AN ANALYTICAL VIEW OF EDMOND DÉDÉ'S MEPHISTO MASQUE POLKA FANTASTIQUE: AN ARGUMENT FOR RECOGNITION

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AN ANALYTICAL VIEW OF EDMOND DÉDÉ'S MEPHISTO MASQUE POLKA FANTASTIQUE: AN ARGUMENT FOR RECOGNITION

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Within the confines of black music research, Edmond Dédé (1827-1903) receives praise as an American violinist, composer, and conductor; yet his achievements lack contextual recognition. This thesis will examine one of Dédé's most popular works, his *Méphisto Masqué: Polka Fantastique* (1889). The polka, like Dédé, has been misunderstood and neglected by scholarly research since its appearance in the concert halls of nineteenth-century Europe. To contextualize *Méphisto Masqué*, I offer a concise definition of polka in the context of Dédé's contemporaries. By then analyzing its form, structure, harmonies, melodies, and orchestration, *Méphisto Masqué* will be used to offer a greater significance to Dédé's work as a composer.

Introduction to Polka Research

"Polka is perhaps the most misunderstood, misrepresented, and mocked popular musical form in American history." Such a sentiment, expressed by Ann Gunkel in her 2004 article "Polka Studies in the Scholarly Landscape," serves as both a warning and a call-to-arms to anyone studying and writing about the polka. Albeit challenging, Gunkel presents a need for more scholarly attention of this "uniquely American cultural-hybrid."

¹ Ann Gunkel, "Polka Studies in the Scholarly Landscape," *Polish American Studies* 61, No. 2 (Autumn 2004): 5.

By satisfying that need, a broader yet more concrete understanding of the polka's musical characteristics can be developed so as to define its social and historical contexts.

Therefore, we are justified by Gunkel's statements to build a basic musical understanding of the polka before attempting to contextualize Edmond Dédé's *Méphisto Masqué*.

Polka defined

The polka, as a musical genre, is referenced in a number of nineteenth-century manuals about dance in Europe and the Americas; however, little to no attention is given to its formal musical structure. Encyclopedia and dictionary entries published in the past twenty years focus on historiography and offer little more than their predecessors. *Grove Music Online* (GMO) has one of the more detailed articles available. In strict terms, it describes the polka as "a lively couple-dance in 2/4 time." Although polka's origins have not been traced back any farther than the 1830's as a Polish folk dance, its popularity as a ballroom dance was established by the mid- to late nineteenth-century. Eventually, several popular nineteenth-century composers—Stephen Foster, Louis Moreaux Gottschalk, Bedřich Smetana, Franz Liszt, and Emile Waldteufel—adopted the polka as an independent instrumental work for solo piano and/or small chamber ensembles.

Biographical Sketch of Edmond Dédé

The environment in which Edmond Dédé developed his musical abilities directly correlates to his music. Therefore it is appropriate to offer a select biography of Dédé's life to contextualize his musical style and achievements, and ultimately to help us better appreciate his work as a composer. The biography to follow has been abridged and edited

² Černušák, Gracian, Andrew Lamb, and John Tyrrell, "Polka," *Grove Music Online*, Accessed February, 24, 2011, http://oxfordmusiconline.com.libproxy.txstate.edu/subscriber

from a more extensive version available in A Survey of Sources Related to Edmond Dédé:
Nineteenth-Century New Orleans Violinist, Composer and Conductor.³

Dédé was born sometime within the years 1827 and 1829 in New Orleans,

Louisiana, to two freed, colored migrants of West-Indies origin. While in New Orleans

Dédé's father took a post as *chef de musique* for a local militia band. From this, it is said
that Dédé's first music instructor would have been his father, although there are
discrepancies as to who Dédé's first instructor actually was. Scholars also debate what
instrument Dédé studied first. As a consensus, most published materials agree that his
first instrument was the clarinet. When introduced to the violin, Dédé developed into a
prodigy. He first studied violin with Constantin Debergue (1799-1861), a free black
musician and conductor of the local Philharmonic Society founded by free creoles of
color in the antebellum period, and later with Italian-born violinist Ludovico Gabici,
composer and conductor for the old St. Charles Theater. Dédé also studied counterpoint
and harmony under teachers of both races: Eugene Prevost and Charles Richard Lambert.

This accounts for an extremely valuable and unique education for a black male in New
Orleans in the early nineteenth-century.

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³ Christopher Hanson, "A Survey of Sources Related to Edmond Dédé: Nineteenth-Century New Orleans Violinist, Composer and Conductor," (MM Thesis, Texas State University-San Marcos, 2009). My thesis cites a large number of authors who have published information about Dédé's biography. Their individual work is triangulated to construct a biography that reflects the research available about Dédé to date. The authors have been cited within the footnotes to follow, however, a more detailed biography and the correlation of the individual authors' work is available in the thesis.

⁴ Maud Cuney-Hare, Negro Musicians and Their Music, (New York: G.K. Hall & Co., 1936), 237.

⁵ Lester Sullivan, "Composers of Color of Nineteenth-Century New Orleans: The History Behind the Music," *Black Music Research Journal* 8, (1988): 54.

⁶ Cuney-Hare cites Dédé's first instrument as the cornet which does not follow the consensus (1936).

⁷ Kinzer, Charles E, "The Band of Music of the First Battalion of Free Men of Color and the Siege of New Orleans, 1814-1815," *American Music* 10, 3 (Autumn, 1992): 348-369.

⁸ Sullivan, "Composers of Color of Nineteenth-Century New Orleans," 54.

⁹ Cuney-Hare, Negroe Musicians and Their Music, 237.

¹⁰ Sullivan, "Composers of Color of Nineteenth-Century New Orleans," 54.

Dédé moved to Mexico in 1848, as did many other of New Orleans' free creoles of color after the Mexican war. Maud Cuney-Hare states that "Dédé's father sent him to Mexico in order to complete his musical training." Arthur LaBrew claimes that while Dédé was in Mexico he made contact with the pianist Henri Herz, who was on an extended tour of the Americas at the time. Dédé returned to New Orleans in 1851 with an "economical turn of mind." By this point Dédé had been composing regularly. In 1852, just one year after his return, he was rewarded for his compositional efforts with the publication of his mélodie "Mon Pauvre Coeur" (1852), again, a considerable accomplishment for an African American at the time. 14

Dédé began saving his money by working as a cigar roller; with the assistance of several local patrons and friends he acquired enough funds to travel to Europe. ¹⁵ Marcus Christian states that he traveled to Belgium first. Being disappointed by not finding what he had hoped for, he then moved on to Paris. ¹⁶ Cuney-Hare, however, writes that Dédé arrived first in England before going on to Paris with no mention of Belgium. ¹⁷ Wherever he arrived in Europe first, the consensus is that he went to Paris in 1857 with the assistance of several close friends in New Orleans and abroad. James Trotter states that

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¹¹ Cuney-Hare, Negroe Musicians and Their Music, 236.

¹²Arthur LaBrew cites the interaction of Dédé and Herz from Samuel Trotter's writing and claims that the reference is then repeated by Sullivan, though no mention of Herz appears in Trotter's writing. Arthur R. LaBrew, *Musicians of color in England, Latin America and America*, (Detroit Michigan: 1996), LaBrew argues that such a connection can be established as the account is not documented in Herz's memoirs.

¹³ *Ihid*

¹⁴ Sullivan presents that it was most likely published by Dédé himself, as was the standard operation for most ante-bellum imprints of music by local blacks; yet, Sullivan also states that "it is arguably the oldest piece of sheet music by a New Orleans Creole of Color." Sullivan, "Composers of Color of Nineteenth-Century New Orleans," 54.

¹⁵James M. Trotter, *Music and some highly musical people* (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1878), 340.

¹⁶ *Dictionary of American Negro Biography*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1982. This is the same article written by Marcus B. Christian, used in *Africana: The encyclopedia of the African & African American experience*.

¹⁷ Cuney-Hare, 237.

Dédé was received in Paris with "a welcome worthy of a great people and of so fine an artist." ¹⁸

There is still some discrepancy as to what Dédé accomplished academically before receiving his professional post with the Grand Theatre de Bordeaux in 1860.¹⁹ More recent field research performed by Dr. Sally McKee from the University of Southern California shows that Dédé, as well as many of his contemporaries, was not an enrolled student at the Paris Conservatory, as previously claimed. Instead, he may have studied privately with several of the conservatory faculty, which would ultimately have led to a rumor that Dédé was actively enrolled. This completely contradicts Rodolphe Desdunnes' statement that "Par l'entremise de bon amis, il n'a pas tardé à être admis, comme auditeur, au Conservatoire de Musique de Paris." Whether or not he was actually enrolled in the conservatory, Dédé studied with Jacques-François Formental Halévy (1799-1862) and Jean-Delphin Alard (1815-1888) and won several medals for his achievements on the violin. While in Paris, it is speculated that Dédé befriended the famous composer Charles Gounod (1818-1893), who was also a student of Halévy, although this too is being challenged in more recent research by McKee. ²²

By 1860 Dédé had completed his studies in Paris and moved to Bourdeaux.²³ The next few years would prove to be quite eventful. In 1863 Dédé wrote and produced a ballet entitled *Néhana*, *reine des Fées*, among completing several other works that were

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¹⁸ Trotter, Music and some highly musical people, 340.

¹⁹ Sullivan, "Composers of color of nineteenth-century New Orleans," 55.

²⁰ Rodolphe Lucien Desdunes, *Our People Our History: A tribute to the Creole people of color in memory of the great men they have given us and of the good works they have accomplished,* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1911), 117.

²¹ Cuney-Hare, Negroe Musicians and their Music, 237.

²² Christian, 168.

²³ Most of the resources do not reference a year in which Dédé arrived in Bourdeaux. Sullivan (55), however, protests "about 1860," Lucian Wyatt (1990, 127) suggests "between 1860 and 1862," while Eileen Southern (249) supplies a date of 1868.

being performed by the L'Alcazar Théâtre Orchestra under his baton. Dédé kept his post as the director for L'Alcazar for over twenty-five years.²⁴

Christian explains some of the success that Dédé experienced while he was in Bourdeaux, as well as the esteem and admiration that surrounded his achievements in New Orleans and France.

As a master violinist and composer Dédé received many honors from his native city, from France, and elsewhere. Clarence Cameron White named him as one of the five foremost Negroes in tonal art. Roussève cites his "Valliant Belle Rose Quadrille" (later called, according to James Monroe Trotter, "Le Palmier Overture") as one of his best known pieces. His Quasimodo Symphony was presented at the Orleans Theater on the night of May 10, 1865, before a vast audience composed of leading Negroes and New Orleans and prominent northern whites, with Samuel Snaër, Jr., leading his own orchestra in its production. All of his compositions were considered of the highest order. On a journey to Algeria he wrote his "Le Serment de L'Arabe." Among his other compositions was "Si j'étais lui," and many others that are for the most part unlisted. According to Rodolphe Desdunes, he composed thousands of pieces- "not counting the dances and ballets distributed over all parts of Europe where he visited or lived." This lavish estimate of Dédé's productivity was probably due not to facts but to the high esteem in which the people of his race held him.²⁵

By the mid-1880s Dédé had a Paris publisher and membership in the French Society of Authors, Composers and Editors of Music. In addition to Christian's description Lester Sullivan points out that during Dédé's "Bourdeaux period, he wrote ballets, ballet-divertissements, operettas, opéra-comiques, overtures and over 250 dances and songs... in addition to writing all of this theatrical music... he produced at least six string quartets and an unpublished cantata, Battez aux champs.... This variety and volume of output contrasts sharply with the production of the New Orleans black composers who remained at home."26

²⁴ Christian claims it was twenty-seven years to be exact (168).

²⁶ Sullivan, 56.

By 1894 Dédé was a full member of the Society of Dramatic Authors and Composers in Paris. It was at this time in his life and career, "almost forty-six years after his self imposed exile" that Dédé planned and executed a trip back to New Orleans. Cuney-Hare asserts that Dédé was met with wide acclaim and concertized from Texas to as far north as Chicago upon his return. Despite Wyatt's claim that he "returned to new Orleans several times during the 1890s for 'farewell concerts'." Though the farewell concerts did take place with the most popular and talented musicians of the day, the consensus of the research published that covers Dédé's return to America cites only one trip from 1893 to 1894. On the journey to America, Dédé's ship was caught in a violent storm and his treasured Cremona violin was lost at sea. Despite such a loss and the disorientation of the ship from its original course to New Orleans, Dédé landed in Galveston and stayed for two months visiting patrons and performing for the public, for which he was praised by the best musicians of the region both black and white.

Christian recalls Dédé's return to New Orleans in great detail:

[...after all the years he had been absent from his native city his name was still a legend.] Some were fond of recalling his handsome figure, amiable disposition, commanding appearance, and "unmixed Negro blood." The music lovers recalled his mastery of the violin-how while he was still a student in New Orleans his admirers never seemed to grow tired of listening to his peculiarly fine playing of the studies of Kreutzer and the "Seventh Air Varié de Beriot." His staccato and legato were considered an exercise in perfection. Admirers declared that he threw his whole soul into his playing and "meets with no difficulties that he does not easily overcome." Dédé returned in full measure the high esteem that his compatriots accorded him... His visit to New Orleans in 1893 became a triumphal homecoming. The elite of the old free colored class flocked to

²⁷ Christian, 168.

²⁸ Cuney-Hare, Negroe Musicians and their Music, 237.

²⁹ Lucius Wyatt, "Six composers of nineteenth-century New Orleans," *Black Music Research Journal* 10, (1) (Spring):127.

³⁰ Cuney-Hare, *Negroe Musicians and their Music*, 237. Among the list of patrons who entertained Dédé while he was in Galveston are Cuney-Hare's parents.

his concerts to hear the aging maestro "charm and captivate his public by the enchantment of his bow." ³¹

While performing in New Orleans, Dédé was absorbed by attention and praise; he even received accolades by *L'Abeille*, the last major French-language publication of white Creole New Orleans.³² During his time in New Orleans he introduced two new songs before he returned to France: "Si j'étais lui" published locally by A.E. Blackmar and "La Patriotisme" a song that utilized a text by Desdunes.³³ Dédé considered "La Patriotisme" as his farewell to New Orleans and arguably America. The somber tone and lulling rhythm of the alliteration of the text is haunting as one realizes the sincere love Dédé had for the country that refused to accept him due to the color of his skin:

La Patriotisme

My adopted mother, France, who so often has consoled me;

Eternal is my destiny to live far from my native country, the land of my birth; but the prejudice that pursues, it is implacable;

My country which refuses my love, it is the land of my birth.³⁴

While in his last days in America Dédé received honorary membership in the Société des Jeunes-Amis, a leading social group composed mostly of Creoles of color with antebellum free background.³⁵ Discouraged by the ever increasing torrent of

³¹ Christian, 169.

³² Sullivan, "Composers of color of nineteenth-century New Orleans," 57.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Cuney-Hare, Negroe Musicians and their Music, 238.

³⁵ Sullivan, "Composers of color of nineteenth-century New Orleans," 58.

prejudice exemplified by the Jim Crow laws, Dédé returned to France where he died in Paris in 1901, survived by his wife Sylvie and their son, Eugène Arcade Dédé. 36

Although there are still pertinent facts regarding Dédé's life that need to be established, the work available to date offers a concise, yet appropriate picture of what Dédé became for the *gens de colour*, among others. His notoriety is evident in the social and historical accounts of his initial training, his return to America, and his academic accolades while studying abroad. Ultimately, his success is truly a testament to the struggle of the free Créoles of color in New Orleans at the turn of the twentieth century. Having a clear idea of where and how Dédé developed his musical abilities and the success he earned from composing and performing, we can better appreciate the scope in which the *Méphisto Masqué* would have been written and received.

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³⁶ LaBrew, Musicians of color in England, Latin America and America, 17.

CHAPTER II

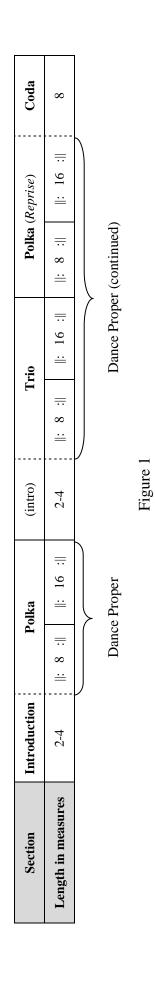
FORM AND STRUCTURE

In terms of structure, Henri Cellarius in his dance manual *La Danse Des Salons* describes "the music [of the polka] in ternary form with eight-bar sections, sometimes with a brief introduction and coda." ¹ Supporting Cellarius's description, Ludwig Bussler, in his compositional treatise entitled *Musical Form*, describes the polka as a slow dance in a binary meter and offers a thorough written outline of its construction. ² Bussler divides the polka into four sections whose names are shown in bold type in Figure 1: Introduction, Polka, Trio, and "Repetition of Polka with Coda." Solid lines separate distinct sections within the figure whereas dotted lines show a connection. Bussler notes that the introduction is usually short and does not belong to the dance proper. The section labeled polka contains 8-bar phrases that divide into two asymmetrical parts of 8 and 16 bars. The Trio is constructed similarly to the polka with 48 measures divided into 8 and 16 bar repeated phrases and is frequently preceded by a short introduction that does not

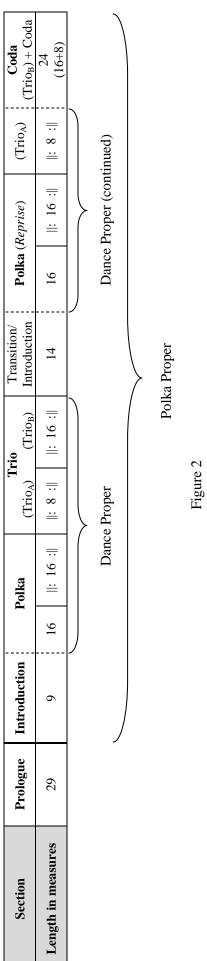
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¹ Cellarius also outlines several defining rhythmic patterns that dictate both form and style, which will be discussed in more depth below. Henri Cellarius, *La Danse Des Salons*, (Paris:1847).

² Ludwig Bussler, *Musikalische Formenlehr*, (Berlin: Carl Habel, 1883). Ludwig Bussler (1838-1900) was a German musicologist and prolific author on composition and pedagogy. Bussler's treatise was originally published in German entitled *Musikalische Formenlehre* in 1883, but was translated with the author's permission by N. Gans and published in London in 1894.



Structure of polka as outlined by Bussler



Structure of Méphisto Masqué

interrupt the dance proper. Finally, there is a repetition of the section labeled polka with an added Coda, usually 8 measures in length. With Bussler's description, as well aspolkas written by Dédé's contemporaries, we can observe how Dédé's *Méphisto Masqué* adheres to and differs from established practice.

In the Mephisto Masqué, Dédé altered two of the most important aspects of dance music: meter and form. The first 29 measures of the work are in 3/4 and marked *Andantino quasi allegretto*, which is contrary to Bussler's description of a "lively couple dance in 2/4." Interestingly, Gunther Schuller, in his recording of the *Méphisto Masqué*, omits the first 29 measures and begins at measure 30 where the piece transitions into 2/4 prior to the polka proper. With respect to form, Dédé's polka includes an extended introduction labeled "prologue," as shown in Figure 2. Compared to Bussler's description, Dédé's "introduction," as indicated on the original manuscript, is exceptionally long. The prologue closes with a brief cadenza that harmonically leads to an extended 9-measure transition to facilitate a metric, rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic change into the polka proper. These 9 measures more directly correspond to Bussler's introduction in Figure 1 than the prologue.

The dance proper adheres to the structural length dictated by Bussler. Contrary to Bussler's description, Dédé writes a parallel double period in the first 16 measures rather than an exact repeat of 8 initial bars. Such a treatment of the polka was not uncommon, as seen in Waldteufel's *Trictrac Polka* Op. 181 (1905).⁶ The second half of the polka is also

³ Gunther Schuller, 2005, *Turn-of-the-century cornet favorites*. Sony Records B000AARKVM

⁴ This label is taken from the 1889 score for solo piano.
⁵ The original manuscript of the piano and full orchestral parts are included in Appendices A and C. Appendix B is a transcription of the piano score, using modern notation software, to aid in reading the music.

⁶ A copy of the piano reduction for Waldteufel's *Trictrac Polka* is included in Appendix D to illustrate the written out repeat, and is also referenced later for its adherence to harmonic practices.

a parallel double period; however, it is repeated in its entirety before moving directly to the trio. The trio is therefore not introduced, as otherwise suggested in Figure 1, but does follow the structure and length of Bussler's description with 8 and 16 repeated bars. The first 8 bars of the trio form a parallel period, and the second half forms a parallel double period. As seen in Figure 1, Bussler does not suggest or reference a transition to the reprise. However, Dédé inserts a transition of 14 measures before the reprise to the beginning of the polka via *Dal Segno al Coda*. Dédé also repeats the trio within the reprise of the polka, which in turn, completely alters its overall structure.

Figure 1 shows a polka that builds a ternary form: (Intro) Polka-Trio-Polka (Coda). A repetition of the trio, as seen in Figure 2, generates something binary in form: (Intro) Polka-Trio-Polka-Trio (Coda). With true craft, Dédé manages to alter the form without altering the structure of each section within the polka. In the reprise the first 8 measures of the Trio, labeled Trio_A in Figure 2, repeat. The end of Trio_A is marked with the Coda sign, (although the listener would have expected it at the end of the polka proper). The Coda begins with a modified statement of the 16 measures that comprise the second half of the Trio, labeled Trio_B, and are followed by 8 measures of expanded material previously presented within the Coda.

While still maintaining the strict internal phrase structure of the polka and trio,

Dédé completely altered the accepted ternary structure of the polka proper. In terms of
accepted dance practices and traditions of the polka in the mid- to late nineteenth century,
this treatment of the form was undoubtedly noticed. One questions the reception of such
alterations, as it surely would have defied the listeners' expectations.

CHAPTER III

RHYTHMIC, HARMONIC AND MELODIC CONTENT

Having described *Méphisto Masqué*'s form in the previous section, I will now explore its rhythmic, harmonic, and melodic content to elaborate Dédé's compositional style and technique. The analysis that follows limits its discussion to Dédé's treatment of harmony and melody in the context of late nineteenth-century polkas. Although harmonic principles of the same era will be taken into consideration, the analysis remains within the genre of polkas to contextualize aspects of the work as a departure or an adherence to established practices.

Conventionally, a polka begins with a short introduction of 2-4 measures that establishes the tonic key while utilizing distinct characteristic rhythmic patterns. Dédé adhered to these conventions in the introduction to his polka *Mirliton Fin de Siécle* (1892). Yet the opening of *Méphisto Masqué*, as seen in Figure 3, is harmonically and rhythmically unconventional. Supported by extreme registral and dynamic emphasis, a

¹ The *Grove Music Online* article entitled "Polka" offers five characteristic rhythmic patterns associated with the polka. One of these rhythms (plays a prominent role in Dédé's polka themes. This rhythm will be referred to as the polka rhythm or "PR" as seen in Figure 4. Černušák, Gracian, Andrew Lamb, and John Tyrrell, "Polka," *Grove Music Online*.

² A copy of the first violin part for Dédé's *Mirliton Fin De Siécle* is included in Appendix D to illustrate his use and understanding of polka conventions, particularly the function and length of the introduction.

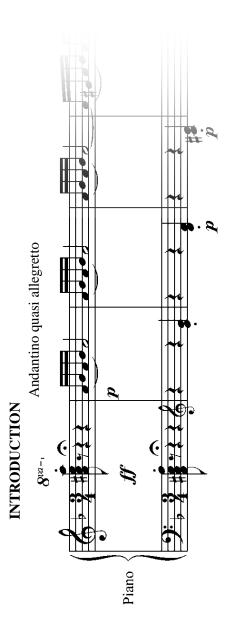


Figure 3

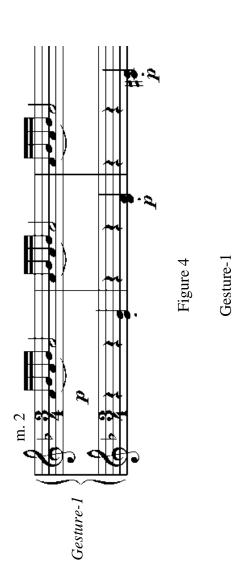
Introduction to Méphisto Masqué

fortissimo A-major block chord in root position across both staves (covering a range from A2 to A6), serves as a dramatic gesture to begin the prologue. Rhythmically, a fermata on beat two isolates the chord. Harmonically, this A-major chord is simply the dominant preparing an inevitable resolution to tonic d minor. The first chord, however, could be perceived as tonic, much like the opening of Beethoven's third symphony Op. 55. A major is not tonicized, due to the gesture in mm. 2-4 that points towards d-minor.

The gesture appears a total of three times within the work. Each time, it is modified. Gesture-1, shown in Figure 4, consists of two parts: down-beat sixteenth notes that center around scale degree five and off-beat descending thirds that generate V4/3 - i - V⁶ in tonic d minor. Due to the rhythmic ambiguity of the first measure, the listener may perceive the sixteenth notes not as the down beat of measure two, but as an anacrusis, as illustrated in Figure 5.

Dédé uses the gesture as a unifying element to introduce or to transition between new sections of the polka. Gestures 2 and 3, as seen in Figure 6, are rhythmically modified when the meter changes from 3/4 to 2/4. The second and third gestures consist of the polka rhythm (PR) on the off-beat and descending thirds on the down beat (which generate the same harmony in d minor as Gesture-1).

Dédé continues to encourage metric ambiguity by introducing each gesture with material that alters its metric emphasis. Figure 7 indicates five measures of transition into Gesture-2 preceding the polka that complicate the listener's ability to perceive the transition from triple to duple meter. Articulation and dynamics in this passage, as well as the fermati on beat two in mm. 30-31, emphasize the PR and distort the duple meter. Rhythmically, depending on how long the performer holds the fermati, the listener may



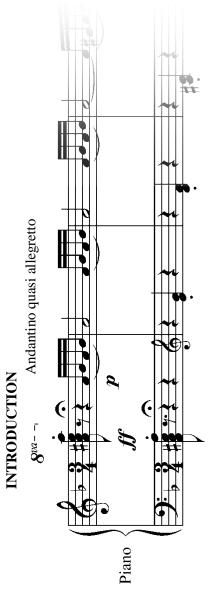


Figure 5

Aural perception of Gesture-1 as an anacrusis

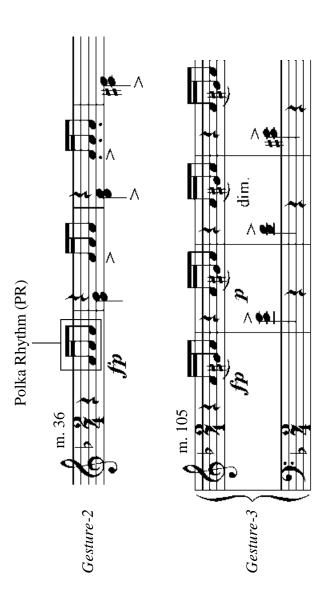
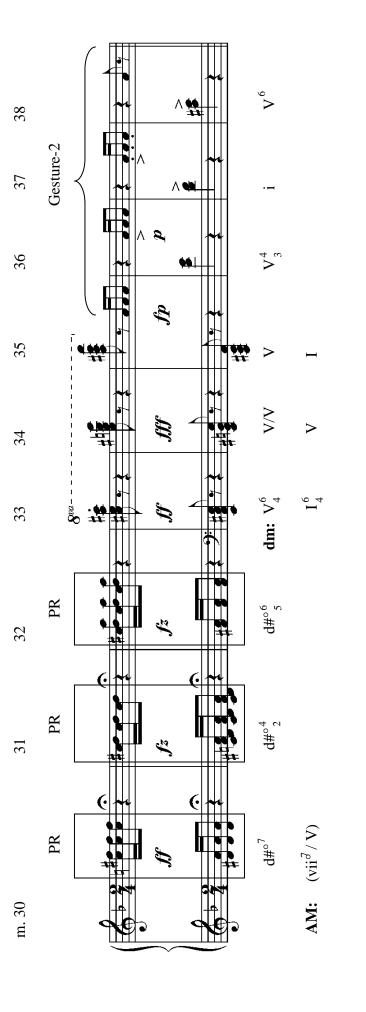


Figure 6

Gesture-2 and 3



Transition into Gesture-2

not recognize the meter change until m. 33, when the fermati are no longer present. Harmonically, mm. 30-32 introduce a D#⁰⁷ chord in a series of inversions as an applied chord to E major (the dominant of A). The three block chords in mm. 33-35 (A: cadential 6/4-V-I) grow with dynamic intensity (ff-fff), and establish the new meter while prolonging the dominant into Gesture-2. Although a strong emphasis is placed on A major, as in the prologue, a modulation is not realized due to the gesture that follows. The G natural in m. 36 transforms the A major triad into A dominant-seventh that ultimately prepares the listener for the d minor at the start of the polka proper (m. 39).

Lastly, having illustrated the rhythmic and harmonic ambiguity of gestures 1 and 2, we can examine the transition in mm. 95-108 that includes Gesture 3. Dédé introduces new rhythmic emphasis in this transition, as seen in Figure 8. All of the polka's primary themes up to this point place emphasis on the down beat, as is appropriate in this style of dance music. Rhythmic material in m. 95, however, accents the upbeat with forte dynamics. Dédé writes a four-bar phrase in mm. 95-98 that emphasizes the dominant in the first two measures, the tonic in the third measure, and the sub-mediant in the fourth. In mm. 99-102, the four-bar phrase repeats with the same harmonic and rhythmic structure, now in A minor, concluding with an IAC. The rhythmic figure of two eighthsquarter (an augmentation of the PR) repeats on E half-diminished seven before resolving to an A-major block chord in m. 105. Gesture-3 begins in the same measure, ornamented with chromatic neighbors (G#). The Gestures offer continuity between the different

³ Richard Rosenberg, who has transcribed several of Dédé's orchestral works, believes that Dédé wrote *fortes* rather than accents to suggest emphasis of certain rhythmic gestures. (Personal communication, Summer 2011)



Transition into Gesture-3

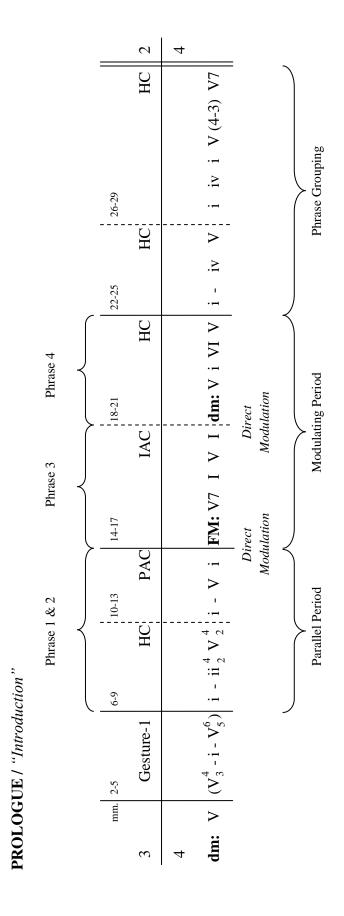
sections of the work, which are otherwise disjunct. The rhythmic and harmonic structures, as well as the supporting material that precede them, unify each gesture.

Having discussed the gestures, I will return to analyze the prologue to further understand the function of its harmonies as shown in Figure 9. The first eight measures (mm. 6-13) organize into two four-measure phrases that end with a half- and perfect-authentic cadence respectfully, thus constructing a parallel period. Phrases 3 (mm. 14-17) initiates a direct modulation to the relative major (F). Although such a modulation is not untraditional, phrase 4 (mm. 18-21) returns to d minor through direct modulation as well. This generates a modulating period that ends with a half cadence. The last phrase of the prologue (mm. 26-29) also ends with a half cadence, constructing a phrase grouping for mm. 22-29. This series of half cadences reinforce the dominant and harmonically support the introductory nature of the prologue, which leads the listener to the resolution of gesture-1 into the polka proper. ⁵

The polka, beginning in m. 39, mirrors the harmonic activity of the introduction by using direct modulations to relative tonal centers, as diagramed in Figure 10. The polka proper switches between d minor and the relative F major every 16 bars (excluding repeats). The entire Trio is presented in the parallel D major, before returning to d minor for the reprise of the polka. The Coda returns to D major with material previously stated in the Trio and remains in D for the conclusion of the work.

⁴ It appears as if Dédé was constructing something in ternary form with the return of previously stated material in m. 22.

⁵ One should note that this amount of harmonic activity is unconventional within the introduction to a polka, a sentiment echoed in the previous section when discussing the unconventional nature of the introductions length and form.



Harmonic outline of the Prologue

Figure 9

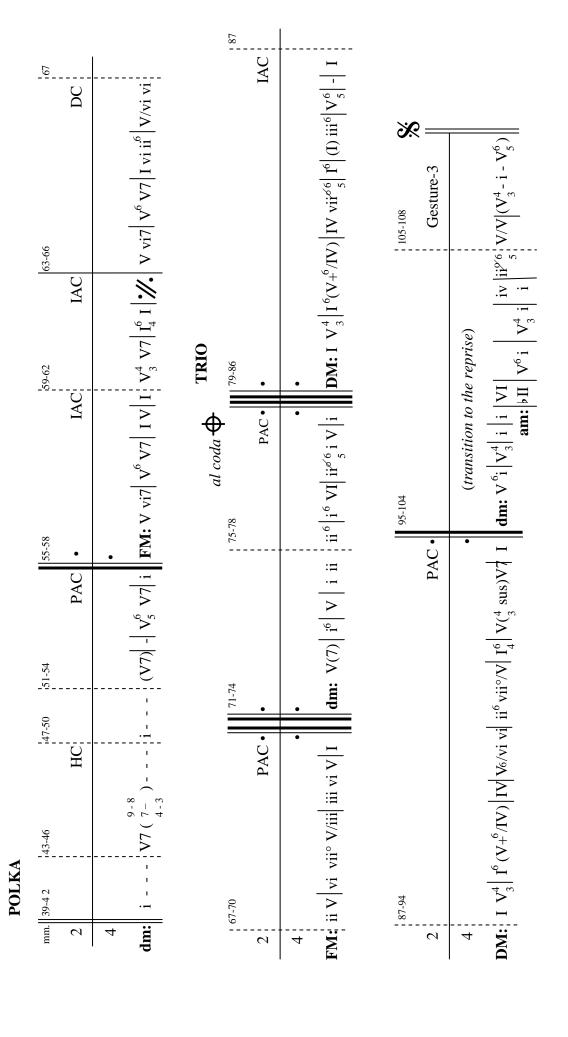


Figure 10

Harmonic outline of the Polka Proper

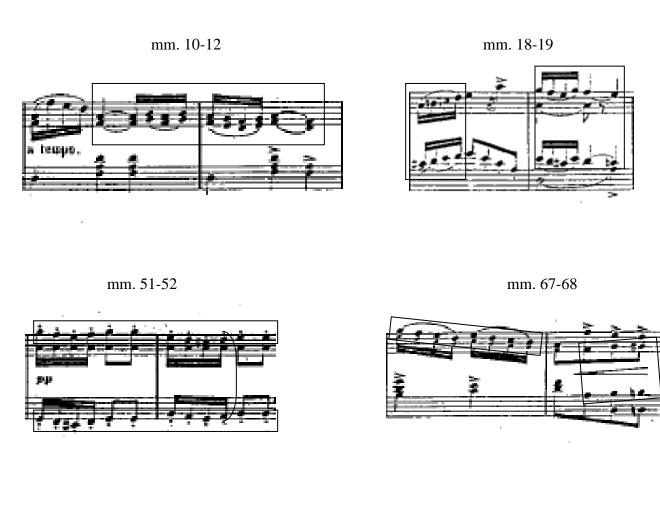
The amount of harmonic activity in *Méphisto Masqué* far exceeds that found in polkas written within the same era. First, most polkas were written in major keys.

Second, polkas usually have only one modulation to distinguish between the polka (in the tonic) and the trio (in the subdominant). Two examples of such harmonic design are in the *Carolinen* (1900) and *Trictrac* (1905), polkas by Emile Waldteufel (1837-1915). Dédé also used this design in his *Mirliton Fin De Siecle* (1892). Although the harmonic outline of *Méphisto Masqué* is extremely unconventional, compared to the standard harmonic practices of contemporary polkas mentioned above, the harmonic structure helps reinforce the binary form previously discussed.

More subtle nuances of the melodic and harmonic devices employed by Dédé speak to his capability as a composer: the parallel tenths and thirds in both melodic and accompanimental figures (Figure 11); the tonic pedal implemented under the primary theme of the prologue (Figure 12); and the use of multiple voices in the B section of the prologue (Figure 13).

Exaggerating and manipulating the listener's expectations, Dédé managed to present his *Polka Fantastique* within the common musical practices of the nineteenth-century while still exercising his creativity and craft. Using rhythmic, harmonic and melodic devices, Dédé transformed a simple dance into something both distinctive and original in its time.

⁶ Waldteufel's *Carolinen Polka* (as well as the *Trictrac Polka* and Dédé's *Mirliton Fin De Siécle*) is supplied in Appendix D to illustrate the harmonic conventions of polkas.



mm. 95-102



Figure 11
Use of parallel tenths and thirds



Figure 12

Use of tonic Pedal in Méphisto Masqué

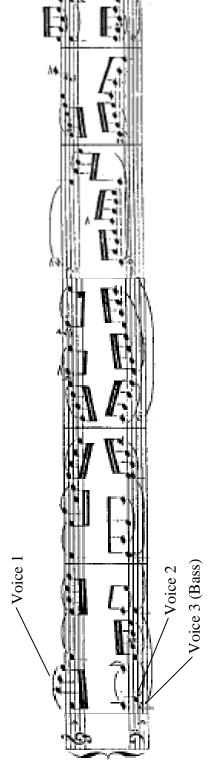


Figure 13

Use of multiple voices in Méphisto Masqué

CHAPTER IV

ORCHESTRATION

The task of orchestration is an art. Berlioz, Debussy, and Ravel enhanced their works and careers using unique instruments and idiomatic instrumental techniques to redefine the practice of orchestration. Berlioz went one step further and presented his thoughts on orchestration in the *Grand Traité d'Instrumentation et d'Orchestration Modernes*, first published in 1843, then revised and enlarged in 1855. Even though Dédé studied in Paris between 1857 and 1860, we can only assume that he encountered Berlioz's treatise, since we lack extant evidence.

Manuscripts available through the National Bibliotheque de Paris for the *Méphisto Masqué* include instrumental parts from the full orchestral version as well as a piano reduction, both published in 1889.³ Table 1 shows the orchestration as represented by the printed parts.⁴ The first column lists all of the printed parts organized into their respected consorts. The second column lists any special markings printed on the parts that

¹ Jon Alan Conrad, "Instrumentation and Orchestration," *Grove Music Online*.

² http://www.hberlioz.com/Scores/BerliozTreatise.html#Ophicleide, (July 13, 2011).

³ The original publishing information supplied at the bottom of the first violin part of the orchestral version and the title page of the piano reduction is "Paris, L. Bathlot & V^{ve} Héraud Editeurs, 39, Rue de l'Echiqueir 1889."

⁴ Copies of the original orchestral parts are offered in Appendix C.

Table 1

Orchestration for Méphisto Masqué

None of word	Canada annulaise	# St. Cant.
Ivalité of part	Special markings	# or perioriners
Mirlitons		-
Mirlitons Ténors	with 2 part divisi	4-8
Mirlitons 2 ^{me} Ténors	with 2 part divisi	4-8
Mirlitons Tailles	with 3 part divisi	6-12
Mirlitons Basses	with 2 part divisi	4-8
Woodwinds		
Flûte(s)	with 2 part divisi	2
(Grande Flûte & Petite Flûte)	(written on two staves "Grande and Petite")	
Hautbois	with 2 part divisi	2
	solo Ophicléide cues and vocal parts: "Ah!, Ah!, Ah!"	
1 ^{re} Clarinette en Sib	with solo, cadenza and vocal part: "Ah!, Ah!, Ah!"	1
2 ^{me} Clarinette en La	with vocal part: "Ah!, Ah!"	1
Bassons	with 2 part divisi	2
	and solo Ophicléide cues "if absent"	
Brass		
Cors en Re	with 2 part divisi	2
1 ^r Piston en La	with Ophicléide cues in Polka proper "if absent"	1
2 ^d Piston en La	with vocal cues: "Ah!, Ah!, Ah!"	1
$1^{\rm r} & 2^{\rm d}$ Trombones	written on one staff with 2 part divisi	2
3 ^e Trombone		1
Ophicléide	Extended solo in introduction and polka	1
Percussion		
Timbales en Ré La	with sections for "Tambour" (drum) and triangle	1
Batterie	with sections for "G.C."/Grosse Caisse (Bass Drum), Cymbals and Triangle	3
Strings		
$1^{\rm er} { m Violin}$	with 2-3 part divisi and cues for the Ophicléide/Hautbois solo and	6-10
	Clarinette cadenza	
	mostly split between two staves	
$2^{\rm d}$ Violin	with 2 part divisi and vocal part: "Ah!, Ah!, Ah!"	6-10
Alto	with 2 part divisi and vocal part: "Ah!, Ah!, Ah!"	4-8
Violincelle		4-8
Contre Basse	•	1-4

would have a direct effect on the number of performers, such as solos and divisi. The last column has a projected range of musicians based on the minimum number of players per part (considering the divisi and solos), as well as a larger number considering the acoustical demands of the ensemble. The minimum is 59 musicians, which is still a relatively large orchestra. Acoustically, the mirlitons and string players must be doubled to balance the large wind section. In that case, an ideal size is at least 96 musicians. Dédé shows skill in writing for the strings by utilizing very specific double and triple stops that can be performed by a single musician, as seen in Figure 14. Such writing should not be considered an excuse to reduce the number of players, nor is it a suggestion to the number of players desired, but allows for the best acoustical effect from the strings and displays Dédé's understanding of the orchestra.

Dédé features two specific wind instruments within the work: ophecléide and mirliton. The ophecléide is a conical-bore brass-keyed instrument that was succeeded in modern orchestras by the tuba and euphonium. It was patented by the French instrument maker named Halary (Jean Hilaire Asté) in 1821.⁵ Primarily used as a mediator between the timbre of brass and woodwind sections, it appears in works by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Verdi, and Wagner. Berlioz, in his treatise on orchestration, felt that the ophecléide was best when not left exposed. He goes on to explain: "There is nothing more vulgar, I would even say more monstrous and less designed to blend with the rest of the orchestra than those more or less fast passages written as solos for the

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⁵ Reginald Morley-Pegge, Philip Bate, Stephen J. Weston, Arnold Myers, "Ophicleide," *Grove Music Online*, accessed October 15, 2011,



mm. 1-4 1^{er} Violin



mm. 33-38 1^{er} Violin



mm. 90-93 2^d Violin



mm. 31-35 Alto

Figure 14

Observations of string writing

middle range of the ophicléide.... It is rather like a bull escaped from its stable and frolicking in a salon." In almost complete defiance to Berlioz's disclaimer, Dédé features the ophicléide, in the middle of its range, with an extended solo in the introduction to *Méphisto Masqué*.

The other featured instrument, the mirliton, is a membranophone, closely related to the kazoo, and usually made of metal. The instrument has a long and extensive history dating back to the sixteenth century. The modern mirliton, that would have been used to perform *Méphisto Masqué*, had many designs and names: Eunuch flute, Onion flute, Trumpet Cane, Doggerel, Kazoo and Bigophone. Dédé writes for the mirliton in a small consort that mirrors a string quartet: first and second tenor, *tailles* (a French term used to describe the middle range of a tenor part) and bass. The mirlitons add a percussive, snarelike quality to melodies and harmonies affecting the timbre of the ensemble. In *Méphisto Masqué*, the mirlitons are first heard in Gesture-2 (m. 35) leading into the polka proper. For the majority of the work, the mirlitons' parts double another instrument within the orchestra as seen in Figure 15. There are select sections where the mirlitons are rhythmically or melodically distinct, but it is always within the context of other parts represented across the ensemble, as seen in Figure 16.

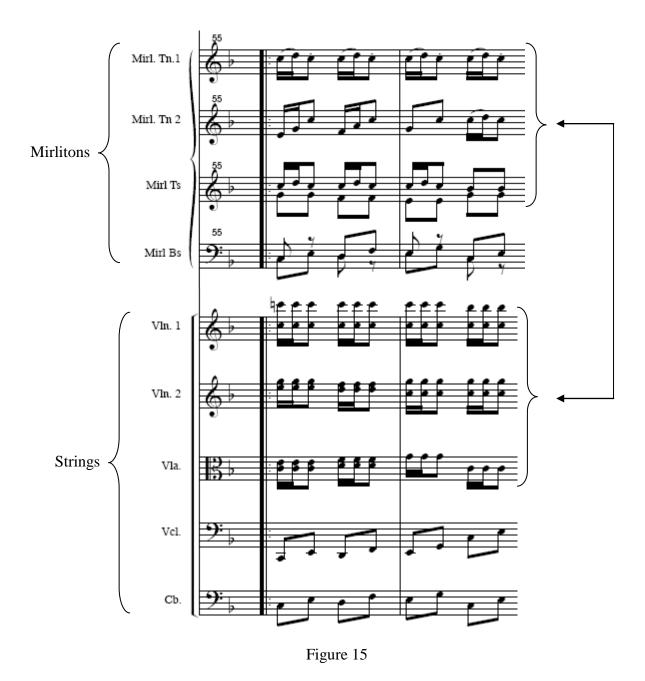
Dédé dedicates the *Méphisto Masqué* to "*Bigotophonistes*" on the title page of the published piano part. Although Bigotophonistes are simply bigophone players, the

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⁶ Hector Berlioz, *Grand Traité d'Instrumentation et d'Orchestration Modernes*, (Paris: Lemoine & cie. 1843). Translated by Michael Austin, Accessed on August 25, 2011. http://www.hberlioz.com/Scores/BerliozTreatise.html

⁷ "Mirliton (Music)," *Wikipédia: Encyclopédia Libre*, translated by Google, accessed October 15, 2011, http://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&prev=/search%3Fq%3Dbigophone%26hl%3Den%26client%3 Dfirefoxa%26sa%3DN%26rls%3Dorg.mozilla:enUS:official%26biw%3D1280%26bih%3D645%26prmd%3Dimvns&rurl=translate.google.com&sl=fr&u=http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirliton_%28musique%29

8 See Appendix A.



Comparison of distinct mirliton parts within the context of the string parts (mm. 55-56)



Figure 16

Doubling between the mirliton and string sections (mm. 39-45)

dedication would seem to contradict the markings on the score which call for mirlitons. Even though we can assume that the names and instruments are essentially synonymous, one questions why the dedication differs from the instrumentation. Richard Rosenberg claims that Dédé was quite conscious in his choice of words:

"Bigotophonistes, if you explore the origins of [the] word, means both someone who plays a "buzzy" instrument or bigots! So the Mask of Mephisto, this polka, is a devilish... piece which is dedicated to bigots and to the people who play in the orchestra. And that doesn't just come from nowhere! [Dédé] certainly wrote that in response to something that affected him deeply, as I am sure it affected all of his family and friends."

This conjecture is purely speculative. Recognizing Dédé's American heritage, Rosenberg assumes he encountered the derogatory term "bigot" and therefore, used it in a clever dedication in *Méphisto Masqué* or "the masked devil." The etymology of the word does support this notion, in that *Bigotophone* was spelled without the "t" in most references to the instrument and its players. One could also suggest that Dédé knew, or admired Bigot's instruments, and simply wanted to feature them in a piece which would be dedicated to their performers. In either case, the question of the dedication and the use of the mirliton offer interesting speculation to their purpose in the work.

The inclusion of these distinctive instruments in *Méphisto Masqué* is a vital component to the program and overall aural effect of its performance. An accurate recording with the full orchestration, performed by the Hot Springs Music Festival Orchestra conducted by Richard Rosenberg, is available on the Naxos label. ¹⁰ Gunther Schuller's recording, however, is less accurate, replacing the ophicléide with a cornet,

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⁹ This quote is taken from my interview with Richard Rosenberg "Discussing the Créole Romantics" in 2007. A transcription of the entire interview is available in "A Survey of Sources Related to Edmond DéDé: Nineteenth-Century New Orleans Violinist, Composer and Conductor," (MM Thesis, Texas State University-San Marcos, 2009).

¹⁰ Richard Rosenberg, 2000, Edmond Dede I. Naxos American Records B00004R7NN

excluding the introduction with the ophicléide solo, and removing the mirlitons completely.¹¹

Gunther Schuller, 2005, Turn-of-the-Century Cornet Favorites. Sony Records B000AARKVM

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Edmond Dédé is one of many American minority composers who was ostracized during the turbulent climate of the late nineteenth-century. Published information about the adversity Dédé faced as an African American overshadows his musical accomplishments. In this thesis I analyze *Méphisto Masqué* to highlight his musical abilities. More specifically, I show how Dédé challenged several musical traditions, such as form and orchestration, while adhering to the harmonic and melodic language of the late nineteenth-century.

To contextualize polka and establish a more concrete understanding of its presence within the scholarly landscape, I used Henri Cellarius's description of the polka and Ludwig Bussler's treatise on musical form to provide a concise musical definition, triangulated with polkas written by some of Dédé's contemporaries such as Emile Waldteufel. With a clearer understanding of polka, my analysis of Dédé's *Méphisto Masqué* highlights several distinguishing characteristics of the work in context to established compositional practices. First, Dédé generates something ternary in form rather than binary. Second, he includes a lengthy introduction in triple meter rather than the two to four customary measures in duple meter. Lastly, Dédé enhances the basic

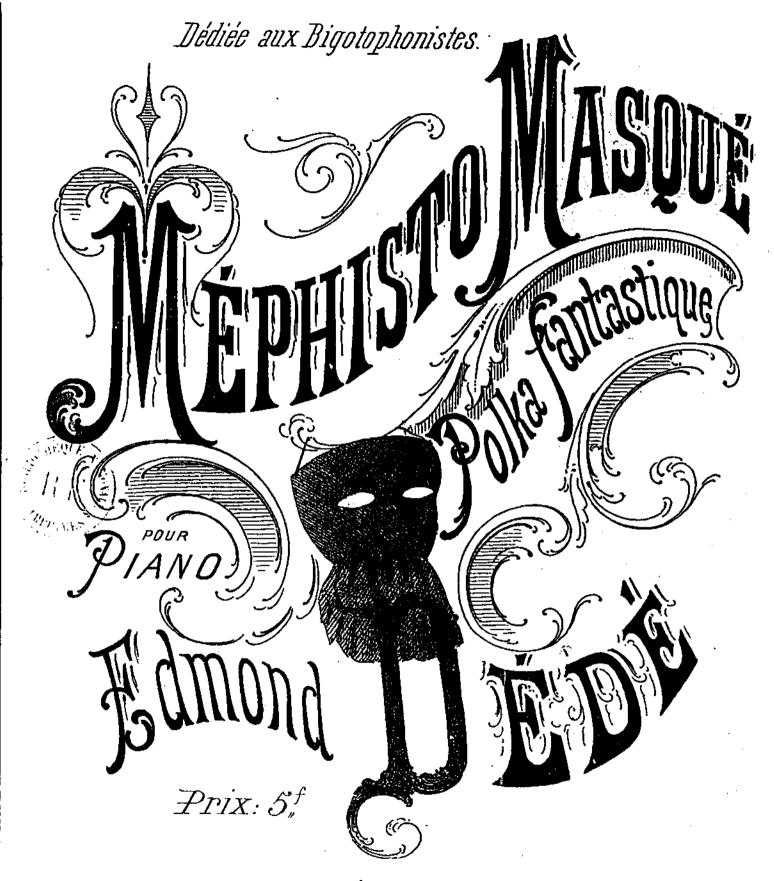
orchestration, as advised in Berlioz's treatise, by featuring two distinctive instruments in the work: ophicléide and mirlitons. Their inclusion is undeniably a vital part of a performance of the work, evidenced by Richard Rosenberg's recording.

By expanding its form and orchestration while adhering to established harmonic and melodic practices of the late nineteenth-century Dédé redefines the possibilities of polkas for concert use. Dédé's place in the lexicon of American music history can therefore be viewed not only through his biography, but by his work as a composer.

APPENDIX A

MÉPHISTO MASQUÉ PIANO MANUSCRIPT

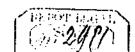
The following is a copy of the original piano manuscript for Méphisto Masqué published in 1889.



Paris, L.BATHLOT & V'e HÉRAUD Editeurs, 39, Rue de l'Echiquier.

Pous droits d'Exécution publique et de reproduction récervés.

lmp. Jury.Paris



Dédiée aux Bigotophonistes.

MÉPHISTO MASQUÉ

POLKA FANTASTIQUE

Pour PIANO

Par EDMOND DÉDÉ.





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APPENDIX B

MÉPHISTO MASQUÉ PIANO TRANSCRIPTION

For the sake of clarity, the original piano manuscript has been transcribed using modern notation software.

MÉPHISTO MASQUÉ

POLKA FANTASTIQUE

Par EDMOND DÉDÉ





Mephisto Masque 3 49



APPENDIX C

MÉPHISTO MASQUÉ ORIGINAL ORCHESTRAL PARTS

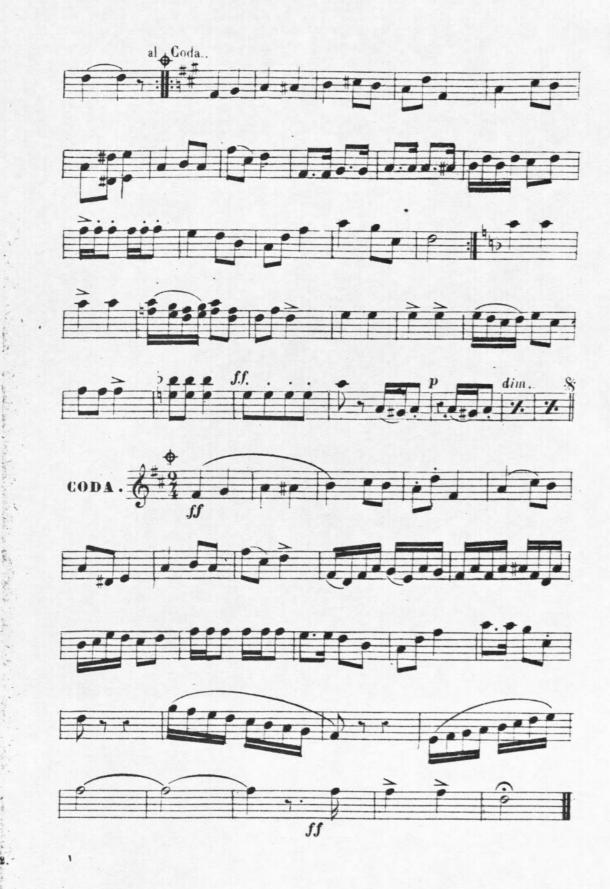
For reference, and an attempt for preservation, all of the original orchestral parts have been copied into this appendix. A majority of the excerpts or examples in the body of the text have been taken from these parts.

MEPHISTO MASQUÉ

POLKA FANTASTIQUE



L.BATHLOT & V !! HERAUD, EDITEURS, Rue de l'Echiquier 59.



MEPHISTO MASQUE

POLKA FANTASTIQUE



L. BATHLOT & Ve HERAUD, EDITEURS, Rue de l'Echiquier 39.



MEPHISTO MASQUÉ

POLKA FANTASTIQUE

Par EDMOND DEDE .

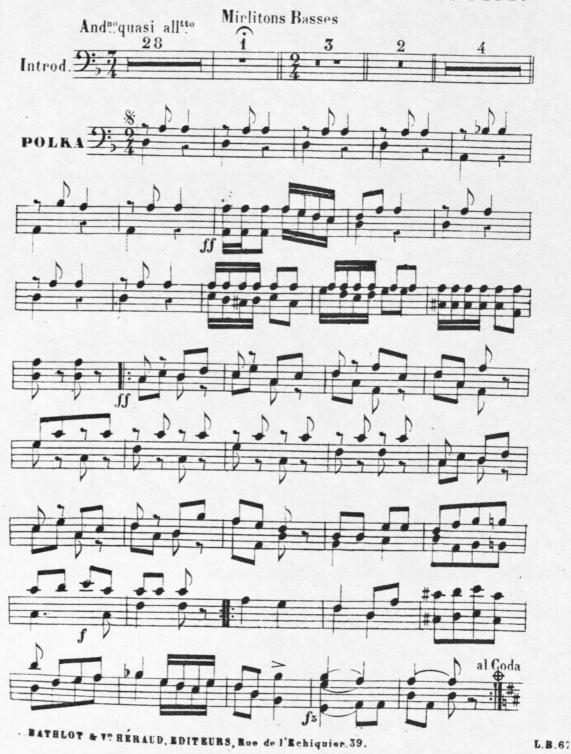


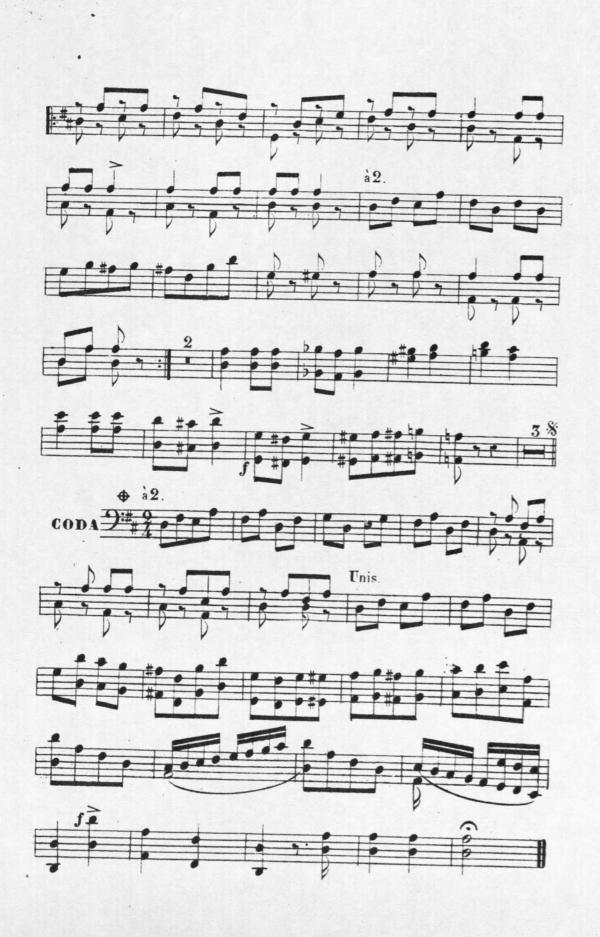


MÉPHISTO MASQUÉ

POLKA FANTASTIQUE

Par EDMOND DEDÉ.

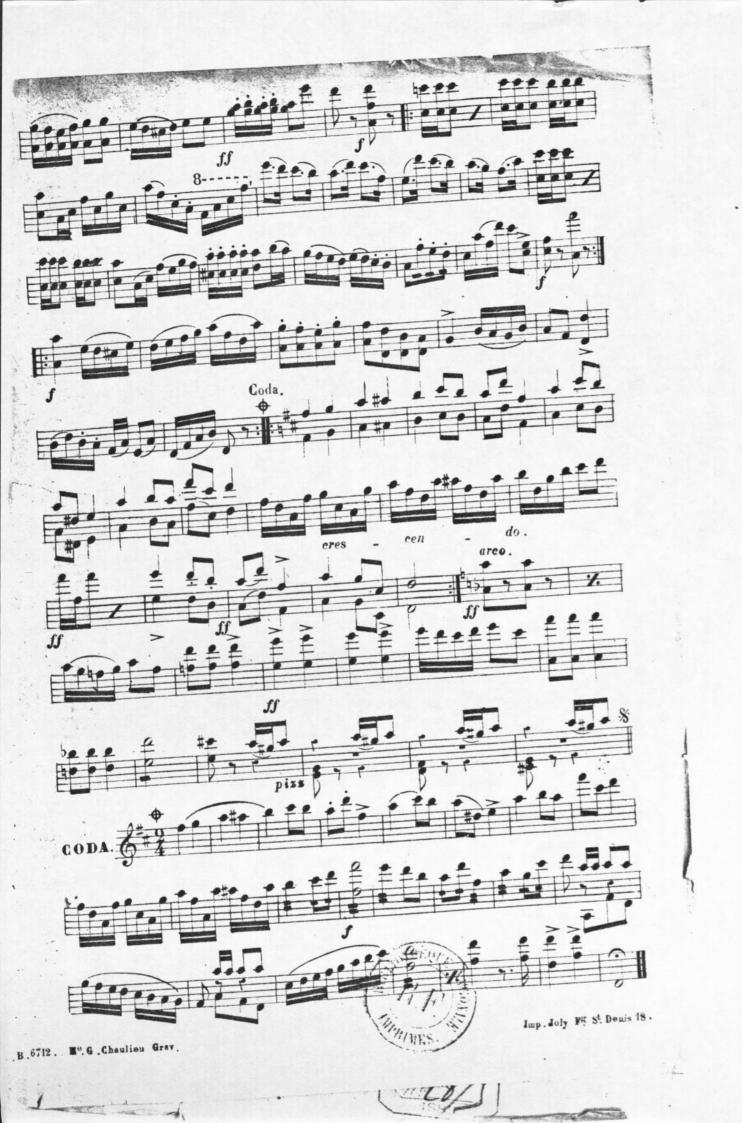




MÉPHISTO MASQUÉ



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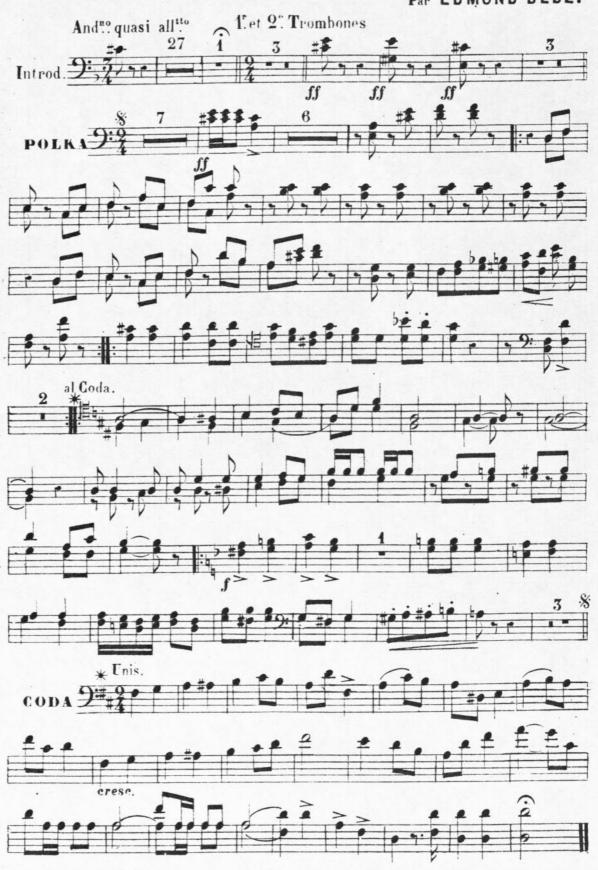




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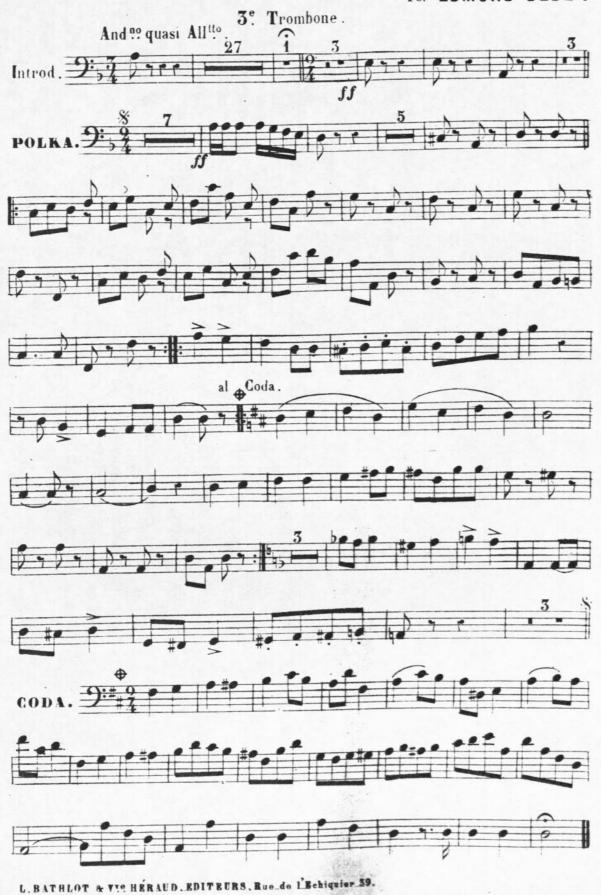
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POLKA FANTASTIQUE





POLKA FANTASTIQUE

Par EDMOND DEDE .



POLKA FANTASTIQUE

Par EDMOND DÉDÉ.

Batterie .



MEPHISTO MASQUE

POLKA FANTASTIQUE

A grand orchestre alec fanfares

Par EDMOND DÉDÉ.

1er Violon .







MEPHISTO MASQUE

POLKA FANTASTIQUE

Par EDMOND DEDÉ.



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POLKA FANTASTIQUE

Par EDMOND DEDE .



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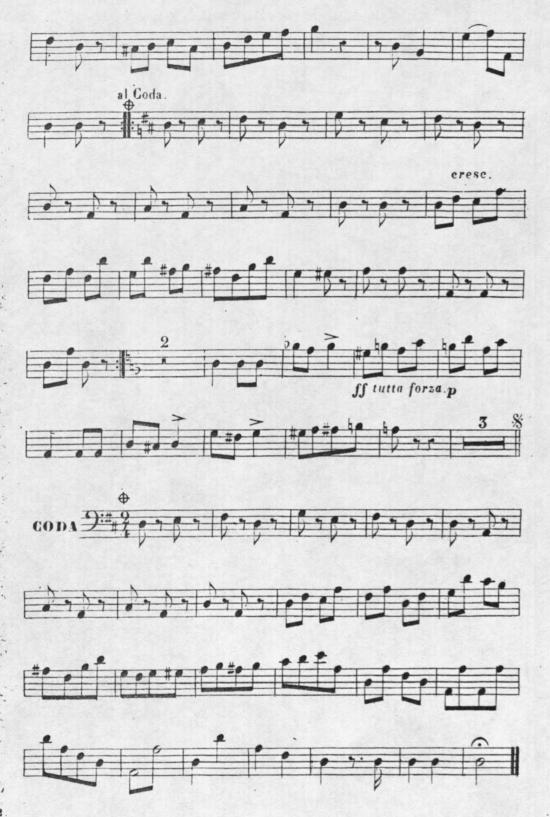
MEPHISTO MASQUE

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APPENDIX D

ADDITIONAL POLKAS

A piano reduction of the *Trictrac* (1905) and *Carolinen* (1900) polkas by Emil Waldteufel, as well as, the first violin part of the polka *Mirliton Fin de*Siécle (1892) by Edmond Dédé have been included in this appendix to illustrate the harmonic and structural aspects of polkas referenced in the body of the text.

TRICTRAC - POLKA.













CAROLINEN - POLKA.

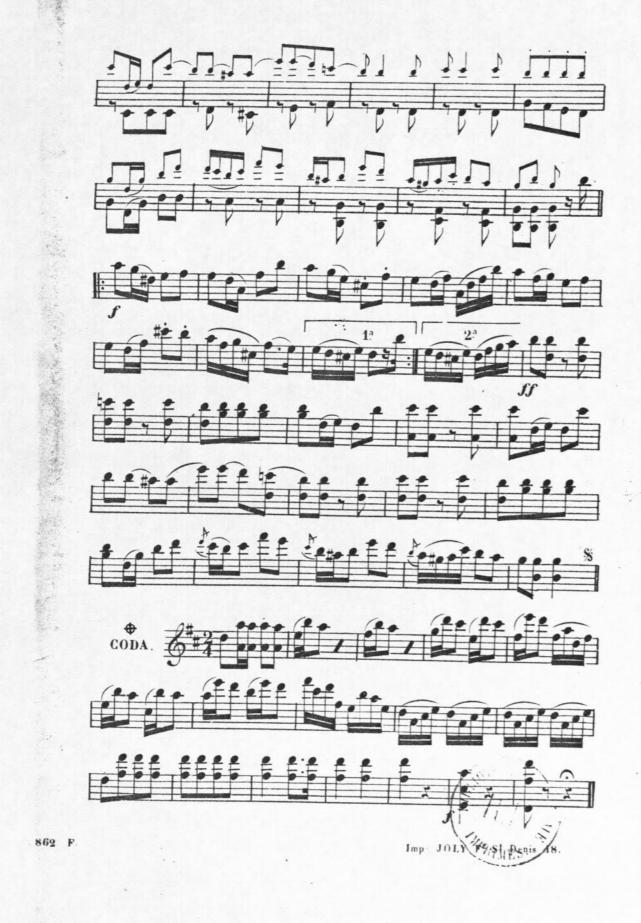






MIRLITON FIN DE SIÈCLE





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INTERVIEWS

Richard Rosenberg, interview by Christopher T. F. Hanson. Hot Springs Arkansas, Summer 2008.

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