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Henriette Renié: A pioneer in the world of the harp

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HENRIETTE RENIÉ:
A PIONEER IN THE WORLD OF THE HARP

by

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ABSTRACT

Henriette Renié: A Pioneer in the World of the Harp

by

Constance Slaughter

Henriette Renié was a creative and bold woman in the French musical world at the turn of the twentieth century. She began her career as a child prodigy on the harp, and the success she achieved from this enabled her to further her scope of interests into the fields of teaching and composing. As a concert harpist she elevated the status of the harp from an instrument for dilettantes to an important solo concert instrument. Quickly frustrated with the antiquated and limited repertoire that existed, she turned to composition. Her original works for harp are comprised of virtuosic compositions for her own performances and simpler pieces for beginning harpists. Renié also expanded the harp's repertoire by transcribing works for solo harp and harp ensemble. This thesis explores Renié as a performer, teacher, and composer, and analyzes two of her important compositions, Légende and Concerto in C Minor.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are several people I would like to thank who made this research possible. It was through the help of Mrs. Patricia John Keightley that I was able to gain access to articles from back issues of harp journals and the original French edition of Renié’s Méthode Complète de Harpe.

Françoise des Varennes of Paris (Renié’s godchild) was kind enough to grant me permission to photocopy original letters and papers of Renié’s preserved in the Library of Congress.

I am grateful to the Music Division of the Library of Congress for their cooperation in obtaining Renié’s letters from their American Harp Society Repository.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1.........................................................1
   Introduction

CHAPTER 2.......................................................9
   The Performer

CHAPTER 3.....................................................22
   The Teacher

CHAPTER 4.....................................................34
   The Composer

CHAPTER 5.....................................................44
   Compositions

CHAPTER 6.....................................................57
   Conclusion

BIBLIOGRAPHY.................................................62

APPENDIX I ..................................................64
   Le Ménestrel article

APPENDIX II ..................................................65
   "Les Elfes" poem

APPENDIX III ...............................................69
   Recital critique

APPENDIX IV ...............................................70
   List of Compositions
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Within the past several years, the absence of women in the field of music, especially composition, has become an important issue to music historians. Women’s virtual exclusion from history books would appear to make their achievements seem minor, but to the contrary, some were pioneers in their fields. This is what prompted me to choose Henriette Renié as the topic of this paper. If one were to look for her in a book about the harp, in the *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, or in an encyclopedia of women composers, little information, if any, would be found. Yet Renié was an important musical figure in France at the turn of the century.

There have been similar cases where a woman musician was placed in the spotlight during her lifetime and then ignored after her death—Cécile Chaminade (1857-1944) and Amy Fay (1844-1928) are two examples that readily come to mind. Yet even though opportunities were opening up for women as professional musicians, their achievements were still overshadowed by men. To complicate Renié’s situation even further, the instrument she played had not been considered important enough to warrant a place on the concert stage; yet, she overcame these challenges and made her mark in music.

Prior to 1880, female students at a conservatory were only allowed to study performance, but by the end of the nineteenth century women could enroll in classes in theory, harmony, and composition. No longer did a woman have to be a nun or member of an aristocratic family to obtain a
well-rounded musical education. Now, with this new freedom, more women than ever before were active as professional musicians.¹

Renié was fortunate to have lived at this time. She was born to a musical and artistic family. Her father, as a young man, embarked upon a career as a painter. This disgraced his family to such a degree that they disinherited him and placed him under legal guardianship. In order to make a living, he turned to acting and became quite successful. After Gioacchino Rossini saw one of his performances, he encouraged the young man to pursue singing, which eventually led to a position with the Paris Opera. However, this career was short-lived. M. Renié was forced to abandon his stage career at the insistence of his fiancée's family. He would only be able to marry Gabrielle Mouchet, his sixteen-year old cousin, if he abandoned the theater and returned to painting. Her parents would not consent for their daughter to marry anyone of the stage. He resumed his painting and sculpting and became a successful artist.²

Henriette Renié was the youngest of five children and the only girl for Jean-Emile and Gabrielle, born September 18, 1875, in Paris. As a child, she took piano lessons and played duets with her grandmother, but the piano promptly lost favor with her once she began harp lessons. Although her entire family was musical, only Henriette pursued music as a lifelong career. Her older brother, Jean Renié, was an accomplished


pianist and considered a career as a composer, but eventually became an officer in the Army, as did most of her brothers.

In 1884, at the age of nine, Renié entered the Paris Conservatoire after only one year of harp lessons. Quickly recognized as a prodigy, she rapidly excelled at her new instrument, surpassing students twice her age. Her first prize in the Conservatoire competition at age eleven began what would be a long and successful career as a virtuoso harpist, a career that would win her recognition as one of the best harpists of her time.

A natural companion to a performance career is a teaching career, which Renié eagerly began as early as age nine. When she was eleven, she was rehearsal assistant to her harp teacher, Alphonse Hasselmans, at the Conservatoire and soon after had her own private students. Teaching spanned her entire life and gave her great pleasure. As she stated, "I owe to my teaching career my closest friendships, my biggest joys, and many precious discoveries for my virtuosity. Without knowing it, I had great influence on almost all of my pupils."3

Henriette Renié's career as a composer began with harmony and composition classes at the Conservatoire, during which time she received several prizes for composition, fugue, and harmony while a student of Theodor Dubois. Although composition would occupy less of her time than either performing or teaching, she contributed markedly to the limited

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repertoire of the harp through her original compositions, as well as through her numerous transcriptions.

In addition to her devotion to music, Renié was also dedicated to helping others less fortunate. Petite caisses des artistes (Little Fund for Artists), and Association of Former Pupils of the Conservatory are two of the charitable organizations she established to aid other musicians in financial straits. Little Fund for Artists was established during World War I as a strictly private charity to provide immediate and anonymous financial assistance for artists. Association of Former Pupils of the Conservatory was founded along with Alfred Cortot for the purpose of mutual aid.

Renié also instituted harp competitions to help young musicians embark on careers as professional harpists. In 1912, she founded Prix Renié, the first international harp competition, and contributed substantial sums of her own money for the prize.

All of this financial aid came from a woman who barely made ends meet for herself and the others she supported. After her father’s death, Renié assumed the support of her mother and her brother, François, who suffered from extreme deafness and poor vision.

Her complete dedication to her work and to everyone associated with it was not without sacrifice, however. Renié, a loner, decided at a relatively young age never to marry. Ever since childhood loneliness was her way of life. Even though she was involved in a variety of activities and enjoyed a successful career, she did not have many friends with whom to share her life. Having received her scholastic education from her mother at home, Renié spent very little time with other children. Occasional
acquaintances were made with other students at the Conservatoire, but often they were twice her age.

As a teen-ager, she did have the opportunity to marry, but she turned it down, reasoning, "He is an officer. I am an artist. He will spend his life moving from garrison to garrison. I cannot share his life unless I give up my career, my art." Other women musicians of her same era also chose a career instead of marriage and a family. Amy Fay, for example, never married, albeit she had several suitors throughout her life. Cécile Chaminade expressed her views on marriage as follows:

Marriage must adapt itself to one's career. With a man, it is all arranged and expected. If the woman is the artist it upsets the standards and conventions. It ruins the woman's art... A woman should choose one or the other.5

Throughout her career Renié was the recipient of several honors. She was awarded the gold medal of the "Salon of French Musicians" in 1935, and a Prix du disque for one of her harp recordings. The most prestigious of all awards was the Legion of Honor in 1954.

Her success in music and her contribution to the world of the harp have been commented on by several great musical figures. Adolphe Boschot, a member of the Institut de France, wrote, "This renaissance, or rather, this resurrection of the harp is largely due to Henriette Renié, to her innovative Concerto, to her fruitful teaching, and many successes as a virtuoso." He concluded with this definition of her: "She is an artist who, throughout her life, devoted herself entirely to beauty and

4Des Varennes, 46.
goodness." After her death Bernard Gavoty wrote in Le Figaro (March 28, 1956): "Henriette Renié was a striking figure in French music. The harp owes to her what the guitar owes to Segovia. The public, completely won over, has given the harp its stamp of approval."

With no surviving family it is difficult to piece together Henriette Renié's life and multi-faceted career with the paucity of information that exists. She was always careful to maintain a spirit of detachment in everything she did. After her death, it was difficult to locate any of her personal belongings. It was almost as if she just passed through life. An excerpt from her meditations confirms this: "Without a doubt, God would want me to pass through life, barely putting my feet down." If it were not for the memoirs and recollections of her god-child, Françoise des Varennes, her niece Solange Renié, and former students, we would know very little about this woman who changed the course of the harp and its music, and pointed several generations of harpists in a new and exciting direction.

The sources available for the research of this paper were in the form of articles, one book, and letters currently held in the American Harp Society Repository at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Portions of the paper regarding the history of the harp were based on information from The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians; Roslyn Rensch's The

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7Ibid.
Harp, one of the most comprehensive books on harp history, harpists, and harp music currently in print; and a booklet by harpist John Thomas entitled, History of the Harp.

Several articles on Henriette Renié were published in harp journals. The American Harp Journal, formerly titled Harp News, a biannual publication of the American Harp Society, published several articles on Renié in 1956 and 1975, respectively, the year of her death and the one hundredth anniversary of her birth. A few of the more lengthy articles were informative, but for the most part these were nothing more than fond reminiscences by her admirers with little regard for dates and details.

Henriette Renié: Living Harp (1990) was published by Renié’s godchild, Françoise des Varennes, a well-known French poet. It is a fond recollection of her godmother covering the time from the marriage of Renié’s parents to her death. Although this is the most complete biography, it is by no means the most accurate. Several discrepancies were found between facts in des Varennes’ book and her articles in the harp journals.

The American Harp Society Repository holds much of Renié’s correspondence, a draft of an autobiography, a critique of a student’s recital program, and a series of interviews from 1955. All correspondence, except one letter to former student Harpo Marx, is between Renié and one of her prize pupils, concert harpist Mildred Dilling. The draft of an autobiography was translated and appeared as an article in The American Harp Journal. This concerned her career from her first encounter with the harp to the success she achieved as a performer, teacher, and composer. The interviews only reiterate biographical data already published in articles and des Varenne’s book.
Alphonse Leduc of Paris published most of Renié’s compositions. A large number are currently out of print, but most of her transcriptions are still available through harp music companies and Françoise des Varennes. Some scores are stored in the American Harp Society Repository in the Library of Congress.

This paper attempts to trace Renié’s life and career as a performer, teacher, and composer from her student years through retirement. Chapters Two through Four discuss her career in each of these fields. Two of her best known compositions, which are still performed in concerts and competitions today, are analyzed in Chapter Five.

The concluding chapter discusses her many awards and achievements, and the Appendix includes a complete listing of her compositions for harp and her transcriptions for solo harp and harp ensemble.
CHAPTER TWO
THE PERFORMER

"Henriette Renié was an unrivaled Apostle."¹ Her entire life was devoted to the harp in every respect—performing, teaching, and composing. Her success in all three was unequaled by any other woman of the time, but she is perhaps best known as a performer. Her concert career, which began when she was a small child, spanned several decades and earned her world-wide recognition. Her greatest achievement, which has proved invaluable to the harp world, was the establishment of the harp as a significant concert instrument. Previously, it had been considered an instrument for pretty, young amateurs to play, but Renié transformed the harp’s image into that of a prominent concert instrument. Through her concerts, radio broadcasts, and recordings she brought inspiration to many harpists, who in turn inspired others, thus creating an ever-expanding field for harpists. Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979) for one, remembered Renié’s concerts as an important part of her childhood:

Our father, faithful friend of Henriette’s father, would not have missed one of her recitals for the world. We went there guided by the heart and we returned with the spirit filled with the most indisputable admiration.²


Music had always been a part of Henriette Renié's life. By the age of five, she had already been studying piano for several years, practicing two hours a day and playing keyboard duets with her grandmother. She showed promise as a young pianist, but the piano did not hold her interest. All she wanted to do was to play the harp.  

Renié's first encounter with the harp occurred in 1880, at a concert in which her father was singing. Alphonse Hasselmans, then a well-established harpist and teacher at the Paris Conservatoire, also played in the concert. "I don't quite know what filled my childish soul," she explained in a Swiss radio interview many years later, "but I was thunderstruck."  

On the way home, she turned to her father and said with much conviction, "That man is going to be my harp teacher." And she was right.  

It was not until three years later, in 1883, that she began lessons on the harp. Because of her small size, she was not able to reach the pedals of the harp, so her first year of study consisted mainly of exercises. Despite this restricted repertoire, Renié was fascinated with the harp, as she apparently said, "I worked as if it were a party." It was not long before the piano disinterested her, and the harp occupied most of her time.

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5Ibid.

She now practiced only half an hour on the piano and two hours on the harp. "It was all great fun [harp lessons], whereas everything connected with the piano bored me."  

After a year of study, she was still too small for her feet to reach the pedals, yet it was necessary to use the pedals in order to make progress in her studies. To reach the pedals, she had to hop down from her stool, piled high with books, set the pedals in place and hop back up into her seat, all the while continuing to play, not missing a beat. This did not prove to be an adequate solution to her problem, so a system of pedal extensions was devised by either Hasselmans or her father.  

Attached to each pedal was a steel rod of varying lengths, and each rod had a thick, round piece of brass. This enabled Renié to reach all the pedals on the harp without having to hop down from her stool. Now that this problem was solved, there was no holding her back.

In 1884, shortly after her ninth birthday, Renié was admitted to Hasselmans' class at the Paris Conservatoire. Her admittance into the Conservatoire was the beginning of a prolific performance career that would include several prizes for outstanding musical achievement and for her compositions, concerts before royalty, and international recognition. Her first music competition appears to have been the large competition given by

7Ibid.

8There is a discrepancy among sources. Des Varenne's book mentions Renié's father as the inventor. "Recollections of a Harpist" by Renié reports it was Hasselmans or her father.

9Renié, 16.
the Conservatoire at the end of each year. She entered this soon after beginning her studies at the institution. Her goal was to enter the competition playing the same music as the older students, and perhaps receive honorable mention at best. But much to her surprise, she was awarded second prize. Encouraged by this accomplishment, she practiced even harder and soon after, in July of 1887, won first prize. (This was at the same time Fritz Kreisler won his first prize in violin. He was also twelve years old.\textsuperscript{10}) First prize, awarded her by unanimous decision, was a high achievement at that time since there were as yet no international competitions. A review of the competition in \textit{Le Figaro} appeared the next day.

Mademoiselle Renié—for that is the name of this child prodigy—is not [yet] twelve years old and one does not have to look far in order to predict her future, since she is already an artist who understands quite well how to charm and captivate the public.\textsuperscript{11}

Up until this time, Renié’s grandparents (her mother’s parents who were opposed to Jean-Emile’s career as a musician) did not know Henriette had been admitted to the Conservatoire. After she won her second prize, they were informed only so they would be prepared for the many reporters covering the competition winners. Her grandfather was infuriated by the news, but her grandmother was very pleased.\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{10}“Henriette Renié,” \textit{Harp News} (Spring 1951), 6.
\textsuperscript{11}Des Varennes, \textit{Henriette Renié: Living Harp}, 34.
\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., 32.
Following her first-prize win there were no more harp classes for her. It was already time to embark on a career, so Renié began performing extensively. Her concerts included performances for queens, princesses, and an emperor, as well as famous composers. The Queen of Belgium, Marie-Henriette, a former harp student of Hasselmans, requested a concert by Renié. Renié, as a young girl, was very excited about playing for a queen. As she later recalled,

I was electrified at the idea of going to a "Palace." I didn't know what to imagine. But what a disappointment, it looked just like any big house! It was even worse when I saw the Queen. I didn't expect to see her with a crown, but her small lace bonnet like that of a theater usher was a great disillusion. I played five or six pieces; the rest of the time I amused myself with her small bulldogs.13

That same autumn, Renié played for the deposed Emperor of Brazil and Princess Mathilde, Napoleon III's cousin. "I played so much between the age of twelve and thirteen. The most memorable evenings for me were those of the Princesses Mathilde of Diemer and of Pauline Viardot, because I met so many celebrities."14

Many people began to take notice of this young harpist. She was offered numerous contracts, including several from an organization that presented various "phenomena" to the public, but her father refused to let her accept any of them. As he said, "My daughter is not a trained monkey!"15

13 Renié, 17.
14 Ibid.
René was fifteen when she gave the first of her solo recitals in Paris. Her performances to date had been private concerts or a performance of only one or two pieces. By the age of fifteen, she was ready to give recitals open to the public. These concerts were important since they provided the only means for her to establish a reputation as a virtuoso harpist. Musical societies and soirées or private receptions given by individuals helped musicians gain recognition, but not on the level of a virtuoso concert artist, which was René’s goal.

Not only did René have the problem of being a woman trying to establish a career, she also played an instrument that was considered unimportant. In the minds of most musicians, the harp was either an instrument for talented dilettantes of social standing or an orchestral instrument. In previous generations, the harp’s importance had been trivialized. Witness, for example, the following remarks, written in 1876, stating that the harp gives "young ladies an opportunity to display pretty hands, well-rounded arms, and neat feet."

Even in René’s early years, harp lessons were an indulgence of the upper class to make young girls more marriageable. René knew that the lessons she gave these ladies "had only one purpose: to bridge the gap between playing house with dolls and setting up house with a husband."

During the last half of the nineteenth century, the harp’s importance as an orchestral instrument increased. Composers of this time used the

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harp in their works more frequently and for important solos. Liszt, for example, used harp in almost all of his orchestral works. Wagner used the instrument to accompany soloists in Tannhäuser, as did Rossini in William Tell and Verdi in Il Trovatore. Well-written, idiomatic harp writing in pieces such as Richard Strauss' tone poems, Tchaikovsky's ballets, and the orchestral works of Camille Saint-Säens, Maurice Ravel, and Claude Debussy helped establish the harp as a permanent and important part of the standard symphony orchestra.\textsuperscript{18}

The inclusion of the harp as part of the standard orchestra was an important development, but as a consequence made it difficult to establish the harp as a significant solo instrument. This was another bias Renié faced in her struggle to become a successful musician.

A career as a concert musician is taxing; the stress of a concert career aggravated Renié's health problems. She was a small, delicate woman who suffered from fragile health throughout her life. The first of her health problems was a violent stomach disorder that occurred when she was twenty-one. This left her relatively weak, especially when she drove herself to perform too often.\textsuperscript{19} Additional health problems would eventually force her into an early retirement.

On one occasion, she became so ill that she had to cancel a performance of her Concerto in C Minor for harp and orchestra with the Lamoureux Orchestra, directed by Camille Chevillard. This distressed her;

\textsuperscript{18}Rensch, 109.

\textsuperscript{19}Des Varennes, Henriette Renié: Living Harp, 57.
she felt she had lost everything and that the great career she had aspired to had been sacrificed. Fortunately, the concert was rescheduled a few weeks later, on March 24, 1901. This concert was such a success that it solidified her worldwide career. Renié had succeeded in establishing herself (as performer and composer) and the harp. For the first time the harp was accepted as a solo instrument in an orchestral performance.\(^{20}\)

After the Lamoureux concert Renié was solicited by conductors and composers. In 1903, Gabriel Pierné, anxious for a successful premier of his new work, asked Renié to debut his new harp concerto, \textit{Concertstück}, under Jules Colonne. After the success of this work and her own \textit{Concerto in C Minor}, she performed as a soloist quite often over the next few years:

1905 - \textit{Fantaisie} by Theodore Dubois
Concerts du Conservatoire

1906 - \textit{Elegie} and \textit{Dance Caprice} by Renié
Concerts Lamoureux

1909 - \textit{Choral et Variations} by Charles-Marie Widor

1910 - \textit{Danse Sacrée et Danse Profane} by Claude Debussy
Colonne

1913 - \textit{Poème Symphonique} by Marcel Grandjany
Colonne\(^{21}\)

\(^{20}\text{Ibid.}, 58.\)

Over the course of her career she performed in almost every European country. She never went abroad, however. Travel at that time was too lengthy, and she could not afford to cancel her lessons; thus she was obliged to tour closer to home. At one point, Toscanini offered her a contract to perform in the United States but she refused, fearful that if her elderly mother were to become ill she would not be able to return home.22

This offer by Toscanini came during a four-year period in which Renié did not give solo recitals. Those years had been difficult, both physically and emotionally. The death of her father affected her quite deeply, for she was very close to him. In August of 1914, one of her brothers was killed in World War I while leading his regiment in a charge. In 1916, her close friend, Louise Reigner, lost her twenty-three year old son. Renié would later reflect on the impact of this tragic period on her life and music:

It is curious, but those four years spent without giving solo recitals, during which I went through so many emotions—even those not concerning the war itself—have certainly given me more maturity. I arrived not at the height of my career, as I had been there for fifteen years, but at the height of the blooming of my life in the most elevated sense: moral, intellectual, artistic, and spiritual. And my concert programs took on a totally different form. They were better, more coherent musically, more involved with art than with virtuosity.23

22 Des Varennes, Henriette Renié: Living Harp, 92.
23 Ibid., 91.
She went on to say that transcriptions took on a more important role in her programs, and she cut out "everything which did not bring a real richness to the repertoire of the harp." She continues,

I began to get rid of the bane which consists in believing that one touches the public and beauty only by speed and by conquering technical difficulties. On one program, I began with Rameau's Minuet of *Castor et Pollux*...because of its simplicity it must be played with great artistic mastery, or it will indeed sound infantile.24

By the 1920's, radio, recording equipment, and phonographs, inventions that changed the world of music, had become more easily accessible to the general public. This new technology was much to Renié's advantage since recordings had a great impact on her career. In 1926, she participated in the first radio broadcast from the Eiffel Tower. Around this same time she made several recordings of her original compositions and transcriptions, recording first for Columbia, then Odeon. Within three months after these records were released, they sold out. One of her recordings won her the Prix du disque, in 1930, the first prize awarded for harp recordings.25

Renié was offered numerous recording contracts but declined, insisting it was imperative to re-record her first records. She did not feel that they adequately represented the quality of her musical output. Even though the phonograph had existed since 1887, the electrical recording process was still primitive. Phonographs were not standardized so the number of revolutions per minute (rpm) varied on each machine. Furthermore, the

24Ibid., 91.

determination of a "take" rested on technical, not musical, grounds. One of her compositions, Légende, was made on two sides with a noticeable pitch difference. Other pieces had to be played at accelerated tempos because of the short amount of time on each side of the 78 rpm records. These recordings do show virtuosity, but not the interpretation she desired.

Nonetheless, with the help of this medium, Henriette Renié earned worldwide recognition. Now her music was made available to more people, and for the first time, outside of Europe. Harpists from around the world went to France to study with her, including the actor/comedian Harpo Marx. Salvi harp makers named one of their new models after her, "Renié."

Just prior to the onset of World War II, at the height of her career, Renié retired from the concert stage. Her health had grown increasingly fragile, and she became apprehensive of obligations and of numerous performances, which physically exhausted her. Recital preparation became agonizing because of her almost unattainable standard of perfection and her delicate health. This made her refuse offers of contracts of impresarios and others. In 1937, at the age of 62, she wrote:

At this moment, my road seems difficult because of fatigue and present exertion; but it is also due to the anxiety and the duty to fulfill in order to succeed...It is better to be prepared for battle than to be surprised by the enemy.27

This exhaustion was the beginning of an illness which forced her to reschedule a concert. After the performance, she wrote,

This concert, how painful! It is, I think, the last that I will give in my career ... What a disappointment not to play Ballade

26Ibid., 16.

fantastique (omitted from the program because it was too exhausting) although it's better than ever! And the Sospire, which was so beautiful, I have given all that I had--I have accepted it. I have even blessed the fact...²⁸

With this she retired from the concert stage, but not from playing the harp. She followed a daily regimen to which she strictly adhered. Each morning, after attending mass, she would closet herself in her studio and practice for two hours, with no interruptions. "You may disturb me if the house catches on fire--not otherwise," she would warn her maids.²⁹

Solo performances were limited to one per year: a musicale in her harp studio to benefit the Little Fund for Artists. In preparation for this recital, she would practice forty pieces from which the audience could pick the ones they wanted to hear.³⁰

After the second world war, Renié was ill every winter with bronchitis, pneumonia, and digestive infections that antibiotics would later control. She suffered from severe rheumatism, except in her hands. Neuritis also plagued her, although it was often in remission. Around 1951, she had repeated attacks of neuritis and sciatica that practically disabled her. She would have to take so many sedatives that she would become dizzy, yet she continued to give lessons.³¹

²⁸Ibid.
³¹Des Varennes, Henriette Renié: Living Harp, 112.
Her failing health prompted her to cease performing in public. Her final concert was for close friends in June of 1955. This concert is documented by those who were in attendance. Maurice Imbert, a well-known French critic, wrote the following about the event:

The venerable musician wanted to play once more for a few privileged people at her home. Not only is the magical virtuosity which she retains at such an age amazing...but also the force of life and enthusiasm which emanates from her; she burns with the inextinguishable flame of youth...All those gathered there could not but marvel once again at the perennial youth of her faculties as a virtuoso, of the sparkle of life which animated her in action, of the flame that played around her personality, no less vividly than four decades earlier.32

In a bulletin of the International Association of Harpists, Pierre Jamet, its President and founder, as well as a harpist, wrote about the same performance:

Henriette Renié was nearly eighty when I heard her playing at home for the last time. I had taken my daughter, Marie-Claire, and Bernard Galais with me and we came out dazzled by the power and vitality which emerged from her playing; she created an extraordinary atmosphere, which was explained by the love she had given all her life to the harp.33

Almost a year later, on March 1, 1956, at the age of 80, she died.

The world of the harp owes a great deal to Henriette Renié. She took an instrument considered trifling and unimportant to any serious musician and elevated it to a degree of sophistication equal to that of the violin or piano.

CHAPTER THREE
THE TEACHER

"Do you love the harp?" That was the first question Henriette Renié asked all prospective students. If their answers were negative or even the least bit weak, she felt it pointless to continue.\(^1\) She did not want to waste her time with anyone who did not share her passion or enthusiasm for the harp.

It seems Renié was driven by the same strong desire to teach as she was to play the harp. She was surprisingly young (nine years old) when she began her teaching career. "I did not wait for the advanced age to start my career as a teacher which attracted me so forcibly; I would have taught anything."\(^2\) Her first student was a friend of her youngest brother, Ferdinand Maignien. Trying to follow the example of her own mentor, Alphonse Hasselmans, Renié was not a lenient teacher, often shouting at those pupils who had not practiced.\(^3\) Despite the harsh treatment he received from her, Maignien continued playing and eventually became the harpist of the Paris Opera.


\(^3\)Ibid.
By the age of eleven, in 1886, Renié was supervising rehearsals for
the harp class at the Conservatoire. After she won the Premier Prix of the
Conservatoire, students began seeking her out for instruction. Shortly
before her thirteenth birthday she received her first private student, a
woman much older than she. Madame Delormé was "a ravishing woman who said
to me, Mademoiselle, I heard much about you and I would like to take
lessons from you." Surprised and bashful, I answered that I would ask my
mother."\(^4\)

At the beginning of her teaching career, most of her students were at
least twice her age. "It was my constant worry that neither the pupils nor
their parents should treat me as a child."\(^5\) In later years she was
delighted to have a student her own age.

Gradually, Renié's studio of harp students increased, and soon she had
pupils all over Paris. During the year she taught in Paris in her studio
located on the ground floor of her home at 55 rue de Passy. In the summer
months she taught in the French coastal town of Etretat. Her studio had
been the attic studio of her father. When Monsieur Renié lived there, his
home had been a gathering place for the more renown artists of the day.
From 1855 to 1910, distinguished figures from several areas of the arts
were frequent visitors, such as writers Guy de Maupassant, Alphonse Kass,
and Victoron Sardon; composers Massenet and Offenbach; painter Gustave
Courbet; and actors Sully, Mounet, and LeCoir, to name a few.\(^6\)

\(^4\)Ibid.
\(^5\)Ibid.
\(^6\)Françoise des Varennes, "Henriette Renié," \textit{The American Harp Journal}
(Winter 1975), 4.
Renié gave private lessons and group lessons. She conducted a harp ensemble which consisted of seven of her harp students, and they performed music she transcribed for them. Her goal in forming this ensemble was to build on a repertoire for an ensemble of harps that was even smaller than that of the solo harp. Also, with the addition of other harps, more tone colors were possible.

Renié’s transcriptions for solo harp and harp ensemble were a significant contribution to the harp literature. She chose works by major composers that she felt would enrich the harp repertoire and accommodate the special needs of the harp, such as limited chromaticism. A complete listing of solo and ensemble transcriptions appears in the Appendix.

Teaching would sustain her financially throughout her life. At times it was her only source of income. Even though she played a concert almost every night, this often was for charity, and she was forced to teach as many students as possible. Due to unfortunate circumstances, Renié had to assume financial support for her family as well. Her father had suffered a heart attack while carrying one of her brother’s heavy valises; he was unable to work, so support of the family fell upon Renié. Even as a young girl she paid for the recreational activities, such as riding lessons, of her brothers. Most of her brothers were officers and did not earn much money, and Renié supplemented their incomes.

The problems with money, or lack thereof, became a constant worry in her life. At seventeen, for example, she was struggling to make payments on a new harp when her mother wrote to Renié’s father, voicing concern over her daughter’s financial anxiety:

...Erard sent for their 2,200 francs yesterday, and then again today!...As tired as I am, I had no sleep, all because of you, my darling! I don’t want to see you worrying about questions of money.
I had hoped to see some soirées and profitable lessons for our darling child...Nevertheless, she works so hard, poor dear, and it grieves me that she doesn't receive more compensation. I have no doubt that it will come, but at the present moment, she shouldn't have to be so preoccupied with the idea of paying for the harp herself. In short, I'm in a state of deep depression which I make every effort to hide when I'm with the child, but which I can't escape when I'm alone...  

Throughout her seventy years of teaching, Renié never held a teaching position at a music school; all teaching was done in her home studio. In 1912, Hasselmans informed Renié that he was leaving his position as harp instructor at the Conservatoire. Having suffered partial paralysis in his left side several years earlier, he had become too exhausted to teach anymore. "You are the only one who can continue my work," he told her. "There is not one woman professor in the advanced instrumental classes!" she objected. Hasselmans replied, "What does it matter? There is no one but you! You can't refuse."  

During the course of the selection process, Renié lost the support of her staunchest ally because Hasselmans died shortly after telling her of his resignation. After Renié went through the customary process of informing the members of the Council of her candidacy and receiving positive responses from almost everyone, Marcel Tournier, a composer with only five or six harp students, was appointed to the position instead. The reason for this decision is explained in a letter dated June 22, 1912, from Renié's former composition teacher, Theodore Dubois, to their mutual friend, cellist Raymond Feuillard:

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8Ibid., 79.
My dear friend M. Feuillard,

You must imagine how much I desire the nomination of our friend H. to the Conservatoire! Nothing could be more justified! But, I have been looking into it, and among the responses that I am receiving one is worded thus: "Therefore, she will have my vote, and I hope that she will have many others; but I am advised that in the ministerial group of the Council, sympathies run towards Tournier, and that he has the best chance of being selected." This frightens me, and I was more afraid of this after a conversation I had with a clerk! It would be a gross injustice, but they are capable of it! Is it necessary to trouble and worry our friend with this? I shall let you be the judge of the right moment to warn her. Coming directly from me it would perhaps seem, in her eyes, unjustifiably serious; I still have hope. Do what you think best; talk with her mother, her brother or even with herself, perhaps; but she will keep her guard up! My warmest regards to you and to Madame Feuillard as well,

Th. Dubois

Renié would once again have a chance at that position when Tournier retired from the Conservatoire. The director of the Conservatoire, Claude Delvincourt, offered Renié the class. This time it was her decision whether or not to accept, and she declined, citing that Tournier was leaving after more than thirty-five years and she was four years older than he.

Around 1939, with the onset of World War II, ill health forced Henriette Renié to retire from her busy schedule as a concert performer. For several years her publisher had urged her to write a method book, but she was always too busy. Now that she was semi-retired she was able to do so. The next few years’ work culminated in the two-volume Méthode Complète de Harpe, 1946.

Renié’s reputation as a gifted teacher spread world-wide with the publication of her Méthode Complète de Harpe. Soon after publication it was

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9Ibid., 81-2.
10Ibid., 111.
translated into English by Virginia Morgan, a former student. Shortly after her translation, she reflected on the book and her experience as a student of Renié:

Translating Mlle. Renié’s Method shortly after it was published by Leduc, perusing notebooks filled after inspirational lessons with Mlle. Renié, made me thankful for the opportunity I had had in studying with her, and grateful for the generations of harpists to come that so many of the helpful indications she had to offer were included in her Method... As her Method exemplifies, she willingly provided details from her vast storehouse of experience that are of immeasurable benefit.11

Her method book proved to be quite successful. Up to this time few composers had written as comprehensive a collection of technique and exercises. Her book was used not only by students but by professional harpists, as well. Concert harpist Carlos Salzedo (1885-1961) wrote to Renié, "Your great Method is a gigantic, deeply captivating work. I [hope] that nothing should stop the marvelous dynamism of your devotion—one may even say sacrifice to our cause."12

Volume one of the two-volume set begins with a labeled diagram of her Érard harp. A preface follows in which she explains that the fundamental principle of her method is suppleness: fingers, wrists, and hands must be relaxed, not stiff, in order to achieve the correct hand position and sound for the harp. After these introductory comments, the next nine chapters concentrate on harp technique. Each chapter begins with a summary of items to be covered in the lesson. The first chapter explains the pedals of the harp, positions of the pedals, and the correct seated position at the harp,

11Mildred Dilling and Virginia Morgan, "Henriette Renié," Harp News (Fall 1956), 5.

all of which Renié carefully diagrammed. Throughout the rest of volume one, Renié includes hand position, exercises for all fingers, practice for intervals, arpeggios, harmonics, three- and four-finger chords, glissandos, près de la table (playing close to the soundboard), trills, tremolos, pedal changes, and sons étouffés (staccato notes). Short pieces and excerpts by Renié and other harp composers such as Nadermann and Hasselmans illustrate newly learned principles. The volume concludes with numerous pieces for review of techniques covered in previous chapters. Other composers represented in volume one include Louise Charpentier and Robert Schumann.

One of the newer harp effects explored in this volume is the glissando with the pedals set in enharmonic equivalents. Renié describes this technique as "une nouvelle richesse sonore dont la magie poétique où éblouissante est unique, et pour augmenter son admiration et son amour pour la harpe...."

The following example from chapter five (p. 33) illustrates three glissandos with different pedal arrangements:

1° Glissé de l'accord parfait de Sol bémol (Accrocher Fa♭, La♭, Do♭)  

2° Ajouter un Mit♭ on obtient un glissé de l'accord de septième de dominante sur Sol♭.

3° Remettre Fa♭, accrocher Sol♭, c'est alors l'accord de septième diminuée sur Sol♭.
Intervallic glissandos are another form of the glissando and, like the enharmonic glissando, are used mostly in twentieth-century music. Examples of the glissando in the interval of a third, sixth, and an octave are given with an accompanying etude using all three intervals (pp. 55-56). Renié explains that the principle for all intervals is the same: the thumb is high, the fingers are inclined.

PETITE ÉTUDE POUR LES GAMMES EN TIERCES, SIXTES ET OCTAVES GLISSÉES

The use of enharmonics to facilitate fast trills and tremolos is explored in lesson twelve. In an example from La Source by Zabel (1835-1910), "le trille à 4 doigts donnant un tremolo simple sur la même note, est inimitable à aucun instrument, pour sa limpidité et sa légèreté."
The octave tremolo is also explained and illustrated (pp. 82-83):

Renéé calls volume two a syntax and appendix, and it covers specific techniques from volume one in more detail. Different articulations are explained and include the long, or unmuffled articulation, proportional articulation, short articulation, and thumb articulation. Once again, Renéé stresses the importance of a supple wrist and includes a section on musicality. Instruction in executing other techniques, such as staccato, détaché, non legato, harmonics, intervallic harmonics, and bass octaves is illustrated by excerpts from concertos and advanced pieces. The section "The Art of Fingering" gives sample fingerings for irregularly grouped notes (five, six, seven, nine, and ten-note groups).

The execution of mordents is illustrated according to the classical fingerings: 3,1,2 or 2,3,1 and 1,2,3,1,2,1, or 1,2,4,3,2,1 (p. 176):

Having covered the basics of harp technique in volume one, Renéé delves into more detailed topics in the second book. She also incorporates
sections such as "Special Advice for the Virtuoso," "Before a Concert," and "Maintaining and Repairing the Harp." The penultimate part of the book consists of a section of cadenzas and excerpts from various symphonic works with "difficult features," for example, Donizetti’s *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Ravel’s piano concerto, Albert Roussel’s *Le Festin de l’Araignée*, and Tchaikovsky’s *Ballet de Casse-Noisette*. Excerpts by Berlioz, Chopin, Debussy, Lalo, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Wagner also appear. The volume ends with daily exercises for the articulation and independence of the fingers.

These two volumes represent a concerted effort to provide the harp student with the most thorough harp instruction as succinctly as possible. The method is aimed toward the more advanced pupil, certainly not the novice. Illustrative examples are from concertos, concertinos, sonatas, and solo works of various contemporary composers. All of these works are of medium to advanced difficulty. What is interesting about the examples from Renié’s two volumes is that they are excerpts from the standard harp repertoire of the time, yet most of these pieces are never heard today, and many are even out of print.

To measure Renié’s success as a teacher, one has only to look at the number of students who continued on to become successful harpists, either in performance or teaching. The approach she took in teaching was probably what sustained her success throughout her career and kept bringing students from all over the world to her studio in Paris. Her philosophy was to make lessons fun and not criticize too frequently. She believed that the more difficult a work was, the more a teacher should make it as attractive as possible in order to give students the courage to make the effort to attain their goal. Renié would caution her students never to criticize a student until he or she had found something to commend.
Many of Renié's students recall how encouraging and exhilarating their lessons with her were. Virginia Morgan vividly recalled her lessons: "I have never known anyone who could explain so clearly the ways to achieve the technical and musical results desired. There was never a wasted second during her lessons."\(^\text{13}\) Susann McDonald, currently professor of harp at the University of Indiana, wrote

In recalling my lessons with Mlle. Renié, I remember vividly her passionate love of the harp, her impeccable musicianship, the profound expressivity of her phrasing, the spirit and animation of her personality coupled with her keen sense of humor, and above all, her deep faith in God. As a young student, I was impressed also with her openness to and appreciation of the more recent music of that time, Paul Hindemith's \textit{Sonata} and Benjamin Britten's \textit{Ceremony of Carols}.\(^\text{14}\)

The list of harpists who studied with Renié is impressive. Many became famous virtuosos/teachers/composers themselves and took Renié's method of teaching with them all over the world.

Mildred Dilling began her studies with Renié in 1914, after Carlos Salzedo, an equally successful harpist, told Dilling, "She [Renié] is as high above all harpists as heaven is above earth!"\(^\text{15}\) Their lessons continued for several consecutive summers, but their friendship lasted a lifetime. Dilling became a successful concert harpist, performing at the White House seven times for four presidents, participating in radio shows,

\(^{13}\)Dilling and Morgan, 5.


and even giving introductory harp lessons to such film celebrities as Sir Laurence Olivier, Bob Hope, and Harpo Marx.16

Marcel Grandjany (1891-1975) appears to have followed in Renié's footsteps. After beginning harp studies with her, he attended the Paris Conservatoire, won the first prize in the Conservatoire competition, and became a successful virtuoso, teacher, and composer. He was an active and influential teacher, occupying the harp position at the Juilliard School from 1938 to 1969. Grandjany studied with Renié for ten years, yet even after establishing an illustrious career of his own, he occasionally would seek her advice when polishing a recital program. His friendship with his teacher lasted until her death.17

Henriette Renié's success as a teacher earned her a world-wide reputation that is still intact today. Her constant need to give back to others, as seen through her Méthode book and her teaching, accounts for her place in history as one of the great harpists. She expressed her feelings in a 1955 taped interview as follows:

I do not work for myself only now. I work for those who continue after me. I think for an artist, the hope of passing the flame to other hands--far from making one sad--on the contrary, gives strength, peace, and joy to one's life.18

This flame has been passed to numerous harpists who, in turn, will pass it on to many others.

16Ibid., 6.


CHAPTER FOUR
THE COMPOSER

Ask a conductor, violinist, or composer a question about Henriette Renié, and he or she will likely respond, "Who?" But ask a harpist about Henriette Renié and one will likely get at least an idea of who she was and why she was important. In addition to being a concert virtuoso and sought-after teacher, she was also an accomplished composer. Her compositions are almost exclusively for harp, and this accounts for her virtual anonymity in other musical circles.

Renié was a successful composer from the beginning. From her first piece, Andante Religioso, her compositions won praise. There were two factors that worked to her advantage as a composer: 1) her name was already well-known in music circles as a gifted performer, and 2) the novelty of a newly developed harp, the double-action pedal harp, attracted attention.

The double-action pedal harp was patented in 1810, so it was a relatively new instrument.¹ The harp that had been used before this time had been the single-action pedal harp. This single-action harp worked on the same principle as today's pedal harp. A fork of two prongs was mounted on a small brass disc and connected to machinery inside the neck of the

¹The date of the patent varies among sources. In John Thomas' History of the Harp, the date is June 6, 1801. Another source reports it was patented in 1819.
harp. The strings ran between the two prongs, and when the pedal was depressed it turned the disc, shortening the string by a semitone.\(^2\) This had been quite an advancement for the harp but was still ineffective when it came to modulation. Since this harp could change a note by only one semitone, it was restricted in the numbers of keys it could play.

The double-action pedal harp was able to solve all problems of modulation. Invented by the piano builder Sébastien Érard, the harp was now able to produce three distinct pitches on every string: the flat, the natural, and the sharp. The instrument contained a double notch in the pedestal by means of which the pedal, after having been pressed into the first rest, as in the single-action harp, may be pressed to a second rest. This double-notched pedal device made it possible to play in twenty-seven keys (fifteen major and twelve minor) as opposed to thirteen keys (eight major and five minor) on the single-action harp.\(^3\)

This new mechanism was a major achievement. According to Stainer and Barret's *Dictionary of Musical Terms* (1876), however, "the harp was no longer being cultivated as it had once been."\(^4\) The double-action harp did replace the single-action harp in the concert hall and European drawing rooms, but it was soon found too difficult for the average performer. The majority of harpists were young girls, usually sisters or daughters, who

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\(^3\) Ibid.

would provide harp accompaniment to a gentleman on the flute, but these girls were now unable to master the pedals of the newer instrument. With more modern music in vogue, many of these dilettantes switched to the simpler piano.\(^5\) Whereas Sebastien Érard had regenerated the harp, popular opinion was that he had "provided an instrument for the gifted genius and serious concert artist, rather than for the casual amateur."\(^6\)

The majority of the existing harp literature of Renié's time was composed for the single-action harp. Even though the pedal mechanism had been a great improvement in harp construction, the repertoire was still limited. The three composers who made the greatest contribution were J. B. Krumpholtz (1742-1790), J. L. Dussek (1738-1818), and Louis Spohr (1784-1859), all married to professional harpists.

Krumpholz's compositions consisted of several concertos, some sonatas for flute or violin and harp, duos for two harps, and many solos and studies. Dussek's output included sonatas, harp duets, and concertos. Spohr wrote several pieces for solo harp and duos for violin and harp.

Other works for the single-action harp were concertos of Eichner (1769) and Albrechtsberger (1773) in Germany; in France, four concertos and various sonatas, variations and duos of Petrini (1744-1819), and the harp and fortepiano duos of Boieldieu as well as his Concerto in C of 1800. All in all, this was not a prodigious repertoire when compared to other instruments such as piano, flute, and violin.\(^7\)

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\(^5\)Ibid.

\(^6\)Ibid., 118.

By way of Érard's development, "a greater variety of music could now be played on the harp than ever before." This led to a large number of harpists composing music themselves. Throughout the nineteenth century, harpists wrote technical studies, and composed and arranged a large quantity of music for solo performance. This burst of compositional activity among harpists was born of necessity; solo demands of the harpist were not being met by the major composers.

This is where Henriette Renié made her most significant contribution to the world of the harp—a contribution that will last forever. Exasperated by the limited repertoire for harp, she set out to do something about it. When she began her studies, the harp was considered an unimportant instrument. A critic in the 1880's called the harp a "thankless instrument without variety and never in tune. Arpeggios, harmonics, and chords are all the instrument has to offer." Rensch points out that even though the critic's statement seemed harsh, he may have had a valid complaint in regard to the concert harp repertoire available in his day.

Henriette Renié worked this negative attitude to her advantage. The double-action harp made many new effects possible, such as enharmonics and modulation in any key. Her incorporation of these effects in her compositions made her stand out as a "real" composer against most of the contemporary harpist/composers.

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8 Rensch, 118.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid, 117.
In addition to her original compositions, Renié greatly expanded the harp repertoire by transcribing pieces of the great masters that she believed "brought a real richness to the repertoire of the harp." These works were usually written for piano. She published twelve books of her classic transcriptions for solo harp as well as harp parts in score for her Sextette. An ensemble of six harps gave the instruments the sonorous possibilities of a small orchestra, as well as an enlarged repertoire.

Henriette Renié's compositional preparation began as a child at the Paris Conservatoire in the fall of 1888. Normally the Conservatoire did not allow anyone under fourteen to register for harmony classes, but an exception was made because of her competition performance. Barely thirteen, Renié began her studies in harmony, counterpoint, and fugue with Theodore Dubois and Charles Lenepveu.

Composition appears to have been easy for Renié, but the difficulty came in showing her works to others. She dreaded calling attention to herself, and this reluctance was compounded by the fact that she was the only female student in her class of eighteen men. _Andante Religioso_, for harp and violin, was one of her first compositions, and remained in her briefcase for six weeks until she had the courage to show it to others. When she finally did, much of the class was absent, so the small group of men present gathered around the piano and hummed the violin part as Renié

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played the harp part on the piano. Her professor, Dubois, was pleased and apparently said, "It's very good. You should do many more like that!"\textsuperscript{14}

There is no mention of her compositional progress from the time of \textit{Andante Religioso} (1890) to her next successful work, \textit{Concerto in C minor} for harp and orchestra, begun around 1894, while she was still attending composition classes at the Conservatoire. The first two movements were written at this time, but the work was not completed for seven years, in 1901. When she showed the finished work to Dubois, he was very complimentary and urged her to ask Camille Chevillard, one of the greatest conductors of the period, if he would conduct it at his next concert. As Renié recalled,

\begin{quote}
    My heart was wildly pounding when I rang his doorbell. He received me quite kindly and asked me to play my \textit{Concerto}. I worked my way through it, half singing, half playing the piano, toiling away like a galley slave. Somehow I managed to give him an idea of the first movement.\textsuperscript{15}
\end{quote}

At the end of her audition, without a word of praise, Chevillard began to calculate the number of musicians he would need for the performance.

The concerto's success prompted Chevillard to consider including it on the program at the Lamoureux concerts. When he asked her if she wanted to play the concerto at the Lamoureux concerts, Renié, stupefied, replied, "Wouldn't you prefer the Reinecke concerto?"

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., 52.

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., 55.
Many years later Chevillard remarked, "It was the first time that a composer whom I asked to play his/her own work, suggested someone else's instead."16

This Lamoureux engagement was the one Renié was forced to cancel because of ill health. Fortunately, it was rescheduled for a few weeks later, March 24, 1901. To perform as the "Soliste des Grands Concerts" was an envied and supreme honor, since no international competitions yet existed. It was the highest of musical achievements. The concerto was such a success with the Lamoureux concerts that she was engaged to play it twenty-five times with orchestras in every European country, except Russia.17

Contemplation was Renié's next composition and the first for solo harp. The melody came to her during her morning prayers, and by the end of the day she had completed the piece in time to perform it that evening as a birthday present to La Baronne de Rochetaille, "an admirable woman for whom I had a deep affection."18 Renié spent one month each year at Contenson with the Rochetaille family, giving lessons to daughter Camille. "Affection was, therefore, the factor that inspired this work."19

In 1901, after the success of her concerto, Renié wrote what is considered her masterpiece, Légende for solo harp. A formidable work, it was considered quite modern compared to other harp music in existence.

17Ibid., 9.
18Ibid., 8.
19Ibid.
First of all, it was programmatic, based on "The Elves," a poem by Leconte de Lisle. Second, many new effects that expand the limitations of the instrument were used to depict events in the poem.

Légende was completed at a time when drastic changes were taking place in music. There was a move away from traditional harmony and key relations to more complex and sophisticated, sometimes non-functional harmonies. Color became increasingly important and form was greatly expanded, going beyond clear-cut classical forms such as sonata, variation, etc. All of these changes can be seen in the music of composers such as Gabriel Fauré, Claude Debussy, and Maurice Ravel. The traits of Ravel's music are what Renié incorporated most in her music: clean melodic contours, distinct rhythms, and complex and sophisticated harmonies. These can be seen in Légende and other works. They demonstrate that Renié never stopped searching for new ways to expand the scope of the harp.

Légende is a model example of Renié's writing: risky, challenging, virtuosic. Only a harpist with flawless technique and many years of study is capable of performing a piece like this. Not only did Légende reveal new possibilities of the harp, but it also paved the way for other harp composers--Carlos Salzedo, for example, and Marcel Grandjany.

Deux Pièces Symphoniques for harp and orchestra followed. The two movements, Elegy and Danse Caprice, were premiered at the Lamoureux concerts. In 1907, asked to write a piece for the competition of the Conservatoire, Renié composed Pièce Symphonique for solo harp in three movements. The piece was inspired by the brutal death of a cousin her same age. Other works for solo harp, around 1907, include La Ballade
Fantastique and the Danse des Lutins, for which she won the Grand prix du disque in 1911.20

By 1907, if not before, Renié had established a reputation as a competent composer. Other harpists who had taken up composition to compensate for the lack of quality music were considered "performing artists not renowned or even gifted composers of original music."21 Renié's reputation far exceeded such an assessment, as can be seen from one of her concert reviews from Le Ménestrel, February 23, 1907.

The orchestral concert of Mlle. Renié at the Salle Erard was very interesting. The young harpist is not only a remarkable virtuoso but has impeccable technique, sonority of great power; she has proven herself more and more as a composer of real merit. Many new works for harp, solo or with orchestra such as Danse-Caprice, are a feat of strength and originality. The recent Elegy heard at the Lamoureux concerts, was of noble impression. Ballade fantastique, very evocative after Edgar Poe, is of pages deserving fixed attention.

The orchestration of Mlle. Renié is colorful, well-balanced, powerful without brutality and reveal an absolute mastery. [She was] Admirably assisted by M. Chevillard and his orchestra.22

In Renié's compositions, one can see the progression and direction of her performance career. Early compositions such as Concerto in C minor, Légende, and Pièce Symphonique are virtuosic and stunning pieces she wrote for herself to play in concert. As she matured and her career focused more on teaching and less on performing, her compositions became simpler. Grandmère Raconte une Histoire (1940) is a short, easy piece for non-pedal harp; similarly brief is the simple Les Pins de Charlannes (1940) for two

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20Ibid., 10.

21Rensch, 118.

22The article appears in French in its entirety in the Appendix.
harps or harp and piano. These two pieces are examples of compositions that served more of a didactic purpose than an enrichment of the harp concert repertoire.

There is no mention in any sources of when Renié stopped composing. Her output probably began slowing down after the completion of the Méthode, which occurred after World War II. Every winter she was plagued with several illnesses, and these would have made it difficult for her to work.

Renié's original compositions number about thirty-four and transcriptions are almost double that: an impressive output for a composer who spent only one month of the year composing. She had to earn a living, and her demanding work load of teaching and performing left little time to concentrate on new compositions. Every July when her family would go to Etretat for vacation, Renié would stay in Paris and compose.

From a letter dated July 1908, she expressed her passion for writing:

One single thing makes me work seriously and excites me: orchestrating! That's what I like! Not looking for an idea, but adding, coloring, hearing within oneself, a swarm of resonances, making the first plans, the second ones, the final ones...that I like! Then I find myself one again with my blessed fervor.23

It was this passion for composing and transcribing that helped produce so much new music for the harp. Henriette Renié began with a limited and outdated repertoire and expanded it in many different directions. Today her impact is easily overlooked. Attention is focused on two male harpist/composers, Carlos Salzedo and Marcel Grandjany, whose works far outnumber hers. But, without Renié paving the way, the harp and its music would not be where it is today.

CHAPTER FIVE

COMPOSITIONS

Henriette Renié was a dynamic performer who played with agility and virtuosity. These characteristics are particularly evident in her early works for solo harp, and solo harp and orchestra, which she wrote to enhance her own concert repertoire. Légende and Concerto in C minor are her best known works and those which best typify her style. As harpist Marcel Grandjany said,

I advise the young musician who never knew her to practice the Allegro of her Concerto in C minor and Légende. It is there that you will learn to know her, her vibrant energy, her zest and virtuosity. She is the Master.1

Légende, written in 1901, when Renié was twenty-six, remains one of the composer’s most performed works. Compared with other compositions in the harp repertoire it was a novel piece for its time. The existing literature at the turn of the century consisted of little more than small sonatinas, sonatas, and chamber works. Légende is a tone poem that depicts the story’s events picturesquely in the music. Renié based this work on "Les Elfes," a poem by Leconte de Lisle.

The poem recounts the tale of a cavalier who must ride through a dark forest on horseback in order to reach his fiancée (see text and translation in the Appendix). His ride is interrupted by the elves, who are ordered by their queen to encircle him. After trapping the cavalier, the queen tries

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to seduce him with her powers, and when he refuses, she puts a curse on him. He is able to free himself of the queen and her elves and continues his trip on horseback. After a frantic gallop through the woods, he reaches his love, but is too late. His trip ends when he encounters the ghost of his fiancée, who has just died.

René does not follow the poem stanza by stanza, and the refrain that appears in the poem is not reflected in the composition, but she does use certain musical motives to depict events in the poem. René did not leave any explanation of Légende, but it is possible to isolate certain motives that most logically describe the actions of the story.

Légende begins with an introduction opening with the motive for the lady-love:

Example 1

The cavalier's hurried galloping on horseback through the woods is expressed by this march-like rhythm of measure 23.²

Example 2

²This rhythmic theme of frantic galloping also appears in pieces such as Liszt's Mephisto Waltz or Berlioz's Damnation of Faust.
His galloping is gradually slowed down by the encirclement of the elves. Example 3, from measure 53, depicts the elves as they surround the cavalier and then dance. The composer marked this passage "agitato" (to mimic the elves’ dancing):

Example 3

The elves’ dancing is interrupted by the appearance of the queen at measure 66. Rolled chords and descending harmonics, which lend a mystical mood, announce her arrival.

Example 4
The queen's attempt at seducing the young cavalier, and the subsequent spell she places upon him when he rejects her, is illustrated by the rapid figuration in measure 75.

Example 5

As he flees the queen, the theme of his beloved returns at measure 165.

Example 6

The tension mounts as he hurries through the forest, consumed by the thought of his fiancée (measure 173). The galloping motive returns at measure 191. The return of the elves' dance and the queen signify the presence of the queen's curse, which strikes the cavalier's fiancée. At measure 255, the introduction returns along with the first motive, but it is not in its original f minor key, signifying that the cavalier is seeing
his fiancée's ghost. The drama of the situation is represented in the final page of the piece by rapid arpeggios and glissandos.

It is not certain how Renié, herself, interpreted these passages, but in a letter to Mildred Dilling in which she critiqued one of Dilling's performances of Légende, Renié described certain passages, as "les elfes," "la malediction" (the curse), "la fiancée," etc. These particular passages have been underlined. An excerpt of this letter appears below, and a translation can be found in Appendix III, page 69.3

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Légende is written in the typical French harp style of the turn of the century: spacious, rolled chords, and an abundance of arpeggios and glissandos. But one can also discern a more contemporary style. The harmonic language gives a modern aspect to the old-fashioned chords and glissandos. The use of seventh chords, both augmented and diminished, is much more abundant than previously seen in harp music. The mode changes

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This letter is a portion of a two-page handwritten manuscript critiquing Mildred Dilling's recital program. The date is unknown. Previously part of Mildred Dilling's estate, the letter now is a part of the American Harp Society Repository at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.
frequently (f minor, c minor, b-flat minor, B-flat major, f minor, F major, f minor), lending a deliberately unstable quality.

Although Renié used limited melodic material, the music is not monotonous. She generated an entire piece out of the following two themes:

**Theme 1**

**Theme 2**

Theme one stays close to its original form, but theme two is subjected to considerable manipulation. The melodic outline of this theme is retained, but its other components are altered in rhythm, harmony, and texture.

The first appearance of the galloping motive introduces theme two at measure 23. Its next emergence at measure 53 places the melody in a triplet rhythm. This new rhythm, combined with an increase in tempo and an "agitato" marking, transforms it into a different musical idea.

The queen's spell (measure 66) is depicted by another manipulation of the second theme. This time the rhythm has been simplified to thirty-second notes, and the key has changed to b-flat minor. Thematic transformation at measure 115 does not adhere as closely to the outline of theme two as the other variants, yet the half-step at the beginning is still important.
The key of f minor returns for the next entrance of theme two. Measure 149 presents the melody in a series of sixteenth-note triplets. Other appearances of this theme are in the Poco più animato passage at measure 210, the Allegro vivo of measure 237, and its final entrance at measure 245.

Renié employed technical devices in Légende that had rarely been seen in harp music up to this time. Before the double-action pedal harp, enharmonic equivalents were more difficult to execute. Once Renié began writing for this new harp, she took full advantage of this technique. This made it possible to play, as in measure 19, a b-flat and a b-natural at the same time:

The use of enharmonics also reduced the number of pedal changes. In measure 27, a b-natural is used instead of a c-flat, since a c-natural is needed in the next measure. Using the enharmonic equivalent of c-flat reduces the number of pedal changes by one, which is important since there are three pedal changes for the next measure.

Another relatively new technique was the intervallic glissando at measure 52. It covers the interval of a fourth and is used to end the section before the dance of the elves.

Légende is a neatly structured piece with definite separations between sections. Yet, some passages are more loosely constructed to allow for improvisation. Such passages include measure 14, an arpeggio to be played
in the style of a fantasia. Renié marked some of the passages "ad lib," as in the ascending arpeggios in measure 17, and the "quasi ad lib" passage at measure 263.

Inspection of the score demonstrates that Renié was a thorough composer who paid close attention to detail. Légende is meticulously marked for articulation, phrasing, dynamics, fingerings, and most importantly, pedal changes. The interpretations she conceived for this composition are carefully indicated throughout.

For Concerto in C minor Renié broke away from the traditional three-movement concerto form by inserting a scherzo and trio before the fourth and final movement.4 A two-page section for which she wrote "pour enchainer le Scherzo avec le Final" is to be used if there is no break between movements three and four. If this link is used, the players are instructed to end the scherzo fourteen measures early and go into the connecting passage, which begins the final movement at measure five. If it is not used, the final movement would be introduced after a brief pause by a sweeping glissando in the harp.

The first two movements of Concerto in C minor, composed much earlier than Légende (in 1894; movements three and four were added later, in 1901), prefigure the compositional process of Légende. In both pieces Renié used only a small amount of material and created an entire movement (or work). Her style and method are later illustrated in the analysis of the first movement.

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4Brahms also utilized a four-movement form for his second piano concerto, but he inserted a scherzo for the second movement.
In the first movement, Renié adhered rather closely to the standard concerto version of sonata form. It opens with an orchestral introduction played by the strings. During this sixteen-measure introduction most material of the movement is represented. The important harmonies are outlined (c minor and g minor) as well as a portion of the first theme.

Two components comprise theme one. They are equal partners but can be separated. In the following example, letters A and B are used to differentiate the two parts of the theme. The rhythmic motive is denoted by the letter A, the melodic theme by letter B.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

Theme IA is again stated, but now in its complete form in the solo exposition beginning at measure 17. The harp plays the theme in c minor with minimal accompaniment by the strings. The material stays near the key of c minor until it moves to the Neapolitan in measure 41. This is the first introduction of the lowered supertonic in the movement and serves as a preview of what happens later. Measure 51 returns to c minor but only briefly and begins a modulatory passage on the material of theme IA that moves to g minor by measure 59. A cadential passage begins in the harp at measure 73. The repeated D pedal prepares for a g minor resolution, but instead, Renié provides a deceptive cadence in E-flat major, the relative major of the home key at measure 82. As soon as the E-flat major chord is
played, the composer modulates again to prepare for the appearance of theme two:

The second theme is different in character from theme one. Played by the oboe and accompanied by harp glissandi and muted strings, theme two is more lyrical than theme one, a typical feature for a second theme in sonata form. Like the first theme, it begins with the descending perfect fourth of c to g.

A half cadence in g minor closes off the exposition and begins the development at measure 92. As is typical, development begins with theme one material in the solo harp. String accompaniment similar to that of the solo exposition assists the harp. By measure 100 this passage has modulated to f minor. For the next several measures the key center of the development goes up by fourths: f minor, b-flat minor, e-flat minor, A-flat major, D-flat major. Renié's goal in the development seems to be the arrival in D-flat major (the Neapolitan of c minor) at measure 131. It is preceded by a fermata which sets the passage off from all material that
came before it, and the Neapolitan is an area Renié had been hinting at in
the exposition but did not dwell on. In the development she stays in the
Neapolitan for several measures.

D-Flat major is followed by a long, modulatory passage that leads to
the development of theme two in the key of A-flat major at measure 159.
Once again Renié immediately moves away from the key she just established,
returns to it at measure 165 and moves away again. The key area of c minor
returns at measure 175 but shortly afterwards moves to the relative major,
continuing to modulate until it arrives back at c minor for the
recapitulation at measure 257.

This lengthy development (165 measures) has just been discussed mostly
in terms of harmonic development, but much thematic development also
occurs. Renié fragments the themes of the exposition and reworks them into
new combinations and sequences, such as the half-step rise and fall of
theme 1B at measure 114 and the fragmented sequence of theme 1A beginning
at measure 140. Thematic transformation is also achieved by manipulation
of the themes, use of the exposition themes in an imitative, contrapuntal
texture, and transposition and arrangement of the themes in rapidly modula-
ting sequences.

Preceded by a brief pause, the recapitulation begins at measure 257
with the same melodic material as in the exposition except for a thicker
orchestral accompaniment. Chromaticism beginning in measure 267 leads the
key area away from c minor, hinting at the dominant of c minor. An aug-
mented sixth chord at measure 280 resolving to a tonic chord begins the
introduction to the coda at measure 285. Increased tempo and harmonic
rhythm build intensity and bring the movement to a close in its home key.
The first movement of *Concerto in C minor* exemplifies Renié’s writing style. She embraced the Classical traditions of concerto sonata form in her treatment of the exposition, development, and recapitulation, but added her own touches throughout the entire piece.

The second movement presents a reprieve from the busy texture of the first movement. The tripartite form consists of two themes—one characterized by a downward motion, the other by an upward triplet and duplet motion—in a softer texture of muted strings, horn, and winds. Variants of each theme lend harmonic interest to the movement. The Neapolitan key of movement one (D-flat major) serves as the tonic in this second movement.

The staccato notes of the harp and the pizzicato of the strings bring a timbral change to the third movement. After the contrasting trio in A-flat major, the scherzo returns, culminating in the traditional a b a' form.

The first actual cadenza appears as the aforementioned connecting passage between movements three and four. It is not as virtuosic as solo portions of the first movement, yet serves its purpose of leading the work harmonically from the key of the scherzo to the beginning key of the final movement.

The only other cadenza in this concerto appears at measure 204 of the last movement. Descending arpeggios and broadly rolled chords close off the recapitulation of the fourth movement and lead into the C major coda at measure 214.

As in *Légende* the skill needed to play this work is like Renié’s performance style: confident, virtuosic. The rapid arpeggiated passages,
as seen in movements one and four, as well as the largely spaced full chords, seem to typify her style.

There are noticeable differences in compositional style between Concerto in C minor and Légende. One is the absence of an overt programmatic impetus in the concerto. The writing in the concerto is more flowing, whereas in Légende events and persons in the poem are vividly depicted by particular motives in the music. Concerto in C minor also lacks much of the color of Légende, one reason being the absence of the text. Légende is full of different colors, and utilizes the harp in order to achieve varied effects. With an orchestral accompaniment as in the concerto, tone color is not the exclusive responsibility of the soloist; these different tone colors are supplied by the orchestra, which also provides harmonic and motivic support.

One can see a development of Renié’s compositional style in Concerto in C minor and Légende. The concerto is much in the style of the last nineteenth century. Both comply with the nineteenth century musical standard of functional tonality. As she composed more works, Renié’s personal style began to appear; a style which utilized the harp in more unconventional ways. Both contain the fast, brilliant passages that are the hallmark of her style.
CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

"When one thinks of the harp, one thinks of Henriette Renié."¹ This is a fitting tribute to a woman whose lifelong devotion to the harp and its music elevated the instrument to a level of importance never before achieved. Through her numerous performances as a virtuoso harpist and through her innovative compositions, she brought the harp out of the salon and into the concert hall.

Renié’s work not only influenced other harpists, but composers as well. According to Françoise des Varennes, a majority of the harp compositions written during her time were inspired by her; not only did she play them all, but she was the impetus behind their being written.² It was her influence on Gabriel Fauré, Claude Debussy, and Maurice Ravel that prompted the inclusion of the harp in so many of their compositions. As a result, their compositions exemplify some of the best examples of idiomatic harp writing in existence.

Renié also influenced lesser-known composers. Film producer Marcel L’Herbier remembered how her transcription of Debussy’s Danse Sacrée et Danse Profane (1904), originally written for chromatic harp, affected him at the premier performance:

²Ibid.
I was a little over twenty when— at long last! — I heard Henriette Renié, that saint of the art of music... the Debussy dances, sacred or profane, literally danced under her delicate finger-tips. I was overcome with astonishment, and there were some consequences: I wrote my first piece for the harp. Henriette Renié, the source of my inspiration, will never know, fortunately for her...3

Renié's entire career was an effort to help others. During World War I she established Little Fund for Artists (Petite caisse des artistes). This was strictly a private charity that provided immediate and anonymous monetary help to artists. Throughout her lifetime she administered funds entrusted to her by friends or from concerts she gave regularly. These donations resulted in about forty checks a month that Renié was able to contribute. As much as she enjoyed helping others, she found it a hard, tiring, and time-consuming job. As early as 1920, she wanted to discontinue the fund but was encouraged not to quit. The organization continued for twenty years after her death, thanks to the effort of friends.

Along with her friend Alfred Cortot, Renié founded Association of Former Pupils of the Conservatory. This served the same purpose as her Little Fund for Artists.

In 1912, Henriette Renié, recognizing the need for an international harp competition, founded the Prix Renié.4 Almost immediately, the competition became a prestigious event with such notable adjudicators as Maurice Ravel, Albert Roussel, Paul Paray, flutist Phillipe Gaubert,


4The date of the establishment of the competition varies. In two sources by des Varennes, she gives two different dates, 1912 and 1914.
Gabriel Pierné, Charles-Marie Widor, and harpists Marcel Grandjany, Pierre Jamet, and Carlos Salzedo. Participants arrived from as far away as the United States (an eight-day journey) and were required to perform repertoire equivalent to a short recital. A monetary prize contributed by Renié was awarded to the winner. Odette Le Dentu, a former winner of the competition, wrote:

People came from all over the world to ask her advice. Had she lived in the age of the airplane, imagine how different the destiny of the harp would have been! Transportation difficulties and the lack of student grants prevented the Concours Renié from having the kind of worldwide renown that is so indispensable for any instrument.\(^5\)

Renié was the recipient of several honors during her career. On December 19, 1935, in the hall of the Paris Conservatoire, she was awarded the gold medal of the "Salon," given to her for outstanding musical achievement.\(^6\) In 1930, one of her compositions, Danse des Lutins, won the Prix du disque, the first prize for harp recordings.\(^7\) Renié was also awarded the Alain Chartier Prize (Academy of Fine Arts) for Sonata for piano and cello, her only composition that was not for harp.

The most prestigious distinction bestowed on Renié, and one that she did not even want, was the Legion of Honor rosette. After another composer's refusal of the award in 1954, anyone who wished to be considered for the Legion of Honor was asked to submit a request. Renié did not want to do this, but after the prompting of her god-child and friends she filled


out the application. Several months later it was hers. In recognition of her award, she received congratulatory letters, such as the following from Claude Delvincourt, Director of the Conservatoire:

March 6, 1954

Dear Friend,

Anything is possible in this world...Four years ago I made a request for the rosette (of the Legion of Honor) for you. When I was told that you hadn’t even gotten the ribbon, I thought I was dreaming. Since then I have struggled twice a year, to straighten out this oversight and to have this injustice rectified. Last time I lost my temper. You will then understand how happy I was to see your name in the Ministry of National Education’s last list of nominations.

With my sincere congratulations, let me embrace you. Yours in great haste.

Claude Delvincourt⁸

Henriette was admired by many fellow musicians for her talent and her achievements throughout her career. Adolphe Boschot, a member of the Institut de France, made the following comment:

This was the pure and beautiful career. This career is so rich that, in describing it, I have had to limit myself to a mere sketch of the woman, a woman whose tender goodness was combined with an indomitable energy, and whose deeply spiritual nature made of her, until the end, a superior individual in all spheres.⁹

⁸Ibid., 17.
⁹Ibid., 57.
Paul Paray, another member of the Institut de France and the successor of Camille Chevillard, described Renié as follows:

Nobility, generous spirit, intelligence, an immensely cultivated mind, these are the expressions conjured up, when we evoke the memory of our wonderful Henriette Renié. Her musicianship, her instrumental knowledge, were supreme; her teaching, her devotion to her pupils, exemplary. To these gifts, she added those of the creator; witness the works of great merit, which she composed throughout her career...\textsuperscript{10}

And Jean Pierre Rampal, the famous flutist, recalled the first time he played with Renié:

In nineteen forty-eight, at the beginning of my career, I had the luck, and the great honor of playing with Henriette Renié. There emanated from this great musician an impression of strength, of abundance and effervescence, only equaled by her exceptional mastery of her instrument, and all this in the service of music. For me, it was an unforgettable moment.\textsuperscript{11}

Henriette Renié’s multi-faceted career as a virtuoso harpist, teacher, and successful composer spanned more than seventy years. She enjoyed the fame and respect from her performances and compositions during her life, yet today many of these accomplishments are overlooked, and she is chiefly remembered as a teacher. When comparing Renié with the women of today, her achievements do not seem unusual, but in turn-of-the-century Europe, where women were expected to marry, stay home, and raise a family, her career was quite remarkable.


\textsuperscript{11}Ibid., 16.
WORKS CITED


APPENDIX I

23 février 1907. LE MENESTREL, Paris, France p.61

Le concert avec orchestre de Mlle Henriette Renié à la salle Erard a été fort intéressant. La jeune harpiste n'est pas seulement la virtuose remarquable que l'on sait, au mécanisme impeccable, à la sonorité d'une puissance exceptionnelle; elle s'affirme de plus en plus comme un compositeur d'un réal mérite. Plusieurs œuvres nouvelles pour harpe, soit seule, soit avec orchestre, une Danse-Caprice d'un tour fort original, l'Elégie récemment entendue aux Concerts-Lamoureux et d'une impression si noble, une Ballade fantastique, très évocatrice, d'après Edgar Poe, sont des pages dignes de fixer l'attention. L'orchestration de Mlle Renié est colorée, bien équilibrée, puissante sans brutalité et décèle une absolue maîtrise. Admirablement secondée par M. Chevillard et son orchestre, qui donnèrent aussi des pièces de Haendel et de Grieg, la jeune artiste a été longuement acclamée après l'exécution prestigieuse de ses propres œuvres, ainsi que du concerto de Reinecke et de la belle et expressive Fantaisie de Theodore Dubois qui terminait le concert. A signaler encore la Pastorale et Caprice de Scarlatti, l'Aurore de Bizet (transcription Renié) et Gitana d'Hasselmans.
APPENDIX II

LES ELFES

Couronnés de Thym et de Marjolaine,
Les Elfes joyeux dansent sur la plaine.

Du sentier des bois aux daims familier,
Sur un noir chevak, sort un Chevalier.
Son éperon d’or brille en la nuit brune;
Et lorsqu’il traverse un rayon de lune,
On voit resplendir, d’un reflet changeant
Sur sa chevelure un casque d’argent.

Couronnés de Thym et de Marjolaine
Les Elfes joyeux dansent sur la plaine.

Ils l’entourent tous d’un essaim léger
Qui dans l’air muet semble voltiger.
Hardi! Chevalier par la nuit sereine,
Où vas-tu si tard, dit la jeune reine
De mauvais esprits hantent les forêts;
Viens danser plutôt sur les gazons frais.

Couronnés de Thym et de Marjolaine
Les Elfes joyeux dansent sur la plaine.

Non! ma fiancée aux yeux clairs et doux,
M’attend et demain nous serons époux.
Laissez moi passer, Elfes des prairies,
Qui foulez en rond les mousses fleuries;
Ne m’attardez pas loin de mon amour,
Car voici déjà les lueurs du jour.

Couronnés de Thym et de Marjolaine
Les Elfes joyeux dansent sur la plaine.

Reste chevalier. Je te donnerai,
L’Opale magique et l’anneau doré,
Et, ce qui vaut mieux que gloire et fortune,
Ma robe filée au clair de la lune.
Non! dit-il. Et de son doigt blanc
Elle touche au cœur le guerrier tremblant.

Couronnés de Thym et de Marjolaine
Les Elfes joyeux dansent sur la plaine.
Et sous l'éperon, le noir cheval part.
Il court il bondit et va sans retard;
Mais le chevalier frissonne et se penche;
Il voit sur la route une forme blanche
Qui marche sans bruit et lui tend les bras;
--Elfes, esprit, démon, ne m'arrête pas--

Couronnés de Thym et de Marjolaine
Les Elfes joyeux dansent sur la plaine.

--Ne m'arrête pas, fantôme odieux!
Je vais épouser ma belle aux doux yeux
O mon cher époux, la tombe éternelle
Sera notre lit de noce dit-elle.
Je suis morte! Et lui la voyant ainsi
D'angoisse et d'amour tombe mort aussi.

Couronnés de Thym et de Marjolaine.
Les Elfes joyeux dansent sur la plaine.
THE ELVES

Crowned of Thyme and of Marjoram,
The Elves joyfully dance on the plain.

From the forest path to the familiar deer,
Upon a black horse, a knight comes out.
His golden spur shines in the dark night;
And at that time crosses a ray of moon,
One sees shining, a changing reflection
On his hair a silver helmet.

Crowned of Thyme and of Marjoram
The Elves joyfully dance on the plain.

They surround all of a light crowd
Where in the air mute appear to hover.
Daring! Knight by the serene night,
Where are you going, says the young queen
Of bad spirits who haunts the forests:
Come, dance more upon the fresh grass.

Crowned of Thyme and of Marjoram
The Elves joyfully dance on the plain.

No! my fiancée of clear and sweet eyes,
Wait for me tomorrow we will be man and wife.
Let me pass, Elves of the praires,
Who crowds in around the frothy flowers;
Do not make me late for my love,
Because here already is the gleam of the day.

Crowned of Thyme and of Marjoram
The Elves joyfully dance on the plain.

Rest knight, I give you,
The magic opal and the golden ring,
And that is worth more than glory and fortune,
My thread dress in the moonlight.
No! He says, and with her white finger
She touches the heart of the trembling warrior.

Crowned of Thyme and of Marjoram
The Elves joyfully dance on the plain.
And under the spur, the black horse left.  
He runs and springs without slowing;  
But the cavalier shook and bowed down;  
He sees a white form on the road  
That walks quietly and opens its arms to him;  
--Elf, spirit, demon, do not stop me--

Crowned of Thyme and of Marjoram  
The Elves joyfully dance on the plain.

Do not stop me, hateful phantom!  
I go to marry my beauty of sweet eyes.  
0 my dear spouse, the eternal grave  
Will be our wedding bed she says.  
I am dead! and he sees her  
and from anguish and love also falls dead.

Crowned of Thyme and of Marjoram,  
The Elves joyfully dance on the plain.
APPENDIX III

TRANSLATION OF RECITAL CRITIQUE

The Elves--right thumbs excessive--other than that, perfect.

Love song very good--the following Elves amazing!

The entrance of the queen is perfect. A little more on the low F to the beginning of the passage which is very, very good.

Just before the ending (q.q.) take time? Or a kind of rallentando before the curse?

The Ending (the page of the large octaves) perfect--there is a little more disproportion between the two hands.

The fiancée: (revoir) a little less in the octaves.

The incident before the last page, it is all .... B natural which was [bizarre] and you ....
APPENDIX IV
COMPOSITIONS

*Dates not available

SOLO

Contemplation 1898
Légende 1901
Pièce Symphonique 1907
Ballade Fantastique 1907
Danse des Lutins 1911
Six Pièces Brèves 1919
Grandmère Raconte une Histoire 1940
Feuilles d’Album(s) 1943
(Esquisse; Danse d’Autrefois;
Angelus
Feuille d’Automne *
(Esquisse)
Opus 1 First Suite *
(Menuet; Au Bord du Ruisseau;
Petite Valse)
Opus 1 Second Suite *
(Air Ancien; Lied; Valse
Mélancolique)
Opus 2 First Suite *
(Conte de Noël; Recueillement;
Air de Danse)
Opus 2 Second Suite *
(Invention dans le style
ancien; Reverie; Gavotte)
Promenade Matinale *
(Au loin dans la verdure)
Promenade Matinale *
(Dans la campagne ensoleillée)
CHAMBER

Andante Religioso (Harp and Violin or Cello) 1890
Fêtes Enfantines (Harp and Reciter) *
Les Pins de Charlannes (2 Harps or Harp and Piano) 1940
Scherzo Fantaisie (Harp and Violin) *
Trio (Harp, Violin and Cello) *

HARP AND ORCHESTRA

Concerto in C minor 1894; 1901
Deux Pièces Symphonique 1905

STUDIES

Méthode Complète de Harpe 1946
Vol. 1
Vol. 2
TRANSCRIPTIONS

Dubois--Trois Morceau
Liszt--Un Sospiro

Transcriptions Classiques de la Harpe: 1940-54

FIRST COLLECTION: 1950
Beethoven--Andante (from Sonatine in G)
Daquin--La Melodieuse
Haydn--Menuet (from 33rd Sonata)
Marin Marais--Romance and Rondeau
Rameau--Musette (Les Indes Galantes)
Rameau--Menuet (Castor et Pollux)
Rameau--Menuets (Platee)

SECOND COLLECTION: 1954
Chopin--Preludes No. 20 & No. 23
Daquin--L'Hirondelle
Lully--Gavotte en Rondau (Ballet du Roy)
Mendelssohn--Barcarolle
Scarlatti--Piece en Re
Zinpoli--Sarabande et Gigue

THIRD COLLECTION: 1950
Bach, J. S.--Bourree (from Suite in C for Cello)
Beethoven--Adagio (from Clair de lune)
Daquin--Le Coucou
Rameau--Tambourin;
Rondeau Des Songes
Schubert--Moment Musical No. 3

FOURTH COLLECTION: 1954
Mozart--Sonata in C Major
Paradisi--Toccata (from 4th Sonata)

FIFTH COLLECTION: 1940
Dandrieu--Les Fifres
Dandrieu--Les Tourbillons
Handel--The Harmonious Blacksmith
Liszt--Consolations No. 3

SIXTH COLLECTION:*
Beethoven--Adagio (from Pathetique Sonata)
Chopin--Prelude No. 2
Couperin--Tic-Toc-Choc ou les Maillotins
Handel--Gavotte Variee

SEVENTH COLLECTION:*
Chopin--Celebre Valse Dite du Chat
Rameau--Gavotte (Boreales)
Scarlatti--Presto (20th Sonata in G)
Schumann--L'Oiseau Prophets

EIGHTH COLLECTION: 1958
Dagincourt--L-Etourdie (Rondeau)
Liszt--Consolations No. 2
Mendelssohn--Fileuse (Song Without Words No. 34)
Scarlatti--Allegriissimo (4th Sonata)

NINTH COLLECTION:*
Chopin--Preludes No. 6 & No. 11
Listz--Consolations No. 5
Listz--Le Rossignol
Scarlatti--Capriccio (Sonata E Major)

TENTH COLLECTION: 1956
Duphly--La Victoire
Liszt--Nocturne (No. 3 des Reves d'Amour)
Scarlatti--Pastorale
Schumann--Au Soir
TRANSCRIPTIONS (con’t)

ELEVENTH COLLECTION:
1964
Bach, J. S.--10 Pieces

TWELFTH COLLECTION:
1964
Bach, J. S.--10 Preludes
TRANSCRIPTIONS FOR HARP ENSEMBLE

Louis Aubert, Nocturne, 4 harps
Louis Aubert, Menuet, 4 harps
J. S. Bach, Gavotte (suite en ré), 3 harps
Beethoven, Marche Turque (Ruines d’Athènes), 3 harps
Georges Bizet, Menuet (l’Arlésienne), 3 harps
Georges Bizet, Carillon (l’Arlésienne) 3 harps
Georges Bizet, Deux Entractes (Carmen)
Georges Bizet, Intermezzo, 6 harps plus Double-quartet
Georges Bizet, 1st Menuet (l’Arlésienne, 6 harps, violin, cello)
Boismortier, Les Rêverences Nuptiales, 3 harps
Borodine, Dans les Steppes de l’Asie Centrale, 3 harps
Couperin, Le ’Je ne sais quoi,’ 3 harps
Couperin, 2nd Concert, Harpe, violin, cello
Couperin, Menuet. Allemande
Couperin, Air Contrefugué
Dandrieu, L’Enjouée, Harpe, violin, cello
Dandrieu, Les Fifres, 3 harps
Claude Debussy, Voiles, 3 harps
Claude Debussy, Pagodes, 4 harps
Claude Debussy, Cake-Walk, 3 harps
Claude Debussy, La Cathédrale Engloutie, 3 harps
Claude Debussy, Petite Suite
Claude Debussy, En Bateau, 4 harps
Claude Debussy, Cortège, 4 harps
Claude Debussy, Menuet, 4 harps
Claude Debussy, Air de Ballet, 4 harps
Théodore Dubois, 6ème Parole du Christ, 4 harps, violin, cello
Théodore Dubois, 1ère Parole du Christ, 6 harps, double-quartet
Gabriel Dupont, Mélancolie du Bonheur, 3 harps
TRANSCRIPTIONS FOR HARP ENSEMBLE

(con't)

Anton Dvorak, Danse Slave No. 3, 3 harps
Anton Dvorak, Danse Slave No. 7, 3 harps
Anton Dvorak, Danse Slave No. 4, 6 harps, double quartet
Gabriel Fauré, Siciliana, 3 harps, double quartet
Gabriel Fauré, Suite de Dolly
Gabriel Fauré, Mi-a-ou, 3 harps
Gabriel Fauré, Berceuse, 3 harps
Philippe Gaubert, Sarabande, 3 harps
Manuel de Falla, Pantomime, 3 harps
Manuel de Falla, 1ère Dance (Vie Brève) 3 harps
Gluck, Marche Religieuse d’Alceste, 4 harps, violin, cello
Granados, Danse Espagnole No. 4, 3 harps
Grieg, Au Matin, 3 harps
Grieg, Berceuse, 3 harps
Grieg, La Mort d’Ase, 2 harps
Grieg, Danse Norvégienne No. 2, 4 harps
Grieg, Danses Norvégiennes No. 2, 3, 3 harps
Grieg, Valse No. 2, 2 or 4 harps
Grieg, Feuillet d’Album, 2 harps
Grieg, Danses Norvégiennes No. 3, 4, 3 harps, double quartet
Haendel, Concerto Grosso en si majeur, 3 harps plus hautboy
Haendel, Allegro du Concerto Grosso, 3 harps
Haendel, Bourrée, 3 harps
Haendel, Concerto en Ré
Haendel, Allegretto, 4 harps
Haendel, Menuet, 4 harps
Haendel, Bourrée, 4 harps
Raynaldo Hahn, Bal de Béatrice d’Estre (fragments), 3 harps
Vincent d’Indy, Valses: Aarau, 3 harps
Vincent d’Indy, Laufenbürg, 3 harps
J. de La Presle, Le Jardin Mouillé, 3 harps
TRANSCRIPTIONS FOR HARP ENSEMBLE
(con’t)

Franz Liszt, *Légende de Saint François d’Assise*, 3 harps
Franz Liszt, *Saint François de Paule marchant sur les flots*, 3 harps plus double quartet

Mozart, *Menuet* (Sérénade) 3 harps
Mozart, *Menuet en sol min.*, 3 harps
Mozart, *Menuet en mi bémol min.*, 3 harps
Mozart, *Menuet* (quintette), 3 harps
Mozart, *Menuetto* (Symp. en mi bémol), 3 harps
Joaquin Nin, *Le Chardonneret au Bec d’Or*, 3 harps
Gabriel Pierné, *Marche des Petits Soldats de Plomb*, 3 harps
J. P. Rameau, *Menuet* (Castor et Pollus), 3 harps, violin, cello

J. P. Rameau, *Gavotte* (du Temple de la Gloire), 3 harps
J. P. Rameau, *Rigaudon* (Dardanus), 3 harps
J. P. Rameau, *L’Indiscrète*, 3 harps
J. P. Rameau, *Hyppolite et Aricie*, 3 harps
Rachmaninov, *Prélude*, 3 harps
Maurice Ravel, *Habanera*, 3 harps
Maurice Ravel, *Rigaudon* (Tombeau de Couperin) 3 harps
Maurice Ravel, *Pavane pour une Infante Défunte*, 3 harps, double-quartet

Henriette Renié, *Contemplation*, 3 or 4 harps
Henriette Renié, *Barcarolle*, 3 harps
Henriette Renié, *Défilé des Lilliputiens*, 3 harps
Henriette Renié, *Pièce Symphonique*, 3 harps
Camille Saint-Saëns, *Pavane* (Proserpine), 3 harps
Camille Saint-Saëns, *Entrée des Écoliers*, 4 harps
Camille Saint-Saëns, *Air de Ballet* (Etienne Marcel) 4 harps
Camille Saint-Saëns, *Musette Guerrière*, 2 or 3 harps
Camille Saint-Saëns, *Valse*, 3 harps
Camille Saint-Saëns, *De la Suite Algérienne*
TRANSCRIPTIONS FOR HARP ENSEMBLE
(con’t)

Camille Saint Saëns, Marche Militaire Française, 4 harps
   plus double quartet
Camille Saint Saëns, Reverie d’un Soir a Blidah, 4 harps
Déodat de Séverac, Les Multiers devant le Christ de Livia,
   3 harps
Déodat de Séverac, Le Retour des Muletiers, 3 harps
Joaquin Turina, Tango, 3 harps
Joaquin Turina, Orgia, 3 harps
Richard Wagner, Choeur des fileuses, 4 harps