, opus 4, no. 1, in the same series. In addition, he appeared every six to nine months between 1907 and 1910 on the Concerts Firmin Touche, performing a variety of works, including Boëllmann's Fantaisie dialoguée with orchestra and Mendelssohn's Sonata in F Minor.<sup>56</sup>

Between 1893 and 1910, Gigout participated in a substantial number of organ and chamber music programs in concert halls and salons around Paris which were not part of a regular series. One example of these independently sponsored concerts was his participation on a program with pianist Suzanne Percheron in the Salle Gaveau on 11 May 1910; he performed Boëllmann's Suite gothique and the organ part of Saint-Saëns's Deux duos (Choral and Scherzo) for organ and piano with Mlle Percheron.<sup>57</sup> Also, he gave numerous house concerts for Baron Georges Roulleaux-Dugage and Pierre Plichon between 1905 and 1910. One such concert chez Roulleaux-Dugage on 1 February 1907 was devoted to music by Gigout (the Rhapsodie sur des Noëls

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<sup>55</sup>Le mercure musical 4 (15 March 1908): 318.

<sup>56</sup>Le courrier musical 10 (1 December 1907): 657.

<sup>57</sup>Le guide du concert, no. 3 (7 May 1910): 11.

and the Toccata) and Boëllmann (the Suite gothique and the Variations symphoniques).<sup>58</sup> It is entirely possible that Gigout's most memorable participation in a house concert occurred on 7 June 1909 chez Count Bérenger de Miramon when he performed an organ and harpsichord version of Handel's Concerto in D Minor with Wanda Landowska.<sup>59</sup>

Not only do these concerts exemplify a considerable portion of Gigout's musical activity during this period, but they emphasize the importance of the organ in the salon and concert hall scene in the late 19th and early 20th century. Gigout can be recognized as a leading force in this regard.

#### Honors (1892-1908)

Gigout's many talents led to an increasing number of honors bestowed upon him between 1892 and 1908. First, he was commissioned to write a piece for a festival given in Nancy in 1892 to honor the beginning of the Russian-French alliance:

The "Hymne à la France" was written [by Gigout] in six days. . . . It was performed by three regiments in the presence of the President of the Republic, M. Sadi Carnot, who honored the composer by accepting the dedication. This piece remains in the musical repertoire of the Garde Républicaine.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>Le courrier musical 10 (15 February 1907): 118-19.

<sup>59</sup>Dufourcq, Gigout, 11.

<sup>60</sup>Fauré, Hommage, 29, n.

Le ménestrel reported that the work achieved "a very good effect. M. Gigout, who had returned to Nancy for the occasion, received heartiest congratulations."<sup>61</sup>

In 1895 it was announced that Gigout had been named chevalier to the French Legion of Honor, to the lowest of the several ranks of membership. This commendation was bestowed upon those who had rendered twenty to twenty-five years of active service to improve the quality of life in France, whether social or cultural. It was not unusual for an artist of Gigout's stature to be recognized for his achievements; Guilmant had been nominated only two years before. Le ménestrel announced that

only one musician was honored. In addition to being eminently distinguished and of a true talent, M. Gigout was recognized for his brilliant achievements as the organist of Saint-Augustin, a composer, and the founder of an organ school. Everyone will applaud this nomination.<sup>62</sup>

Gigout valued this nomination to the end of his life. Although it was not uncommon for an honoree to be promoted to higher ranks in the Legion, he never received a promotion, commenting much later in life that this was one of his greatest disappointments.<sup>63</sup>

In 1897 Gigout's biography appeared in Nos auteurs et compositeurs dramatiques, which was published under the

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<sup>61</sup>Le ménestrel 58 (19 June 1892): 200.

<sup>62</sup>Le ménestrel 61 (21 July 1895): 232.

<sup>63</sup>Huré, "Gigout," 19-20.



auspices of the Société des Compositeurs de Musique. Though his tenure at Saint-Augustin was incorrectly listed as having begun in 1868, this account succinctly summarized his accomplishments to that time.<sup>64</sup>

At the close of the 19th century Gigout was at the height of his career. His reputation as a performer, teacher, and music educator was firmly established. On the eve of the Universal Exposition of 1900 he served on the committee that planned the musical events at the Trocadéro. With him on the committee were some of Paris' most well known and respected musicians, including Massenet, Saint-Saëns, Dubois, d'Indy, Pierné, Fauré, Pugno, Guilmant, and Widor.<sup>65</sup> Before a large and receptive audience Gigout performed one of the ten organ recitals given during this exhibition, although the program was not reported.<sup>66</sup>

Several years later he was nominated president of a newly formed commission whose purpose was to assess the current condition of church music in France and to examine the government's policies on the distribution of subsidy funds for training church musicians. The Association de

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<sup>64</sup>Jules Martin, Nos auteurs et compositeurs dramatiques: portraits et biographies (Paris: Ernest Flammarion, 1897), 245.

<sup>65</sup>Le ménestrel 65 (2 December 1899): 390.

<sup>66</sup>Le ménestrel 66 (2 September 1900): 279.

Musiciens d'Eglise hoped that its presence would increase the government's awareness of the importance of the many Cathedral and parish training programs. In defining the goals of this organization, Gigout elegantly justified the importance of music programs within the church, and specifically the study of the organ:

Then there is the organ, this marvelous educator of our musicians. Look among our present composers, Massenet, Saint-Saëns, Fauré, all . . . studied the organ, which provided their first musical inspirations. Thanks to the diversity of its timbres it allowed them to search for orchestral combinations that shaped their most imaginative ideas. No, all that must not perish.<sup>67</sup>

Another honor given to Gigout was in the form of an invitation to participate as a member of a committee of eminent French musicians in an international music congress in Milan in 1909, on the occasion of the one-hundredth anniversary of the Milan Conservatory. With him were Dubois, Guilmant, d'Harcourt, Massenet, d'Indy, Dukas, and Widor, among others. The opinions about pedagogy that Gigout expressed during this conference summarize the philosophy that had formed the basis of his fifty-year teaching career:

Necessary for young musicians who intend to learn composition or the organ is to study thoroughly from the beginning of their work, counterpoint, and, at the same time, harmony (classification of chords).

Diatonic and polyphonic styles should particularly be emphasized.

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<sup>67</sup>Le ménestrel 73 (2 March 1907): 71.

This program leads surely to a good performance of chorale preludes, the cantus firmus appearing alternately in each voice from example to example-- a good goal for organist-improvisers and future composers alike.

I scarcely know any better preparation for the study of vocal or instrumental free fugue, and, through it, for the practice of the art in any of its forms.<sup>68</sup>

Throughout his life Gigout firmly believed that one must attempt to master thoroughly these basic skills in order to be a functioning musician. He writes in the Preface to his revision of Lemmens's Ecole d'orgue that

it is indispensable for a finished organist to be able to improvise, as it is constantly necessary in the catholic church to do so. In order to be able to discharge his duties as an organist expediently, the performer must thoroughly understand harmony, melody, fugue, the art of plainchant, and the ecclesiastical atmosphere inseparable with our ideas of church music.<sup>69</sup>

This preparation, coupled with the countless opportunities he created for his students to perform in musicales, providing them concert experience and contact with the most eminent professional artists in Paris, ensured a thorough and well-rounded musical education at his organ school.

In March 1911 Gigout was sixty-seven years old. One would have assumed that partial retirement, or at least a slackening of teaching, performing, and church duties,

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<sup>68</sup>Le monde musical 21 (30 March 1909): 87.

<sup>69</sup>Lemmens, Ecole d'orgue, preface.

would have been in order. Instead, he was just beginning the final stage of major activity in his life.

CHAPTER 5  
THE LAST PERIOD

Gigout's Nomination to the Conservatory

Gigout had seen Franck, Widor, and Guilmant named as Professor of Organ at the Conservatory in 1873, 1890, and 1896, respectively, and in 1890 and 1896 he was himself considered a candidate for the position. Since the 1870s he had served almost yearly as an adjudicator on the committees that awarded the various prix there.

Upon the announcement of Guilmant's death at the end of March 1911, rumors began to circulate concerning his replacement. Many thought that Louis Vierne was the logical choice, since he had graduated in the organ class of Franck and Widor and had assisted Guilmant for many years as the suppléant in the organ class. The following week Le ménestrel announced that Vierne, Gigout, Charles Tournemire, and Joseph Bonnet were among the candidates to succeed Guilmant.<sup>1</sup> On 15 April Le ménestrel reported that "M. Eugène Gigout has asked us to make it known

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<sup>1</sup>Le ménestrel 77 (8 April 1911): 111.

that he is not, as it was announced by mistake, a candidate to succeed Alexandre Guilmant in the organ class at the Conservatory, his professional obligations not permitting it."<sup>2</sup>

When Saint-Saëns found out that Gigout had declined candidacy, he wrote to Fauré:

1 May 1911

I understand that Gigout is not considering the position of organ professor at the Conservatory. It would give me much pleasure if he were named, and for him I would bend the rule that I have for myself of never interfering with what concerns the administration of the Conservatory. Even outside of the great friendship that I have with him, I regard him as the most impressive organist that I have ever known. He has the most admirable technique; but even more so, he is a marvelous improviser and with him the splendid art of improvisation, so French and so necessary, in my opinion, will not be in jeopardy.<sup>3</sup>

Through the insistence of both Saint-Saëns and Fauré, Gigout agreed to become a candidate. Fauré wrote:

Not in Paris at this moment, Saint-Saëns conveyed by letter the wishes that he fashioned for the success of Gigout. I did not fail to communicate this letter to the Nomination Committee. It ended with these words: "It would be deplorable if Gigout is not named, because without argument, he is the foremost organist in Paris."<sup>4</sup>

When Le ménestrel announced Gigout's candidacy, a sarcastic comment was added to the notice:

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<sup>2</sup>Le ménestrel 77 (15 April 1911): 119.

<sup>3</sup>Camille Saint-Saëns and Gabriel Fauré, Correspondance--soixante ans d'amitié, ed. Jean-Michel Nectoux (Paris: Heugel et Cie., 1973), 91.

<sup>4</sup>Fauré, Hommage, 12.

It may be remembered that M. Gigout had written expressly that he was not a candidate to succeed Guilmant, "his professional obligations not permitting it." These "obligations" without doubt have suddenly disappeared. It really was not worth the trouble to protest so vehemently against our announcement.<sup>5</sup>

Gigout promptly responded the following week:

Dear M. Heugel,

Concerning my "professional obligations" having suddenly disappeared, serious considerations caused me to go back on my word several days after the announcement appeared in Le ménestrel.

What person does not change his mind?

I did not think that I was obligated to inform you that I had changed my mind. . . . Without doubt, I was wrong.

I hope that you will kindly receive the apologies and excuses that are devoutly offered to you.

Eugène Gigout<sup>6</sup>

The editor of Le ménestrel added below Gigout's letter:

How Gigout varies! But one would love to know what these "serious considerations" were.

The "serious considerations" obviously were the result of the intervention of Fauré and Saint-Saëns in the situation. Furthermore, Fauré's position was embedded in some unfortunate political intrigue within this circle. Two years earlier a serious rift had occurred between Widor and Fauré over the nomination of the latter to the

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<sup>5</sup>Le ménestrel 77 (13 May 1911): 150.

<sup>6</sup>Le ménestrel 77 (20 May 1911): 160.

Académie des Beaux-Arts. Widor had made some unkind comments about Fauré to mutual friends and these remarks had been repeated to Fauré. The feud was fueled when Widor supported Vierne as Guilmant's successor, while Fauré, the Director of the Conservatory at that time, wanted his life-long friend Gigout to obtain the position.<sup>7</sup> It seems that Fauré did eventually use Gigout's nomination as a revenge tactic against Widor. Whether or not Fauré purposefully set out to hurt him is arguable; it is entirely possible that it was an afterthought. There is no question that Fauré supported Gigout's nomination in the best interests of the Conservatory and lobbied heavily to secure his appointment. Years later, Vierne wrote rather bitterly concerning the nomination that

Gigout was given the first-place position . . . with fourteen votes; I was second with seven votes, and Tournemire was third with three votes. . . . This was the annihilation of seventeen years of unceasing work, my reward for the dedication with which I had served gratuitously in the interest of our field, since I had not received a stipend for either the lessons or classwork.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>For a more detailed account of this situation, see Bernard Gavoty, Louis Vierne: la vie et l'oeuvre (Paris: A. Michel, 1943), 106-10, and John Near, "The Life and Work of Charles-Marie Widor" (D.M.A. diss., Boston University, 1985), 246-47.

<sup>8</sup>Gavoty, Vierne, 108. Having lost the nomination, Vierne responded by severing all ties with Gigout and Fauré. This series of events was surely as unsettling to Gigout as it was to Vierne. Gigout had great respect for his younger peer. In 1900, Gigout had been among the ten-member jury that had unanimously nominated Vierne as titulaire to Notre-Dame. Together they had inaugurated



In a letter to Saint-Saëns dated 4 June 1911, Fauré acknowledged that the appointment had not come easily: "Gigout's nomination was signed yesterday! Finally, it is done, but after such a battle! I will fill you in later."<sup>9</sup> In a letter dated the same day, Fauré wrote a similar message to Gigout: "Finally, it is done, but not without difficulty since it was met with bias again yesterday. I will fill you in this summer."<sup>10</sup>

Throughout his life, Gigout had remained dedicated to his commitments; his "professional obligations" truly were a concern to him. He felt a compelling allegiance to his organ school, and his acceptance of the Conservatory position would give it little reason to exist. In spite of the honor that would accrue to him by obtaining this professorship, he carefully weighed his decision. At sixty-seven he entered the final stage of his teaching career by accepting the position as Professor at the Conservatory, the appropriate culmination of events after more than fifty years of dedicated teaching at the Niedermeyer School and his own organ school.

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several instruments, including the Puget organ in the church of Saint-Charles in Monceau on 19 March 1909. Vierne finally did reconcile himself with Fauré and subsequently with Gigout in 1914-15.

<sup>9</sup>Saint-Saëns, Correspondance, 91.

<sup>10</sup>Dufourcq, Gigout, 23.

Professor at the Conservatory

Concerning the operation of Gigout's organ class, Adine Jemain tells us that "we had three classes per week. As a rule, two classes were reserved for improvisation and the third for performance study."<sup>11</sup> Vierne recounted in his memoirs that Franck had structured his organ class in much the same way.<sup>12</sup>

During Gigout's tenure at the Conservatory, Jean Huré writes that "under the influence of Eugène Gigout . . . our younger organists have once more discovered the true Bachian tradition and, something especially precious from our point of view, the true French tradition."<sup>13</sup> These remarks must have angered the Widor/Guilmant school of performers, who had prided themselves on their interpretation of the German school, especially Bach. Gigout's appointment to the professorship was certainly a blow, even somewhat of an insult to Widor. When he had replaced Franck in 1890, he had attempted to change the structure of the organ class. In striving to teach the ideals of

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<sup>11</sup>Adine Jemain, "Quelques souvenirs de la classe d'orgue d'Eugène Gigout," L'orgue, no. 155 (July-September 1975): 73.

<sup>12</sup>Jack Reed Crawford, "Mes Souvenirs by Louis Vierne: An Annotated Translation" (Ph.D. diss., University of Miami, 1973), 32.

<sup>13</sup>Jean Huré, "The French School of Organ Playing in Its Own Land," trans. Frederick H. Martens, The Musical Quarterly 6 (April 1920): 274.

Lemmens to his students, he had concentrated more on the teaching of literature rather than improvisation. Then, when he left the organ position to become Professor of Composition in 1896, he insisted that this emphasis continue, specifying that Guilmant was to take his place.

Even though Gigout did not oppose the ideals of Lemmens, he was never totally accepted in the Widor/Guilmant clique. From the recountings of the workings of Gigout's Ecole d'Orgue, it is obvious that his students had received a well-balanced exposure to various kinds of repertoire. This is evident in the countless reviews of the concerts spirituels which refer to the performances of varied literature given "with intelligence, surety, and style."<sup>14</sup>

In the final years of Gigout's teaching career he seems to have placed a stronger emphasis on the study of improvisation. Without doubt, it was more of a concern in his organ class than it had been with either Widor or Guilmant, although neither of these master teachers had ignored this art. According to American organist William Carl,

Gigout never hesitated to urge the importance of the study of improvisation, and would add, "It is all very well to prepare an extensive repertoire of well-chosen works, but improvisation should take preem-

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<sup>14</sup>Le ménestrel 68 (20 July 1902): 232.

inence. Be sure and see that it is encouraged and taught in the United States."<sup>15</sup>

Archibald Henderson, an organist from Scotland who studied in Paris, expressed the opinion that while Gigout was an admirable performer, his true strengths were in improvisation and the accompaniment of plainchant:

After a number of visits to the organ loft at St. Augustin, Gigout kindly invited me, as a guest, to one or two special meetings of his organ class at the Conservatoire. As is well known, Gigout succeeded Guilmant as professor of organ at the Conservatoire, and as a pupil of Widor I was, of course, interested to become acquainted with Gigout as a teacher and to hear the work of his class. Guilmant and Widor were great performers; indeed, two of the greatest players of their time. Gigout, while an admirable organist, excelled in improvisation and in the accompaniment of plainsong. These features in the work of the French organist were those stressed and practiced in Gigout's class, solo-playing being of a less brilliant standard than in the classes I have heard of Guilmant and Widor.<sup>16</sup>

Maurice Duruflé, who entered the organ class at the Conservatory in 1920, gives the impression, in comparing Vierne or Tournemire to Gigout, that the style of teaching had indeed changed with Gigout's arrival there:

What can one say about the teaching of Gigout, the Professor at that time? It was based almost exclusively upon the study of fugue. We learned few pieces, and only Bach. We also improvised on a given theme in classical first-movement sonata form; the

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<sup>15</sup>William C. Carl, "Gigout: A Past-Master at Improvisation," The Musician 31 (August 1926): 32.

<sup>16</sup>Archibald M. Henderson, "Memories of Some Distinguished French Organists," The Musical Times 78 (July 1937): 632.

first and third sections were somewhat andante and the development section more lively.<sup>17</sup>

Though a champion of the Widor/Guilman school, Archibald Henderson acknowledged the effective methods that Gigout used to teach improvisational skills:

The class-training in improvising, however, was original, and, being carefully graded, proved encouraging, even to the youngest students. It was conceived much more on contrapuntal than on harmonic lines. In the early stages it consisted in adding a single part, note against note, to a simple diatonic melody. This being added in the bass, the melody would then be given to a lower voice, the counterpoint being added above. When two-part counterpoint could be improvised easily, three- and four-part work was then considered. When note-against-note harmony had been mastered, the student passed on to free counterpoint. Later, examples were given for canonic treatment; and lastly, the exposition of a fugue was demanded. It was a rigorous but stimulating course.<sup>18</sup>

This account emphasizes the meticulous approach of Gigout in this important area of the organist's training. It may be assumed that he had carefully prepared his students at the Ecole d'Orgue in much the same way.

To what degree did the musical advancements of the early 20th century affect the improvisational language of Gigout's students? Huré writes:

They are allowed--and this license is astounding on the part of a master born in 1844--to branch out into a modernism which some might find extreme, yet which

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<sup>17</sup>Maurice Duruflé, "Tournemire and Vierne," trans. Ralph Kneer. The American Organist 14 (November 1980): 56.

<sup>18</sup>Henderson, "Memories," 632.

is always interesting, and which gives the organistic art an entirely new physiognomy.<sup>19</sup>

Huré was one of Gigout's most ardent supporters, but his comments concerning Gigout's willingness to enter into the harmonic and rhythmic language of the 20th century are highly contested by other accounts. In speaking of her training at the Conservatory when she studied organ and improvisation with Gigout, Germaine Tailleferre, one of "Les Six," strongly suggests that he did not enjoy the avant garde stylistic developments in France after 1910:

I was excited by the four-handed reading with Darius Milhaud of Pétrouchka and Sacre du printemps and this merited my discharge from the organ class, since my improvisations (strongly influenced by Stravinsky) provoked shrieks of horror from my professor Eugène Gigout.<sup>20</sup>

An anonymous writer, signing himself only as "l'homme heureux," supports Tailleferre's account:

E. Gigout avoids dense sonorities in his improvisations, as in his written works.

This year his students have amassed thick sonorities full of inappropriate doublings.

E. Gigout likes the most simple diatonicism.

His students have endeavored to introduce chromaticism, that very worn-out manner of playing to a charming subject . . . that called for a light and pastoral style; under the pretext of modernism they caricatured the great but "old-fashioned" Wagner.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Huré, "French School," 275.

<sup>20</sup>Germaine Tailleferre, "Mémoires à l'emporte-pièce," ed. Frédéric Robert, Revue internationale de musique française, no. 19 (February 1986): 22.

<sup>21</sup>L'homme heureux [pseud.], "Chronique de l'homme heureux," L'orgue et les organistes, no. 4 (15 July 1924): 15-16.

If it is indeed true that Gigout concentrated on the teaching of improvisation during this period, two issues are immediately raised. First, did Gigout actually neglect the teaching of a wide variety of repertoire, as Duruflé suggests? The mysterious "homme heureux" indicates that Gigout's class in 1924 performed repertoire consisting of works that included Tournemire's Triple Choral, Bach's Fugue in A Minor (BWV 543), Franck's Choral in B Minor, and Vierne's Scherzo (2nd Symphonie).<sup>22</sup> This is quite in contrast to Duruflé's recollections.

Secondly, were Gigout's strengths as a teacher of repertoire less formidable than those of Widor and Guilmant? These issues are embedded within a perennial problem, the human tendency to support the teachers whose methods we endorse and to discount those with whom we do not agree. Thus, it becomes difficult at times to sort through these commentaries in order to reach an unbiased point of reference concerning the contributions of a particular maître.

André Fleury, who studied with Vierne, Gigout, Tournemire, and Dupré, described Gigout's teaching as being "rather pedantic and old-fashioned."<sup>23</sup> Of course,

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<sup>22</sup>L'homme heureux, "Chronique," 16.

<sup>23</sup>Rulon Christiansen, "Hommage à Louis Vierne: A Conversation with André Fleury," The American Organist 21 (December 1987): 60.

he was comparing Tournemire, Vierne, and Dupré, essentially products of the 20th century, with Gigout, a product of the 19th century. On the other hand, Jean Huré felt that Gigout's teaching at the Conservatory had made significant contributions to the development of the modern French organ school. Concerning Gigout's students, Huré wrote that

their touch, their manner of playing has grown supple and varied, capable of firmness, even of rigidity; when needs be, of violence or tenderness. Their rhythmic exposition has grown more flexible; they have gained much in intelligence and variety of phrasing.<sup>24</sup>

Emile Jean-Baptist Ripert, a contributor to Avignon's Courrier du Midi, wrote that Gigout's students were not only fortunate to have a teacher who provided a lasting example of talent and character, but one who could help his students unlock the "secrets of the profession."<sup>25</sup> Ripert concurred with Huré's opinion, writing about Gigout's own playing that "a touch of absolute precision, an extraordinary variety of expression, and a rhythm sometimes flexible, sometimes strict, endowed his performances with a spirit of intense vitality."<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Huré, "The French School," 274-75.

<sup>25</sup>Emile Jean-Baptist Ripert [Eusebius, pseud.], M. Eugène Gigout: Professeur d'orgue au Conservatoire de Paris (Avignon: François Seguin, 1911), 4.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 5.



Because of the unfortunate political intrigue, the extent of Gigout's contributions as Professor at the Conservatory may forever remain clouded. Nevertheless, it is evident that he functioned satisfactorily in thoroughly preparing the students for their examinations. Alexander Schreiner witnessed such an examination and described this annual routine as follows:

I attended the annual competition at the Paris Conservatory during which the bearded Gigout, Professor of organ, sat like a patriarch not far from the organ console, while each member of his class underwent the examination conducted by an august body of judges. . . . It seemed as though Gigout, in recommending his pupils, was also, in a way, on trial before the examiners. Each candidate was required to improvise an accompaniment to a given Plain Chant. This was followed by an improvised Fugue on a given subject, an improvised Andante on another theme, and, finally, a performance of the Finale by César Franck.<sup>27</sup>

Schreiner's recollection of this event reveals an important hallmark of Gigout's personality, namely his concern for his students' development. He probably did feel that he was on trial during these examinations since he desired so strongly to see the success of his students. In describing her experiences with Gigout, Adine Jemain portrays him as a balanced individual who displayed patience and professionalism toward his students:

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<sup>27</sup>Alexander Schreiner, French Masterworks for Organ: A Collection of 19th Century Classics Collected and Edited by Alexander Schreiner (Rockville Centre, N. Y.: Belwin Mills, Inc., 1958), preface.

These little remembrances would not be complete if I did not say some words about our old and dear master. He was benevolent and indulgent, but he never missed the opportunity to make a joke and occasionally laughed at us. He was always in a good mood, kind, and of an even temperament. I never heard him say a bad word about anyone.<sup>28</sup>

Without doubt, Gigout's tenure as Professor at the Conservatory had interrupted the plan that Widor had instigated in continuing the Lemmens tradition (as he viewed it). After Gigout's death in 1925, Guilmant's prize-winning student Marcel Dupré replaced Gigout at the Conservatory, a nomination that must have delighted Widor because once again one of his disciples was in the position. The hostility that Gigout's appointment had fueled within the ranks of the Widor/Guilmant supporters was most likely the greatest factor leading to the neglect of his accomplishments after his death. Additionally, the attention given to Widor, Guilmant, Dupré, and Vierne outside France at this time essentially overshadowed everyone else's efforts, especially those who were not solid members of this clique.

#### Concert Activity

Throughout the fourteen years that Gigout was Professor of Organ at the Conservatory, he maintained an active performing schedule. During this time he enjoyed the benefits of his age and the associations that he had

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<sup>28</sup>Jemain, "Quelques souvenirs," 74.

built through the previous six decades. His name continued to appear on various concert programs, including those of the Salon des Musiciens Français and the Société Française des Amis de la Musique, as well as on benefit programs for the Niedermeyer School.

Gigout actively supported the work of several of the artistic organizations whose purpose was to promote the compositions of its members. The Société des Compositeurs de Musique and the Salon des Musiciens Français became outlets for performances of his compositions in various genres. It is easy to forget that he not only composed works for organ and harmonium, but also for chorus, solo voice, solo piano, piano four-hands, and orchestra. For example, on 29 January and 3 March 1914 André Marchal, Gigout's first student at the Conservatory to receive a premier prix in organ, gave the first performances of Gigout's Trois improvisations caractéristiques (1912) for piano at concerts of the Société des Compositeurs de Musique<sup>29</sup> and the Salon des Musiciens Français.<sup>30</sup>

Gigout's ties to the Niedermeyer School remained constant throughout his life. He had entered the Niedermeyer School three years after its inception and had shown himself to be one of the most celebrated performers, teach-

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<sup>29</sup>Le guide du concert 5 (24 January 1914): 289.

<sup>30</sup>Le ménestrel 80 (7 March 1914): 77.

ers, and church musicians that the school had produced. After 1900, when Loret left, he had returned for several years to teach organ at the school. In 1902 he had participated in concerts celebrating the hundredth anniversary of Niedermeyer's birth. On 8 May 1913 he appeared at the Salle Gaveau in a concert sponsored by the Société Française des Amis de la Musique for the benefit of the scholarship fund for the boarders at the school.<sup>31</sup> As late as 1924, he played the organ for a special mass to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the school's founding.<sup>32</sup>

It is difficult to document all of Gigout's activities throughout these later years, since World War I did so much to disrupt the publication of the music journals that provide the richest sources of information concerning his activities. The outbreak of the war confined his work to Paris. During these years he took part in the efforts of the Oeuvre Fraternelle des Artistes, an organization that had come into existence under the patronage of the Société Française des Amis de la Musique, the Société des Auteurs, Compositeurs, et Editeurs de Musique, and the Fédération des Artistes Musiciens de France. The first objective of the Oeuvre Fraternelle des Artistes was to

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<sup>31</sup>Le ménestrel 79 (3 May 1913): 144.

<sup>32</sup>Le ménestrel 86 (11 April 1924): 172

raise money for musicians who had suffered from the war and their families. Secondly, the organization wanted to promote the works of composers who were actively serving in the French army since they lacked the opportunity to continue to promote their own music.<sup>33</sup> Gigout was named as a member of the Comité d'Honneur, along with Théodore Dubois, Charles Lecocq, Alphonse Leduc, and Widor, among others.

Gigout's thoughts concerning this troubled time were expressed in the organization's official publication, La musique pendant la guerre. His commentary gives the impression that he felt that it would be dangerous to become so caught up in worry over the hostilities of war that important tasks on the home front would suffer:

Since the outbreak of hostilities and outside of some articles in daily newspapers, I devour nothing but the reports from the various fronts, of which the reading becomes alas! evermore engrossing.

Should I tell you also that, like so many others, I am trying to do a little good?

I consider that to inform your readers of it in no way stirs up the emotions of those who ordinarily resist changing their habits. Our friends at the front are by no means unaware that they are the constant object of our thoughts, of our concerns, of our worries.

Eugène Gigout<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>La musique pendant la guerre, no. 7 (April-May 1916): 99-100.

<sup>34</sup>La musique pendant la guerre, no. 3 (December 1915): 40.

The horrors of war tend to help heal rifts in friendships; perhaps this contributed to Vierne's desire to re-establish contact with Gigout. On 20 May 1916 the two shared a concert at the Salle Gaveau for the profit of blind soldiers.<sup>35</sup>

On 16 June 1916 Gigout was one of three artists who presented the first concert in a series called the Festival de Musique Française, under the auspices of the Oeuvre Fraternelle des Artistes. The guest artists were Gigout, a M. Ghasne of the Opéra Comique, and a M. Plamondon of the Opéra. The orchestra was under the direction of Paul Vidal, Alfred Bachelet, François Casadesus, and Edouard Flament. Gigout premiered an Andante for organ by Georges Kriéger.<sup>36</sup> Unfortunately, the periodical La musique pendant la guerre, which provided much information concerning these activities, ceased publication immediately after this concert, nor have other reviews of it come to light.

Despite the war and his advancing age, Gigout continued to perform actively. By 1917 the musical scene had somewhat stabilized itself and many concert series began to thrive as they had before the war. On 11 February he performed in the Salle Gaveau with the Concerts Colonne-

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<sup>35</sup>La musique pendant la guerre, no. 7 (April-May 1916): 111.

<sup>36</sup>La musique pendant la guerre, no. 7 bis (16 May 1916): 127.

Lamoureux. The program included Handel's Concerto in D Minor (opus 7, no. 4) for organ and orchestra. According to one reviewer, the orchestra's performance was less than satisfactory; the ensemble was not precise and musical spirit was absent. The reviewer went on to comment that

the celebrated organist Gigout appeared equally affected by this situation. . . . It would have been nice to have heard Gigout in possession of his skills. But why call upon Gigout's help? This is not the type of concert that adds anything to his already glorious career, whereas a young unknown organist . . .<sup>37</sup> would be able to benefit by such an opportunity.

This review is one of the few unfavorable ones in Gigout's entire career. Subsequent accounts indicate that he retained his skills and that the badly reviewed concert in 1917 was an exception.

In June of that same year he participated in two benefit concerts, playing works by Boëllmann and Saint-Saëns at Notre-Dame for the Amis de l'Art Liturgique and works by Bach and Saint-Saëns at Sainte-Clotilde for the Secours aux Musiciens d'Eglise.<sup>38</sup>

During this period he frequently programmed the organ works of Saint-Saëns, some of which held special significance for him. Saint-Saëns had dedicated the Prelude and Fugue in Eb Major (opus 99, no. 3) and Sept improvisations to Gigout. It may be recalled that he had given a concert

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<sup>37</sup>Le courrier musical 19 (1 March 1917): 122.

<sup>38</sup>Dufourcq, Gigout, 13-14.

in 1896 to honor the fiftieth anniversary of Saint-Saëns's first public concert in Paris. In November 1917 Gigout was a guest performer in the Saint-Saëns festival at the Salle Gaveau, where he played the composer's Fantaisie in Eb Major, Rhapsodie, and Marche religieuse.<sup>39</sup> Also, he played the organ part for the premiere of Saint-Saëns's Cyprès et lauriers for organ and orchestra at the Trocadéro on 24 October 1920, with the composer conducting the orchestra of the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire.<sup>40</sup> This was Gigout's final public tribute in which he would participate before Saint-Saëns's death in 1921, a fitting testimonial to the years of friendship between the two musicians.<sup>41</sup>

As Gigout became older, he not only continued to perform the organ works of Saint-Saëns with regularity, but he also kept the works of his adopted nephew Boëllmann before the public. Boëllmann's daughter Marie-Louise (now being raised by Gigout) participated with her adopted father in many of these concerts. For a Boëllmann festi-

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<sup>39</sup>Le courrier musical 19 (15 December 1917): 426.

<sup>40</sup>Morel, "Saint-Saëns," 114-15.

<sup>41</sup>Huré ["Gigout," 21] relates that "when Saint-Saëns died, Gigout remained so unmoved that everyone was surprised . . . remaining close to the hearse of the great master from the Madeleine to the Montparnasse cemetery, where he was to say a eulogy at the tomb, he was choked by his tears. Transported home and confined to bed, he was silent, despondent."



val given at the Salle Gaveau on 17 January 1918, Marie-Louise accompanied a M. Hollmann, cellist, in the Sonata for cello and piano and the Variations symphoniques. Gigout played Boëllmann's "Marche religieuse" and "Allegretto" from the Deuxième suite and the complete Suite gothique. Gilbert Beaume, the reviewer who covered the event, wrote that

the most interesting work, in my opinion, was the Suite gothique for organ, played magnificently by M. Eugene Gigout, eminent Professor at the Conservatory. Unhappily, this work was first on the program, and I wonder if this was the reason that it was not applauded as much as it should have been.<sup>42</sup>

A further examination of Gigout's programming reveals that even though he concentrated more often on works by his closest friends, he did not totally neglect works by other composers. For example, during the inauguration of the Mutin organ in the church of Saint-François-de-Sales (25 November 1920) he performed three of Saint-Saëns's Sept improvisations, his own Pièce jubilaire, and Bach's Toccatà in F Major.<sup>43</sup> An examination of the remainder of the repertoire that he programmed from year to year shows that, in keeping with his earlier manner, he tended to repeat works that were either his favorites or audience pleasers. The works of Bach and Handel appeared as the most representative examples of music before 1750. The

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<sup>42</sup>Le courrier musical 20 (1 February 1918): 65.

<sup>43</sup>Le monde musical 31 (December 1920): 372.

Romantic works of Lemmens, Boëly, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and other more classically oriented composers often reappeared as well.

Of his own concert works, he most often performed the Scherzo, the Toccata, the Grand choeur dialogué, and the Pièce jubilaire. More routinely, he programmed his one-page interludes in Gregorian tonality--these appear in collections such as the Cent pièces brèves dans la tonalité du plainchant (1889), the Album grégorien (1895), and the Cent pièces nouvelles (1922). Archibald Henderson believed that these collections were especially significant since they contain clues to Gigout's improvisational style:

Gigout is one of the most charming and courteous of men. He is a capital classic player, and has special readiness and pleasure in improvising in the old modes. His gift in this direction has found expression in the two volumes of short pieces in the Gregorian tones, published by Leduc, and in a new volume shortly to be issued by Chester.<sup>44</sup>

An example of typical programming comes from a concert on 23 February 1920 in the Salle Pleyel, where Gigout performed for the Société des Compositeurs de Musique three of his interludes in Gregorian tonality, one interlude in modern tonality, and the Scherzo.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Archibald M. Henderson, "Organs and Organists of Paris," The Musical Times 62 (1 September 1921): 632-33.

<sup>45</sup>Le guide du concert 6 (29 February 1920): 166.

### The Final Years

Following the War, Gigout's life seemed to come full circle. He made his final two extended tours in 1918, when he played in Lyons, Avignon, Marseille, Cannes, and Monte Carlo in March.<sup>46</sup> He then travelled to Switzerland in late June-early July to give concerts at the church of Saint-Nicolas in Fribourg and the French church in Berne, where his presence was appreciated for more than musical reasons:

M. Eugène Gigout, the celebrated organist, was invited to give many organ recitals this summer. These were splendid concerts which vigorously counterbalanced the propaganda that has been spread in Switzerland by German organists.<sup>47</sup>

At seventy-five, Gigout made a return appearance in the Salle des Fêtes at the Trocadéro on 19 January 1919. He had been thirty-four when he first performed there; now, forty-one years later, he played his Grand chœur dialogué in a concert that included Fauré's Requiem.<sup>48</sup>

One of the more significant events during this period occurred in May 1921, when he returned to the Cathedral in Nancy for the dedication of the restored organ. Following damage inflicted during World War I, Mutin restored the Cavaillé-Coll instrument for which Gigout had super-

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<sup>46</sup>Le courrier musical 20 (15 April 1918): 191.

<sup>47</sup>Le courrier musical 20 (September-October 1918): 294.

<sup>48</sup>Le courrier musical 21 (1 February 1919): 40.

vised an earlier restoration in 1881.<sup>49</sup> Gigout had remained Nancy's most illustrious musical product; it was thus only fitting that he return at age seventy-seven to take part in the ceremonies for the rededication.

In 1922 Gigout played concerts commemorating the centennial of the birth of César Franck. On 15 June he performed Franck's Prélude, fugue, et variation and Pièce héroïque at Saint-Augustin. On 9 December he participated with the choir school from Sainte-Clotilde in presenting selections from the religious choral works of Franck. On this program he performed the Cantabile, the Andantino, and the Choral in A Minor.<sup>50</sup>

In 1923 two celebrations of the sixtieth anniversary of Gigout's career took place,<sup>51</sup> the first event at the Conservatory in March:

The event that was held on Wednesday, 21 March, in the Salle d'Orgue at the Conservatoire National de Musique was joyful. The sixtieth anniversary of the career of organist Eugène Gigout took place there.

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<sup>49</sup>Le ménestrel 83 (20 May 1921): 220.

<sup>50</sup>Le ménestrel 84 (8 December 1922): 504; Dufourcq, Gigout, 14.

<sup>51</sup>In 1863 Gigout became titular of Saint-Augustin at nineteen years of age. This marked the beginnings of his professional career. Gigout holds the second-place record for the number of years a French organist has remained in the same church position. In the year of his death, he had served Saint-Augustin for sixty-two years. This record has been surpassed only by Widor, who remained at Saint-Sulpice for sixty-four years (1870-1934). Widor lived twelve years longer than Gigout, but only surpassed Gigout's record by two.

These sixty years passed by in the same parish, at Saint-Augustin, evidently establishing a record; I believe that it would be necessary to think back to the great Sebastian Bach in order to find another example of the same patriarchal heritage.<sup>52</sup>

Assisting in this ceremony were Paul Léon, director of the Société des Beaux-Arts; Henri Rabaud, director of the Conservatory; André Messenger, composer, former student, and friend of Gigout; and Fauré. Following the opening remarks by Rabaud, Messenger recounted memories of the Niedermeyer School, mentioning the "unrelenting little tip of the blue pencil that seemed to take a wicked pleasure in correcting the errors in the counterpoint exercises of Gigout's students,"<sup>53</sup> adding that even though Gigout was strict and unbending at times, students left the school well prepared.

The most important tribute to Gigout's career during this celebration came from his closest friend Fauré, who presented him his Hommage à Eugène Gigout. This testimonial summarized Gigout's musical accomplishments, gave an assessment of his personality, and recalled some anecdotes about Gigout's contacts with famous people. The Librairie Floury subsequently printed this testimonial together with a list of Gigout's published works and the names of over four hundred subscribers, which included

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<sup>52</sup>Le ménestrel 85 (30 March 1923): 150.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

France's most well known musicians and supporters of the arts; the names of Widor and Vierne are noticeably absent. Fauré praised his friend's most salient qualities when he wrote: "A refined genius, sensitive, a good, simple-hearted man, of the highest and purest moral fiber, Gigout brings together the most noble and exquisite qualities in himself. He is a true Frenchman."<sup>54</sup> A profound sense of admiration is evident from this sixty-seven-year friendship.<sup>55</sup>

Following Fauré's speech at the Conservatory ceremony, André Marchal played the Introduction et thème fugué, the Grand chœur dialogué, and several Pièces brèves dans la tonalité grégorienne. The ceremony was consecrated by the placing of a plaque in the Salle d'Orgue which read:

This plaque is a lasting testimony of the admiration and the recognition offered to Eugène Gigout by his friends and students in the Salle d'Orgue at the Conservatoire National de Musique in Paris on 21 March

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<sup>54</sup>Fauré, Hommage, 30.

<sup>55</sup>Following the death of Saint-Saëns in 1921, Huré tells us that Gigout never spoke of his intense sadness. When Fauré died in 1924, the hurt was too great to keep hidden. Huré, "Gigout," 21: "He made the funeral arrangements, having to suffer humiliation in explaining to M. François Albert that Fauré was a glorious Frenchman; being thrown to the ground by grief and excitement, he then secluded himself, sick at this time, no longer able to hide his pain. He wanted to play at the funeral. The doctors stopped him from leaving his room. He then uttered the words which expressed an infinite sadness: 'It is better this way, I couldn't go on.'"

1923 for the festival commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of his artistic career.<sup>56</sup>

This tribute was only a fitting response to the career of one who had devoted his life totally to an art that had touched countless numbers of students, peers, and listeners:

The mere presence of the most eminent professors from the Conservatory and the numerous organists and choir directors from Paris who assisted in this tribute on 21 March testifies beyond doubt to the fervent admiration that was aroused in intellectual circles as well as in the musical world by the work, the talent, and the character of the superb artist that was honored.<sup>57</sup>

According to Eugène de Goyon, only one component was missing from the celebration:

Ah! this was truly a beautiful and touching ceremony!

Nevertheless, I had one disappointment. I waited--and perhaps I was not alone--to see the director of the Beaux-Arts take from his pocket a cross of Officer of the Legion of Honor and during thunderous applause, pin it on the lapel of the one who had come to celebrate his golden anniversary.<sup>58</sup>

The second event of this anniversary year was a ceremony on 5 November 1923 at Saint-Augustin:

The red carpet covered the front steps up to the iron gate [and] the bells rang with all their might to proclaim the joy. On the inside, the main altar glistened and the nave and the side aisles were full of an attentive and anxious crowd, delighted by the

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<sup>56</sup>Fauré, Hommage, 7.

<sup>57</sup>Charles Collin, "La soixantenaire d'organiste du maître Eugène Gigout," La revue des maîtrises, no. 40 (April 1923): 26.

<sup>58</sup>Le ménestrel 85 (30 March 1923): 150.

outstanding liturgy that they had come to take part in; the sounds of the stringed instruments and harp were heard in the shadows of the cupola as they tuned. It was, in a word, everything that preceded an opulent marriage ceremony.<sup>59</sup>

It was truly the anniversary of the sixty-year marriage of the church of Saint-Augustin and Gigout. Presiding over the ceremony were Cardinal Dubois, Bishop of Paris, and Mgr Jouin, rector of the parish. Eloquent speeches eulogized Gigout the organist and the master interpreter of liturgical art. During the ceremony choral and instrumental music by Franck, Saint-Saëns, Fauré, Niedermeyer, and Boëllmann was performed.<sup>60</sup> Three former students of Gigout played an active role in the ceremony: the organ was played by André Marchal, and the choir, accompanied by Paul Verdeau, was under the direction of Armand Vivet.

The reviewer for Le ménestrel wrote:

"Student of M. Gigout"--Is not this phrase that untiringly reappears most touching? There are great numbers of "students of Gigout," so numerous that they are profusely distributed in the parishes of Paris, its environs, and unto the farthest provinces.<sup>61</sup>

Preceding the ceremony at Saint-Augustin, a testimonial dinner was given in Gigout's honor at the home of Monsignor Jouin. During this time, Cardinal Dubois appointed Gigout a Commandeur de l'ordre pontifical de

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<sup>59</sup>Le ménestrel 85 (16 November 1923): 481.

<sup>60</sup>La revue des maîtrises, no. 47 (November 1923): 84.

<sup>61</sup>Le ménestrel 85 (16 November 1923): 481.



Saint-Grégoire and proclaimed that "it is good to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary, it is even better to celebrate the sixtieth, but now it is necessary to get to the seventieth anniversary."<sup>62</sup> Gigout did not live to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of his career; however, the last two years of his life were still active and filled with his teaching responsibilities at the Conservatory and his duties at Saint-Augustin, though his performing schedule tended to slacken.

The penultimate event in the cycle of celebrations at the end of Gigout's life occurred on his eightieth birthday, when he returned to Nancy on 23 March 1924 to dedicate the Cavaillé-Coll-Mutin organ of forty stops in the Salle Poirel of the Conservatory in Nancy.<sup>63</sup> Le ménestrel compared his reception there with the festivals given in his honor the preceding year in Paris.<sup>64</sup> A reviewer wrote about the performance that

the old master Gigout, always looking youthful and energetic, appeared to a loud and continued ovation. He first played the Prelude and Fugue in Eb Major by J. S. Bach . . . is there any need to write that his interpretation was outstanding? Registration is hardly ever marked in the works of the old masters; it is the organist's responsibility to choose the different registers, combining them, following the character and the coloration of the specific work.

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 482.

<sup>63</sup>Dufourcq, Gigout, 15, incorrectly lists the location of the concert as the Cathedral in Nancy.

<sup>64</sup>Le ménestrel 86 (4 April 1924): 159.

Too often, organists misuse the reed stops with sonorities too vociferous that give the fugues of Bach a brittle, almost vulgar color. M. Gigout blended these sounds with a skillfulness and a remarkable restraint, reserving the reed stops for the climax that was successfully reached through a gradual increase in sound. . . . With the orchestra of M. Bachelet, he then played the Concerto in D Minor by Handel with such polished elegance that his virtuosity completely thrilled the audience.<sup>65</sup>

That evening Gigout assisted in the presentation of selections from Gounod's Faust and other works from the operatic repertoire. At eighty years of age, he commented that "this is the first time that I have invaded the stage of the theater."<sup>66</sup> After this Gigout played several concerts, but the program in Nancy must have held special significance since it represented his strong ties to the city of his earliest musical inspirations.

The last major concert that he performed outside of Paris occurred at the church of Saint-Godard in Rouen on 23 November 1924. On this program of works by Bach, Boëly, Boëllmann, Saint-Saëns, and Gigout, was one of his few performances of a chorale prelude by Bach ("O Mensch, bewein' dein' Sünde gross") in a concert. The Journal de Rouen reported:

It is appropriate first to give homage to the master Eugène Gigout, whose lively and brilliant playing astonished the audience. Is there any sight

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<sup>65</sup>"Eugène Gigout à Nancy," La musique d'église, no. 28 (April 1924): 31.

<sup>66</sup>Jean Huré, "Inauguration d'un grand orgue à Nancy," L'orgue et les organistes, no. 1 (April 1924): 32.

more beautiful than to see an eighty-year-old organist having maintained in his technique, as in his improvisations, the fresh inspiration and agile performance of a young instrumentalist?<sup>67</sup>

Despite Gigout's age, critics and audience alike were astounded by his improvisational skills:

In hearing M. Gigout improvise in a manner so brilliant and at the same time spiritual, as in the "Versets on the Magnificat," the admiration that his elders and his contemporaries like Saint-Saëns and Fauré openly professed about him is understandable.<sup>68</sup>

In Fall 1925 Cavaillé-Coll's successor Charles Mutin completed a minor restoration of the organ at Saint-Augustin. Gigout prepared works by Clérambault, Lebègue, Bach, Franck, Niedermeyer, Gigout, Saint-Saëns, and Boëllmann for the November concert of rededication.<sup>69</sup> However, following a vacation trip to the mountains, he took a chill and caught cold. Huré says that

according to his habit, he did not take care of himself, despite the advice of his friends. A little bronchitis and congestion followed. Miraculously, after having worried the doctors for awhile, he resumed teaching. Nevertheless, he stayed mostly in his apartment . . . not leaving often.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>"Eugène Gigout à Rouen," Journal de Rouen (25 November 1924), quoted in L'orgue et les organistes, no. 10 (15 January 1925): 1.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., 2.

<sup>69</sup>Dufourcq, Gigout, 15.

<sup>70</sup>Huré, "Gigout," 2.

In October, Gigout stopped playing at masses in Saint-Augustin and was unable to participate in the rededication ceremonies in November.<sup>71</sup>

On the evening of 8 December he began to feel that he was choking and became unconscious. When the doctor arrived, his temperature had dropped and no pulse could be found, but, to the amazement of the doctor, he regained consciousness. He apologized for inconveniencing the doctor and told those at his side to go to bed for the evening. Huré comments that "this was the hour that he did his finger exercises so that he would not lose his excellent technique. Out of habit he performed these exercises on the edge of his sheets."<sup>72</sup> In these last peaceful hours he smiled many times, made some witty remarks, and even praised the herbal tea that had been brought to him:

Without pain, without twitching, without being delirious, he died at three o'clock in the morning. The attentions lavished upon him until his last breath could do nothing to change the "need to sleep" that was expressed by the beautiful and peaceful voice of the dear old man.<sup>73</sup>

Huré adds that it looked as if Gigout was only fifty years old and asleep.

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<sup>71</sup>Paul Locard, "Eugène Gigout," Le courrier musical 28 (1 January 1926): 25.

<sup>72</sup>Huré, "Gigout," 3.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

News of Gigout's death saddened friends and students alike. Various tributes soon appeared in the leading music journals of the day:

The dignity of this man's character makes even more magnificent the examples that this prolific life leaves behind. Like Guilmant, Gigout accomplished with joy that for which he had been created! In the beautiful pléiade of contemporary French organists, he will always hold an eminent place as a performer, composer, and educator.<sup>74</sup>

This tribute, like others, points up the fact that Gigout was acknowledged not only as a composer, but as an educator and performer. Vivet wrote, "Never, indeed, had the title of maître more justly emphasized such an exceptional talent, for Eugène Gigout played with a refinement that understood all branches of his art."<sup>75</sup> Paul Locard stressed that Gigout's reputation was not limited to his musical talents:

Through the most benevolent and open-minded attitudes toward the art that was brought to life by his dedication to performing daily tasks, Gigout remained a wonderful model in everything that he attempted. This concurrence of an exceptional talent and a noble character will seldom be encountered.<sup>76</sup>

Norbert Dufourcq wrote:

Gigout spoke little and always after much reflection. The foundation of his character was kindness and modesty: benevolent and indulgent, such was this

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<sup>74</sup>La revue des maîtrises, no. 70 (December 1925): 87.

<sup>75</sup>Vivet, "Gigout," 24.

<sup>76</sup>Locard, "Eugène Gigout," 25.

man who never attempted to judge others nor himself.<sup>77</sup>

Gigout's funeral and entombment were on Saturday, 12 December. Cardinal Dubois and Monsignor Jouin presided over the mass at Saint-Augustin. Once again, the music performed had significant ties to important people in Gigout's life: Elégie by Boëllmann, Ego sum by Gounod, Kyrie by Niedermeyer, Andante by Saint-Saëns, Domine non secundum by Franck, and In paradisum (from the Requiem) by Fauré. Most fittingly, Gigout's Marche funèbre was played as the body was taken from the church for burial in the cemetery in Montmartre.<sup>78</sup>

During the entombment, eulogies were pronounced by Rabaud, Director of the Conservatory; Isidore Massuelle, president of the Association des Anciens Elèves de l'Ecole Niedermeyer; and Henri Heurtel, Director of the Niedermeyer School. Rabaud asked, "Who can forget the truly angelic serenity of this simple face and gentle expression like a sanctuary lamp?"<sup>79</sup> The most befitting testi-

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<sup>77</sup>Norbert Dufourcq, "Eugène Gigout," La petite maîtrise 16 (February 1926): 2.

<sup>78</sup>Vivet, "Gigout," 29.

<sup>79</sup>Huré, "Gigout," 27.

monial was given by Isidore Massuelle, who summarized Gigout's life in two sentences:

Gigout never changed. He remained astonishingly young, since, if selfishness makes a man older before his time, we must believe through his example that surrender and sacrifice of oneself to an ideal loftiness renews the youthfulness of the heart and preserves the suppleness of the spirit.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup>Ibid., 30.

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## APPENDIX A

### Organ at Saint-Augustin, Paris Peschard-Barker, 1868

Grand Orgue	
54 notes	
Jeux de Fond	
Montre	16
Montre	8
Flûte	8
Flûte harmonique	8
Gambe	8
Prestant	4
Jeux de Combinaison	
Doublette	2
Plein jeu	V
Cornet	V
Bombarde	16
Trompette	8
Clarion	4

Positif	
54 notes	
Jeux de Fond	
Bourdon	16
Bourdon	8
Salicional	8
Flûte harmonique	8
Salicional	4
Cromorne	8
Jeux de Combinaison	
Trompette	8
Clarion	4

Récit Expressif	
54 notes	
Jeux de Fond	
Kéraulophone	16
Voix céleste	8
Flûte harmonique	8
Flûte harmonique	4
Cor anglais	16
Euphone	8
Hautbois	8
Voix humaine	8
Jeux de Combinaison	
Bombarde	16
Trompette	8
Clarion	4

Pédale	
27 notes	
Jeux de Fond	
Flûte	16
Flûte	8
Flûte	4
Contrebasse	16
Violoncelle	8
Contre-Basson	16
Basson	8
Jeux de Combinaison	
Ophicléide	16
Bombarde	16
Trompette	8
Clarion	4

### Pédales de Combinaison

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tirasse Positif</li> <li>2. Tirasse Grand Orgue</li> <li>3. Tirasse Récit</li> <li>4. Copula Positif sur G.O.</li> <li>5. Copula Récit sur G.O.</li> <li>6. Copula Récit sur Positif</li> <li>7. Octaves Aiguës du Récit</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Copula Grand Orgue</li> <li>9. Anches Positif</li> <li>10. Anches Grand Orgue</li> <li>11. Anches Récit</li> <li>12. Anches Pédale</li> <li>13. Trémolo</li> <li>14. Expression du Récit</li> </ol> |
|---|---|

Organ at Saint-Augustin, Paris  
Cavaillé-Coll rebuilding, 1899  
\*Additions by Mutin, 1925

Grand Orgue 56 notes		Récit Expressif 56 notes	
Montre	16	*Quintaton	16
Bourdon	16	Cor de nuit	8
Montre	8	Diapason	8
Bourdon	8	Gambe	8
Flûte harmonique	8	Voix céleste	8
Salicional	8	Flûte	4
Gambe	8	Octavin	2
Prestant	4	Plein jeu	V
Bourdon	4	Hautbois	8
Quinte	2 2/3	Clarinette	8
Doublette	2	Voix humaine	8
Plein jeu	V	Tuba magna	8
Cornet	V	Trompette harmonique	8
Bombarde	16	Clarion harmonique	4
Trompette	8		
Clarion	4		
Positif 56 notes		Pédale 30 notes	
Bourdon	16	Sous-basse	32
Bourdon	8	Sous-basse	16
Flûte harmonique	8	Flûte	16
Salicional	8	Contrebasse	16
Flûte douce	4	Basse	8
Dulciane	4	Flûte	8
Nasard	2 2/3*	Violoncelle	8
Carillon		Flûte	4
Cromorne	8	Basson	16
Trompette	8	Basson	8
Clarion	4	Bombarde	16
		Trompette	8
		Clarion	4

Pédales de Combinaison

- |                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Tirasse Grand Orgue      | 8. Octaves graves du Récit |
| 2. Tirasse Positif          | 9. Octaves aiguës du Récit |
| 3. Tirasse Récit            | 10. Anches Pédale          |
| 4. Grand Orgue sur machine  | 11. Anches Grand Orgue     |
| 5. Copula Positif sur G.O.  | 12. Anches Positif         |
| 6. Copula Récit sur G.O.    | 13. Anches Récit           |
| 7. Copula Récit sur Positif | 14. Tremblant du Récit     |
|                             | 15. Expression du Récit    |

## APPENDIX B

### Gigout's Prizes and Awards from the Niedermeyer School

- 1858      Second prize, piano  
            Second honorable mention, plainchant  
            Honorable mention, harmony (2nd division)  
            First prize, organ (2nd division)
- 1859      Prix unique, harmony (2nd division)  
            First prize, organ  
            Prix unique, plainchant
- 1860      First prize, organ (reawarding of the prize)  
            First prize, plainchant (reawarding of the prize)  
            Second prize, piano  
            Honorable mention, composition
- 1861      First prize, composition  
            First prize, organ (reawarding of the prize)  
            First prize, plainchant (reawarding of the prize)  
            First prize, piano
- 1862      First prize, solfege  
            First prize, piano (reawarding of the prize)  
            Special prize, plainchant  
            First prize, composition  
            Diploma, maître de chapelle
- 1863      Diploma, organ

# APPENDIX C

## Catalogue of Works of Gigout<sup>1</sup>

Title	Editor
Staccato-Etude (Piano)	J. Hamelle (1868)
Rêverie (Piano)	J. Hamelle (1868)
Bagatelle (Piano)	J. Hamelle (1868)
Suite de pièces (Organ)	Costallat (1872)
Prélude et fugue (en si mineur)	
Andante et allegretto con moto	
Fantaisie	
Andantino	
Largo	
Andante sostenuto	
Chants du Graduel et du Vespéral romains harmonisés à 4 voix à l'usage des maîtrises	Heugel (1875)
Vol. 1: Office du matin	
Vol. 2: Ordinaire de la messe	
Vol. 3: Office du soir	
Ave verum (Chorus à 4)	J. Hamelle (1877)
Tantum ergo (Chorus à 4)	J. Hamelle (1877)
Pièce symphonique (Piano 4 hands)	J. Hamelle (1879)
Caprice-Ballet (Piano 4 hands)	J. Hamelle (1879)
Fantaisie scolastique (Piano 4 hands)	J. Hamelle (1879)

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<sup>1</sup>Fauré, Hommage, 33-38.

- Méditation (Violin and Orchestra) J. Hamelle (1879)
- Six Pièces (Organ) Durand et fils (1881)
- Introduction et Thème fugué
  - Communion
  - Marche religieuse
  - Marche funèbre
  - Andante symphonique
  - Grand choeur dialogué
- Sérénade (Voice and Piano) J. Hamelle (1882)
- Rondeau (Voice and Piano) J. Hamelle (1882)
- Comment disaient-ils? (Voice and Piano) J. Hamelle (1882)
- Le prêtre (Voice and Piano) L. Grus (1882)
- Transcriptions (Organ) Durand et fils (1883)
- Tollite hostias (final chorus from Saint-Saëns's Christmas Oratorio)
  - Air de la Pentecôte (Bach)
- Etude (Piano) L. Grus (1886)
- Impromptu (Piano) L. Grus (1886)
- Capriccio (Piano) L. Grus (1886)
- Au Guery! (Piano) L. Grus (1886)
- Suite de trois morceaux (Organ) Rosenberg (1888)
- Marche rustique
  - Lied
  - Marche de fête
- Cent pièces brèves (Organ or Harmonium) Heugel (1889)
- Dans la tonalité du plain-chant

Pièces diverses (Organ) Durand et fils (1891)

Prélude et fugue (en mi)  
Rapsodie sur des airs catalans  
Rapsodie sur des airs canadiens

Dix pièces en recueil (Organ) Leduc (1892)

Prélude-choral et allegro  
Minuetto  
Absoute  
Toccata  
Andante religioso en forme de canon  
Rapsodie sur des noëls  
Offertoire ou Communion (trio de claviers)  
Scherzo  
Antienne dans le mode phrygien ecclésiastique  
Sortie sur l'antienne "Adoremus in aeternum"

Hymne à la France (Piano 4 hands) Published by the composer  
(1892)

The same (Piano 2 hands)  
The same (arranged by A. Josset for Military Band)

Poèmes mystiques (Organ) Durand et fils (1893)

Prière en forme de prélude  
Cortège rustique  
Pèlerinage

Marche funèbre (Piano or Harmonium) Durand et fils (1893)

Andante symphonique (Piano or Harmonium) Durand et fils  
(1893)

Méditation sur les jeux de fonds (Organ) J. Laudy, London  
(1895)

Interludium (Organ) Otto Junne, Leipzig  
(1895)

Contemplation (Piano and Harmonium) Heugel (1895)

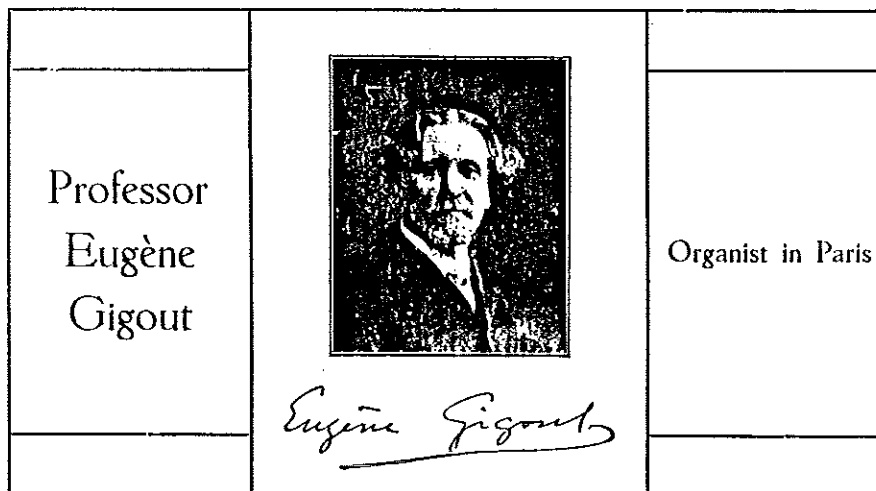
Berceuse (Piano and Harmonium) Heugel (1895)

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Tempo di marcia (from Cent pièces brèves)<br>(Piano and Harmonium)                      | Heugel (1895)                       |
| Album grégorien (Organ or Harmonium)  | Leduc (1895)                        |
| Vol. 1: 115 pieces in modes I-IV  |                                     |
| Vol. 2: 115 pieces in modes V-VIII  |                                     |
| Trois pièces (Organ)  | Durand et fils (1896)               |
| Prélude et fugue (en si bémol)  |                                     |
| Andante varié   |                                     |
| Allegro con brio  |                                     |
| Deux pièces (Organ)   | Durand et fils (1898)               |
| En forme de légende   |                                     |
| Marche des Rogations  |                                     |
| Romanza pour orgue (Liszt) (Harmonium)  | Arthur P. Schmidt,<br>Boston (1898) |
| Prière à Notre-Dame (Harmonium)<br>extracted from L. Boëllmann's<br>Suite gothique      | Durand et fils (1898)               |
| Transcription (Organ)<br>Fantaisie dialoguée for organ and<br>orchestra by L. Boëllmann | Durand et fils (1899)               |
| Marche des Rogations (Harmonium)  | Durand et fils (1899)               |
| Andantino (Harmonium)   | Durand et fils (1899)               |
| Cantabile (Harmonium)   | Durand et fils (1899)               |
| Marche religieuse et Communion<br>(Harmonium)   | Durand et fils (1899)               |
| Ave verum (Voice and Organ)   | Durand et fils (1899)               |
| Tota pulchra es (Voice and Organ)   | Durand et fils (1899)               |



Quatre pièces grégoriennes (Organ)	Librairie de l'Art catholique (1918)
Ecole d'orgue de J.-S. Bach (Organ)	Librairie de l'Art catholique (1922)
Cent pièces nouvelles (Organ or Harmonium)	Chester, London (1922)
Dix pièces (Organ or Harmonium)	Seyffardt, Amsterdam (1923)
Deux pièces (Organ or Harmonium)	Seyffardt, Amsterdam (1923)

# APPENDIX D



No.		§
1079.	TOCCATA, E major . . . . . J. S. Bach	10.—
1080.	PRAELUDIUM, E flat major . . . . . J. S. Bach	11.50
1081.	MARCHE RÉLIGIEUSE, Op. 16 . L. Boëllmann	9.—
1082.	ANDANTE CON MOTO, Op. 45, No. 7 A. F. Boëly	5.—
1083.	ANDANTINO, G minor . . . . . C. Franck	9.—
1084.	TOCCATA . . . . . E. Gigout	5.—
1085.	COMMUNION . . . . . E. Gigout	6.—
1086.	GRAND CHOEUR DIALOGUÉ . E. Gigout	6.75
1087.	MINUETTO . . . . . E. Gigout	6.50
1088.	SONATA, Op. 65, No. 6, Part I and II F. Mendelssohn	11.50
1089.	SONATA, Op. 65, No. 6, Part III and IV F. Mendelssohn	7.50
1090.	PRELUDE, Op. 37, No. 2 . . . F. Mendelssohn	6.25
1091.	ETUDE, Op. 56, No. 5 . . . . R. Schumann	4.—

List of organ rolls that Gigout recorded on the Welte-Philharmonie-Orgel in 1912/13. M. Welte & Sons, firm--originators and manufacturers, Supplement to the Catalogue of Music-Rolls for Philharmonic-Organs III & IV (Freiburg-im-Breisgau and New York: M. Welte & Sons, 1914), 28.