Performing Québécois Nationalism:
The Reception and Revival of André Mathieu

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Abstract

Over the past decade there has been an unexpected revival of Québécois composer André Mathieu's works. Mathieu (1929–1968), who was allegedly touted by Rachmaninoff as the "Little Canadian Mozart," died in poverty and obscurity. Post-World War Two, his music was unpopular for aesthetic and social reasons, and thus rarely performed until the mid-2000s. The shape Mathieu has taken in the recent *mémoire collective* of Quebec citizens is directly linked to the efforts of pianist-composer Alain Lefèvre. Discussion of Mathieu's career and reputation is divided chronologically into three periods: his early life as a child prodigy (1929–1945); his adolescence and later career (1943–1968); and his ensuing reception (1964–2017). Drawing on musical analysis, biographical detail, and reception history, as well as larger networks of cultural and institutional history, sociology, and contemporaneous philosophical thought, I explore reasons for Mathieu's discontinuous reception as well as his current prominence in the Québécois canon.

Résumé

La dernière décennie fut témoin d'une étonnante redécouverte des œuvres du compositeur québécois André Mathieu (1929–1968). Celui que Rachmaninoff aurait surnommé le « petit Mozart canadien » mourut dans la misère et l'oubli. Après la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, pour des raisons esthétiques et sociales, sa musique était devenue impopulaire et fut donc rarement interprétée avant le milieu des années 2000. L'espace qu'occupe depuis peu le compositeur dans la mémoire collective québécoise est directement lié aux efforts du pianiste et compositeur Alain Lefèvre. Une analyse de la carrière et de la réputation d'André Mathieu est ici divisée chronologiquement en trois périodes : ses débuts en tant qu'enfant prodige (1929–1945); son adolescence et les dernières années de sa carrière (1943–1968); et la réception qui s'ensuivit (1964–2017). M'appuyant sur une analyse musicale, sur des détails biographiques et sur l'histoire de la réception, ainsi que sur des réseaux plus larges d'histoire de la culture et des institutions, de sociologie et de pensées philosophiques contemporaines aux événements analysés, j'explore les raisons de cette discontinuité de la réception de Mathieu, ainsi que sa notoriété actuelle dans le canon musical québécois.

Acknowledgements

Finishing this thesis feels like I have come full circle. I don't recall when I first learned about André Mathieu, but I do remember hastily submitting an essay for my "Music and Politics" class one Friday afternoon in the fourth year of my undergraduate degree at the University of Western Ontario. At the time, I was also a research assistant for the professor of that class, Emily Abrams Ansari. Part of my job was putting together some final details for the school's centennial celebration of Benjamin Britten, which was opening that night. Funnily enough, my current advisor Chip (or Lloyd Whitesell as he was credited in the programme) gave the opening lecture. It was only after I arrived at McGill to do my master's in musicology and I noticed the statue of Mathieu one block from school that I realized there might have been something to my essay.

Of course, I had a lot of help and support from then to now. I give my highest expression of gratitude to my advisor, Chip, for his advice and support, for proofreading many drafts, and for cheerleading when I needed motivation. I specially thank Emily Abrams Ansari and Kate Helsen, my past mentors at the University of Western Ontario, who have supported me as I have advanced in my education, as well as my current mentors at McGill, notably Lisa Barg, David Brackett, and Steven Huebner.

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Introduction

We cannot define the nature of a nation if we ignore the incessant work of the people who interpret its existence.
—Fernand Dumont[1]

In May 2015 a statue of the Québécois composer André Mathieu (1929–1968) was unveiled on 455 Sherbrooke Street, steps from McGill University's Schulich School of Music. The statue, a bust of Mathieu propped up by instruments featured in his *Concerto de Québec*, is subject to both the banalities and indignities of city life, the occasional selfie but more often than not polite uninterest as passers-by barely spare a glance in his direction. All the while, the *Concerto* is played on an endless loop over loudspeakers, in a performance realized by Québécois pianist-composer Alain Lefèvre. The commission of the statue by the building's owner represents the apex of the complete revival of Mathieu's legacy, now physically and sonically installed in the centre of Montreal.[2]

Mathieu, a child prodigy purportedly nicknamed the "Little Canadian Mozart" by Sergei Rachmaninoff, had a brief and tragic life. Showing tremendous musical precocity from a young age, his early successes in composition and performance were but a flash in the pan due to the political, economic, and social upheaval that resulted from the Second World War, in addition to his personal issues—namely his alcoholism. Mathieu was a practitioner of a late-romantic pianistic style he called *romantisme moderne* ("modern romanticism") and his compositions were largely inconsequential in Quebec's music scene in the years immediately after his death. Aside from a handful of champions, his works were not performed with any regularity until the

[1] Fernand Dumont quoted in Jocelyn Maclure, *Quebec Identity: The Challenge of Pluralism*, trans. Peter Feldstein (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003), 3.
[2] Éric Clément, "Une sculpture en hommage au compositeur André Mathieu," *La Presse*, 28 May 2015.

twenty-first century. This occurred for a number of reasons, including the unfinished status of many of his works, the lower aesthetic value placed on his style of composition among contemporaneous taste-makers in Quebec (many of whom espoused musical modernism in their criticism, compositions, and artistic activities), and his tarnished reputation in the province—the result of his shameful decline in plain sight of the public during the latter half of his life.

The singularity of the figure of Mathieu as a child prodigy is coupled with the singularity of his reception, both during his life and posthumously. Discontinuous and unconventional, Mathieu's posthumous legacy has remained in the control of a small number of actors, who elevate the composer with ostentatious undertakings, including recordings, performances, and movies. This work is supported by a body of literature—newspaper articles, interviews, program notes, liner notes, and books—that emphasizes the necessity of reclaiming Mathieu as an important link in the history of music in Quebec between the virtuosic pianist-composers of the romantic European tradition and their present-day Québécois counterparts. Although the current media landscape around Mathieu is flourishing, there was little scholarship on André Mathieu until the twenty-first century. The first posthumous book about Mathieu was written by journalist Joseph Rudel-Tessier to coincide with the 1976 Olympic Games, whose official music was based on themes from Mathieu's works (as arranged by Montreal jazz pianist Vic Vogel). Entitled *André Mathieu, un génie*, Rudel-Tessier's book includes a series of interviews with Mathieu's mother, and has been classified by Danick Trottier as "hagiographical" in a recent volume on child prodigies.[3] After a thirty-year gap, a slim biography about Mathieu by Marie-Thérèse

[3] Danick Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case of the 'Young Canadian Mozart'," in *Musical Prodigies: Interpretations from Psychology, Education, Musicology, and Ethnomusicology*, ed. Gary E. McPherson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 668. See Joseph Rudel-Tessier, *André Mathieu, un génie* (Montréal: Editions Héritage, 1976).

Lefebvre was released in 2006 as part of the LIDEC *Célébrités/Collection biographique* series.[4] Lefebvre was no doubt chosen to write the book by virtue of her knowledge of Mathieu's father, Rodolphe Mathieu (1890–1962); she is the author of a biography of Rodolphe that was published by LIDEC a year before, as well as a much more extensive biography that posits Rodolphe as the first professional composer in Quebec.[5]

Much of the recent flurry of attention around André Mathieu has occurred in tandem with the reintroduction of his works to the Quebec music scene by pianist-composer Alain Lefèvre. Initiating his homage to Mathieu with a recording of the *Concerto de Québec* (his third piano concerto, 1941) with the Orchestre symphonique de Quebec in 2003, Lefèvre also commissioned a biography of the composer from Georges Nicholson (2010), and acted as a consultant and musical director of Luc Dionne's biopic *L'enfant prodige* (2010).[6] More recently, Lefèvre served as a judge for the 2017 edition of the Concours musical international de Montréal (CMIM), for which Mathieu's piece *Laurentienne No. 2* (1946) was the compulsory Canadian work. In the same year, Lefèvre opened the Toronto Symphony Orchestra's Canadian sesquicentennial celebrations with an orchestral reconstruction of Mathieu's *Rhapsodie Romantique* (1958) and premiered a new orchestration based on a recently-discovered and authenticated two-piano version of the *Concerto de Québec* with the Orchestre symphonique régional de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue.[7] Occurring in tandem with Canada 150—the country's sesquicentennial celebrations of Confederation—and the 375th anniversary of the founding of Montreal, these

[4] Marie-Thérèse Lefebvre, *André Mathieu: pianiste et compositeur québécois (1929–1968)* (Montréal: Lidec, 2006).
[5] Marie-Thérèse Lefebvre, *Rodolphe Mathieu, 1890–1962: L'émergence du statut professionnel de compositeur au Québec* (Québec: Septentrion, 2005); *Rodolphe Mathieu: Un compositeur remarquable* (Montréal: Lidec, 2005).
[6] Luc Dionne, Mathieu, André, Denise Robert, and Louis Daniel, *L'Enfant prodige* (Montréal: Alliance vivafilm, 2010); Georges Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie* (Montréal: Québec Amérique, 2010). See Appendix I for complete discography of Mathieu's works.
[7] This new version, the Piano Concerto No. 3, is differentiated by Lefèvre from the version that was popularized from its use in the film *La Forteresse* with a more generic name.

honours indicate Mathieu's ongoing, albeit belated, induction into a performance canon of Canadian and Québécois composers.

Although Mathieu's works have been reintroduced to audiences, many have pushed back against his inclusion in the canon. While those who wish to rehabilitate the composer's image are embracing Western art music values that advantage the solitary creative genius, under the very same paradigm of the work-concept, as theorized by Lydia Goehr in *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, the ontological status of Mathieu's compositions is necessarily suspect. As Goehr states, "Most of us tend…to see works as objectified expressions of composers that prior to compositional activity did not exist."[8] Western art music works, since at least the beginning of the romantic period, are considered the expression of the mind of a single creator. When placed under scrutiny, it is nigh impossible to determine whether Mathieu's compositions are the expression of a single creator, or the result of a complex series of compromises between André, his father, and subsequent interpreters—both past and present. Not only have misgivings about the authenticity of Mathieu's early compositions followed the composer from his first public appearances due to Rodolphe's mediation in the compositional process, but the authorship of the works Mathieu wrote as an adult is suspect as a result of the numerous corrections, orchestrations, and arrangements made during his lifetime and posthumously.[9]

[8] Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 2. "We assume, further, that the tonal, rhythmic, and instrumental properties of works are constitutive of structurally integrated wholes that are symbolically represented by composers in scores. Once created, we treat works as existing after their creators have died, and whether or not they are performed or listened to at any given time. We treat them as artefacts existing in the public realm, accessible in principle to anyone who cares to listen to them" (2).

[9] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 678. The nature of Rodolphe's involvement in the composition of Mathieu's earliest works is discussed in Chapter 1. In an interview with Gaëtan Robert when he was 20, Mathieu implies that he is often reluctant to talk about his parents due to the rumours surrounding the authenticity of his compositions. Gaëtan Robert, *Le Samedi*, 20 August 1949.

Due to the unorganized status of Mathieu's papers and the incomplete state of many of his later scores (incidentally, the extant unorchestrated piano sketches composed in the final years of his life are the best representations of his modern romantic style), it was an extraordinary undertaking to bring Mathieu into his current prominence—with Alain Lefèvre coordinating much of the labour. Lefèvre's stature as an internationally renowned interpreter of romantic and contemporary music aided the recent reception; however, many questions remain unanswered about Mathieu, his music, and the reasons behind the impulse to legitimize and memorialize him, as well as the corollary drive in Quebec to generate public memory through the institutionalization of Québécois art. Given the personal difficulties he encountered, the case of André Mathieu is striking: enshrined as a tragic anti-hero, Mathieu seems to be celebrated in Quebec for his potential rather than his achievements. It is a wonder why a child prodigy of Mathieu's stature—a pianist-composer without a substantial artistic output beyond adolescence, whose works are primarily juvenilia, and who spent his adult life in relative obscurity—would garner any attention nearly 50 years after his death.

The reasons for Mathieu's initial exclusion from the canon are manifold and the recent revival of Mathieu warrants close examination to understand the motives behind these rehabilitative efforts. In this thesis, I explore the interplay between cultural past and present as contemporary subjects find communion with a history that is continuously being reinvented. By developing critical frameworks to account for the atypicality of Mathieu's meteoric ascent to stardom, the stagnation of his career after the war, and his posthumous reception, I will address both sociocultural and musicological questions about the origins of a musical canon of Québécois composers. Simultaneously, by understanding the formation of this specific canon, I will explore reasons for the present relevance of André Mathieu's music in Quebec.

The thesis is divided chronologically into three periods: the first chapter describes Mathieu's early life as a child prodigy (1929–1945); the second chapter documents his adolescence and latter half of his career (1943–1968); and the third chapter examines Mathieu's reception history, both posthumously and immediately before his death (1964–2017). Each chapter will bring musical analysis, biographical detail, and reception into conversation, as well as larger networks of cultural and institutional history, sociology, and contemporaneous philosophical thought, to evaluate Mathieu's uneven reception.

Chapter one analyzes Mathieu's early life according to the eight interconnected vectors of the "coincidence approach" framework, created by developmental psychologist David Henry Feldman. Taking account of the socio-cultural situation in Montreal in the first third of the twentieth century, I document how the musical development and personal philosophies of Mathieu's father Rodolphe Mathieu came to bear on his son's career and the direction of his creative energies. The chapter is ordered in a roughly chronological fashion to cover his first public recital at the age of six in his father's concert series *Les Soirées Mathieu,* and accounts for the developmental factors of his family, the historical period, and the cultural milieu. This is followed by Mathieu's early musical development under the guidance of his father, his compositional method, and a theoretical analysis of his juvenile works. Considering his father's role in the transcription of his music, I challenge the idea of the young Mathieu as a solitary genius, as it is unclear where Mathieu's hand drops out and his father's takes over. Further, I evaluate the role of Rodolphe in constructing and managing Mathieu's public persona, reflecting upon the comparisons between the father-son relationships of the Mathieu and Mozart families, and Danick Trottier's theory of the "Eternal Child." The chapter concludes with a return of the

idea of coincidence to explain the bad luck and poor management that influenced Mathieu's decline.

Chapter two continues the analytical work from the first chapter in relation to Mathieu's modern romantic compositional style as well as his stagnating performance career. In this chapter, I return to Mathieu's reception history with an eye to the shift in post-war musical aesthetics to more avant-garde forms of musical expression. The latter half of Mathieu's life is a case study of a growing Québécois nationalist movement in the years leading up to the Quiet Revolution. Mathieu's increasing radicalism led him to join the Bloc Populaire Canadien (a precursor to the modern Parti Bloc Québécois), for which he wrote the *Chant du Bloc Populaire* (1943). His simultaneous engagement with Québécois nationalism in his personal politics and disengagement with musical modernism in his artistic creations put him at odds with a city in the midst of the work of nation-building with progressive initiatives such as Expo 67. Mathieu was isolated further due to his personal battle with addiction, his animosity towards proponents of modern music, his inability to complete projects, and his participation in lowbrow spectacles called "pianothons"—marathon piano concerts in which the only goal was to play the piano as long as possible. One of the great ironies of Mathieu's reception is that the works composed in this period are considered the most representative of Mathieu's mature style, yet he is always defined by his status as a child prodigy.

Chapter three documents Mathieu's posthumous reception, including his immediate exclusion from the Québécois historical and performance canons. These omissions are thrown into stark relief when considering the positive posthumous reception of Rodolphe Mathieu. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to two high-profile nationalist revivals of Mathieu's music: the 1976 Montreal Summer Olympic Games and Lefèvre's twenty-first century project. At the

behest of André Morin, a faithful admirer and friend, themes from Mathieu's compositions became the basis of the "integrated musical concept" for the Games, serving a prominent role in the official welcome song as well as the opening and closing ceremonies. Though Morin's intent was to revitalise interest in Mathieu, the occasional function of the music did little to create sustained enthusiasm for Mathieu's work. Much later, Alain Lefèvre would take up the mantle to greater success, collaborating with several arrangers, orchestras, and the Quebec record label Analekta, to produce a comprehensive body of Mathieu's works.

Ultimately, this thesis seeks to uncover possible reasons for the gaps and inconsistencies in Mathieu's biography and reception in an effort to understand the particularity of his current prominence in Quebec and Canadian concert and recording culture. By bridging musical historiography and Quebec studies, I form conclusions about Mathieu's legacy in its current iteration as a by-product of a Québécois national identity that took shape in the years after his death. Drawing upon the work of Jocelyn Maclure—who theorizes that the peculiarity of Québécois nationalism is the result of an ongoing colonial legacy, where the perceived cultural hegemony of English-language North American society has fed the majority-minority cultural imagination in Quebec—I propose that Mathieu's reception follows a trend of historical revisionism with the goal of restoring national signifiers in post-Quiet Revolution Quebec society. This is facilitated by a distinct media landscape in Quebec that supports the democratization and commodification of its cultural products, which is an effective method of producing Québécois *mémoire collective*. And André Mathieu, whose late-romantic music is sentimental and accessible, is a potent nationalist figure for those who are willing to listen.

Chapter 1: The "Little Canadian Mozart" and the Construction of a Musical Prodigy (1929–1945)

If you were Québécois in the 2010s, you would have had to live in another country to be unaware of the ambiguous figure of André Mathieu (1939–68).[1] During his childhood, Mathieu was touted by his handlers as the "Little Canadian Mozart"—a moniker he purportedly earned from Rachmaninoff—and celebrated in Quebec, France, and across America for his precocity at the keyboard, both as a composer and a performer. Yet in the years after his death, Mathieu faded from public consciousness and his works were not performed. Mathieu's present-day champions justify their rehabilitative efforts as somehow correcting the record of the reception of this composer, who has a biography fraught with false-starts and interruptions. According to their narrative, Mathieu was a casualty of his time due to his family's poverty, the lack of professional concert culture in Quebec, and the miscarriage of his formative studies during the Second World War.

The nature of the twenty-first century revival of Mathieu and the nationalist ideologies that motivate this rehabilitative drive are the subject of Chapter 3. To make sense of this revival, however, it is necessary to revisit the early years of Mathieu's life, including the contexts in which he was born and raised, his capacity as a composer and performer, and the trajectory of his career. Since the reception of Mathieu—both past and present—rests on the idea of his wasted potential, it is necessary to determine what is knowable about the pianist-composer's prodigious talent, as well as to understand how his prodigy persona was constructed and marketed in the early years of his life. This chapter accounts for the first decade of Mathieu's life, which is also

[1] Danick Trottier, "André Mathieu: Encore bien des questions…" *Les Cahiers de la Société québécoise de recherche en musique* 12, no. 1 (2011): 121. « Il aurait fallu habiter un autre pays pour être insensible à la nébuleuse André Mathieu durant l'année 2010. »

his most productive period as a composer and the most well-documented in the records left behind by his manager and father as well as in the press.

In "Two Roads Diverged in the Musical Wood: A Coincidence Approach to the Lives and Careers of Nyiregyházi and Menuhin," developmental psychologist David Henry Feldman proposes a framework called the "coincidence approach" to understand the development of musical child prodigies.[2] Feldman's pragmatic coincidence approach can be applied to historical subjects, which is one of its strengths as a possible social model for analyzing André Mathieu's development. Feldman identifies eight interconnected vectors that contribute to the likelihood that a child will both become a prodigy and sustain a positive trajectory of musical excellence. The eight vectors are:

> (1) physical evolution; (2) cultural evolution; (3) historical and political contexts; (4) personal strengths and weaknesses, including talent; (5) family, including possible transgenerational influences; (6) teachers and mentors; (7) the domain (classical music performance and composition); (8) the field (including critics, agents, benefactors, technologies, schools, and other institutions).[3]

The coincidence framework is an effective tool to help understand the development of a historical prodigy such as Mathieu as coincidental and socially situated rather than inevitable. In this chapter, I use the eight vectors from Feldman's framework not only to account for Mathieu's personal musical development as a child prodigy, but to analyze how he was presented as such to audiences while he was in the custody of his parents.

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[2] The framework was developed by Feldman in the 1970s, with published findings in 1986. It was not created specifically to analyze musical prodigy. "Up to the time when the coincidence system was proposed, explanations for the unbelievable performance of the prodigy included the supernatural, reincarnation, or prophesy or astrology. No scientific effort to understand the appearance of the prodigy had been offered in the scholarly literature." David Henry Feldman, "Two Roads Diverged in the Musical Wood: A Coincidence Approach to the Lives and Careers of Nyiregyházi and Menuhin," in *Musical Prodigies: Interpretations from Psychology, Education, Musicology, and Ethnomusicology*, ed. Gary E. McPherson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 117.

[3] Ibid., 120.

The success of the coincidence approach in accounting for the construct of prodigy depends on the size and integrity of the archive. Aside from the inherent ambiguities in the nature of prodigy itself, a great deal about Mathieu is either unknown or unknowable due to the failure to preserve many of his original scores or record his performances.[4] In addition, restricted access to particular types of information about the composer—for instance manuscripts or biographical detail, especially that which may be considered shameful—diminishes the ability to answer questions about Mathieu or dispel the mythology surrounding the composer. This privileges certain actors who have access to this withheld information, such as Alain Lefèvre and Georges Nicholson, who were able to fashion Mathieu's narrative to support their own ends. However, in this analysis, it is not my intent to determine the extent and nature of Mathieu's ability in a pseudo-archaeological dig—a trend not unknown in musicology, as seen in the literal exhumation of the bodies of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—but to understand the construct of prodigy as it relates to Mathieu's early career by tracing the coincidental network of associations that led to the formation of his prodigy persona.

Familial Ties: Rodolphe Mathieu and the Development of a Musical Milieu in Montreal

André Mathieu was born 18 February 1929 on the cusp of the Great Depression to a working-class family in Montreal. Like many musical prodigies, André came from a musical family. His mother, Wilhelmine "Mimi" Gagnon-Mathieu (1907–1976), was a violinist of some skill, though at the behest of her mother, she did not pursue a career in music.[5] His father, Rodolphe Mathieu (1890–1962), was a pianist, music teacher, and avant-garde composer in a

[4] There is only a single commercially published compact disc of Mathieu playing his own works. See André Mathieu, *André Mathieu joue André Mathieu (la collection privée de Georges Nicholson)*, Fidelio FACD700, 2010, compact disc, Recorded 1933–1942.
[5] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 51–2.

style that became increasingly atonal, which Marie-Thérèse Lefebvre characterizes as evocative of the discrete styles of Alexander Scriabin and Arnold Schoenberg. Running counter to the historical inequity that merely positioned Rodolphe as his son's manager, Lefebvre recognizes Rodolphe as the first professional composer in Canada.[6] In a time when conservative French romantics like Camille Saint-Saëns cast a long shadow in Quebec, and other Québécois composers were writing in nationalist folk-like idioms, Lefebvre claims that "Mathieu [was] the first musician in Canada to consider composition as personal expression of artistic thought and to associate reflection [thought] with the act of music. He [was] also the first to use the full potential of existing compositional tools, disregarding established rules [of tonality]."[7]

Rodolphe's talent and originality as a composer separated him from his contemporaries in Quebec long before his sojourn in Paris (1920–25), where he studied with Vincent d'Indy.[8] As one critic wrote, "Mathieu is the most refined and original composer that we have. So far, his works escape the conventional guise that characterizes most of the works written by Canadians."[9] Yet aside from a handful of advocates, Rodolphe was rejected in Quebec. Léo-Pol

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[6] According to Lefebvre, Wilhelmine Gagnon-Mathieu's disparaging account in Rudel-Tessier's *André Mathieu, un génie* did much to obfuscate her husband's artistic merit. In the same year, however, Rodolphe was the subject of an exhaustive dissertation; see Juliette Bourassa-Trépanier, "Rodolphe Mathieu, Musicien Canadien (1890–1962)" (PhD diss., Université Laval, 1976).

[7] Lefebvre, *Rodolphe Mathieu, 1890–1962: L'émergence du statut professionnel de compositeur au Québec*, 12–13. « Mathieu est le premier musicien au Canada à considérer la composition comme l'expression personnelle d'une pensée artistique et à associer la réflexion au geste musical. Il est également le premier à utiliser tout le potentiel des outils d'écriture sans égard à l'application de règles établis. »

According to Lefebvre, Rodolphe was also the first to react against the nationalistic tendencies of Canadian composers to use folk in high art, searching instead for a different type of authentic self-expression: « Dans ses écrits sur l'activité de création, Mathieu cherche à rendre compte du processus intellectuel, psychologique et émotif qui le conduit à s'affirmer en tant que créateur. » ("In his writings on the act of creation, Mathieu seeks to account for the intellectual, psychological and emotional processes that lead him to assert himself as a creator.") He wrote extensively about music and his essays are reprinted in Rodolphe Mathieu, *Parlons…musique* (Montreal: A. Lévesque, 1932).

[8] Rodolphe left in May 1920. A student of Franck at the Paris Conservatory, Vincent d'Indy (1851–1931) also taught Isaac Albéniz, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, and Canadian Georges-Émile Tanguay.

[9] Henri Gagnon, *Le Canada musical*, 3 April 1920. « Mathieu est le compositeur le plus cultivé, le plus original que nous possédions. Ses œuvres ont échappé jusqu'ici à cette tenue conventionnelle qui s'affiche dans la plupart des productions musicales écrites par des Canadiens. Elles révèlent un mode d'expression qui a le rare mérite d'être personnel où circule, libre de toute contrainte scolastique, l'inspiration la plus généreuse. »

Morin—Québécois pianist, composer (under the pseudonym James Callihou), and one of the most influential music critics of his time—wrote that Rodolphe was

> at the same time the most attacked and the least understood Canadian composer. And the less he is known and understood, the more he is vehemently attacked […]. This musician is reproached precisely because of his personality….He is the only one of his generation who has such a personal way of making music and who expresses himself with perfect ease in the language of his time.[10]

Despite their differing musical aesthetics, Rodolphe evidently shaped his son's valuation of authorship; by his early adolescence, André began to see himself more as a composer than as a pianist.[11]

Career composers in Canada in the 1920s, however, could not be readily be supported in an economically underdeveloped country that prized utility above all else. Rodolphe is but one Canadian composer who is part of this "Lost Generation." When he returned to Quebec in 1925, he had to supplement his income by teaching counterpoint and rudimentary piano. In March 1926 Morin described the situation as follows:

> The professional composer is not something we are familiar with. Such an an anomaly has not been foreseen as a part of Canada's future.…There is not much room for the composer, this species deemed useless to the physical development of this young country…where artistic professions are compared to troublesome obsessions whose development should not be encouraged. Art, laziness, vice—these are quite common conceptual associations that will hold for quite a long time still.[12]

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[10] Léo-Pol Morin, « Les compositeurs canadiens: Monsieur Rodolphe Mathieu », *La Patrie*, no. 57, 1 May 1926. « Il est significatif que parmi les compositeurs canadiens, Rodolphe Mathieu soit à la fois le plus attaqué et le moins compris. Et moins il est connu et compris, plus il est attaqué avec véhémence […]. On reproche à ce musicien, précisément, sa personnalité….Il est le seul de sa génération qui possède une manière aussi personnelle de faire de la musique et qui s'exprime avec une parfaite aisance dans la langue de son temps. » Morin studied in Paris at the same time as Rodolphe (1920–5) and Rodolphe dedicated *Trois Préludes* (1921) and *Sonata* (1927) to him.

[11] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 667.

[12] Léo-Pol Morin, *La Patrie*, 20 March 1926. « Que le métier de compositeur, nous ne connaissons pas cela. Une telle anomalie n'a pas été prévue dans l'avenir canadien….Il n'y a pas beaucoup de place pour le compositeur, cette espèce dite inutile au développement physique de ce pays neuf…où les métiers d'art sont assimilés aux manies à peine excusables dont on ne doit pas favoriser le développement. Art, paresse, vice, voilà des associations d'idées et de mots assez courants qui auront cours longtemps encore. »

In the essay "In Search of Genius," published in *Papiers de musique* in 1930, Morin describes how the difficult conditions for Canadian composers makes it difficult to appreciate when Canadian works contain true musical genius: "Besides, haven't our composers sometimes had the weakness of lacking genius?…Our composers

Although Morin describes all arts in terms of their utility with the same broad strokes, the culture around original composition in Quebec, and Canada more broadly, was slower to develop than other disciplines due to the lack of institutional infrastructure for the production, promotion, and performance of new musical works. In the milieu of visual arts, for instance, the Musée des beaux-arts de Montreal was established in 1847. Conversely, it took a number of tries to establish a permanent professional orchestra in Montreal; the oldest still alive is the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal, which was established in 1935. In the domain of composition, the status of the composer in Canadian society would not improve until the creation of the Canadian League of Composers in 1951 by Samuel Dolin, Harry Somers and John Weinzweig. The Canadian League of Composers increased the circulation of Canadian works, leading to the greater prominence of Canadian composers within Canadian concert halls.[13] By that point, however, the most productive years of both André and Rodolphe were behind them.

To influence the perceptions around music and develop a more fertile artistic environment in Montreal, Rodolphe founded and became the first director of the Canadian Institute of Music/Institut canadien de musique (1929–c.1956). The Institut was Rodolphe's effort to establish a creative and intellectual milieu in Montreal that resembled the richness of the Parisian scene that he had experienced firsthand. It was the largest organization of its kind in Canada for a number of years. In 1930, Rodolphe inaugurated a concert series entitled *Les Soirées Mathieu*, informal lecture-recitals (at first monthly, and then more irregular) in which one or two invited guests would debate a variety of topics including composition, art, literature,

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have lived in such paradoxical and exceptional conditions that even if their works had contained the spark of genius, they would have been no better appreciated and no more enduring. So long as composing is not accepted as an intellectual activity, it will remain a risky venture—unless genius is in command." There were many that recognized André Mathieu's precocity as genius; the recognition of his talent was made all the more exciting since it had never before been perceived in Quebec. Léo-Pol Morin, "In Search of Genius," in *The Attentive Listener: Three Centuries of Music Criticism*, ed. Harry Haskell (London: Faber and Faber, 1995), 291.

[13] Lefebvre, *Rodolphe Mathieu, 1890–1962: L'émergence du statut professionnel de compositeur au Québec*, 12.

philosophy, feminism, psychology, science, and politics. Held in a variety of Montreal hotels, the private and semi-private evenings were often representative of Rodolphe's iconoclastic attitude towards composition and were part of an effort to advance his vision of establishing a music culture in Quebec distinct from both that of France and of English-speaking North America.[14] At a time when the continent was plunged into economic depression, and aesthetic and ideological discourses were veering drastically to the right, *Les Soirées Mathieu*, "conceived by a composer conscious of the intellectual necessity of confronting ideas, were a veritable cultural crossroads where thought could express itself in complete freedom on so many current topics."[15] The series was a product of a burgeoning sense of cultural autonomy among a budding class of intellectuals and artists in Montreal.

More often than not, however, the *Soirées Mathieu* functioned as mouthpiece to amplify the Mathieu family's influence in the city. Within the first year, Rodolphe organized a concert of his own works, which were by no means in heavy rotation in Quebec's concert halls. The program included his Piano Sonata, *Deux Poèmes*, Sonata for Cello and Piano, and *Saisons canadiennes* performed by Hortense Lord, Paul Trottier, the Quatuor Durieux, Lucien Plamadon, and Ulysse Paquin. The concert was generally well-received by the handful of news outlets in the city, but critics remained skeptical of Rodolphe's music. Writes one anonymous reviewer on 29 October in *The Gazette*, Rodolphe's music

[14] Although significant in their own right, Rodolphe Mathieu's *Soirées* were but one faction of a drive to create a French-language intellectual and musical milieu in Montreal. Its activities were modeled after those of the « Cercle Alpha-Omega, » which was a secret society active from 1909–1916 of which Rodolphe was a member. However, such considerations are beyond the scope of this chapter. For a contextualization of *Les Soirées Mathieu* within the history of intellectual societies in Montreal, see Marie-Thérèse Lefebvre, « Les Soirées-Mathieu (1930–1935), » *Les Cahiers des dix*, 57 (2003): 85–118. See also Annick Poussart, "Canadian Institute of Music/Institut canadien de musique," in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, Historica Canada, 1985–, article published 8 February 2006, online.

[15] Lefebvre, « Les Soirées-Mathieu (1930–1935), » 117. « Ces Soirées, conçues par un compositeur conscient de la nécessité intellectuelle de confronter les idées, furent de véritables carrefours culturels où la pensée pouvait s'exprimer en toute liberté sur autant de sujets d'actualité. »

> is a force that counts in the sparse musical culture of this country. For all his awkwardness, his lack of definite form and his gloom, which, it must be confessed, is inclined to become monotonous at times, he is free from the "rubber stamp" and has the gift of being able to reveal himself as he is in his music. In spite of its atonality, its experimental turn of phrase, his music is a personal confession and anyone who has listened to the usual type of Canadian composition will know to appreciate this.[16]

Several years later on 25 February 1935 at the Ritz-Carlton, one of the major concert venues at the time, *Les Soirées Mathieu* was also the site of André Mathieu's debut recital at the age of six.[17] The program included Schumann's minute *Soldatenmarsch*, Rodolphe's *Deux mélodies* (*Automne, Hiver*), and his own works: Concertino Nos. 1 and 2, *Les Gros Chars*, *Trois Études*, *Danse Sauvage*, *Valse pour enfants*, *Dans le nuit*, and *Procession d'éléphants*. Mathieu and his juvenilia were received with enthusiasm by members of the audience, who were charmed by the novelty of the child pianist-composer. In *Le Devoir*, Frédéric Pelletier wrote, "Is André Mathieu a child prodigy because, at four years old, he wrote little pieces and, at five, he politely presented them to the public? No, he is much more than that: a precocious child, who possesses—as if it were truly possible—the impeccable sense of rhythm anchored in his little head."[18] A critic for *The Montreal Star* had a more tempered reaction—a common tendency in English-language reception throughout Mathieu's career:

> André Mathieu has plenty of strength for his size and quite a good memory; he repeated tunes correctly and generally seemed to hit the notes he wanted. For the rest, a nice bright little boy enjoyed himself at the keyboard….and was rewarded at the end with flowers like a primadonna. It was amusing for the half hour it lasted.[19]

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[16] "Rodolphe Mathieu in Fine Recital," *Gazette (Montreal)*, 29 October 1930, 13.
[17] The advertisement for the concert listed André as five years old.
[18] Frédéric Pelletier, *Le Devoir*, 26 February 1935. « André Mathieu est-il un enfant prodige parce qu'à quatre ans il compose de petits morceaux et qu'à cinq ans il les présente gentiment au public? Non: il est ce qui vaut beaucoup mieux, un enfant précoce, qui possède, comme si pareille chose était possible, le sentiment impeccable du rythme ancré dans son petit cerveau [...]. Rhythmes, imagination et facilité de les rendre au piano. Et voilà, c'est tout ce qu'il y a dans sa présentation d'hier soir. »
[19] H. P. Bell, *Montreal Star*, 26 February 1935.

Due to the change from a recital to a debate format several years before his concert, André was introduced by a debate between politician André Laurendeau (1912–68) and essayist Berthelot Brunet (1901–48) on the subject « *La situation des Canadiens français légitime-t-elle une attitude pessimiste ou optimiste?* » ("Does the situation of French Canadians warrant a pessimistic or optimistic attitude?"), with Laurendeau arguing the side of optimism.[20] Though the relationship between the debate and the young André Mathieu may have been coincidental, critics who attended that evening unwittingly took Laurendeau's position with regards to the outlook on Mathieu's career; one critic wrote, "the child is endowed with a musical instinct that could become genius," while another overtly called André an "honour to his race."[21] This nativism suffused with biological determinism and a sense of anticipation for inevitable greatness is an integral component of Mathieu's early reception and contributed to his meteoric rise in Quebec. As for *Les Soirées Mathieu*, after André's concert, they became increasingly infrequent as Rodolphe stopped teaching and composing to manage his son's career, buoyed by the success of André's debut.

Mathieu's Early Development and Reception

Unlike other canonical prodigy-composers such as Mozart, Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn, Erich Wolfgang Korngold, Samuel Barber, and Benjamin Britten, or prodigy-performers such as Niccolò Paganini, Clara Schumann, Nadia Boulanger, Yehudi Menuhin, Glenn Gould, and even the pop star Michael Jackson, Mathieu is defined almost exclusively by his early successes in both fields rather than his mature career. The coincidental nature of

[20] Lefebvre, « Les Soirées-Mathieu (1930–1935), » 111.
[21] Marcel Valois, *La Presse*, 26 February 1935; Francine, (*nom de plume* of Adrienne Roy Villandré), *Le Jour*, February 1935. « Extraordinaire récital d'André Mathieu...Le plus merveilleux, c'est que l'enfant doué d'un instinct musical qui pourrait devenir du génie, possède le sens du rhythme et de la mesure... »

prodigy is something that cannot be overstated when discussing the phenomenon, especially in the case of André Mathieu; however, the scarcity of information about Mathieu's early life has imposed a narrative constructed by the family and other close friends of the family on the child's development. One must be careful not to read too closely into the family's unsubstantiated stories nor perpetuate their belief that Mathieu was fulfilling some kind of destiny. Indeed, the gaps in the narrative and the incongruity between accounts of Mathieu's exploits and historical fact are points of interest.

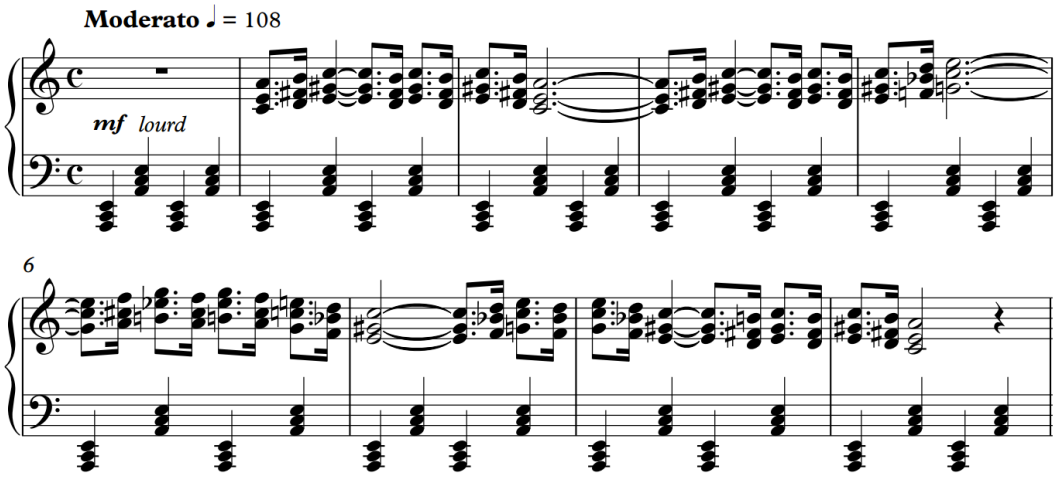
Accounts from Mathieu's mother, Mimi, characterize him as an incredibly precocious child, who walked and talked from a young age. Rodolphe taught piano out of the family home at 4519 rue Berri and at some point André found the piano curious enough to approach it himself without prompting from his parents, as the story goes. In a 1976 interview with Joseph Rudel-Tessier, Mimi describes watching Mathieu accurately reproduce "O Canada" at the piano. She excitedly called Rodolphe into the room. When prompted, André played the notes again without mistakes while Rodolphe—who was initially skeptical—listened.[22] According to developmental psychology, the ability to remember and recreate a melody at a young age is an important measure of early musical aptitude.[23] Mimi was the parent who pushed Mathieu into the spotlight and, in the years after both Rodolphe and André had passed, was disparaging of her late husband's reluctance to commit his son to a life of stardom. Trottier characterizes Rodolphe as "wary of the way in which his wife placed the child on a pedestal. It must be understood that, for Rodolphe, the value of art did not reside so much in its transmission as in its creation."[24] For young musical prodigies, however, compositional precocity is often coupled with extreme

[22] Rudel-Tessier, *André Mathieu, un génie*, 58.
[23] Gagné and McPherson, "Analyzing Musical Prodigiousness," 37.
[24] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 670.

instrumental precocity. This creates an inherent conflict for prodigies who exhibit both qualities by virtue of the gradual separation of the two roles over the course of the twentieth century.

Mathieu's earliest surviving compositions are mimetic, themes and elaborations upon onomatopoeic imitation. Subjects include the little ducks he saw at the pond (*Les Petits Canards*, 1933), just as he saw a big train (*Les Gros Chars*, 1933–34), a parade of elephants at a circus (*Processions d'éléphants*, 1934–35), and a "savage" dance by a troupe of indigenous people (*Danse sauvage*, 1934–35). In most cases, his early works follow a rounded binary form (ABA') with standard 8-measure phrases repeated twice (the second time often at the octave), a contrasting B section with more rhythmic interest, and a return to the opening material in a different register and with a contrasting dynamic marking. In each piece there is very little sense of development due to the final repetition of the primary theme.

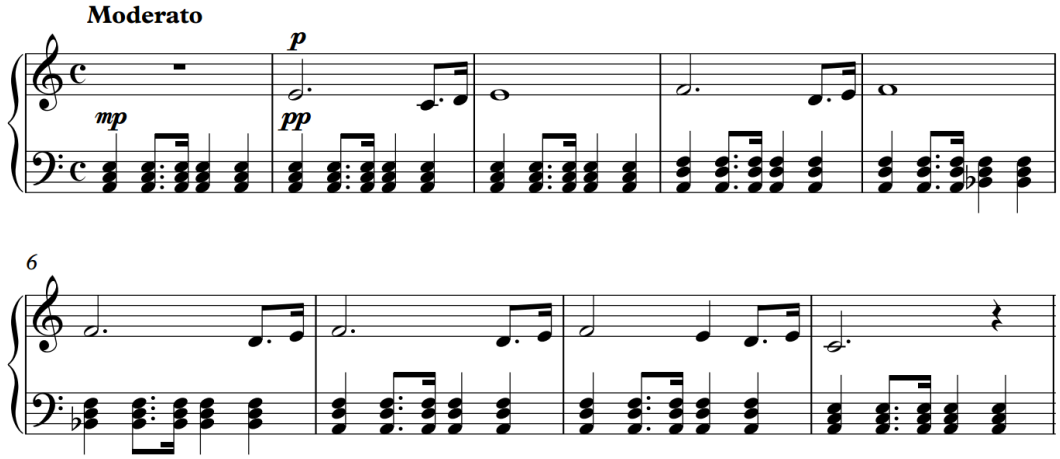
Figure 1.1: André Mathieu, *Procession d'éléphants,* Op. 5, mm. 1–9.



The phenomenon of juvenile compositions among child prodigies is well-documented, with the following caveat: "The ability to bring something absolutely new into existence is not

granted to every mature composer and certainly not to the prodigy composer whose early attempts may reveal a certain facility, but lack genuine originality. Indeed, such juvenilia will probably never be as original as the innocent prodigy may suppose."[25] Mathieu relies on clichés such as the heavy plodding footfalls of the static bass line in *Procession d'éléphants* (an elephant only has four feet, after all [Fig. 1.1]), or the relentless dirge pattern in *Marche funèbre* (Fig. 1.2). In both *Procession d'éléphants* and *Marche funèbre*, each composed when he was five, the key is A minor, the tempo is *Moderato*, the bass is repetitive both rhythmically and harmonically, the melody is in the right hand, the form is rounded binary, and the theme is 8 measures in length with one bar to establish the character with the left hand.

Figure 1.2: André Mathieu, *Marche funèbre* Op. 7, mm. 1–9.



[25] Claude Kenneson, *Musical Prodigies: Perilous Journeys, Remarkable Lives* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1998). Kenneson, who was a naturalized Canadian cello teacher and the first teacher of Canadian cello prodigy Shauna Rolston (daughter of violinist and conductor Tom Rolston), includes a survey of other important twentieth-century prodigies, including a near-comprehensive list of Canadian prodigies that conspicuously excludes André Mathieu. It is unclear whether this is accidental or deliberate.

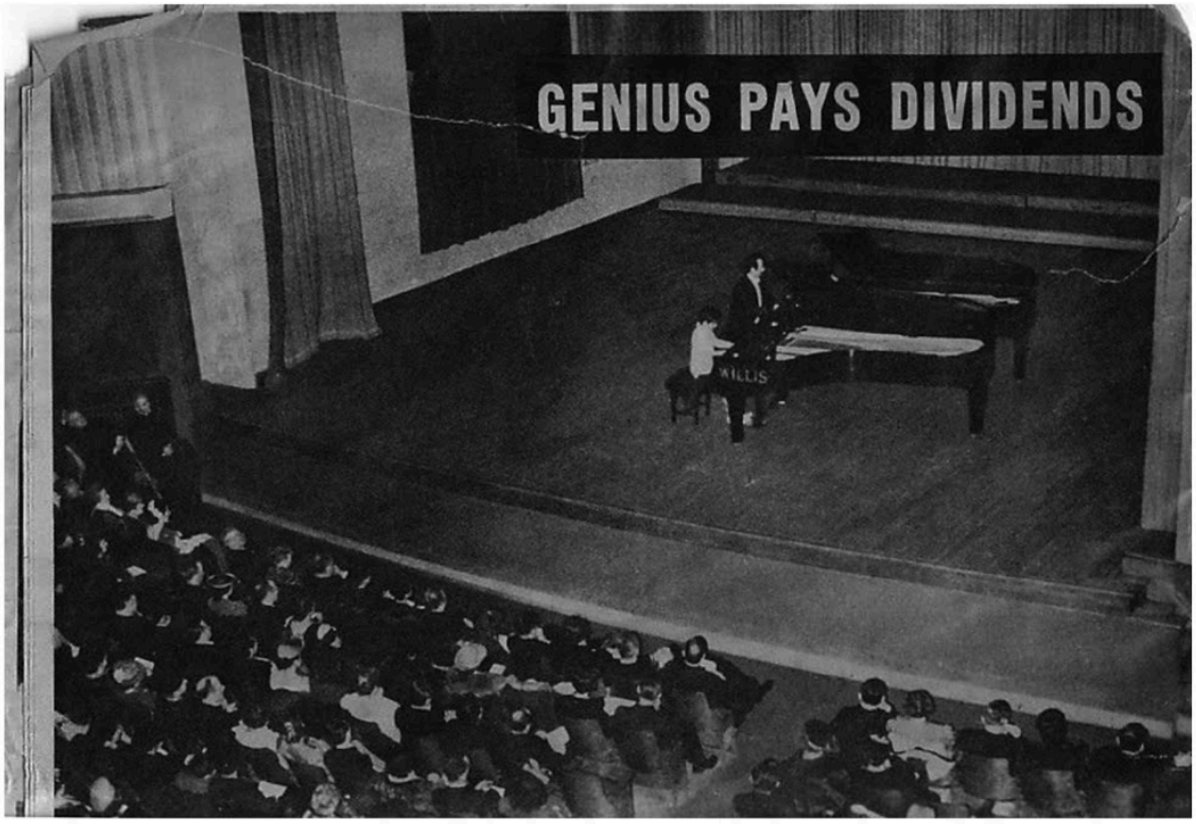
The strength of Mathieu's early works lies in his ability to create an atmosphere with a relative economy of means. Even within the simplicity of his juvenilia, he has an acute sense of harmonic colour, as with the augmented treble chords in *Procession d'éléphants* or surprising use of unprepared ♭ II harmonies in mm. 5–6 of *Marche funèbre*. Many fleeting moments of brilliance had the potential to be spun out into a larger romantic character piece with a more fluid formal structure, such as a Nocturne or Prelude. Such instances include the *religioso* B section of *Tristesse* Op. 11 (*Sadness*, 1935) and the complex harmonic progressions of *Dans la nuit* Op. 12 (*In the night*, 1934–5)—which, according to family myth, came to Mathieu fully-formed in the middle of the night after a thunderstorm. In the hands of a child during a live performance, there was a certain novelty and charm to the petite creations, especially the more virtuosic childhood pieces such as *Les abeilles piquantes* Op. 17 (*The Stinging Bees*, 1935) and *Les Mouettes* Op. 19 (*The Seagulls*, 1937).

Believing in a hierarchy of composition over performance, Rodolphe advised André to pursue the former; however, like many child prodigies, Mathieu would struggle in his adolescence and early adulthood to break out of this childhood mode and find a mature voice. The influence of his father in his development is difficult to quantify. Since Rodolphe taught piano and counterpoint, he became André's first teacher. The child would practice four hours a day and "according to first-hand accounts and photos from that period, lessons often took place through an imitative process, with two pianos placed side by side, a situation occasionally reproduced in concert."[26] During the first decade of his career, Rodolphe would often appear on stage with André to play the piano accompaniment to the Concertino Nos. 1 and 2 (see Fig. 1.3). Sitting next to his father, a composer himself, Mathieu's childhood performance practice did

[26] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 671.

little to suppress the audience's skepticism that he had both composed and arranged the works he was performing.

Figure 1.3: "Genius Pays Dividends": André Mathieu playing the Concertino No. 2 with Rodolphe at the Auditorium Plateau de Montréal.[27]



In 1935 Conrad Letendre discussed the matter at length in *Le Courrier de St-Hyacinthe* after spending time with the family:

> But to what extent can the compositions of the young André Mathieu be attributed to him? I had the opportunity to spend a few hours with Mr. and Mrs. Rodolphe Mathieu and their child. I observed, questioned, and, thanks to the kindness that they showed me, I believe I am able to affirm that the compositions of the young Mathieu are his own to the same extent as the compositions of eighteen- and twenty-year-old students, which are started, developed, and finished under the guidance of a master, and which they readily (and quite legitimately) sign. In

[27] Published in the *Montreal Standard*, 6 April 1940.

> short—and quite understandably—the difference in the two cases resides only in the methods one takes or procedures one adopts to correct mistakes, determine the course to be followed, and direct the work of the pupil. These musical ideas are childlike; he says them simply, but he says them well. Have not the greatest composers started as he did?[28]

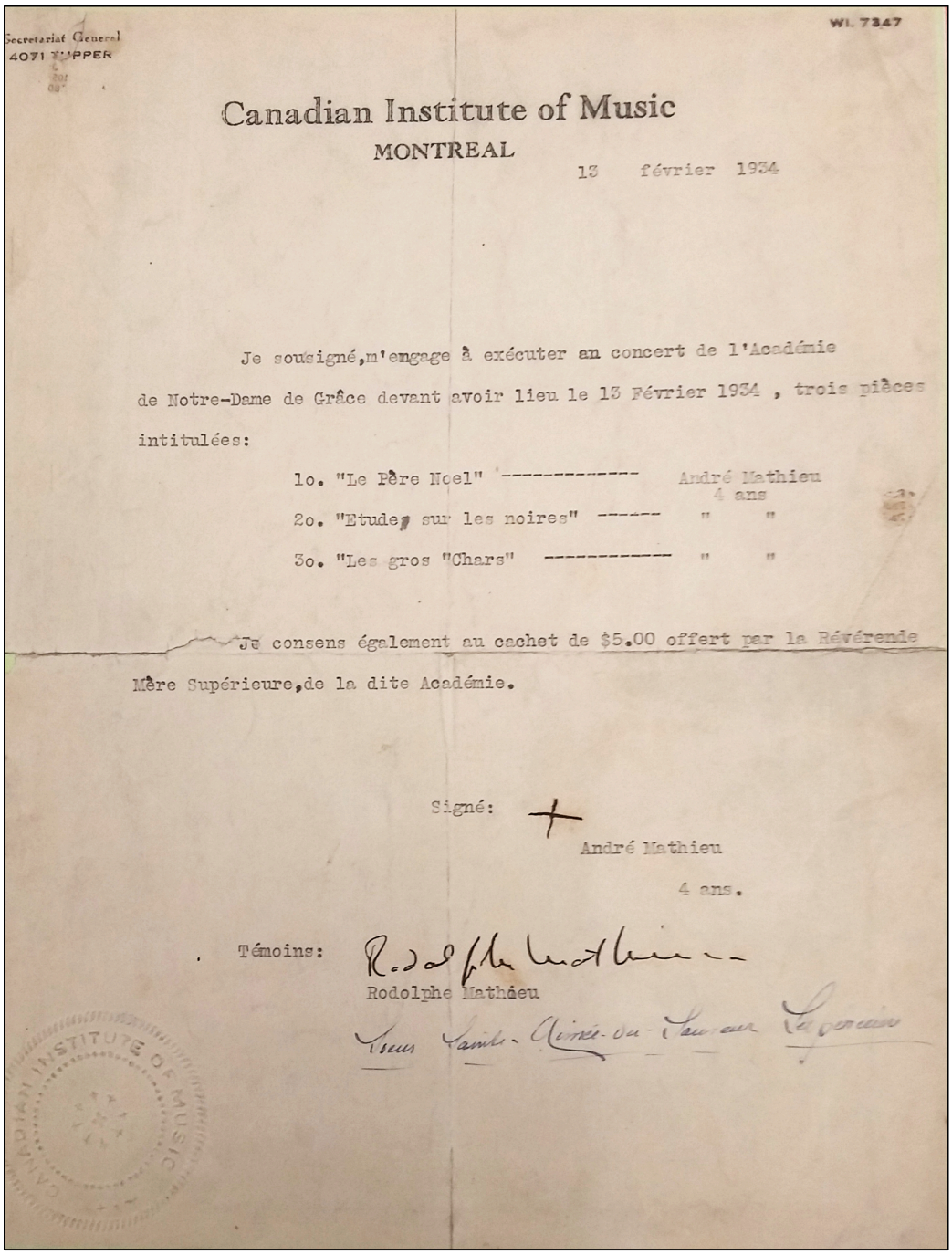
Letendre emphasizes the similarity between André's work and the work of young composers three and four times his age, confirming both the remarkable ability of the prodigy and the immaturity of the works themselves relative to mature compositions. The difference in method he describes between André and older students of composition likely refers to the role that Rodolphe played in transcribing the works. As seen in figure 1.4, the first contract signed by André at the age of four for $5, the young composer could barely hold a pen, let alone inscribe his works in musical notation. In the document, André scrawls an "X" instead of his name and his father has to sign his own name below as a witness.

Mathieu composed at the piano by improvising on simple themes, which Rodolphe transcribed. As Rudel-Tessier documented from his conversations with Mimi, "André would improvise, invent, and tell stories. When he would repeat the same story, without modifying it anymore nor adding or subtracting anything, the work would be 'fixed'…and Rodolphe would notate it and transcribe it for his son."[29] According to Mimi, André would correct his father if he

[28] Conrad Letendre, "André Mathieu: pianiste et compositeur," *Le Courrier de St-Hyacinthe*, 15 November 1935. « Mais enfin, dans quelle mesure les compositions du jeune André Mathieu doivent-elles lui être attribuées ? J'ai eu l'avantage de passer quelques heures en compagnie de Monsieur et Madame Rodolphe Mathieu et de leur enfant. J'ai observé, questionné et, grâce à la bienveillance dont ils m'ont gratifié, je crois pouvoir affirmer que les compositions du jeune Mathieu lui sont dues à peu près au même titre et dans la même mesure que le sont aux étudiants de dix-huit à vingt ans leurs propres compositions commencées, élaborées et terminées sous la direction et les conseils du maître, et qu'ils signent volontiers et bien légitimement d'ailleurs. En somme, et c'est bien compréhensible, a différence dans les deux cas ne réside que dans les moyens à prendre, ou dans les procédés à adopter pour corriger les erreurs, déterminer la marche à suivre et diriger le travail de l'élève. Ces idées musicales sont des idées d'enfants; il les dit simplement, mais il les dit bien. Les plus grands compositeurs n'ont-ils pas commencé comme lui ? »

[29] Rudel-Tessier, *André Mathieu, un génie,* quoted by Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 65. « André improvise, il invente et raconte des histoires. Quand il répète la même histoire, qu'il ne la modifie plus et qu'il n'y ajoute ni n'en retranche plus rien, l'œuvre est « fixe », comme dit Mimi, et Rodolphe la note et la transcrit pour son fils. »

Figure 1.4: André Mathieu contract 13 February 1934.[30]



Secretariat General
4071 KUPPER

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Canadian Institute of Music
MONTREAL

13 février 1934

Je soussigné, m'engage à exécuter au concert de l'Académie de Notre-Dame de Grâce devant avoir lieu le 13 Février 1934, trois pièces intitulées:

1o. "Le Père Noel" ---------- André Mathieu 4 ans
2o. "Etude sur les noires" ------ " "
3o. "Les gros "Chars" ---------- " "

Je consens également au cachet de $5.00 offert par la Révérende Mère Supérieure, de la dite Académie.

Signé: + André Mathieu
4 ans.

Témoins: Rodolphe Mathieu
Rodolphe Mathieu
Sœur Sainte-Aimée-du-Sacré-Cœur Lapointe

CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF MUSIC

[30] Mathieu Family *fonds*, National Archive of Canada. At the concert at the Académie Notre-Dame-de-Grâce on 13 February 1934 (part of a class recital), Mathieu played his earliest works: *Le Père Noel*, *Étude sur les noirs* Op. 1, and *Les Gros Chars* Op. 2.

notated his piece incorrectly, but it still remains impossible to determine the extent of Rodolphe's influence on the music. It is highly likely that his assistance helped shape the final product, even if the majority of the thematic ideas were by André himself. Contemporaneous accounts are unreliable; it is evident that Mathieu's parents, as well as the Québécois critics invested in his success, did not want to undermine the authenticity of a child—especially *this* child, who, in inspiring nationalist fervor, came to embody a certain kind of hope.

Questions about the proper attribution of his works followed Mathieu from the earliest days of his career and remain unanswerable. It is virtually impossible to date the archival scores of his earliest opus numbers; although they appear to be written in the composer's hand, the steadiness and consistency of the penmanship implies that this was done many years after the works were composed and premiered. The necessary—and as of yet, unfinished—work of dating and attribution is made all the more difficult due to the restricted access to original manuscripts. It is well documented how the tension between Mathieu's performer persona and his composer persona not only influenced his career trajectory, but had a lasting negative effect on his reception once the novelty of prodigy wore off.

Even in the face of lingering questions of influence, it remains indisputable that Mathieu could play the pieces accurately on the piano. And in the latter half of the 1930s, when the age-old phenomenon of the child prodigy was brought to the fore with Shirley Temple (1928–2014) adorning the silver screen, skilled children of any stripe inspired renewed and profound public fascination. In the case of André Mathieu, there was also a sense of national pride at stake. As Trottier describes, "This was the first time that Quebec had produced an exceptional young talent

in music and, in this sense, his career coincided with Quebec society's awareness of [this] phenomenon."[31]

Mozartian Parallels: Critical Reception, Psychoanalysis, and the "Eternal Child"

Once Mimi and Rodolphe realized André's potential after the positive reviews from his first solo concerts in 1935, they decided to pursue a life that would support his musical development. André's career was a high-stakes gamble for the working-class family; not only did Rodolphe put his own career on hold to manage his son's, the entire family relocated across the Atlantic in November 1936 on a partial grant from the Quebec government.[32] As Trottier notes, going to France at this time was a "*passage obligé* for cultured individuals in Montreal."[33] The family stayed in the same house in Paris in which Rodolphe had lived in the 1920s while André took piano lessons from Debussy's protégé Yves Nat (1936–7) and composition with Jacques de la Presle (1937–9).[34] Although the focus was on his studies, in the handful of concerts he gave, André made inroads with the Parisian press and gained important benefactors in businessman Paul-Louis Weiller, and Madame Octave-Homberg, who was the president of the newly-formed *Société Mozartienne de Paris*.[35] Weiller gave the family at least 30,000 francs in 1939.[36]

[31] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 672.
[32] Around this time, Rodolphe began signing letters he wrote on behalf of André as « Rodolphe, "Père d'André." »
[33] Ibid., 673.
[34] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 101, 107.
[35] Ibid., 675.
[36] P.L. Weiller to Rodolphe Mathieu, 19 June 1939, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/A2,2, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa; Rodolphe Mathieu to P.L. Weiller, 20 June 1939, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/A2,2, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. « J'ai bien reçu votre letter du 19 juin m'annonçant votre généreuse intention de continuer encore l'aide que vous daignes apporter à mon fils André. Je vois prie de coire que nouse sommes très touches de l'intérêt que vous portez à son talent et à son développement. » Later, Rodolphe describes how André dedicated his 1939 piece for solo piano *Les Vagues* (*The Waves*) to Weiller's wife.

After a 26 March 1939 concert, Émile Vuillermoz (1878–1960), one of the most important French critics of his generation, penned two reviews that praised the child composer, comparing him to Mozart. On 27 March 1939 in *Candide*, he wrote:

> I will not hide from you that it was with the greatest skepticism that I went to this child prodigy's concert. The little André Mathieu is a babe in arms whom the good fairies of music have blessed. The works that he composed at the age of four, when he could not yet read music, are infinitely superior to everything Mozart wrote as a child. These *Trois Études* for piano reveal not only an absolutely disconcerting sense of the keyboard, but a miraculous subtlety of the ear. These are perfectly balanced works, based on an admirable harmonic logic and in which an infallible instinct supplants all formal training. *If the word "genius" has a meaning, it is here that we can find it*…And here we touch on one of the most troubling problems of universal pedagogy. One indeed wonders in exceptional cases like this if the current disciplines of grafting and cutting should not need to be modified to allow the free blossoming of a rare flower! [Emphasis added][37]

Vuillermoz was not the first to compare Mathieu to Mozart; an anonymous Québécois critic made a similar comparison 9 May 1936 in *Le Nouvelliste* (Trois-Rivières). According to a family legend, that was later proven to be false, Rachmaninoff gave Mathieu the "Little Canadian Mozart" moniker after a December 1936 concert at the Salle Chopin-Pleyel. Rachmaninoff called Mathieu the "Little Canadian Mozart...a genius, more so than I am,"[38] and said to him, "You are the only one who can claim to be my successor."[39] The statements from Vuillermoz, however, were both authentic and significant; he represented the highest tradition of French

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[37] Émile Vuillermoz, *Candide*, 27 March 1939. « Je ne vous cache pas que c'est avec le plus grand scepticisme que je me suis rendu à ce festival d'enfant prodige. Le petit André Mathieu est un enfant sur le berceau duquel toutes les bonnes fées de la musique se sont penchées. Les œuvres qu'il a composées lorsqu'il avait quatre ans et qu'il ignorait encore ses notes sont infiniment supérieures à tout ce qu'écrivit Mozart enfant. Ces *Trois études* pour le piano révèlent, non seulement un sens du clavier absolument déconcertant, mais une subtilité d'oreille miraculeuse. Ce sont là des ouvrages parfaitement équilibrés, reposant sur une logique harmonique admirable et dans lesquels un instinct infaillible supplée à tout formation technique. *Si le mot "génie" a un sens, c'est ici que nous pourrons le déchiffer*...Et nous touchons ici à l'un des problèmes les plus troublants de la pédagogie universelle. On se demande, en effet, si dans des cas aussi exceptionnels que celui-ci, les disciplines courantes de la greffe et de la bouture ne doivent pas être modifiées pour permettre le libre épanouissement d'une fleur rare ! »

[38] J.M. Charton, *Les Années françaises de Serge Rachmaninoff* (Paris: Éditions de la Revue Moderne, 1969), 63–64.

[39] Lucie Renaud, "André Mathieu," trans. Annie P. Prothin, liner notes to Alain Lefèvre, *L'enfant prodige: L'incroyable destinée d'André Mathieu*, Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, London Mozart Players, Tucson Symphony Orchestra, and Orchestre symphonique de Québec. Analekta AN 2 9284-5, 2010, 10.

musical criticism and this fact was not lost on Rodolphe, who would quote the sentence emphasized above for years afterwards in concert programs and newspaper advertisements.

In his writing, Vuillermoz emphasizes not only that André Mathieu was like Mozart, but that at this point in his career, he was *better*. Days later in *L'Excelsior*, he reiterated his opinion with clarification that it was impossible to tell whether Mathieu would become a better composer than Mozart. "For I do not yet know if the little André Mathieu will become a greater musician than Mozart, but I affirm that at his age Mozart had not created anything comparable to what was executed for us with sensational *brio* by this miraculous boy."[40] Trottier aptly notes that there are two problems with this ahistorical comparison: there are no factual means to compare the abilities of Mozart and Mathieu and the claim is an exaggeration since the social contexts of the two young composers were completely different.[41] Even if the comparison is allowed to stand, it remains that between the age of 6 and 10, Mathieu composed 19 works, while Mozart composed 75.[42] For Rodolphe's purposes, however, the statements made by Vuillermoz and others served to validate André's skill. Moreover, given the trajectory of Mozart's career, the comparisons also anticipated future artistic successes for Mathieu.

Mozart is the ubiquitous model for how we understand both musical prodigy and the composer. The circumstances surrounding his death—especially questions concerning the authorship of his unfinished *Requiem*—fueled German romantic imagination about composers as individual artists instead of tools within the European court system. Elizabeth Kramer describes the romantic period as characterized by a combination of Platonic idealism and expressivist

[40] Émile Vuillermoz, *L'Excelsior*, 29 March 1939. « Car je ne sais pas encore si le petit André Mathieu deviendra un plus grand Musicien que Mozart, mais j'affirme qu'à son âge Mozart n'avait rien créé de comparable à ce que nous a exécuté, avec un brio étourdissant, ce miraculeux garçonnet. »
[41] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 674.
[42] Marie-Thérèse Lefebvre, *André Mathieu: pianiste et compositeur québécois (1929–1968)* (Montréal: Lidec, 2006), 16.

theories, where the author actualizes a higher idealized spiritual form as a result of a "psychological transmission of ideas and feelings through composing and listening."[43] During the romantic era, the idea of the individual gained a significance in Western culture that has not disappeared, even as the societies of Western democracies have largely become more secular; in the twentieth century, some of the importance of individual creation shifted from an authentic expression of the Self to securing capital in a system that penalizes false claims to authorship. However, fundamental facets of romantic thought remain in the reception of individual twentieth-century creators in their works and biographies. There is an element of this impulse in the reception around Mathieu to map his life onto Mozart's. Indeed, as Trottier notes, even his death at 39

> has fed into the mythical dimensions of his life relative to exceptional musicians throughout history—witness the short lives of Mozart, Schubert, Mendelssohn. In this context, we must be wary both of the way in which we understand his body of work and of the cultural ideals with which we burden it.[44]

There are, however, constructive parallels between the histories of Mozart, Mathieu, and other musicians who displayed prodigious talent at an early age of how their fathers (and less often, mothers) directed their development. Whether or not Mozart's childhood was used directly as a framework by Mathieu's father, it is a point of reference for understanding the sociological aspects of child prodigy. The psychoanalytical dimension of Rodolphe's involvement in André's instruction and supervision has been well documented by Nicholson and Trottier. Both have suggested strong similarities between the histories of the Mozart family and the Mathieu family that go far beyond André's moniker or his early death. As Nicholson describes in *André*

[43] Elizabeth Kramer, "The Idea of Transfiguration in the Early German Reception of Mozart's Requiem," *Current Musicology* 81 (2006): 74. According to Kramer, these romantic ideals can help explain the reception around Mozart's unfinished *Requiem*, in particular, the ideal of *Kunstreligion* ("art religion"), where the work is a site of transfiguration for both the composer and the audience.
[44] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 668.

Mathieu: biographie, aside from the Bach clan, which was a dynasty transmitted hereditarily, Rodolphe Mathieu and Leopold Mozart—both of whom had tried and failed to make a lucrative career out of music—were responsible for the early musical development and the monetization of the talent of their respective sons.[45] Where he had failed to thrive as a composer before, Rodolphe was determined to succeed with his son; states Nicholson, "André is the incarnation, the tangible manifestation of all of Rodolphe's research. He is his 'product.'"[46]

Part of the marketing of Mathieu by his father involved the "rejuvenation" of André in concert programs and the like: claiming he was younger than he was to inflate his accomplishments. Over a century earlier, Beethoven's father manipulated the age of his son to sell more concert tickets.[47] This type of parental mediation is not uncommon; after all, the longer a prodigy stays young, the longer they are a prodigy and can be marketed as such. According to Trottier, Rodolphe's practices "exaggerated the childhood state and encouraged a dichotomy between childhood and adulthood in his career. His parents…colluded in the game by lying about his age as the years passed and public interest diminished; this was also a matter of well-being and security regarding the investment in the child as performer."[48] As a child, Mathieu often performed in an all-white outfit, which also served to emphasize his youth. Even when he had matured out of childhood, several concert programs would list the age of composition of his earliest works, as if the date of composition and the condition of having been a child prodigy

[45] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 37. « En fait, le schéma biographique qui ressemble le plus à celui d'André Mathieu, c'est celui du musicien à qui, dès sa plus tendre enfance, on l'a associé, comparé et à l'aune duquel on a jugé et juge encore ses œuvres: Mozart. La précocité n'est pas le seul facteur de rapprochement des deux compositeurs. Mis à part le clan Bach pour laquel la musique est un monopole transmis de façon héréditaire, les pères qui élèvent leurs enfants et leur impartissent—et dans le cas de Rodolphe, presque malgré eux—un maîtrise comme par osmose, d'un métier qu'ils ont prémâché pour ce réceptacle malléable, ne sont pas légions. »
[46] Ibid., 71. « André est l'incarnation, la manifestation tangible de toutes les recherches de Rodolphe. C'est son "produit." »
[47] See Alexander Wheelock Thayer, *Life of Beethoven, Part I* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967).
[48] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 670.

outweighed any current considerations of his ability at the keyboard. This had the effect of working against him when he was older because the practice emphasized a distinct gap between his childhood and adulthood while calling attention to his lack of new compositions.

In Trottier's examination of Mathieu's instrumental and compositional precocity, he assesses how the idea of the Mozartian "Eternal Child" applies to Mathieu, considering both the management by his parents and his pre- and post-mortem public receptions. As Maynard Solomon illustrates in "The Myth of the Eternal Child," "Mozart was considered…to represent a superlative example of the child's unlimited potentiality for creative and moral development, which could be unlocked by an enlightened upbringing,"[49] which is how audiences, both from Quebec and elsewhere, understood André Mathieu as well. In particular, Mozart and Mathieu were both managed by their fathers with an iron fist; the early and sustained successes of both composer-children could be considered the product of their fathers' management, especially through their use of language and direction of concert presentation that glorified the precocity of both composers.[50]

Trottier notes that there are, however, problems with the archetype of the "Eternal Child" because its particular revisionist agenda is reliant on an ahistorical psychoanalytical methodology.

> Even though the idea of Mozart as an "Eternal Child" has played an important role in the way historians have studied his trajectory as a prodigy…it still remains hotly disputed and challenged. The cornerstone of the issue is the revisionist approach and the lack of methodology with which the notion of the "Eternal Child" is applied to Mozart's relationship with his father and family, namely the psychoanalytical concepts of control and submission.[51]

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[49] Maynard Solomon, "The Myth of the Eternal Child," *19th-Century Music* 15, no. 2 (Autumn, 1991): 96. See also Maynard Solomon, *Mozart: A Life* (New York: Harper Collins, 1995).
[50] Solomon, "The Myth of the Eternal Child," 101. "Leopold Mozart had pictured his son as the ideal subject of an experiment in enlightenment, one which he intended to record for posterity in a biography written by himself."
[51] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 669–70.

In his review of Solomon's biography of Mozart, Matthew Head highlights the ahistoricity of the myth of the "Eternal Child": "'Genius' is not only a discourse on creativity but also a way of transcending time and place and this a principle of historical, or rather ahistorical thought. In its universalizing explanation of identity, psychoanalysis similarly negates historical and cultural differences in identity and subjectivity."[52] Yet, without adopting a purely psychoanalytical stance, it is possible to understand Leopold Mozart's actions as those which are socially and historically situated, even while they fed into an ahistorical myth of the "Eternal Child"—just as it is similarly possible to understand the actions of Rodolphe Mathieu on behalf of his son as such.[53]

Bad Luck, Bad Management, Bad Feelings

While the psychoanalytical dimension of André's decline has been explored in depth by historians, an aspect of Mathieu's history that has not been given its due consideration is the mismanagement of his career by his father. Indeed, some of the more ignominious details of Rodolphe's business correspondence, especially those which highlight his poor judgement or ineptitude, have been completely omitted from Nicholson's biography, even though the information survives in the archive. The accepted reason for Mathieu's decline after 1939 was that the Second World War interrupted his studies; however, particular instances of

[52] Matthew Head, "Myths of a Sinful Father: Maynard Solomon's 'Mozart,'" *Music & Letters* 80, no. 1 (Feb. 1999): 74.

[53] There are two layers of revisionism that may be involved in Solomon's idea of the myth of the "Eternal Child," a distinction that Trottier does not make apparent: the revisionism of the parental figure to promote the child as a genius, and the revisionism of the historian, who may employ a methodology that knowingly or unknowingly places a historical subject in an ahistorical narrative. It must be understood that the motivations behind both types of "Eternal Child" revisionisms are historically situated, even while both may make for flawed historical narratives. Additionally, while the results of both types may be similar in practice, the motivations are different because the latter type is made with the knowledge of the former. Thus, there is an important distance between the revisionism of Rodolphe Mathieu, who was the manager of his son's career, and the revisionism of later actors such as Alain Lefèvre, who is the executor of Mathieu's legacy.

mismanagement and the family's inability to adapt to the new economic and social realities of the period reveal a more complex situation that places much of the responsibility for Mathieu's career trajectory on Rodolphe, as well as on Mathieu himself, who was old enough at this point to make decisions of his own.

Eventually, the infantilization of Mathieu wore thin with audiences and impresarios.[54] As early as 1940, there were indications that André was a hard sell; a response to manager Louis Bourdon (who had resent an inquiry about interest for a concert in New York in English on behalf of Rodolphe) from Elizabeth Mathews of Arthur Judson Artist Management in New York, which operated out of Steinway Hall, reads:

> I am sorry that there appears to have been some misunderstanding about Mr. Mathieu. […] I did talk to him several times on the telephone, but as you know his English is not very good and it is possible that I did not make myself clear to him. […]
>
> As I believe you know, Mr. Salter and his wife were very interested in the boy and made every effort to interest other people and various local managers, but a nine-year-old child prodigy appears to be practically impossible to sell, and it has been very difficult to stir up any real interest despite his tremendous success.[55]

Despite the fact that André was actually 11 when it was "practically impossible" to drum up interest for a nine-year-old prodigy, the letter highlights an important facet of the Mathieu family's history; the difficulty of communicating in English proved persistent for the monolingual family, who were trying to make inroads in the North American music scene. There were few French-speaking performance avenues open at this point; the Mathieus, who had returned to Montreal for a brief vacation to visit ailing family in the summer of 1939—also

[54] Indeed, one only has to look to Canada's other child prodigy of that period, Glenn Gould (1932–82)—who weathered the difficult situation in Toronto—as representative of the possibility that with the right circumstances in his adolescence, André Mathieu could have had a successful career as an adult.
[55] Elizabeth Mathews to Lewis H. Bourdon, 5 April 1940, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/A2,5, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.

taking advantage of the final year of a child travel fee for André[56]—could not return to Paris due to the outbreak of war in Europe and had to start over in Montreal while they considered their next steps.[57]

By all appearances, it was difficult for Rodolphe to schedule concerts for André in Canada and the United States during the war, especially as the years wore on and belts tightened further. Mathieu had nine concerts in 1939 after Canada entered the war on 10 September (Quebec only), fourteen in 1940 (both Quebec and New England), nine in 1941 (Quebec only), nine in 1942 (New York, Quebec, and Ottawa), four in 1943 (Montreal and New York), four in 1944 (Quebec only), and five in 1945 (Ottawa and Quebec).[58] Even with Rodolphe's business records—which include meticulous copies of correspondence—preserved in the Library and Archives Canada, it is impossible to measure all of the dead ends—the unanswered phone calls, the unreciprocated letters, the wasted hours—in his pursuit of concert engagements for his son. The lack of interest from impresarios can be attributed to any number of reasons: the unrecovered—and now wartime—economy of the 1930s; the high price Rodolphe demanded for each engagement (usually $1000[59]); the point Rodolphe inquired during the artistic season (most seasons were planned a year in advance); a saturated local market in his home province that did not want to invite the child to perform two or three seasons in a row; and the prohibitive expense

[56] Rodolphe Mathieu to Octave Homberg, 12 June 1939, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/A2,5, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. « Comme je vous fait part de notre intention d'aller passer nos vacances cette année au Canada, je tiens à vous en donner les raisons qui ont motive ma decision: Premièrement c'est la dernière année qu'André peut voyager à tariff d'enfant, vu qu'il n'a pas encore dix ans, et qu'il peut bénéficier des advantages que les companies nous font. Et, dieuxièmement, ma mère qui est très agée et très malade desire ardemment me voir ainsi que ses uniques petits enfants, André et Camille. »

[57] Rodolphe Mathieu to Octave Homberg, 14 October 1939, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/A2,5, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. « J'ai reçu une charmante lettre de Monsieur Weiller qui me dit qu'il est inutile de penser à retourner à Paris maintenant, mais que André peut continuer ses études en Amérique durant la guerre. C'est malheureux, tout était si bien commencé à Paris. Fau bien se soumettre aux évènements. Il nous faut recommencer en neuf par ici; ce qui n'est pas facile. »

[58] See Appendix V in Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 495–539.

[59] This concert fee would be comparable to more than $16,500 CDN in 2017. Rodolphe often ended up accepting less than half of this fee out of desperation.

of travel to other locales, which could have expanded his horizons. Rodolphe also sought prestigious contracts with orchestras and contacted leading conductors of the time such as Serge Koussevitzky and Leopold Stokowski, but his inquiries were left unanswered since Mathieu remained relatively unknown outside of Quebec.

The war also disrupted André's productivity, who composed only five pieces during the conflict. This had a negative influence on his marketability; in one instance, the Quebec Ladies' Musical Club, which had invited André to play the previous year, were dissatisfied with Rodolphe's proposal. In a letter written 22 November 1940, the president of the club, Dorothy Pfeiffer wrote,

> We engaged your son to play for our club on the condition that an entirely new and different program be submitted. (Sept. 13) You gave assurance in your reply of Sept. 17th of his 'extensive repertoire.' We find upon comparison that the program you sent today is identical with the one played here in the Palais Montcalm last year. This is Contrary to our request. Many people have heard this same program several times in Quebec, as well as in Ottawa + Montreal. Kindly send a new program at once, to fulfill your guarantee, under which Condition, following our correspondence, we entered into contract with you. We the committee is gravely disappointed and can not accept the one you sent today.[60]

To which Rodolphe immediately replied,

> The audience will hear André Mathieu because he is a child who composes and performs like an adult. The public never tires of hearing Chopin, Liszt or Debussy, and it never tires of hearing André Mathieu because you yourself, Madame, tell me that people have gone to hear him more than once in Quebec City, Montreal, and Ottawa. I wonder why these people went back to hear him again if they did not like to listen to the same pieces.[61]

[60] Dorothy Pfeiffer to Rodolphe Mathieu, 22 November 1940, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/A2,12, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. Original emphasis.

[61] Rodolphe Mathieu to Dorothy Pfeiffer, 22 November 1940, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/A2,12, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. « Le public va entendre André Mathieu parceque c'est un enfant qui compose et exécute comme une adulte. Le public ne se lasse pas d'entendre du Chopin, du Liszt ou du Debussy, il ne se lasse pas plus d'entendre du André Mathieu puisque vous me dites vous-même, Madame, que des personnes sont allées l'entendre plusiers fois à Québec, à Montréal et à Ottawa. Je me demande pourquoi ces personnes sont allées de nouveau le réentendre si elles n'aiment pas à écouter les mêmes pièces. »

The Quebec Ladies' Musical Club eventually capitulated and André played the same program of his works at the Château Frontenac on 3 December 1940 that he had performed at Palais Montcalm the year previous, adding several short character pieces from his limited repertoire of other composers' works, including the Menuet from Ravel's Sonatine, Debussy's "Clair de Lune," *La Fille aux cheveux de lin*, "Doctor Gradus ad Parnassum" and "Golliwogg's Cakewalk", Chopin's Études Op. 10, No. 12 and Op. 25, Nos. 2 and 9, and Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2.[62]

Rodolphe also had difficulty settling accounts with advertisers due to the family's difficult financial situation throughout this period. A terse letter from the credit department of the *Musical Courier*, a popular American music periodical, was sent to Rodolphe in 1941 demanding that he settle the $201.82 account.[63] The account remained unpaid until at least 1948. In a letter to the *Musical Courier*, Rodolphe apologizes, "Sincerely regret to delay so long to acquit myself of this account, but it as [sic] been impossible to do so before. The musical affairs haven't been yet very good for us."[64] This ongoing incident not only reveals the family's declining fortunes, but also likely indicates that Rodolphe was not able to advertise André as broadly as was necessary throughout North America to draw a large paying public.

However, André's concert career was not the only priority for Rodolphe (who found the touring life very disruptive for André's studies), even while the income was necessary for the family. Without wealthy patrons to support André, Rodolphe had to turn to the provincial government for support. As he wrote in a letter to Liberal Member of the Legislative Assembly

[62] See Appendix IV in Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 491–4 for a complete list of Mathieu's piano repertoire by other composers.
[63] E. Cullinane to Rodolphe Mathieu, 7 October 1941, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/A2,7, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.
[64] Rodolphe Mathieu to Grace Nylen, 17 August 1948, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/A2,7, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.

for Montreal-Mercier, Joseph-Achille Francœur (1939–48), "Now that we must turn to the United States, considering the conditions in Europe, it would be completely necessary that my son be able to continue his studies with great masters like he had in Paris."[65] He sent a similar letter a day later to Provincial Secretary Henri Groulx (1939–40) that stressed the importance of government funding so that the family could afford elite training for André in New York City, while also unduly boasting that André's international reputation was already secured.[66] Groulx responded on 1 May 1940 that there was not any money in the budget for a bursary until the new fiscal year.[67] The following year, André was granted a bursary from the Quebec government that Rodolphe apparently considered declining because André wanted to be a tennis star rather than a pianist:

> I regret to have to inform you that we can no longer accept the study bursary that you have been kind enough to bestow on my young André. The reason will be as painful for you as it is for me: André has decided to be a tennis player rather than a pianist. Since he cannot do both at once, I asked him to choose, and that is his answer.[68]

[65] Rodolphe Mathieu to J.A. Francœur, 25 April 1940, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/A2,5, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. « Maintenant que nous sommes obligés de nous orienter vers les Etats-Unis, vu les conditions Européennes, il serait de tout[e] nécessité que mon fils puisse poursuivre ses études avec des grands maitres comme [qu'il] avait à Paris. »

[66] Rodolphe Mathieu to Henri Groulx, 26 April 1940, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/A2,5, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. « Je veux bien qu'André donne quelques concerts mais je ne voudrais pas que cela derange ses études. Maintenant que sa reputation internationale est bien établie il me semble qu'il serait temps, puisqu'il a actuellement dix ans, de lui procurer les moyens nécessaires à son développpement total. » Once again, Rodolphe lies about André's age by a year.

[67] Henri Groulx to Rodolphe Mathieu, 1 May 1940, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/A2,11, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.

[68] Rodolphe Mathieu to Hector Perrier, 1 May 1940, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/A2,11, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. « Je regrette d'avoir à vous dire que nous ne pouvons plus accepter la bourse d'études que vous aviez eu la bonté d'accorder à mon jeune André. La raison sera aussi pénible pour vous que pour moi: André a décidé de faire un jouer de tennis plutot qu'un pianist. Comme il ne peut faire les deux à la fois, je lui ai demandé de choisir, et c'est sa réponse. »

It is unclear, however, if this letter was sent, since André played a concert nine days later. In any case, the crisis seemed to be averted since the family relocated to New York in the spring of 1942 for André to pursue his musical studies with Harold Morris.[69]

While in New York, Mathieu won the New York Philharmonic's competition for young composers with his *Concertino* (1942), beating Leonard Bernstein, who was 11 years his senior. This won him the opportunity to play in Carnegie Hall and a $200 prize. The period represents a critical development in Mathieu's style away from the simple themes and forms of his childhood towards a more sophisticated compositional idiom that showcased the breadth of his pianistic and compositional talents. It was around this time that Mathieu composed the solo piano version of the *Concerto de Québec* (1941), which would become one of his most critically acclaimed works. Given Mathieu's rapid development, the prize and the resulting critical success seemed a timely intervention, proof the child could find success in America; however, the Mathieu family was never comfortable in the English-speaking metropolis of New York. As one critic noted, "André's English is no match for his piano playing," and another wrote that he was prone to have outbursts of anger and mentioned that he was happiest when he was in the car on the way back to Canada.[70] In what Nicholson calls "the worst decision of their life," the Mathieu family decided after a single year to return to Montreal. "It was at a moment where the spiritual wealth of the entire world is concentrated in the Unites States that the Mathieus returned to Montreal….This return to Montreal was a victory for André and a defeat for Rodolphe."[71] In her 1975 interview with Rudel-Tessier, Mimi Mathieu voiced her regret over the matter:

[69] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 176.
[70] Unknown Author, *New York Herald Tribune*, February 1942; Ross Parmenter, *New York Times*, 1942.
[71] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 196. « C'est au moment où la richesse spirituelle du monde est toute concentrée aux États-Unis que les Mathieu rentrent à Montréal. » « Ce retour à Montréal est une victoire pour André et une défaite pour Rodolphe. »

> Rodolphe and I wanted to stay in New York so that André could make a career in the United States, because going back to nothing is stupid. André was at a somewhat difficult age. [He] was an adult-child, you know, we didn't have it easy. They were used to getting whatever they wanted; how would you raise these children?[72]

It was impossible for the family to know at the time, but André's performance with the New York Philharmonic would be the highest point of his career. When Mathieu was finally in control of his own trajectory, he seemed unable to mature beyond the childhood state. The very same coincidental factors that added up to early success—in Feldman's framework, Mathieu's precocity and rapid musical development, the heavy influence of his family, the direction provided from teachers and mentors, the nationalistic patronage from his community, the support from critics in the field—would begin to weaken and negate one another in the wake of the personal hardship brought on by this "arrested development." Drawing on psychoanalysis, Trottier notes, "Ultimately, Mathieu expressed anger about having been a child without a childhood," a dramatic consequence of having been marketed by his father as an "Eternal Child."[73] The conditions surrounding Mathieu's decline were, of course, much more complicated. Yet, by establishing the origin of this myth during the desperate period when Mathieu was under the custody of his parents, it is possible to more precisely interrogate the construction of the "Little Canadian Mozart" myth and recognize the socio-economic complexities of the situations leading to Mathieu's decline.

[72] Mimi Mathieu quoted in Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 176. « Rodolphe et moi souhaitions rester à New York pour qu'André fasse carrière aux États-Unis, parce que revenir dans le néant, c'est stupide. André était à un âge un peu difficile…[il] était un enfant adulte, vous comprenez, on n'avait pas le beau rôle. Ils étaient habitués à recevoir tout ce qu'ils voulaient ; comment voulez-vous élever des enfants ? »
[73] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 670.

Chapter 2: Modern Romanticism at the Crossroads (1943–1968)

The biography of a musical child prodigy can take two routes; either the child matures while successfully maintaining a professional career, somehow mitigating the effects of the public eye from a young age; or the child does not develop beyond a childlike mode of performing or composing. Mathieu's development, unfortunately, took the latter direction, and his music in turn suffered. As Trottier states, "the issue with Mathieu's career was the combination of success and failure—rare are those musical careers that so brutally encompass both an inordinate degree of success and the cruelty of sinking into oblivion."[1] Much of Mathieu's decline is due to his lifelong struggles with alcoholism and poverty, as well as his artistic inflexibility in the face of opposition. Amidst the shifting terrain of Western post-war musical aesthetics to more abstract forms of musical expression, Mathieu was furthermore unwilling to accept the instruction of Arthur Honegger (1892–1955) when he returned to Paris to study in 1946 and he abandoned formal pedagogical training in composition. Defeated, Mathieu returned to Montreal, where he would spend the rest of his life. To his great embarrassment, Mathieu's career floundered in full view of his disenchanted Québécois audience, who had once been his most ardent supporters.

However difficult it is to dwell on the unpleasant aspects of Mathieu's later career, it is important to take stock of the situation as it relates to the composer's depreciation in Quebec society in the years leading up to his death. This period of Mathieu's biography, not incidentally, motivates recent reconciliatory efforts. One of the ironies of Mathieu's reception is that he is always defined by his successes as a child, while the most enduring testaments to his skill as a composer are works composed in his adolescence and early adulthood, such as his Piano

[1] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 668–9.

Concerto No. 3 (otherwise known as the *Concerto de Québec* [1941]), *Laurentienne No. 2* (1947),[2] *Prélude Romantique* (1951), *Rhapsodie Romantique* (1958), and Piano Concerto No. 4 (1947). The Third and Fourth Piano Concertos, however, exist in their current iterations as modern orchestrations of the original thematic material that Mathieu composed at the piano. Thus, comparable to his early years and his relationship with his father, questions remain concerning the extent of external intervention in his later compositions, with documented cases of mediation occurring both during his lifetime and posthumously.

Personal Troubles, Declining Fame, and a Parisian Return (1943–1947)

André Mathieu's adolescence and adulthood are characterized by a lack of direction, and there is a distinct correlation between the time André began to make decisions with less parental mediation and the free fall of his career. Returning to the relative cultural starkness of Montreal in 1943 after only one year in New York, the fourteen-year-old Mathieu, who now found himself without any formal instructor, founded the Orchestre de la Jeunesse. A notice in *Le Devoir* on 11 December 1943 calls for interested musicians younger than 20 to audition for a seat at 445 Saint François-Xavier, the general office of the Bloc populaire canadien, with the Mathieu family's personal telephone number at 4519 rue Berri.[3] Aside from a handful of articles, however, no record remains of the public activities of the Orchestre de la Jeunesse, including notices for concerts or concert programs. It is likely there were few, if any, concerts with the orchestra. Unlike other training or repertory youth orchestras, the Orchestre de la Jeunesse did not appear to offer many mentorship opportunities with established musicians. Since Mathieu was never

[2] Mathieu wrote six *Laurentiennes*, but only the second has been located.
[3] Unknown author, "André Mathieu forme un orchestre," *Le Devoir*, 11 December 1943. The following week, *Le Devoir* reported that the turnout for auditions was successful and the orchestra was only seeking two horns, a bass trombone, a tuba, and a harp. See Nicholson, 217.

known to conduct other composer's works, the orchestra appeared to be little more than a tool for Mathieu's own advancement. As Nicholson states, "It is evident…that André Mathieu saw this orchestra as the extension and privileged interpreter of his new works.…Several of his orchestral compositions are dedicated to the Orchestre de la Jeunesse," including the *Ouverture Romantique* (1945), the only complete movement of his first Symphony.[4] The orchestra folded quietly when Mathieu returned to Paris to study with Honegger.

The Orchestre de la Jeunesse is but one casualty of Mathieu's style of self-management. André was full of grandiose ideas, but he never showed any aptitude or interest in the business side of being a professional musician.[5] Consequently, as Rodolphe gradually stepped back from organizing his son's career, prestigious and lucrative concert opportunities dwindled. Mathieu's penchant for flitting from one project to the next was indicative of a general lack of self-discipline and regulation. Raised under the strict control of Mimi and Rodolphe, once he reached adolescence Mathieu rebelled against them, refusing private tutors and classes for the freedom he found amongst his peers, who lived a more bohemian lifestyle.[6]

Compounding these personal issues was Mathieu's addiction, a problem which would interfere with his career for the rest of his life. Mathieu drank heavily from around the age of 15, though his alcohol abuse began some years before; several friends of the family note that Rodolphe had often given him a shot of cognac before recitals when he was a boy. A May 1944 letter written by Rodolphe addressed to André shows the former's exasperation with his son's

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[4] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 220. « Il apparaît cependant évident qu'André Mathieu voyait cet orchestre comme le prolongement et l'interprète privilégié de ses nouvelles œuvres. Nous verrons que plusieurs de ses nouvelles créations pour orchestre sont destinées et dédiées à l'Orchestre de la Jeunesse. » The other two known movements, *Le Chant des ténèbres* and *Hantise* (both 1945) were abandoned.

[5] This is also apparent in the Mathieu Family *fonds* at Library and Archives Canada. André Mathieu's records are nearly complete when Rodolphe was in charge of his career. Rodolphe would keep meticulous copies of all of the business letters he sent on André's behalf. It is unclear whether André did the same; if he did, they are not part of the collection.

[6] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 676.

truancy and behaviour around alcohol, threatening him with violence: "André, from now on, you must eat at home, do not go out in the evening, resume your French classes and spend your time studying and composing. If you disobey my orders, I will take the only means left to me. Your father, Rodolphe Mathieu. NB. A copy of this letter was given to my son André."[7] Nicholson explains how Rodolphe's actions were "doubly damaging"; first, violence and blackmail are not healthy approaches to fight alcoholism, and second, his constant infantilizing of his son, through controlling behaviours of disapproval and interference, sabotaged Mathieu's own attempts to be self-reliant.[8] Yet it remained to be seen whether Mathieu was mature enough to take care of himself. In 1944, Mathieu was involved in an incident when he left his parents for the first extended period of time to travel to Lac des Deux Montagnes with his friends. Saved from drowning by his friend André Audet (1914–52), Mathieu appears to have attempted to commit suicide due to the heartbreak he felt over the actress Huguette Oligny (1922–2013)—who had allegedly, at seven years his senior, found him too young.[9]

Throughout this difficult period for Mathieu, one productive collaboration emerged with the violinist Gilles Lefebvre (1922–2001), who premiered his *Sonate pour violon et piano* Op. 29 on 18 November 1945.[10] The concert at the Windsor Hotel in Montreal was well received by

[7] Rodolphe Mathieu to André Mathieu, 17 May 1944, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/A2, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. « André, à parti[r] d'aujourd'hui, tu dois prendre tes repas à la maison, ne pas sortir le soir, reprendre tes cours de français et deviser [dédier] ton temps aux études et à ta musique. Si tu désobéis à mes ordres, je prendrai les seuls moyens qui me restent. Ton père Rodolphe Mathieu. NB. Copie de cette lettre a été remise à mon fils André. »

[8] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 223. « L'attitude de Rodolphe est doublement dommageable ; d'une part, la brutalité et le chantage n'ont jamais réussi à pénétrer les mécanismes d'alcoolisme, d'autre part, infantiliser, vouloir garder sous tutelle et soumettre cet enfant-adulte sabotent chaque tentative d'André de s'assumer, de se faire une vie hors famille. »

[9] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 676. See Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 224–7 for an extended description of the event, including newspaper and radio reports.

[10] Lefebvre also worked with Mathieu on *La Ballade-Fantaisie* Op. 27, *Complainte* (arr. for violin and piano), and *Berceuse* (arr. for violin and piano). Mathieu's works for violin are some of the only examples of his writing for instruments other than solo piano. In these examples, the piano is generally given more prominence than the violin, which usually doubles the melody line already contained in the piano part. *Complainte* and *Berceuse* also illuminate Mathieu's habit of repurposing already-composed material.

critics, but poorly attended by the general audience—remarkable since this was his first large concert since his appearance at the Mont Royal Chalet in August 1943. As one critic wrote in *The Herald* in a piece entitled "Small Audience Hears Superb Mathieu Recital":

> Last night, we heard and saw a pitifully small audience applaud André Mathieu…. It would be nice to convince M. Mathieu that his recital was superb, which it was; it would be fine to impress upon his adolescent mind that he ranks in our estimation with the musical greats….When a truly great artist is nurtured in the midst of a great metropolitan city, it seems all wrong that he should remain comparatively ignored within its gates.[11]

In the same publication, Gorman Kennedy indicates that "the promotion for the recital didn't measure up to what it takes to meet the topnotch competition."[12] Mathieu and Lefebvre presented the same concert in Quebec City at the Palais Montcalm to similar effect: the concert was a critical success, but the audience did not come to support the two young artists. Whether or not it may be attributed to a failure of marketing, the audience size of the 18 November 1945 and 9 April 1946 concerts was not anomalous compared to the few remaining concerts given by Mathieu, which were sparsely attended compared to those he gave as a young boy. It is highly likely audiences were tired of hearing the same childhood repertoire that formed the bulk of every concert program, while critics were often concerned with reporting on the newest works.

Mathieu was given a fortuitous opportunity when he was awarded a grant from the French government to resume his studies in Paris, this time without his family. In September 1946, the Maison des étudiants canadiens à Paris (House of Canadian Students in Paris) reopened its doors to students for the first time since the start of the Second World War. Among Mathieu's colleagues during his time in Paris was future Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Elliott

[11] C.C., "Small Audience Hears Superb Mathieu Recital," *The Herald (Montreal)*, 19 November 1945.
[12] Gorman Kennedy, *The Herald (Montreal)*, 19 November 1945. In the concert Mathieu performed his Études Op. 1 and 4, *Berceuse, Hommage à Mozart enfant, Danse sauvage, Les Mouettes, Les Abeilles piquantes, Les Vagues, Complainte* (arranged for violin and piano)*, Berceuse* (arranged for violin and piano), *Saisons canadiennes, Sonate pour violon et piano, Dans les champs, Fantaisie*, and *Laurentienne*.

Trudeau (1919–2000).[13] Excited to be studying composition with Honegger and piano with Jules Gentil (1898–1985), Mathieu wrote in an October 1946 letter to his parents, asking for pocket change for cigarettes. He had yet to commence his studies, but his tone was nonetheless full of optimism: "In this magnificent atmosphere, I feel ready to do great things, great musical creations that you will hear about soon."[14] Six weeks later Mathieu sent another letter to his family—again asking for money—that took an altogether different tone about his experiences, and the École normale de musique de Paris, in particular:

> I apologize, my dear father, to write to you again about these monetary issues, but what do you expect, I am alone here in Paris, a little distraught, and having to face multiple obstacles.…The atmosphere of the Conservatoire and the École normale is unbearable to me! I'm beginning to think that the Conservatoire is a museum and the École normale is a nursing home for spinsters![15]

Though he does not indicate specific events, it is evident from his letter that Mathieu was frustrated with his educational environment. He mentions working on a violin concerto under the guidance of Honegger, "who, at least, is an admirable man."[16]

Mathieu's relationship with Honegger began on 7 October 1946. Honegger was one of the more conservative members of Les Six; although the group's aesthetic is characterised as a reaction against German romanticism and French impressionism, Honegger's music had the closest links to the past. Thus, for Mathieu's romantic style, Honegger was one of the more

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[13] See Linda Lapointe, *Maison des étudiants canadien: cité internationale universitaire de Paris, 75 ans d'histoire 1926–2001* (Saint-Lambert, QC: Éditions Stromboli, 2001).

[14] André Mathieu to family, 4 October 1946, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/B2,2, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. « Dans cette atmosphère magnifique, je me sens prêt à faire de grandes choses, de grandes créations musicales dont vous entendrez parler bientôt. »

[15] André Mathieu to Rodolphe Mathieu, 25 November 1946, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/B2,2, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. « Je m'excuse mon cher père de vous entretenir une seconde fois de ces questions pécuniaires, mais que voulez-vous je suis seul ici à Paris, un peu désemparé et ayant à faire face à de multiples obstacles…. L'atmosphère du Conservatoire et de l'École normale m'est insupportable ! Je commence à coire que le Conservatoire est un musée et l'École normale un hospice pour vieilles filles ! »

[16] Ibid. « J'ai sur le métier un concerto de violon que j'écris en suivant les conseils d'Honegger qui lui au moins, est un homme admirable. »

suitable mentors available; however, their working relationship quickly soured and Mathieu spent only one month under his guidance. In a letter to his family dated October 30, Gilles Lefebvre recounts that Honegger assured Mathieu that the latter was the "leader of all Canadian music."[17] This judgement was unsettled nine days later after Mathieu and Lefebvre performed the *Sonate pour violon et piano* for Honegger. Recounts Lefebvre at length:

> Honegger. I met the master through André Mathieu, who has the extraordinary privilege of taking private courses with the famous composer: wanting to play his *Sonate*, he asked for my services.…I will tell you what happened and some of my thoughts in passing. Friday, November 8, 1946, 10 am.…He follows [the music] attentively, looks in turn at André or me, and mostly he listens…and we give a beautiful rendition of the *Sonate*; but now that it is over, what will he say? It is his turn to speak yet he says nothing! It is a moment of fearful anticipation in a deafening silence that nobody would dare to disturb for fear of interfering with the consideration of the judge.…At first, he gives a complete analysis of the work from all angles and finally declares that for a work to have the right to call itself a sonata it must have much more, it must have themes that are better developed and not merely repeated, and, above all, must assume a single character that will by the same token give it more unity. Finally, he goes on to add something terrible: that [Mathieu] should start the work anew and do better, follow his advice based on experience and rebuild another sonata with the same well-inspired themes, create a more sophisticated work, stronger, better constructed, more thoughtful, more serious.[18]

Lefebvre continues in the letter stating that Mathieu fought back against Honegger, defending the work as he had composed it and deciding instead to try to write Honegger a trio, a piece he

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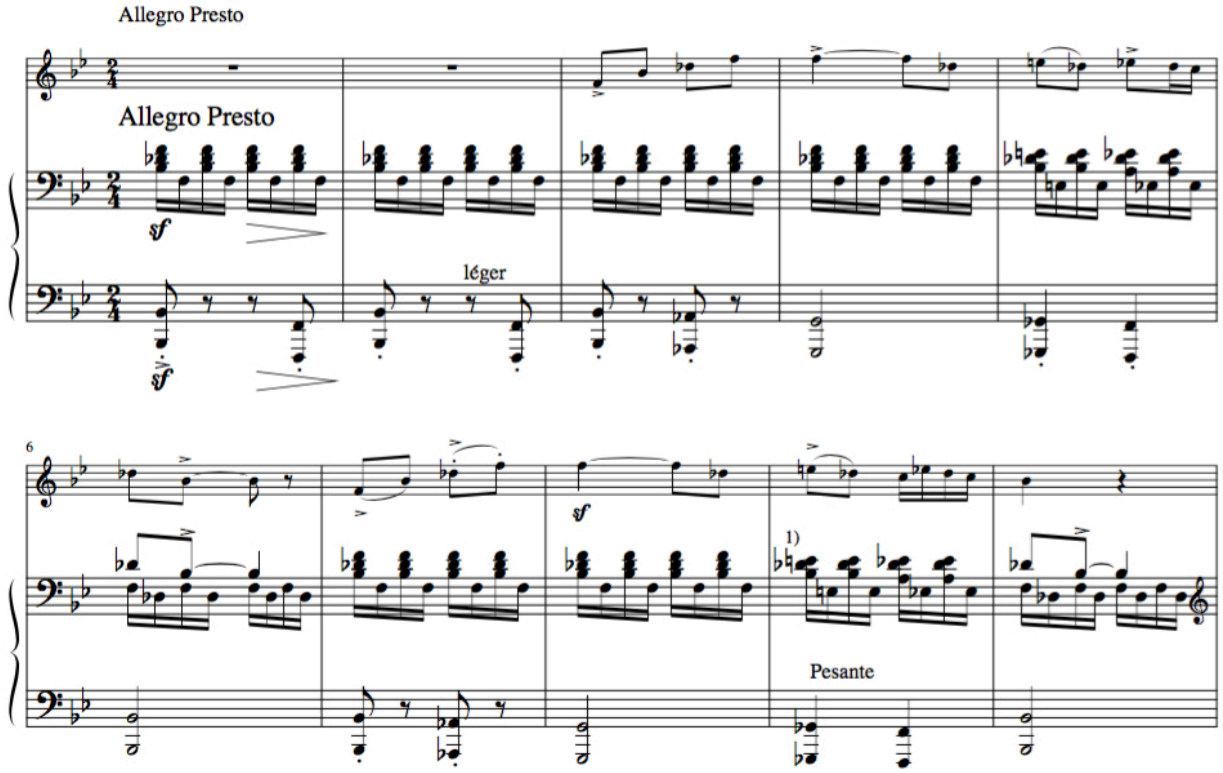
[17] Gilles Lefebvre to family, 30 October 1946, quoted in Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 249. « André Mathieu est bien encouragé. M. Honegger lui a avoué que c'etait lui, André, qui était le chef de tout la musique canadienne. »

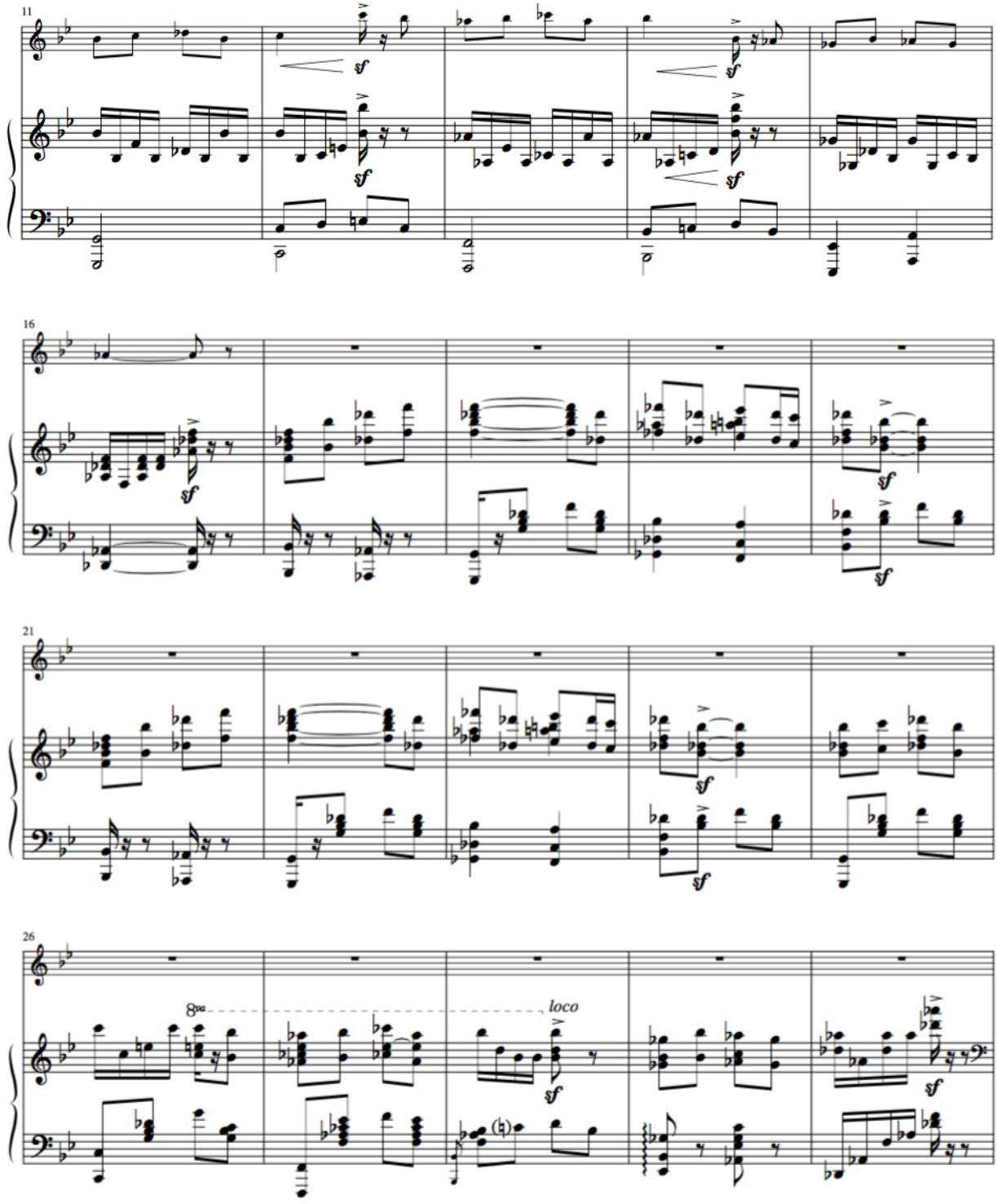
[18] Gilles Lefebvre to family, 17 November 1946, quoted in Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 250–2. « Honegger. J'ai fait la rencontre du maître par André Mathieu, ce dernier a le privilège extraordinaire de suivre des cours privés avec le célèbre compositeur : voulant lui jouer sa Sonate, il demande mes services.…Je te raconte donc ce qui s'est passé et j'ajoute au passage quelques impressions. Vendredi, le 8 novembre 1946, 10 h du matin….Il suite attentivement, regarde tour à tour André ou moi, et surtout il écoute…et nous donnons une belle interprétation à la *Sonate* ; mais maintenant qu'elle est terminée, que dira t-il ? C'est à son tour de parler et il ne dit rien ! C'est un moment d'attente terrible [dans] un silence pesant que personne n'oserait troubler de peur d'interférer dans la réflexion du juge….D'abord il donne l'analyse complète de l'œuvre sous tous les angles et enfin il déclare qu'une œuvre pour avoir le droit de s'appeler sonate, doit avoir plus de suite, doit avoir des thèmes mieux développés et non pas répétés, et surtout doit revêtir un seul caractère qui lui donnera par là même plus d'unité. Enfin, il ajoute ceci de terrible, qu'il faudrait recommencer l'œuvre et faire mieux, suivre ses conseils basés sur l'expérience et rebâtir avec ces mêmes thèmes si bien inspirés une autre sonate, créer une œuvre plus savante, plus solide, mieux construite, plus réfléchie, plus sérieuse. »

finished two years later after he had returned to Montreal. The Trio was, Nicholson claims, an act of rebellion on Mathieu's part, who quit his lessons soon thereafter on good terms; "André, proud, would not have wanted to change his language, his style, and the two creators must have realized, amicably, that they were not going anywhere together."[19] This is perhaps a more charitable view of the events, since it is clear from his letters that Mathieu was unwilling to defer to Honegger and had difficulty maintaining the self-discipline required to excel at his studies.

Figure 2.1: André Mathieu, *Sonate pour violon et piano,* Op. 29, mm. 1–30.[20]



[19] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 252. « André, fier, n'aura pas voulu changer son langage, son style, et les deux créateurs ont dû constater à l'amiable qu'ils n'allaient, ensemble, nulle part. »
[20] André Mathieu, *Sonate pour violon et piano* Op. 29 (Montréal: Canadian Music Centre, 1944).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As Honegger stated in his reprimand, *Sonate pour violon et piano* does not deserve the title of sonata when considering the form of the classical sonata.[21] None of the three movements (*Allegro Presto—Plus lent ad libitum con Fantasia—Allegro Presto*, *Largo—Grandiose—Largo*, and *Allegretto—Allegro Presto*) have a formal structure that could be considered sonata form; Mathieu instead employs a ternary or rounded binary form that is typical of many of his compositions. As seen in figure 2.1, in the opening of the first movement, the primary theme is repeated several times with scant harmonic or melodic variation—first by the violin (mm. 3–16) and then by the piano, verbatim (mm. 17–30). The B section is an abrupt shift from the linear, balanced phrase structure of the opening material. The section, a gradual *ritardando* eventually marked *Plus lent ad libitum con Fantasia*, bears traces of Debussy and Ravel in Mathieu's ethereal use of irrational tuplet divisions, and chromaticism and non-functional harmonic progressions. The writing places less of an emphasis on melody compared to the A section. Mathieu finishes the first movement with a truncated A' section that does not introduce any new material and maintains the same key areas as the opening, a common structural feature in many of Mathieu's pieces.

Though Mathieu evidently draws inspiration from his French predecessors, unlike Debussy's Violin Sonata in G minor (1917) and Ravel's Violin Sonata No. 2 (1923–27), in Mathieu's sonata the violin and piano are not equal partners; rather, the violin is an extension of the piano, usually doubling or repeating the melodic line instead of establishing a contrapuntal relationship. The *Sonate* betrays Mathieu's unfamiliarity with the violin; his writing does not demonstrate the capabilities of the instrument, instead using the violin to sustain and crescendo through phrases, amplifying melodies already contained in the piano. For example, Mathieu

[21] Although, one could make the case that at this point in the twentieth century, entire sonatas often did not include a single movement in sonata form.

scores both instruments to trill at octaves for several measures at the end of the B section; an uncommon—and ineffective—practice given the difficulty of matching the timbre and intonation of the instruments while executing the technique. This technique is also used at length in the B section of the second movement. Not only is Mathieu's writing for the violin unidiomatic, the recurrence of many compositional features makes it unimaginative as well.

Though the *Sonate pour violon et piano* is more sophisticated than the works Mathieu composed in his childhood, the piece suffers from an idiosyncratic formal organization that was characteristic of Mathieu's writing from his earliest juvenilia for solo piano. All three movements are highly sectional and an overall sense of development in the *Sonate* is undermined by the return of the opening/closing A material of the first movement at the close of the third. As Trottier states, "Honegger's judgement of Mathieu agreed with that of certain critics and remains relevant today: many good melodic and rhythmic ideas, but difficulty in sustaining them in a coherent and unified language and form."[22]

After a year in Paris, Mathieu began to run out of money and his parents could not afford to support his education abroad. France was in the midst of economic turmoil due to the war, food was expensive and people were rioting in the street. In a 20 June 1947 letter to his parents, Gilles Lefebvre writes,

> Poor André must return to Canada in August. It's a shame because he had been going to classes regularly with Mr. Jules Gentil for a while, and this I heard from Mr. Gentil himself. He has much to do in music; I often wonder if he will consent to make the small effort it would take for him to become one of the greatest musicians in the world. ANYWAY, IT'S HIS PROBLEM, NOT MINE.[23]

[22] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 679.
[23] Gilles Lefebvre to family, 20 June 1947, quoted in Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 265. « Le pauvre André doit retourner au Canada au mois d'août. C'est dommage car depuis quelques temps, il suivait régulièrement ses cours avec M. Jules Gentil et ça je le tiens de M. Gentil lui-même. Il a beaucoup à faire en musique, je me demande souvent s'il consentira à donner le petit effort que ça lui demanderait pour devenir un des plus grands musiciens du monde. ENFIN [*sic*], C'EST SON PROBLÈME ET NON LE MIEN. » Original emphasis.

Altogether, Mathieu spent under eleven months in Paris. During this time, he performed more than he composed, often at the Maison des étudiants canadiens or the Fédération Normandie-Canada. Ostensibly, this was for pocket money, since the programs would often include solo improvisations at the piano on folk themes, or highly accessible arrangements of jazz, dance, and popular music that accompanied a vocalist.

The concert programs from this period reveal that either there was little interest in Mathieu's art music or he had little interest in playing his own compositions; certainly, his reception by the Parisian public was not as warm as that which he had received as a young boy before the war.[24] His production of new works also slowed; among the pieces composed in this period are four songs for voice and piano based on poems by Paul Verlaine (1844–96)—"Colloque sentimental" (1946), "Il pleure dans mon cœur" (1946), "Le Ciel est si bleu" (1946, incomplete), "Les Chères Mains" (1946)—*Désir* for violin and piano (1946), *Fantaisie brésilienne* for violin and piano (1946), *Bagatelle* No. 2 (1946), and *Laurentienne* No. 2 (1947). Unfinished and lost works include a Violin Concerto (1946), *Fantaisie* for oboe or violin and piano (1947), and several folksongs he arranged for concert settings.

Though extremely difficult for Mathieu personally, artistically, and financially, the period between 1943 and 1947 was only the beginning of his troubles. Trottier notes, "A psychological framework clearly emerges, beginning in this period: the frustration of experiencing failure after having known such success, to which was added ambivalence as to what decisions should be taken regarding his career as a pianist compared with the ideal of composition."[25] Even though his style of composition was thoroughly criticized by Honegger, one of the most preeminent composers of his time, Mathieu refused to reconsider formal elements of his style. Moreover,

[24] See Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 495–539 for a list of recitals and concerts by André Mathieu.
[25] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 676.

Mathieu insisted on musical composition rather than performance, resigning himself to a profession that required a measure of self-motivation he did not possess and involved extended periods of isolation that he could not endure.

Modern Romanticism: Pre- and Post-War Anti-Modern Aesthetics

At a time when there was great stylistic variance among composers in both Europe and North America—many of whom, such as Stravinsky, Hindemith, and Copland, drastically changed styles over their career due to political and aesthetic pressures—it is notable that Mathieu's compositional style evolved very little over his lifetime. He was either unwilling or unable to change his style when reproached by mentors and critics. Marie-Thérèse Lefebvre states that Mathieu's "style remained imprecise."[26] But Trottier counters, "It is not so much imprecision as an amalgam of what Mathieu heard and what his paradigms were, namely the piano works that he played as a child. Clearly, Mathieu improvised based on the repertoire he played in such a way that the reworked atmospheres often became the norm, drawing on the likes of Debussy and Ravel, but also Chopin, Scriabin, and Rachmaninov."[27]

Influenced by the liberalism and intellectualism fostered by his father, most notably with *Les Soirées Mathieu*, Mathieu began to write about music. Mathieu considered the artifice of modernist works of art disingenuous; for him, romantic sensuality was a much more honest artistic statement. His 1946 essay "Le romantisme moderne" ("The Modern Romanticism") was published in *La Voix du Québec* before he left for Paris. In the essay Mathieu defends his romantic compositional style in opposition to musical modernism of the 1940s; his definition of

[26] Marie-Thérèse Lefebvre, *Rodolphe Mathieu, 1890–1962: L'émergence du statut professionnel de compositeur au Québec* (Québec: Septentrion, 2005), 223.
[27] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 679.

modern romanticism is less defined than his disdain for modernism. Indirectly referencing Debussy and Ravel, for whom he had great admiration, Mathieu states, "The modernism of the past fifteen to twenty years provided great creative geniuses, but that of today, with the same material, brings us a music stripped of the sacred fire which expresses the human emotion and the pure sensuality that must exist in all art."[28] To combat the excesses of modernism, Mathieu advocates a return to a more romantic style of composition, referring to an Apollonian-Dionysian dichotomy that recurs throughout musical history, a philosophy he likely derived from Nietzsche:[29]

> Why the name "modern romanticism," you might ask yourself? I would respond that if I have chosen this name it is firstly because I firmly believe in the eternal renewal of things, and that, secondly, I think that after the existence of classicism, romanticism, and finally, what we generally call modernism (but which I consider as the classicism of the new artistic period to come), it is necessary to have romanticism, and this will be modern romanticism. You will tell me that all of these labels are just words after all: I will retort that at any given time words have nevertheless served as valuable assistants for the ideas of men, and to classify these ideas, there must be words for each.[30]

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[28] André Mathieu, "Le romantisme moderne," *La Voix du Québec*, 20 July 1946, 5. « Le modernisme d'il y a quinze à vingt ans fourni de grands génies créateurs, mais celui d'aujourd'hui, avec la même matière, nous apporte une musique dénudée de ce feu sacre qui exprime le sentiment humain et de ce sensualisme pur qui doit exister dans tout art. »

[29] In the opening chapter of *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche states, "We shall have gained much for the science of aesthetics, when once we have perceived not only by logical inference, but by the immediate certainty of intuition, that the continuous development of art is bound up with the duplexity of the *Apollonian* and the *Dionysian*: in like manner as procreation is dependent on the duality of the sexes, involving perpetual conflicts with only periodically intervening reconciliations."

For Nietzsche, an ideal artwork combines the two, which have not been united since Greek tragedy: "Anent these immediate art-states of nature every artist is either an 'imitator,' to wit, either an Apollonian, an artist in dreams, or Dionysian, an artist in ecstasies, or finally—as for instance in Greek tragedy—an artist in both dreams and ecstasies." Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy or Hellenism and Pessimism*, trans. WM. A. Haussman, 3rd ed. (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1923; London: Forgotten Books, 2015), 21, 28.

[30] Mathieu, "Le romantisme moderne." « Pourquoi ce nom de romantisme moderne, vous demanderez-vous? Je répondrais que si j'ai choisi ce nom, c'est premièrement je crois fermement à l'éternel recommencement des choses et que, deuxièmement, je considère qu'après l'existence du classicisme, du romantisme, et enfin de ce qu'on appelle communément le modernisme, mais que je considère comme le classicisme de la nouvelle époque artistique à venir, il faut absolument un romantisme et ce sera le romantisme moderne. Vous me direz que tous ces noms ne sont après tout que des mots: je rétorquerai qu'en tout temps les mots ont tout de même servi de précieux auxiliaires pour les idées des hommes, et que pour classifier ces mêmes idées, il a fallu des noms à chacune. »

Notably, Mathieu did not think of himself as a conservative; he understood his work in the modern romantic idiom as part of a historical dialectic between classicism and romanticism. Thus, in his words, modern romanticism is part of an "eternal renewal" in art, and his music is pushing history forward. However, his line of thinking that sets his romanticism as a distinct reaction against modernism does not acknowledge the direct and unbroken romantic piano lineage from Chopin, Liszt, and Rachmaninoff—even as modernist composers were experimenting with new idioms.[31]

Though he discusses semiotics and aesthetics at length, the closest Mathieu comes to defining modern romanticism in terms of definite musical characteristics is when he states that the style expresses a dialectic of realism and fiction: "Realism in rhythm and harmony, fiction in the melodic line." This explanation is justification for his preferred style of composition: late-romantic tonality, lyrical melody, virtuosic piano writing, and freedom of form and style. Beyond specific compositional features, the general principle of Mathieu's modern romanticism is accessibility for the audience. He decries the modernists who looked to develop expressive styles beyond late-romanticism as talentless hacks: "What I mean by fiction in the melodic line is that the theme of any musical work will be more recognizable and more singing than the 'shrieking birds' presented to us by some 'coconut' [crazy] composers (there are several among us) who wish to pass off their mathematical rantings as music."[32] In other parts of the essay he calls modernist composers "posers" who compensate for their "mediocrity and banality" by

[31] Moreover, the tradition of performing romantic repertoire as well as a lineage of romantic pedagogy had not been broken at the time of publication.

[32] Mathieu, "Le romantisme moderne." « Le romantisme moderne exprimera en même temps le réalisme et la fiction. Le réalisme dans le rythme et l'harmonie, la fiction dans la ligne mélodique. Je veux dire par fiction dans la ligne mélodique, que le thème d'une œuvre musicale quelconque sera plus discernable et plus chantant que ces "cris de poule" que nous présentent certains compositeurs à la noix de coco (il y en a plusieurs chez nous) qui veulent nous faire passer leurs élucubrations géométriques pour de la musique. »

subscribing to the modernist doctrines of the past twenty years.[33] He closes by stating that he knows all of this at the age of 17 (presumably the composers he is deriding are much older than him).

Mathieu carried these conservative anti-modernist attitudes for his entire life. In 1968, months before his death, Mathieu wrote an unpublished review of a new music concert organized by the Société de musique contemporaine de Québec (SMCQ) that criticized the "mediocrity" of the unnamed composers whose atonal works were presented on the evening of March 21. "These people are not musicians; they are theorists of ugliness. They resent those who seek to create Beauty in Art. I would even say they are anarchists in art."[34] According to Mathieu, it is impossible to destroy the "essential foundations" of music, which assumedly means tonality. He closes the review with the following helpful advice: "The agricultural industry always needs labour, and music does not need musical eunuchs!"[35] Mathieu was never invited to join the SMCQ, though it is possible that he would have declined an invitation, had one been offered.

Unusually for a devotee of musical romanticism, Mathieu presented a case against the use of folk idioms in "Pour une Véritable Musique Canadienne" (1952). Though he recognizes the value in rich folk traditions, he asserts that folk does little to enhance art music and diminishes itself in the process. "If we introduce folk elements into a work of art music, folklore loses fifty percent of its value because it loses its simplicity. It is disguised and fancied up. As the artwork exclusively—and disdainfully—admits the intrusion of folklore, folklore itself then offers up

[33] Ibid. « Je considère, sans pour cela vouloir les rejeter complètement, que toutes les nouvelles doctrines artistiques qui ont fleuri depuis vingt ans ont donné l'occasion à tous les cabotins et à tous les poseurs de trouver un excuse à leur médiocrité et à leur banalité, en s'inspirant de ces doctrines libres pour mieux faire à leur guise tout en suivant les élans de leur paresse. »

[34] André Mathieu, "Les Theoriciens de la laideur," March 1968, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/B6,1, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. « Il y a une chose que ces messieurs ne peuvent pas me reprocher, c'est de contester leur médiocrité. Ces gens-là ne sont pas des musiciens, ce sont des théoriciens de la laideur. Ils en veulent à ceux qui s'efforcent de créer de la Beauté en Art. Je dirais même ce sont des anarchistes en art. » Original emphasis.

[35] Ibid. « L'Agriculture a toujours besoin de bras, et la music n'a pas besoin d'eunuques musicaux ! »

nothing that would enrich its already vast musical empire. Each has its role!"[36] To have a true national music, he states, one must look to the future, and not to the past.[37] But for Mathieu, the musical future is not in serialism or other esoteric compositional techniques, but rather in a new romanticism, a style which has the effect of simultaneously looking forwards and backwards. Compositional style is incidental in this essay, merely a consequence of Mathieu defending his own musical practices; what makes a composition "Canadian" in Mathieu's formulation is not any combination of musical characteristics that may evoke an image of the country or its people, but rather the nationality of the composer herself. Due to the profusion of compositional styles in Canada, this is a prevalent distinction in both past and present discourses.

In the face of criticism of his own music, Mathieu's uncompromising attitude regarding musical style fed his audience's increasing indifference to his music and critics considered his style coarse and overblown. Writing in 1951, after a concert at the Phillips Gallery in Washington D.C., Paul Hume stated:

> Mathieu is only 22. His piano technique is the big, flashy kind, able to encompass all demands. But he plays the piano just one way: fast and rather loud. There were few moments of pure, singing tone in the whole evening, a fault of both the pianist and composer.
>
> The music is little more than over-romantic figurations of the most obvious clichés….If Mathieu is interested in being considered a serious composer, he must submit himself to the discipline of some valid instruction. His salon style fails to command either interest or respect.[38]

[36] André Mathieu, "Pour une Véritable Musique Canadienne," in *Place Publique (Boucherville, Québec)*, no. 3 (March 1952): 21. « Si on introduit des éléments folkloriques dans une œuvre musicale d'envergure, le folklore perd cinquante pour cent de sa valeur parce qu'il perd sa simplicité. Il se trouve déguisé et maquillé. Tandis que l'œuvre musicale d'envergure constate avec dépit que cet intrus, le folklore n'a rien à donner pour l'élaboration de son magnifique empire musical. Chacun à sa place ! »

[37] Ibid. « Pour que nous ayons une musique véritablement nationale, nous devons diriger nos efforts vers l'avenir et non pas nous pencher sur le passé, car il ne s'est rien passé. »

[38] Paul Hume, "Own Works Played Here by Mathieu," *Washington Post*, 18 April 1951.

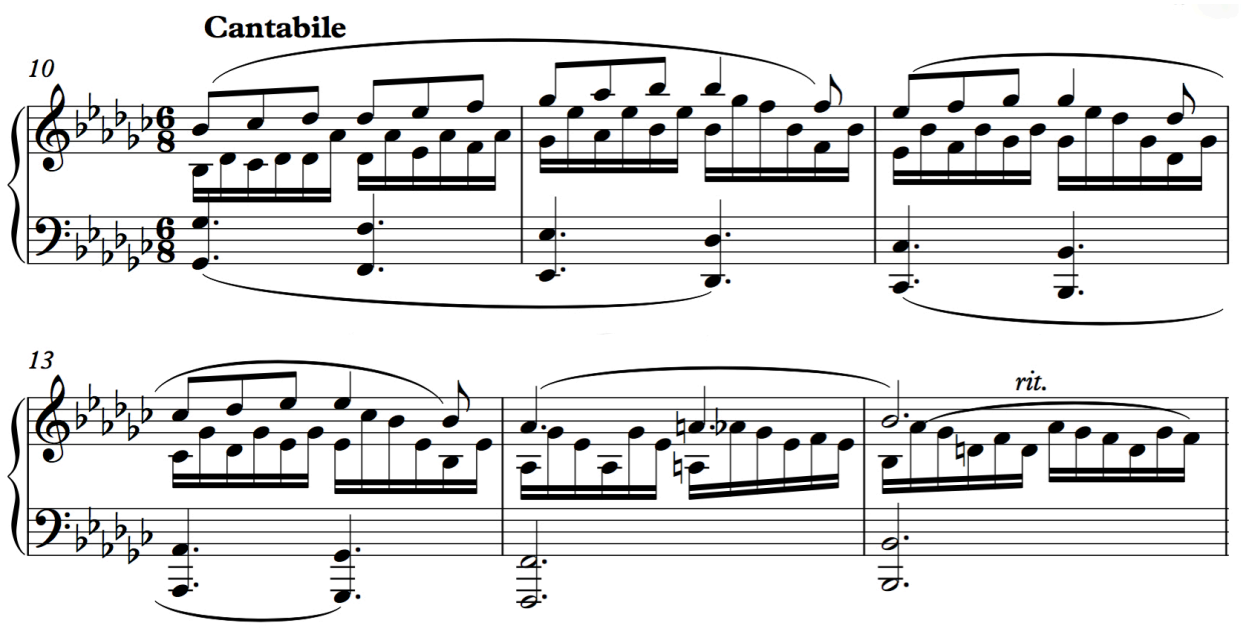
Nicholson characterises this review as "one of the most violent and devastating of [Mathieu's] career."[39] Notably, on the program that night, Mathieu played *Études* op. 3 and 4, *Les Abeilles piquantes* op. 17, *Danse sauvage* op. 8, and several other early works composed when he was a child, for the most part before the age of 10. This reveals both his lack of new compositions as well as his continued reliance on his childhood prodigy persona; the program booklets for concerts in his adolescence and into his early adulthood would often describe in parenthesis how old he was when he wrote the piece rather than the date of composition.

Any composition that was not published before Mathieu's death may be difficult to authenticate; as Trottier notes, pieces in the archive "are often unfinished or in a state that resembled exercises in style."[40] Although recordings of Mathieu performing are few in number, realisations of the same work can vary in structure so substantially that entire themes are rearranged, augmented, truncated, or removed altogether. The most prominent example of this reworking is also Mathieu's most recognizable work, the *Concerto de Québec* (1941). The piece—also known as *Concerto Romantique*, *Symphonie Romantique*, and Piano Concerto No. 3—has been orchestrated and arranged in turn by Jean Deslauriers in 1947, by jazz pianist Vic Vogel for the opening of 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal, and by Gilles Bellemare for Alain Lefèvre in 2003 (Fig. 2.2). In 2008, a two-piano version was uncovered by Nicholson during his research for his biography of André Mathieu. The manuscript was found to be authentic and Lefèvre and Nicholson assert that this version—labelled Piano Concerto No. 3 to differentiate it from the *Concerto de Québec*—represents the composer's vision. This version, orchestrated by

[39] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 315. « Le critique du *Washington Post* va lui servie une des critiques les plus violentes et les plus dévastatrices de sa carrière. »
[40] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 678.

Jacques Marchand, premiered in February 2017 by Lefèvre and the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of JoAnn Falletta.[41]

Figure 2.2: André Mathieu, *Concerto de Québec*, 2nd movement for Solo Piano, (rev. Alain Lefèvre), main theme, mm. 10–13.[42]



What is commonly known as the *Concerto de Québec* is the second movement of Mathieu's original Piano Concerto No. 3, which was part of the soundtrack for the popular 1947 thriller *La Forteresse* (produced in English at the same time with the name *Whispering City*). In the film, directed by Russian expat Fedor Ozep (1895–1948), the *Concerto de Québec* is written by a young composer Michel Lacoste (played by Paul Dupuis), who is forced by the man who commissioned the piece—lawyer and music-lover Albert Frédéric (Jacques Auger)—to kill Marie Roberts (Nicole Germain), a journalist investigating an unsettling series of accidental

[41] "Jacques Marchand revisite les partitions d'André Mathieu," *CBC/Radio-Canada*, 5 March 2015; Mary Kunz Goldman, "Pianist Lefevre, BPO channel Mathieu in glorious concert," *Buffalo News*, 4 February 2017.
[42] André Mathieu, *Douze pièces pour piano seul*, ed. Alain Lefèvre (Trois-Rivières: Les Éditions Orchestra Bella, 2007), 8.

deaths, by pushing her off the top of Montmorency Falls outside of Quebec City. The fifty-five minutes of non-diegetic music in the film was composed by Canadian Morris C. Davis (1904–1968), who was working at the time as a composer and arranger at CBC/Radio-Canada Montreal.[43] The film's producer Paul L'Anglais contacted conductor Jean Deslauriers, who at the time was the head of Radio-Canada's program *Sérénade pour Cordes*. Deslauriers reached out to Rodolphe for permission to use Mathieu's Piano Concerto No. 3. While Deslauriers also orchestrated the music composed by Davis, Giuseppe Agostini was given the task to arrange Mathieu's original score for the film, and the resulting concerto was renamed the *Concerto de Québec*, in reference to the city where *La Forteresse* was shot.[44]

It is not clear if the arrangements made during his lifetime were always sanctioned by Mathieu. He was particularly dissatisfied with the 1947 arrangement of the *Concerto de Québec*, which came out of the business deal Rodolphe made when Mathieu was away in Paris, and this was due in no small part to the fact that Mathieu himself was unable to perform the piece for the recording used in the film. Instead, a young Montreal-based composer and pianist Neil Chotem (1920–2008) appeared in the film. In a 1947 interview with Albert Duquesne for the program *Radio Concerts Canadiens* in which he discussed his lessons and performances abroad, Mathieu interrupts the interviewer as he introduces the piece:

> A.D.: And now, André, since you have happily consented, you will play your Third Concerto, the one that all of your listeners know from hearing a movement in the film *La Forteresse*—
>
> A.M.: —which was not composed for this use by the cinema. This concerto was written when I was 13 years old.…My followers know that it is very different

[43] "Morris Davis," in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, Historica Canada, 1985–, article published June 14, 2007, online.
[44] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 262–63. See also Nicole Deslauriers, *Si mon père m'était conté…*, Montreal: Self-Published, 1983.

> from what I write now. But I am happy for the opportunity to play it for you, because it is the first time I will play it for myself.[45]

Notably, Mathieu tries to simultaneously distance himself from the work—which he states was written in a manner completely different than his current works—and claim the work as a legacy of his prodigy persona by emphasizing his age when he wrote it. This radio program was not the first time Mathieu had played the *Concerto*, but rather the first time he had played the edited version; each time he wished to perform the piece he had to pay a nominal fee to Southern Music, the production company that owned the rights to the score.[46]

Of the extant scores in the archives, those of Mathieu's childhood works that were transcribed by his father as they both sat at the piano are the most complete and stable in form, as evidenced by the comparison of archival recordings to their modern counterparts as well as the archival scores and modern reprints. This invariability, no doubt, has to do with the fact that several of Mathieu's childhood pieces were published during his lifetime. In comparison, none of his piano works after the *Concerto de Québec* (1948) were published. A case can be made for the difficulty Mathieu may have experienced writing out his ideas as an adult. Indeed, in many of his later concerts, Mathieu preferred to improvise at the piano, alone on the stage.

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[45] André Mathieu, interviewed by Albert Duquesne, *Radio Concerts Canadiens*, 1947, quoted in Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 276–77. « A.D. — Et maintenant, André, puisque vous avez bien voulu y consentir, vous allez jouer votre *Troisième Concerto*, celui que tous vos auditeurs connaissent pour en avoir entendu un mouvement dans le film *La Forteresse* […]

A.M. — […] qui n'a pas été composé en vue de cette utilisation par le cinéma […] Ce concerto a été écrit quand j'avais treize ans […] Ceux qui me suivent savent que c'est bien différent de ce que j'écris maintenant […] Mais je suis content de l'occasion que vous m'offrez, car ce sera la première fois que je jouerai moi-même ce concerto… »

[46] André received permission from the president of Québec Productions Corporation on 19 November 1947 to record the *Concerto de Québec* with the Orchestre Radio-Canada (CBC Radio Orchestra) conducted by Jean Baudet. The live recording is one of the few remaining of Mathieu. For others, see André Mathieu, *André Mathieu joue André Mathieu (la collection privée de Georges Nicholson)*, Fidelio FACD700, 2010. Recorded 1933–1942. Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 278.

Towards a Québécois National Music

Both musical aesthetics and the political landscape shifted dramatically during Mathieu's lifetime. According to Georges Nicholson, Mathieu's poor reception when he returned to Montreal was due to "the loss of our collective innocence" after World War II. Though the statement seems reductive and cliché—especially given a similar reaction in many cultures around the globe after World War I—Mathieu composed and performed in a backwards-looking romantic style representative of a self-indulgent sentimentality that seemed vain and unrealistic for audiences both at home and abroad. The years after the Second World War were a time of global reform provoked in no small part by the sentiment that a collective innocence was lost. In Quebec, this took the form of the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s, a nationalist secularizing movement where the strong hand of the provincial government replaced the Catholic Church as the centralizing socio-political institution.[47]

In the early 1940s, as Quebec was dealing with a loss of autonomy as a result of an aggressive centralizing federal government, Mathieu joined the nascent Bloc populaire canadien.[48] The Bloc populaire, popular among young French Canadians, originated over concerns about overseas conscription in what was largely seen as an English war. As Michael D. Behiels states, with the slogan, "'le Canada au Canadiens et le Québec aux Québécois!' the Bloc demanded an active, as well as a declared, sovereignty for Canada, the full recognition of equality between Canada's two founding peoples, and complete respect for provincial

[47] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 284. « La perte de notre innocence collective qui s'étalera comme un glissement tellurique jusqu'à l'avènement officiel du Québec moderne de la Révolution tranquille. »
[48] See Michael D. Behiels, "The Bloc Populaire Canadien and the Origins of French-Canadian Neo-nationalism, 1942-8," *Canadian Historical Review* 63 no. 4 (December 1982), 487–512; Michael D. Behiels, *Prelude to Quebec's Quiet Revolution: Liberalism versus Neo-nationalism 1945–1960* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985); Paul-André Comeau, *Le Bloc populaire* (Montreal: Québec Amérique, 1982).

autonomy."[49] This period marks the emergence of the Québécois national identity; before this time, residents of Quebec identified as French Canadian rather than distinctly Québécois. This identity, though based on a shared language and culture, began to influence organized politics and the economy. There was a consensus among French Canadians arising from the Great Depression that the English Canadian monopoly over industry had corrupted industrial capitalism. One example is the Asbestos strike of 1949, during which the miners, the majority of which were Francophones, voted to hold an illegal strike to demand better working conditions at the American and English-Canadian–owned mines. Many French Canadians rejected capitalism's "underlying ideology of individualistic, liberal democracy."[50] As a result, the powers of Quebec Premier Maurice Duplessis's Union Nationale Party and its close ally the Catholic Church began to wane during the '40s and '50s as new socialist allegiances were formed under the influence of labour unions, universities, and mass media.[51]

Though anti-modernist in his musical aesthetics, Mathieu was relatively progressive in his politics and was outspoken about his political ideologies from a very young age. Mathieu, fourteen at the time, was present at the 5 February 1944 meeting of the Bloc populaire at l'Hôtel Windsor in Montreal, where he premiered the *Chant du Bloc Populaire*, also known as the *Marche du Bloc Populaire* (Fig. 2.3, text by Madeleine Langevin Lippens). The leader of the

[49] Behiels, "The Bloc Populaire Canadien," 491. At least in the minds of its citizens, Quebec has always had a tenuous place within the Canadian Confederation. After England won the Seven Years' War and gained most of the territory that is now Canada, King George III issued the Royal Proclamation of 1763 that declared all French Catholics as British subjects. In the years following the proclamation, with the Quebec Act of 1774 and the Constitutional Act of 1791, French Canadians gained religious freedom that was unheard of in the other British territories, and even the United States. Yet while French Canadians had enjoyed this freedom into the twentieth century, they were still a majority-minority population that had to fight against the dominant culture to retain their autonomy amid a dark history of exploitation of labour by English and Scottish Canadians. See Micheline Milot, "That Priest-Ridden Province? Politics and Religion in Quebec," in *Quebec Questions: Quebec Studies for the Twenty-First Century* (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2011), 123–136.
[50] Behiels, "The Bloc Populaire Canadien," 496.
[51] Ramsay Cook, "'Au Diable avec le Goupillon et la Tuque': The Quiet Revolution and the New Nationalism," in *Watching Quebec: Selected Essays* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 25.

party at the provincial level, André Laurendeau (1912–1968), sat at the piano himself to give the performance, which was presented with a choir conducted by Paul-Émile Corbeil (1908–1965).[52] The text refers to the aims of the party, emphasizing timely themes of sacrifice for one's country, as well as honouring one's traditions and heritage. The music is atypical for a patriotic anthem, featuring rhythmic and harmonic complexities that defy generic expectations and do not lend well to communal engagement. In measures 9–14, Mathieu shifts the perceived metre from four to six ("C'est nous canadiens, qui combattrons" and "C'est nous canadiens, qui marcherons") and then fragments of two ("Toujours, toujours, toujours"), while employing some thorny voice leading, ending on a V/V tonicization on "libertés." In the poem, "canadiens" does not refer to Canadians coast-to-coast, but rather French Canadians; etymologically, Canada was derived from the Iroquoian word *kanata*, meaning "village," and was used by sixteenth-century French settlers to describe the North American colony.

Chant du Bloc Populaire

C'est nous canadiens, qui défendons la patrie,
Pour protéger nos droits et nos libertés.
C'est nous canadiens, qui combattrons,
C'est nous canadiens, qui marcherons
Toujours, toujours, toujours,
À l'assaut de nos libertés.

O Canada ! Tu gagneras ton drapeau,
Pour la fierté et la gloire de tes fils;
Pour nous ce n'est rien de souffrir,
Pour nous ce n'est rien de mourir,
Et quand viendra l'heure de notre délivrance,
Nous saurons assurer, ton immortalité.

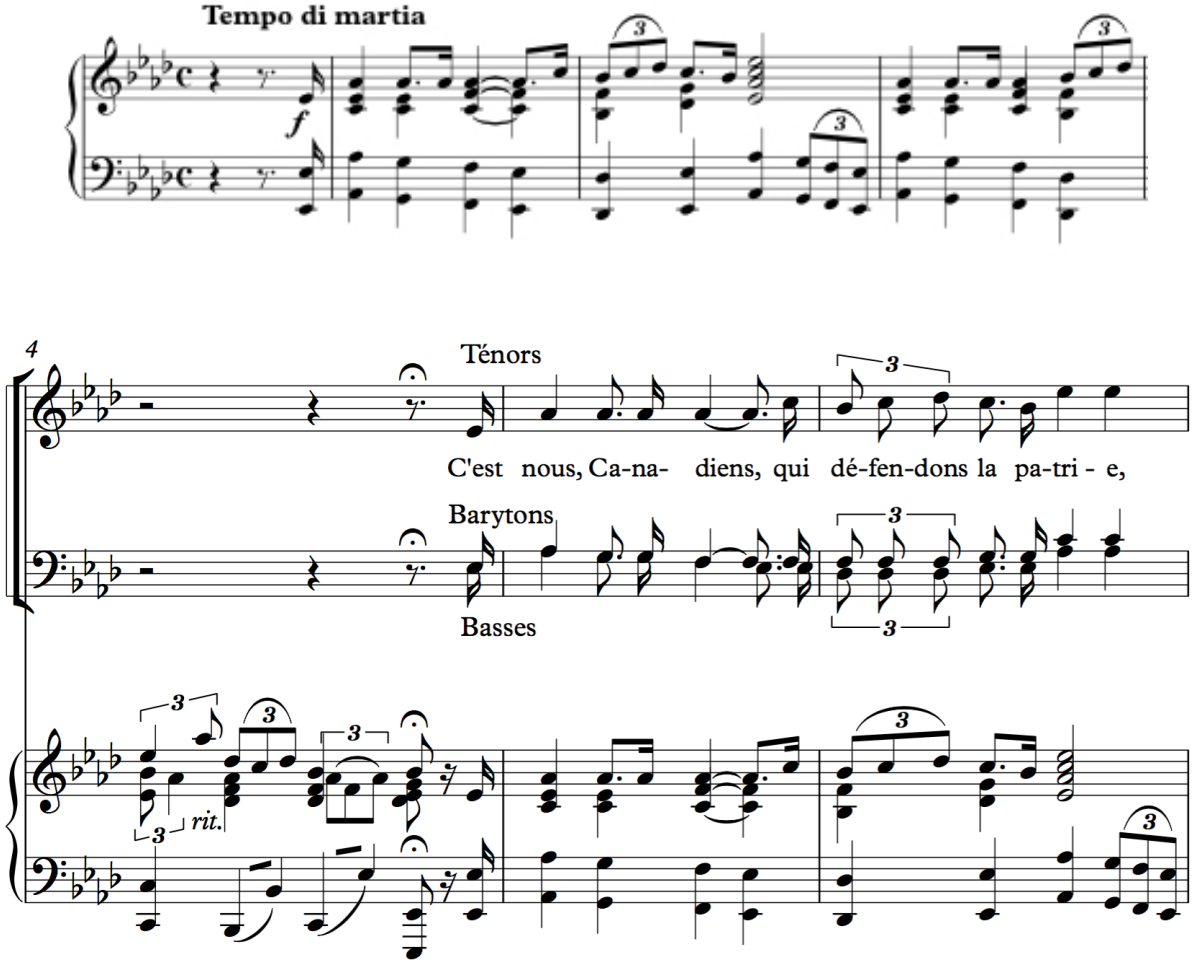
Souvenons-nous de nos pères,
Et des luttes sans repos,
Qu'ont livrés ces héros.

[52] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 220.

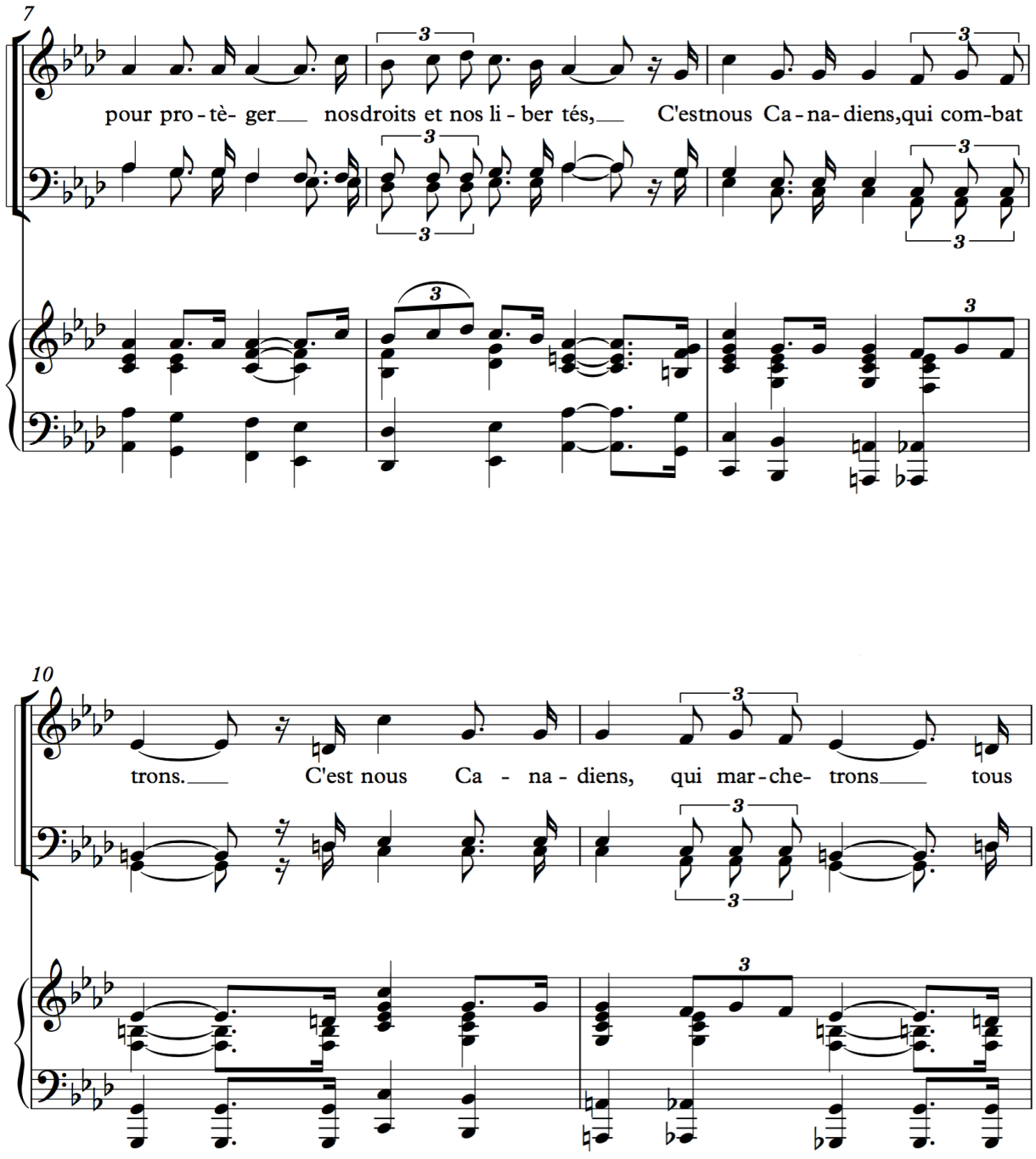
Pour honorer leur mémoire
Nous reprendrons l'héritage pour toujours,
Sans crainte et sans remords,
Nous briserons nos chaines pour toujours.

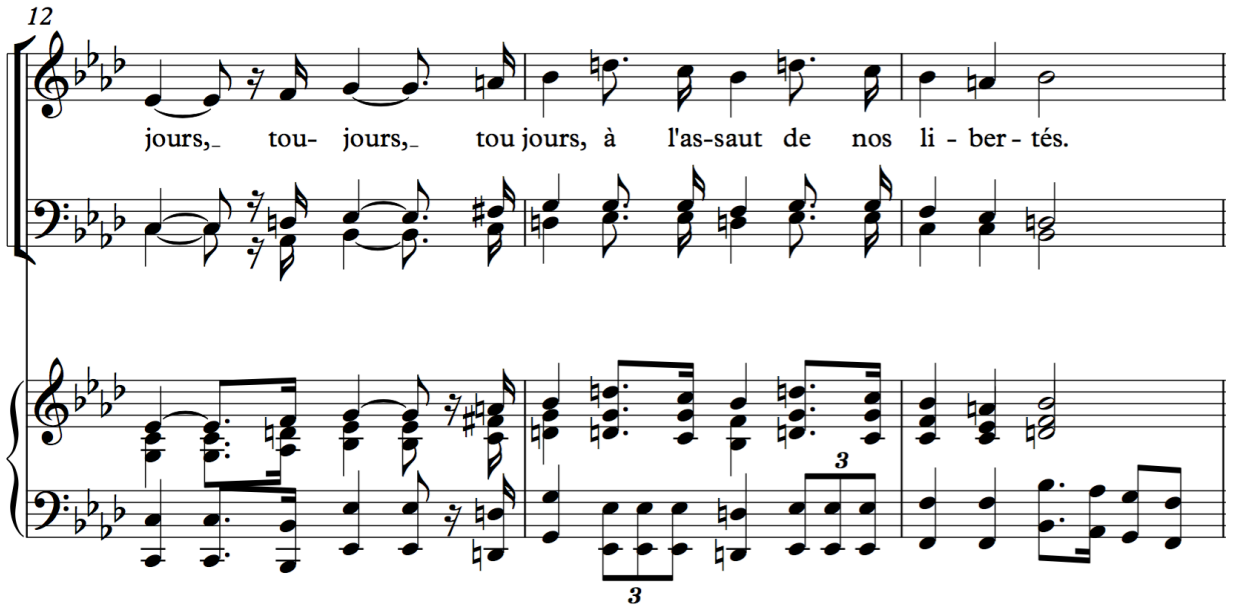
C'est nous canadiens, qui défendons la patrie,
Pour protéger sa liberté et nous serons maître chez nous.

Figure 2.3: André Mathieu, *Chant du Bloc Populaire* (1943), mm. 1–14.[53]



[53] André Mathieu, *Chant du Bloc Populaire* (Éditions CIM: Montréal, 1944), 1. Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/B4/3,1. Transcription.


7
pour pro - tè- ger nosdroits et nos li - ber tés, C'estnous Ca - na- diens,qui com-bat
10
trons. C'est nous Ca - na - diens, qui mar - che- trons tous



By advocating for a relatively conservative platform based on Catholic doctrine, the Bloc populaire canadien was doomed to fail in an increasingly secular society. Though the Bloc populaire never enjoyed great political successes—receiving only 15 percent of the popular vote in the August 1944 provincial election, and folding both provincially and federally in 1947—it is historically significant in that it represents an impulse in a larger movement of emerging Québécois consciousness. Many consider this post-Depression and post-war era as the origin of contemporary Québécois nationalism based on a shared language and culture, as well as common social ambitions.[54]

[54] Behiels, "The Bloc Populaire Canadien," 498, 487–88.

Mathieu was also the president of Les Jeunesses Patriotes du Canada in 1950, when he signed his name on a letter sent to Walter Edward Harris (1904–1999), Canadian Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. The letter criticized his immigration policies for reducing the ratio of French Canadians to English with a steady post-war influx of English immigrants from the United Kingdom. In the letter, Les Jeunesses Patriotes argue that as a minority, French Canadians were already at risk of losing their rights, language, and culture. The subject of the letter, however, was the Jacques de Bernonville, a French collaborator during the Vichy regime who was convicted of war crimes by the French government after the war and sentenced to death. He fled to Canada with the help of prominent French-Canadian Catholics, but his identity was discovered and he was set to be deported. Mathieu and his compatriots argue that the Comte de Bernonville should not be deported and face the punishment for his crimes and that Quebec should have greater control of immigration. Rather ironically given the gravity of Bernonville's

Mathieu also advocated for government funding for the arts, a political shift in Quebec that would necessarily change the nature of patronage from the Catholic Church to the people, as well as increase the role of the provincial government in the arts. However, unlike the secularist group Les Automatistes, a group of artists led by abstract painter Paul-Émile Borduas—who cried "To hell with holy water and the French-Canadian tuque!" in his 1948 manifesto *Refus Global* (*Total Refusal*)—Mathieu did not deny the Church a socio-political role in Quebec. For Mathieu, invoking the rich Catholic tradition in Quebec was a way for artists to strengthen communities.[55] He explains that the government should also invest in infrastructure; in "Une centre artistique à Montréal" printed in *La Voix du Québec* in 1946, Mathieu presents a strong case for a new performance venue in Montreal. As he states, "It is truly pitiful to see that Montreal, a city of a million and a half inhabitants, the second-largest French city in the world, the cultural metropolis of Canada, is incapable of receiving international and national artists."[56] Politicians heeded this advice; Montreal mayor Jean Drapeau (1916–1999) initiated a project for

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crimes, Mathieu accused Harris of racism. This was a position supported by prominent French-Canadian politicians, including the Mayor of Montreal, Camillien Houde, as well as leaders of the Catholic Church. While the signees never condone Bernonville's actions, the incident is but one instance of a particular strain of anti-Semitism in Quebec, which developed in the majority-minority French-Canadian community over fears of assimilation into English Canada as well as concerns over cultural purity, fears outlined in the letter signed by Mathieu. Walter O'Leary, André Mathieu, and René Sarrasin letter to Walter Edward Harris, 31 March 1950, quoted in Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 306–8.

[55] In his 1948 manifesto *Refus Global* (*Total Refusal*), Borduas states, "Through systematically controlled material progress—the privilege of the affluent—we were able, with the help of the Church (and later without it), to evolve politically. But we have not been able to renew our basic sensitivity, our subconscious; nor have we allowed the full emotional evolution of the masses, which is all that could have gotten us out of our deep Christian rut.…Our collective moral strength has regressed steadily into a purely individual and sentimental one, and thus we have woven a lining for an already impressive screen of abstract knowledge behind which society hides, quietly devouring its ill-gotten gains." Rejecting intention and reason in art, Borduas advocates for political and artistic revolution. See Paul-Émile Borduas, *Total Refusal: The Complete 1948 Manifesto of the Montréal Automatists*, trans. Ray Ellenwood (Toronto: Exile Editions, 2009).

[56] André Mathieu, "Une centre artistique à Montréal," *Le Clairon de Saint-Hyacinthe*, 27 February 1948. Reprinted from *La Voix du Québec*, September 6, 1946. « Cela fait vraiment pitié de voir que Montréal, cité d'un million et demi d'habitants, deuxième ville française du monde, métropole du Canada, est incapable de recevoir les artistes étrangers et canadiens. » Mathieu also chastises political leaders for failing to promote Quebec's unique artistic products. Realizing that the media in Canada—and in Quebec to an extent—was dominated by English culture, Mathieu lamented that young French Canadians are oblivious to the great artistic, literary, and musical works of Quebec.

a complex of concert halls, that would eventually become Place des Arts. This is but one example of the city's post-war modernization, which involved many consequential projects that spanned several decades, including the Métro transit system, the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Airport, and the Champlain Bridge.

Six years after "Une centre artistique à Montréal," Mathieu once again criticized the Canadian government in an essay entitled "La Musique Canadienne est-elle frappée d'Ostracisme?" published in *Amérique Française*. He was specifically frustrated by the lack of financial support for Canadian musicians compared to those from the United States, Brazil, and Argentina. Moreover, at the end of the article he presented a case for the value of art for a nation:

> We are often told about Canada's economic prosperity, that's all very well. But what about intellectual prosperity? The artistic influence of a country extends further and lasts longer than economic influence. Mines, whether of coal or iron, are all eventually exhausted. Art, however, is never exhausted. If qualified authorities deigned to pay any attention to the humble suggestions I have just submitted, I would be the happiest of men.[57]

Art, he argues, is an inexhaustible resource with a greater national and international influence than the economy. Unlike the conventional understanding of musical nationalism as a reaction against conservative German musical idioms, Mathieu's nationalism involves socio-political and economic structures rather than musical ones.

[57] André Mathieu, "La Musique Canadienne est-elle frappée d'Ostracisme?" *Amérique Française* 10, no. 4 (July-August 1952): 63–64. « On nous parle souvent de la prospérité économique du Canada, c'est très bien. Et que fait-on de la prospérité intellectuelle ? Le rayonnement artistique d'un pays s'étend plus loin et dure plus longtemps qu'un rayonnement économique. Les mines, qu'elles soient de charbon ou de fer, finissent toujours par s'épuiser. L'art lui ne s'épuise jamais. Si les autorités compétentes daignaient porter quelque attention aux humbles suggestions que je viens de soumettre, je serais le plus heureux des hommes. » Also broadcast by radio station CHLP in March 1952.

Pianothons, Expo 67 & Death (1952–1968)

By his mid-20s, Mathieu, who had largely removed himself from concert life, had hit rock bottom. He did not win any prestigious contracts; the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal had not invited him to their stage since 1943, nor had he been invited to concert series such as the Ladies Morning Musical Club (LMMC) or the Société Pro Musica, likely due, in Nicholson's words, to their judgement that Mathieu's work was "too popular."[58] It was not as if concert organizers were worried that Mathieu was so popular that they would sell too many tickets; in fact, audience sizes for his concerts at this time fluctuated widely and it was not guaranteed that he would draw a crowd. Rather, organizers considered Mathieu's music too accessible and thus not serious enough for their organizations. Moreover, the city that had once celebrated his successes as its own reveled in his breakdown. States Trottier, "The media machine that had previously supported him transformed into a rumor mill, revealing his numerous setbacks in the gossip columns."[59] This includes an earlier incident recorded in a 1952 letter Mathieu sent to Marcel Provost, the founder of the specialised Quebec-based magazine *Radiomonde*, demanding he retract a story printed on January 26, stating Mathieu had committed suicide. The story was retracted in the February 2 issue.[60] Though Mathieu's medical records are protected by privacy laws, Nicholson writes that by way of family friends and Mimi Gagnon-Mathieu, it is understood (but unverifiable) that Mathieu tried to commit suicide at least twice: the first in 1961 or '62, and another time right before the end of his life. Mathieu was also in rehabilitation for alcoholism four or five times between 1954 and his death in 1968.[61]

[58] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 340.
[59] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 676.
[60] André Mathieu to Marcel Provost, 24 January 1952, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/B2,13, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa; André Rufiange, "Les Microses," *Radiomonde*, 2 February 1952.
[61] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 339–40.

In the latter half of his life, Mathieu also failed to earn critical praise for his compositions. On 16 October 1953, Carnegie Hall presented a concert of Canadian music conducted by Leopold Stokowski. The program was formed by a selection committee comprised of several eminent musicians, including British conductor Boyd Neel, Canadian composers Ernest MacMillan and Claude Champagne, American composers Henry Cowell, Walter Piston and William Schuman, and Canadian conductor and founder of the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal (OSM), Wilfrid Pelletier (1896–1982). Mathieu submitted *Dans les champs* from his *Scènes de ballet* (1944–45) for consideration but he was not selected. Instead, the following works were presented: Pierre Mercure's *Pantomime*, Alexander Brott's *Concerto pour violon et orchestre*, Colin McPhee's *Tabuh-Tabuhan*, François Morel's *Antiphonie*, Godfrey Ridout's *Two Mystical Songs of John Donne*, and Healey Willan's *Coronation Suite*. In his biography of Mathieu, Nicholson acknowledges the Mathieu family legend that Claude Champagne played favourites with Morel and Mercure.[62] But there is no conspiracy that can explain how, unlike Mathieu, all six Canadian composers selected for the concert went on to enjoy influential and varied careers as composers, conductors, performers, educators, musicologists, and arts administrators.

Still looking for a comeback opportunity, Mathieu decided to make money by playing in "pianothons," marathon piano concerts in which the only goal was to play the piano as long as possible. As Nicholson notes, the '50s was a time when "-thons" of all types were celebrated, including danceathons, singathons, radiothons, and telethons, often transforming everyday artistic activities into athletic feats of endurance.[63] Notably, *The Guinness Book of World Records* was also first published in 1955, a best-selling record-collecting book indicative of a

[62] Ibid., 331–2.
[63] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 342.

pop-cultural fascination with the exceptional.[64] In his first pianothon on 8 December 1954, Mathieu played the piano consecutively for 21 hours, 1 minute, and 58 seconds. By 1950, Mathieu was playing only his own compositions in concert, and in the pianothon he supplemented his own works with improvisations on themes, as was natural to him.[65] Figure 2.4 features a photo of Mathieu at his first pianothon surrounded by his mother, his sister, a radio announcer, and a rather exhausted-looking doctor wearing a stethoscope around his neck. In the upper left-hand corner, a man holds a stopwatch. Trottier notes, "As ridiculous as this exercise might appear, it attests to the technical endurance of a man for whom the piano is second nature."[66]

Ironically, Mathieu received more press for this event than any other single concert in his career, with many praising him for the spectacle.[67] Others, however, did not have a similarly sympathetic view. One particularly scathing review by Eric McLean for *The Montreal Star* begins, "Although he is now only twenty-five years old, André has suffered the humiliating epithet of 'has been' for almost a decade." McLean highlights how the mechanical aspect of the spectacles worked to the detriment of musicality:

> While every paper and all the wire services carried reports of the "pianothon," I was unable to find a criticism of the performance. No one said whether Mathieu played well or badly or whether his compositions were likely to be included in the standard repertoire. It was enough he had kept the keys in motion for twenty-one

[64] See Guinness, *The Guinness Book of Records* (London: Guinness Superlatives, 1955).
[65] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 337.
[66] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 677.
[67] Pre- and post-concert press includes André Lecomte, *Samedi-Dimanche*, 20 November 1954; J.B., *Le Devoir*, 7 December 1954; Laurie Chisholm, *The Gazette (Montreal)*, 7 December 1954; Suzanne Piuze, *La Patrie*, 12 December 1954; Roland Lorrain, "L'étonnante histoire du pianothon d'André Mathieu," *VRAI*, 18 December 1954; Claude Gingras, "André Mathieu a joué 21 heures, 1 minute et 58 secondes sans interruption," *La Presse*, 9 December 1954; Peter Desbarats, *The Gazette (Montreal)*, 9 December 1954; Marcel Thivierge, *Le Devoir*, 9 December 1954; Paul Rochon, *Le Petit Journal*, 19 December 1954; Jean Vallerand, "La performance d'André Mathieu," *Le Devoir*, December 1954; Claude Gingras, *La Presse*, 21 December 1954; "Serait-ce une renaissance ? André Mathieu tue Mozart en quelque 21 heures !" *Photo Journal*, 25 December 1954; and several unknown sources preserved in his papers at Library and Archives Canada.

> hours. The possibility that someone who peeled potatoes for the same length of time would deserve as much credit did not seem to enter into anyone's mind.[68]

Figure 2.4: André Mathieu, Wilhelmine Gagnon-Mathieu, and Camille Mathieu after a pianothon (ca. 1954, Montréal).[69]

A later review published in the *Photo Journal* entitled "Serait-ce une renaissance ? André Mathieu tue Mozart en quelque 21 heures" ("Is it a Revival? André Mathieu kills Mozart in about 21 hours"), the author recalls the Mozart comparison from Mathieu's youth:

> The shadow of Mozart was already separated from André Mathieu a long time ago, precisely because he is no longer the little boy in short pants that one paraded around the world. The child who played the piano better than his papa has become a man of strong constitution, which allows him to play the piano longer than

[68] Eric McLean, *Montreal Star*, 11 December 1954.
[69] Stéphane Jean, *The Mathieu family fonds, numerical list* (Ottawa: National Library of Canada, Music Division, 1997), 50.

> anyone else. But this man no longer captures the attention of serious critics as strongly as he did as a child. That is the tragedy. It is not the public who has abandoned André Mathieu, but André Mathieu who has abandoned the concert halls![70]

The author concludes the article with several facts he hopes Mathieu will take away from the experience. Firstly, in the future Mathieu should treat the piano as an artistic instrument and not a sport. Secondly, the pianothon has "killed the Mozart myth by teaching that it is perhaps more difficult to be a prodigy at twenty-five than at four."[71] Therein lies the rub: though many contemporary critics—and even his more recent biographers—have characterised the pianothons as aberrations in Mathieu's performance career, the event itself is a superhuman feat not unlike being a child prodigy. For his entire life, Mathieu's persona was wrapped up in an aura of superiority established through impressive—but, by nature, ephemeral—accomplishments that managed to capture significant attention while appealing to the lowest common denominator.

The pianothon could hardly be considered a success for several reasons. Though Mathieu set a world record, it was broken at least three times in quick succession within the span of a single year.[72] The event was also not as profitable as anticipated; Mathieu did not earn more than

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[70] "Serait-ce une renaissance ? André Mathieu tue Mozart en quelque 21 heures !" *Photo Journal*, 25 December 1954. « L'ombre de Mozart s'est séparée d'André Mathieu il y a déjà belle lurette, plus précisément depuis qu'il n'est plus le petit garçon à culottes courtes qu'on promenait de par le monde. Le poupon qui jouait du piano mieux que papa est devenu un homme de forte constitution, ce qui lui permet de jouer du piano plus longtemps qu'aucun autre. Mais l'homme ne s'est plus encore imposé à l'attention des critiques sérieux aussi fortement que l'avait fait l'enfant. Voilà le drame. Ce n'est pas le publique qui a abandonné André Mathieu, mais André Mathieu qui a abandonné les salles de concert ! »

[71] Ibid. « Il aura peut-être tué aussi le mythe Mozart en enseignant qu'il est peut-être plus difficile d'être prodige à vingt-cinq ans qu'à quatre. »

[72] For a brief moment, Upper and Lower Canada had pianothon fever, no doubt buoyed by Mathieu's name recognition. Nineteen-year-old RCAF airman Guy Bastien broke Mathieu's record in January 1955 with 24 hours, 5 seconds. On 2 April 1955, a man named Jacques Villemure of Shawinigan broke the record with 31 hours, but he was overtaken by 16-year-old Denis Asselin from Verdun a few weeks later with 31 hours and 56 minutes. The longest pianothon recorded within this period was held by a man by the name of "Tiny" Bird, who played for 72 hours, 30 minutes in North Bay, Ontario in 1956. According to the report, this man was unable to read music. "Airman Breaks Mathieu Record," *Montreal Star*, 24 January 1955; Claude Gingras, "Champion des 'pianothons' âgé de 16 ans," *La Presse*, 18 April 1955; Fernand Davis, "Faits et Gestes de tous les Coins du Monde," *Le Petit Journal*, 22 July 1956.

$600 due to the high cost of production.[73] It also failed to lead to more prestigious performance opportunities and, moreover, he lost face with several musicians and critics in the city, even with those whom Mathieu once considered friends. Gilles Lefebvre, who had founded the Jeunesses Musicales du Canada in 1949 to help young musicians develop the skills needed for a professional career, excluded Mathieu from the organization over the pianothon business, refusing to invite him to perform or give a lecture. In the documentary *André Mathieu, musicien* (1993) by Jean-Claude Labrecque, Lefebvre states, "The thing that would have given me the biggest pleasure would have been to present André on a Jeunesses Musicales tour, but suddenly he took up these pianothons, he embarked on a career of false stardom that ultimately damaged his entire reputation as well as his music."[74] In all, Mathieu performed at least five pianothons. Though immensely popular with certain audiences, the spectacles failed to gain him enough traction to restart his concert career. If a certain portion of the Quebec population was still enamoured by the grown-up "Little Canadian Mozart," many more were tired of Mathieu's antics, his public drunkenness and violence, his sub-standard concerts, and his habit of slipping in and out of public life.

The details of the remaining years of Mathieu's life are spotty at best. He married his piano student Marie-Ange Massicotte on 22 October 1960. Given Mathieu's problems with addiction and the family's financial status, by several accounts, it was not a happy marriage.[75] On 29 June 1962, Rodolphe Mathieu died. For André this was a heavy blow. Aside from his second trip to Paris and when he married Marie-Ange, Mathieu lived with his parents and

[73] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 361.
[74] Gilles Lefebvre, *André Mathieu, musicien*, documentary by Jean-Claude Labrecque, 1993, interview by Francine Laurendeau, quoted in Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 270. « La chose qui m'aurait fait le plus plaisir, ça aurait été de présenter André en tournée Jeunesses Musicales, mais tout à coup il a enchaîné sur les pianothons, il a enchaîné sur une carrière de faux vedettiste [sic] qui a fait finalement tort à tout sa réputation et à sa musique… »
[75] See Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 387–94.

Rodolphe had a large role in managing his career. In a 1967 interview for the Radio-Canada show *Jeunesse Oblige*, Mathieu states, "When I lost my father, I lost my best friend."[76]

What appears to be the ultimate rejection of Mathieu's music came in the form of his exclusion from participating in Montreal's 1967 International and Universal Exposition (Expo 67) by Mayor Jean Drapeau himself, on the advice of Wilfrid Pelletier, conductor of the OSM. Pelletier, who along with Québécois composers Jean Papineau-Couture (1916–2000) and Serge Garant (1929–1986), and musicologist Maryvonne Kendergian (1915–2011), founded the SMCQ in 1966. The group, which promotes contemporary music, never invited Mathieu to join before his death, nor has it ever organized performances of his music. One of the most influential figures in Montreal's musical community, Pelletier, who had studied piano with Rodolphe Mathieu in his youth, had taken an interest in Mathieu when Rodolphe contacted him in 1935 for his help to organize auditions in New York for André, including the possibility of studying at Juilliard. At the time, Pelletier was a rehearsal pianist and occasional guest conductor of the Metropolitan Opera. Unfortunately, the correspondence between Rodolphe and Pelletier soured due to Rodolphe's need to control the situation. Nothing came of the exchange and André and the Mathieu family lost a potential musical ally with considerable clout.[77] After all, Pelletier sat on the selection committee for the October 1953 Canadian music concert at Carnegie Hall that rejected Mathieu's submission.

The year 1967 often conceptually marks the beginning of Quebec's modern period. In a speech delivered in Montreal under the auspices of Expo 67, French President Charles de Gaulle famously declared, « Vive le Québec libre! » ("Long live free Quebec"). The statement, which

[76] André Mathieu, interview with Jacques Faure, 21 November 1967, quoted in Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 406. « Quand j'ai perdu mon père, j'ai perdu mon meilleur ami. »
[77] See Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 73–80 for a full account of the correspondence.

received a strong rebuke from Canadian Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson who said that Canadians do not need to be liberated, would nonetheless become a rallying cry for Québécois separatists for years to come.[78] Though progressive reforms had occurred for a number of years under the leadership of Drapeau and premier Jean Lesage (1960–66), it was the first time that Quebec—or Canada—established an international stage to exhibit its art, culture, and scientific innovation. Corresponding with the centenary of Canadian confederation and the 325th anniversary of the founding of Montreal, Expo was an opportune time to showcase Montreal's music scene. André Morin (b. 1935), a friend of Mathieu's, was in charge of organizing a concert that went from the evening of May 17 to May 18—since the date of Montreal's founding is contested. Morin insisted on including a work by Mathieu on the program, and planned for the premiere of the *Rhapsodie Romantique* (1958). Mathieu decided that he would be the pianist with the only condition that he would have to orchestrate the existing version for two pianos for full orchestra. Mayor Drapeau ordered that Mathieu was to be placed in rehabilitation at the École de musique Vincent d'Indy under the watch of several clergy members while he composed and practiced.

Several days before the performance, Pelletier convened a meeting with Morin in Drapeau's office to inform both men that it would be impossible to prepare the *Rhapsodie Romantique* on such short notice when Mathieu had not yet finished the orchestration and the pages he had received were full of errors. Though, as Nicholson states, it is easy to interpret Pelletier's decision as a result of ill will he harbored for the Mathieu family (as Mimi would later say, "he's disgusting"), given Mathieu's tarnished reputation from his pianothons and the state of

[78] Robert Everett-Green, "'Vive le Québec Libre': What de Gaulle's Famous Rallying Cry Says About Politics Today," *Globe and Mail*, 24 July 2017.

the orchestration, the conductor had little choice.[79] The concert was perhaps the highest-profile invitation Mathieu had ever received, but once again, his lack of professionalism precluded his involvement. The Expo 67 incident was a final blow to Mathieu; over the course of his adult career, he had earned a bad reputation and was considered a liability. Aside from a few ardent supporters like Morin, few were interested in his music.

In a 31 January 1968 interview with Andréanne Lafond for CBC/Radio-Canada's *Présent*, Lafond pressed Mathieu on his inconsistencies. She asked, "But André Mathieu, to go back to your breaks [from performing], some have said you were sick, others that said you retired to an ivory tower, there are others that say that you drink too much—," at which point Mathieu angrily interrupted her, saying that he only drinks in moderation and that her account of his drinking was false.[80] Mathieu—his voice broken and affected—was likely drunk during the interview, despite his promises to Lafond that he was attempting to turn his life around. He also lied multiple times throughout, first about his age (he was 39 not 35), the amount of consecutive hours he played in his first pianothon (21 not 96), and the number of students in his piano studio (which was certainly less than 17). Reeking of desperation, Mathieu tried to reinvent himself, speaking of how young he felt and of his prodigious talents that remained intact from his childhood. When asked how he felt about the word "genius," however, Mathieu seized up. Unspoken beneath the surface were the difficulties he faced: his loneliness as a child ("And I missed, I missed out on playing with others…"), his continued sorrow over the loss of his father several years earlier, and his frustration over the public's inability to see him as anything but the "Little Canadian Mozart."

[79] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 417–20.
[80] See Appendix II for a full transcript and translation of the interview. André Mathieu, interview with Andréanne Lafond, 2 February 1968, Radio-Canada Archives.

Both the style and substance of the interview are emblematic of Mathieu's failure to manage his addiction throughout his adult life, even when in public. Based on the first-person accounts recorded in Nicholson and Rudel-Tessier's biographies, Mathieu did not always voluntarily check himself into rehabilitation. Instead, due to the constant intrusion of his parents, Mathieu was always contending with his own behavioural issues that arose as a result of his lack of personal agency. Mathieu was also an unreliable narrator who both lied about basic facts and seemed to be unable to articulate his emotional state. Yet, the public was evidently still curious about Mathieu's declining career after he had showed so much potential as a child. Their disappointment was profound: for the Québécois, "the Little Canadian Mozart" was a national hero who represented a kind of hope. His failure, thus, was a failure for the entire nation. The radio program, which was arranged in conjunction with another comeback concert, was one of Mathieu's final public interviews. He died suddenly of natural causes on 2 June 1968; the coroner's report emphasized alcoholism in his explanation of Mathieu's death.[81]

The latter half of Mathieu's life is a case study of nascent Québécois identity in the years leading up to the Quiet Revolution. Mathieu's simultaneous engagement with Québécois nationalism in his personal politics and disengagement with musical modernism in his artistic creations alienated him from audiences who had little patience for the paradox. In Montreal, a city in the midst of the work of nation-building, the nostalgic introspection from a once-successful child prodigy did not gain him recognition among his peers. And Mathieu, who had been unable to adapt both musically and socially, slipped into obscurity.

[81] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 677.

Chapter 3: Memorialization of the "Little Canadian Mozart" (1964–2017)

Though the figure of André Mathieu was not completely forgotten in the years after his death, he had few champions of his music and his works were rarely performed. The more recent representations of Mathieu's biography and works are claimed by their creators to be authoritative sources, correcting the historical record that marginalized the misunderstood figure of Mathieu in Quebec concert culture in the decades after his death. In the introduction to her 2006 biography of André Mathieu, Marie-Thérèse Lefebvre highlights the "profound malaise" that many listeners experience due to the inconsistencies in Mathieu's legacy: "Mathieu is a misunderstood genius who led a miserable life, but we say of his music that it is constructed in an awkward manner and that we must correct its missteps. Mathieu's music and his life have been made into a sort of mishmash, which everyone uses in his or her own way."[1] This is the fundamental problem in understanding André Mathieu's legacy as it stands in the present year; ambiguities in the historical record have invited mediators whose intentions lie beyond merely preserving documents, memoirs, scores, and recordings. The revival has a nationalist objective: the reconstruction and propagation of the works from a neglected national hero.

André Mathieu's reception is peculiar not only because it is uneven and discontinuous, but because the shape Mathieu has taken in the recent *mémoire collective* of Quebec citizens is mediated only by a handful of creators. The impetus for the revival is directly linked to a single actor: Québécois pianist-composer Alain Lefèvre (b. 1962). Through performances of Mathieu's works as a young adult, Lefèvre gained international recognition as the composer's champion,

[1] Lefebvre, *André Mathieu: pianiste et compositeur québécois*, 2. « "Violà justement ce qui crée un profond malaise auprès d'un public cible à qui on envoie un message contradictoire: Mathieu est un génie méconnu qui eut une vie malheureuse, mais on dit de sa musique qu'elle est construite de manière maladroite et qu'on doit en corriger les gaucheries. On a fait de la musique et de la vie de Mathieu une sorte de bouillabaisse dont chacun se sert à sa façon. »

becoming the exclusive interpreter for a number of high-profile premieres of Mathieu's works for piano and orchestra. Lefèvre was involved in both the 2010 biography of Mathieu written by Georges Nicholson, and *L'enfant prodige: L'incroyable destinée d'André Mathieu*, a biopic directed by Luc Dionne, for which Lefèvre was the musical director, composer, and pianist. It is likely an unparalleled situation in music history for the legacy of one man, dead for more than half a century, to so actively privilege another. As Danick Trottier states in his review of Nicholson's biography, due to his mediation in the creation and maintenance of the romantic mythology surrounding André Mathieu, Alan Lefèvre "is an example without precedent in the biographical literature in musicology."[2] To understand the singularity of these recent rehabilitative efforts, it is necessary to examine the history of Mathieu's posthumous reception.

An Early Posthumous Reception (1964–1977)

André Mathieu's decline in the esteem of the Québécois during the latter half of his life is no more immediately perceptible than in the difference in reception between André and Rodolphe in the 1960s. Two years after Rodolphe's death, Annette Lasalle-Leduc's 1964 *La vie musicale au Canada français* emphasizes his importance and establishes him as a musical pioneer in Canada. In a section recalling the criticism of Léo-Pol Morin from the 1920s and '30s that places Rodolphe's music ahead of his time, Lasalle-Leduc states:

> To fight an unfortunate fate which had kept him in the distance for too long, it would have been necessary for Rodolphe Mathieu...to possess a spirit of discipline and a resolve which he unfortunately lacked in everyday life, a tenacious will in the pursuit of his creative work, and, one might add, a certain amount of ambition, to impose his talent in an environment absolutely unprepared to receive his message. His compositional research directed exclusively towards absolute music and his forays into the universe of a chromaticism, so free as to reach the

[2] Trottier, "André Mathieu: Encore bien des questions…" *Les Cahiers de la Société québécoise de recherche en musique* 12, no. 1 (2011): 121. « Je m'attarde en conclusion à l'entretien avec Alain Lefèvre, qui est selon moi un example sans précédent dans la littérature biographique en musicologie. »

> threshold of atonality, could but only arouse—amidst widespread indifference—partly hostile echoes and the indulgent irony of certain critics.[3]

It is never explicitly stated, but the implication is that Rodolphe's talent as a composer was wasted when he gave up creating to manage André's career. Tributes to Rodolphe in Quebec seemed to express regret over Rodolphe's poor reception during his lifetime; within three years of his death, the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal programmed Rodolphe's *Trois Préludes* and the city of Montreal named a street after him.[4] The Société Pro Musica also honoured Rodolphe with several performances of his works.[5] André Mathieu was not given a similar tribute after his death six years later.

In comparison to the praise she gives to Rodolphe, Lasalle-Leduc writes as if André Mathieu were already dead. Given the inconsequential nature of his career at that point, he might just as well have been:[6]

> We think also about the voices that have fallen silent, that of a child, André Mathieu, born in 1930, who at seven, at ten (he had given a recital in Montreal at the age of four) astonished Parisian and American critics and audiences with delightfully ingenious piano works, in which we with pleasure detected the gifts of genius. These musical gifts inherited from his father, Rodolphe Mathieu, in fact predict the future of a creator in the child. A short while later, we also saw in Mathieu the makings of a magnificent pianist. What would have happened to this promising career if the young composer, when he applied himself to serious study after his first attempts as a child, had entered straight into atonality, or into the arcana of the Schoenbergian universe, or finally if he had, like the majority of composers who are now of his age, exploited the materials on which the future of

[3] Annette Lasalle-Leduc, *La vie musicale au Canada français* (Québec: Ministère des Affaires culturelles, 1964), 14. « Pour combattre un destin adverse qui l'a trop longtemps tenu à l'écart, il aurait fallu à Rodolphe Mathieu (ses premières œuvres datent de 1911–14) un esprit de discipline et de décision qui lui faisant malheureusement défaut dans la vie courante, une volonté tenace dans la poursuite de son travail créateur, et on pourrait ajouter : une certaine dose d'arrivisme, pour imposer son talent dans un milieu aucunement préparé pour recevoir son message. Ses recherches uniquement orientées vers la musique pure, ses incursions dans l'univers d'un chromatisme libéré jusqu'aux confins de l'atonalisme, n'avaient su éveiller, à travers l'indifférence générale, que des échos à demi hostiles, ou l'indulgente ironie de certains critiques. »

[4] "Cinq nouvelles rues porteront les noms de personnes célèbres," *Le Journal de Montréal*, 21 April 1965. The concert with the OSM was held 2 March 1965. Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 410.

[5] Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/A8,2, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. Juliette Bourassa-Trépanier, "Rodolphe Mathieu, Musicien Canadien (1890–1962)" (PhD diss., Université Laval, 1976).

[6] Indeed, Mathieu had not given a public recital in almost seven years—not since his final pianothon "to the death" with Jim Montecino in the summer of 1957. Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 538.

> music was built? At the age when others were just beginning to search for their [musical] direction, he was already on a divergent route, where his talent struggled and exhausted itself in attempts to bounce back and escape the pitfalls of facility; and the tragedy of André Mathieu is perhaps that he could not overcome this impasse.[7]

Notably, in Lasalle-Leduc's short consideration of André Mathieu, she attributes his professional underachievement to his personal compositional choices rather than to shortcomings in the Quebec music scene—in contrast to her explanation of Rodolphe's lack of success during his lifetime. Further, as she emphasizes the gap between the potential André showed from an early age—talent he had inherited from his father, no less—as well as his washed out career, it becomes apparent that she, like many of her contemporaries, had more questions than answers about Mathieu's decline.

In post-WWII Canada, there was a drive to understand the origins of Canadian music; while at the same time, with new divisions of labour and leisure, a professional class of performers and composers was emerging in Canada's metropolitan areas. Lasalle-Leduc's *La vie musicale au Canada français* is correlated with an increase in scholarly attention to Canadian composers and the history of music in Canada. English-language musicological research began in earnest in the 1950s with Helmut Kallmann's collection of data in association with the CBC that led to the *Catalogue of Canadian Composers* (1952), as well as Sir Ernest MacMillan's

[7] Lasalle-Leduc, *La vie musicale au Canada français*, 28. « On pense aussi à des voix qui sont tues, à celle d'un enfant, André Mathieu, né en 1930, qui à 7 ans, à 10 ans (il avait donné un récital à Montréal à l'âge de quatre ans) étonna les critiques et les audiences parisiens et américains part des œuvres de piano d'une ravissante ingénuité, où l'on s'est plu à entrevoir les dons du génie. Ces dons musicaux hérités de son père, Rodolphe Mathieu, laissent en effet présager chez le bambin l'avenir d'un créateur. Un peu plus tard, on a vu aussi en Mathieu l'étoffe d'un magnifique pianiste. Que serait-il advenu de cette carrière si prometteuse si le jeune compositeur, lorsqu'il se mit aux études sérieuses après ses premiers essais d'enfant, était entré de plein pied dans l'atonalisme, ou dans les arcanes de l'univers schœnbergien, ou enfin s'il avait, comme la plupart des compositeurs qui ont aujourd'hui son âge, exploité les matériaux nouveaux sur lesquels s'édifiait la musique de l'avenir ? À l'âge où d'autres commencent seulement à chercher leur orientation, il était déjà sur une voie d'évitement, où son talent piétinait, s'épuisait en tentatives pour se reprendre et échapper aux pièges de la facilité; et le drame d'André Mathieu est peut-être de n'avoir pas pu sortir de cette impasse. »

edited volume *Music in Canada* (1952).[8] In the same decade, several music organizations began independently compiling lists of repertoire by Canadian composers, including Claude Champagne for the Conservatoire de Musique et d'art dramatique, Geoffry Waddington for the CBC/Radio-Canada, T. Arthur Evans for the Musical Protective Society of Canada, and the Canadian Music Centre, which was formed in 1959.[9] As ideas about musical lineage proliferated and a performance canon of Canadian works began to be established, it is notable that André Mathieu is often excluded from these early musicological considerations. He largely remained outside of the scholarly canon—as well as the performance canon—until the twenty-first century.[10]

As described in Chapter 1 and 2, there are several possible explanations for Mathieu's exclusion from both canons. Aside from a handful of champions—including Gilles Lefebvre in the 1940s, André Asselin in the 1950s and '60s, and André-Sébastien Savoie in the 1970s—there were few interpreters of Mathieu's music until the twenty-first century. Some of this can be attributed to a lack of interest in the music itself from audiences and performers—a similar reception that Mathieu himself experienced in the latter half of his life. Access to complete scores also proved difficult for aspiring interpreters; the last large-scale piano work Mathieu published was the *Concerto de Québec* in 1948, and many works are unfinished, lost, or exist only as manuscripts in private collections. It is also difficult to place Mathieu's compositions

[8] Helmut Kallmann, *Catalogue of Canadian Composers* (Ottawa, 1952); Ernest MacMillan, ed., *Music in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1955). Louis Applebaum briefly discusses Mathieu's contribution to *La Forteresse* in *Music in Canada*, ed. Ernest MacMillan. Composing for film was not a lucrative option in Canada at the time of the book's release. "There is, however, not enough activity in Canada in the feature-film field to enable a composer to make a vocation of his occasional association with full-length films."

[9] Claude Champagne to Rodolphe Mathieu, 18 February 1954; T. Arthur Evans to Rodolphe Mathieu, 2 December 1954, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/A2,14, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa. Geoffry Waddington to André Mathieu, 30 October 1950, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/B2,10, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.

[10] Mathieu was also excluded from later French-language considerations of contemporary music in Quebec. See Marcelle Guertin, ed., *Musiques contemporaine au Québec* (Montreal: Dérives, 1984).

within a living music tradition; while he was alive, he drew much of his inspiration from past composers, such as the early French modernists and virtuosic Romantic pianist-composers, while refusing to engage with modernists of his generation. Moreover, Mathieu's work and writings failed to inspire a modern romantic school of composition in Quebec during his lifetime, and, unlike his father, he did not have a lasting pedagogical legacy in the province.

While difficult to quantify, another dynamic in Mathieu's early reception is shame. Although Lasalle-Leduc removed personal and psychoanalytical considerations in her explanation of Mathieu's declining career, by the time of publication it was understood in many circles that an important contributing factor was his alcoholism. Certainly, in the years immediately before and after his death broaching the subject of addiction exceeded the bounds of respectability. Considering Mathieu's rescinded status as a national hero, the feeling of shame could have been a demotivating factor for people who were once proponents of André Mathieu's music. According to Alain Lefèvre, there were people who were incapable of talking about the ambiguous and disgraceful circumstances surrounding Mathieu's decline and death. During his early adulthood, when he first experienced interest in Mathieu's music, Lefèvre was approached by an unnamed man after a concert in Montreal, who said to him,

> "Listen, since Mathieu interests you, I'd like to bring you some things." This man, on a fairly cold day, came calling at my home to talk to me. He then told me three things. First, that performing Mathieu was marvellous, and he commended me on playing him. The second thing he said to me was that to deal with André Mathieu could bring bad luck. When I asked him why, he spoke in a very discreet, delicate way, I remember because his response would feed my imagination for a long time: "You know, even today, we do not know how he died and there are many things that nobody wants to talk about."[11]

[11] Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 19. « "Écoutez, puisque Mathieu vous intéresse, j'aimerais vous apporter des choses." Cet homme, un jour de plus assez froid, a sonné chez nous pour me parler. Il m'a alors dit trois choses. D'abord, que d'interpréter Mathieu, c'était merveilleux, et il m'a félicité d'en jouer. La deuxième chose qu'il m'a dite, c'est que toucher à André Mathieu pouvait porter malheur. Quand je lui ai demandé pourquoi, il a parlé de manière très discrète, très délicate, je m'en souviens parce que sa réponse devait longtemps nourrir mon imagination: "Vous savez, même aujourd'hui, on ne sait pas de quelle manière il est mort et il y a plein de choses dont personne ne veut parler." »

Nevertheless, there were several passionate supporters of Mathieu's music who considered his reception in Quebec an affront to his legacy; all they had to do was wait for the right opportunity to reintroduce Mathieu's works to Quebec audiences.

Music for the Montreal 1976 Summer Olympics

Mathieu's music made a sudden high-profile reappearance at the 1976 Games of the XXI Olympiad in Montreal as thematic material for the official song as well as the opening and closing ceremonies, arranged by Montreal jazz pianist and band leader Vic Vogel (b. 1935). André Morin, the CBC/Radio-Canada producer who had advocated for Mathieu during the planning of Expo 67 and Montreal 325 celebrations, was appointed project leader for the ceremonies in July 1974. His skills lay in artistic administration, however, and he was replaced as director-general of official ceremonies by Jacques Lorion, instead becoming artistic advisor.[12] From the beginning, the Comité organisateur des Jeux olympiques de 1976 (COJO) experienced organizational difficulties that led to gross financial mismanagement; the 1976 Summer Olympics would be remembered as the Games with the highest overrun costs, leaving the city $1.6 billion in debt, taking nearly four decades to repay.[13]

The 1976 Olympics were also the first Games in modern history with an associated national festival of arts and culture organized by the host nation. Mayor Jean Drapeau had proposed the festival along with his bid for the Olympics, and in 1969, the International Olympic

[12] Paul Charles Howell, *The Montreal Olympics: An Insider's View of Organizing a Self-Financing Games* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), 118–19.

Morin collected and preserved hundreds of Mathieu's scores, letters, photos, newspaper articles, and personal artifacts. According to a 2010 interview, he is writing a memoir entitled *Entre bons voisins*. Françoise Davoine, "Le voisin discret d'André Mathieu," *Ici Musique (CBC/Radio-Canada)*, 19 May 2010.

[13] Jack Todd, "The 40-Year Hangover: How the 1976 Olympics Nearly Broke Montreal," *The Guardian*, 6 July 2016.

Committee (IOC) made an amendment to its rules to accommodate his plan.[14] At the time of its inception, it was the largest arts and culture festival Canada had ever hosted, with a budget of $8 million and over 4,000 participating Canadian artists, dancers, and musicians.[15]

Against this backdrop, Mathieu's music was given special prominence in the opening and closing ceremonies held at the Olympic Stadium on July 17 and August 1, respectively. According to the official report published by the COJO, under the advice of Mathieu's old friend Gilles Lefebvre, Morin decided on Mathieu's music for its populist appeal:[16]

> One of the most important aspects [of the ceremonies] was the musical score. To meet the objectives described, the directorate opted for an "integrated theme" structure similar to film background music.…This theme could be established by a composer capable of interpreting the mood of the scenarios and of reflecting the emotions of the athletes, the stadium crowd, and the millions around the world who would follow the ceremonies on television or radio.
>
> The nature of the ceremonies themselves, of the choreographed interludes and scenarios, and the personal involvement of both the athletes and the public, all led the directorate to seek a composer of the neo-romantic school, considered the one school of music which best reflects the unique and universal appeal of the Games.[17]

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[14] Gillian Cosgrove, "The Olympic-Size Problem of Keeping Body and Soul Together," *Maclean's Magazine* (28 June 1976): 46. The cultural festival suffered from under-budgeting and organizational problems. It was reported that up to two weeks before the start of the festival, Yvon DesRochers, director-general Arts and Culture of the COJO, refused to sign official contracts with the artists. Several days before its start, there were many doubts about its success: "It'll be something of a wonder if anyone shows up for the telling. The secret is Canada's Cultural Olympics, the most ambitious national culturefest in our history and one that COJO, the organizing committee beset with its high-profile problems on the sports front, has treated from the start as an ugly duckling, not really part of the Olympic nest at all."

[15] For a full list of artistic and cultural events, exhibits, and performers, see Comité organisateur des Jeux olympiques (COJO), *Games of the XXI Olympiad Montréal 1976*, vol. 1 ([Montreal]: COJO, 1978), 578–601.

[16] Rudel-Tessier, *André Mathieu, un génie*, 359. André Morin wrote notes about his musical concept for the Games, which were published in Rudel-Tessier's 1976 biography of Mathieu.

[17] Comité organisateur des Jeux olympiques, *Games of the XXI Olympiad*, 311.

"Taking into account the Olympic tradition and the traditional artistic scenarios of these Ceremonies, besides other program elements at our disposal in Canada as well as Quebec and Montreal, we could realize Opening and Closing Ceremonies of international grade that would compare favourably to past realizations on emphasizing originality in each of these elements for these artistic scenarios. In our opinion, like in the case of Expo 67, we could sign a memorable page in the History of these Olympic Games like we signed one of the greatest pages in the History of the Universal and International expositions." André Morin, "Notes on the Integrated Musical Concept," Vic Vogel *fonds*, HA 815, Concordia University Library, Montreal.

Since the organizers of the ceremonies needed three-and-a-half hours of background music—fanfares, marches, and ceremonial songs—on a fixed deadline, time also factored into the decision, drastically narrowing the field of Canadian composers from which they could select. "The directorate had to find a Canadian composer whose repertory demonstrated the abundance, variety, and wealth of inspiration required. The schedule left no time for a competition to resolve the issue."[18] Morin's idea of an "integrated theme" based on Mathieu's compositions was accepted by the COJO at their meeting in November 1974.[19]

The competition to which the COJO organizers refer alludes to a complaint made by the Quebec Songwriters and Composers society about the official song for the Games, a pop song that features variations on the primary theme from Mathieu's *Rhapsodie Romantique*. Morin and Lorion commissioned "Bienvenue à Montréal" / "Welcome to Montreal"— lyrics by Claude Lacombe and René Simard, and arranged by Vic Vogel—around the musical concept of thematic unity. The song, sung by 14-year-old teen sensation René Simard, was a commercial flop, selling only 7,000 copies between October 1975 and February 1976. Reportedly, disc jockeys refused to play "Bienvenue à Montréal," even though COJO intended for the song to represent the 1976 Games for domestic and international audiences. At CKGM, Montreal's largest English-language station, the program director said, "It's just a lousy song. It's very big-bandish, like a national anthem."[20] Following a boycott, an unofficial songwriting competition was held by

[18] Ibid.
[19] Rudel-Tessier, *André Mathieu, un génie*, 364. This was presented to the COJO by Jean Dupire, who agreed to represent Morin and his associates and present the idea of the integrated musical concept.
[20] Lawrence Martin, "Games' Welcome Song Unwelcome on Radio," *Globe and Mail*, 5 February 1976. René Simard, Claude Lacombe, and Vic Vogel, *Bienvenue à Montréal*, Nobel NL-5713, 1975. The song was released with a 45 which had trumpet fanfares of varying lengths on one side and some early theme music for the opening and closing ceremonies with soft rock and Bossa nova rhythms on the other.

"Bienvenue à Montréal" and, consequently, themes from Mathieu's *Rhapsodie Romantique* are sampled in the first track, "Opening Ceremony," of Australian electronica band Black Cab's 2014 album *Games of the XXI Olympiad*. The concept album is based on East Germany's doping scandal during the 1976 Olympics. The band draws inspiration from East German culture, including their sound, which is heavily influenced by Krautrock.

radio producer Stéphane Venne; the winner was "Je t'aime" by Christian Saint-Roch and Jean Robitaille. The news was announced at the close of the Games but the unpopularity of "Bienvenue à Montréal" and the resulting contest are not mentioned in the COJO's official report.[21]

Montreal music critic Gilles Potvin (1923–2000) gives his take on "Bienvenue à Montréal" near the time of its release in October 1975. As Mathieu's friend and long-time enthusiast of his music, Potvin is skeptical about the use of Mathieu's music in the Games, stating,

> Without his consent, André Mathieu becomes a kind of "official" composer of the Games, which has not failed to arouse some dissatisfaction among composers of today who had hoped to hold a contest as a means of finding the official music for such an event, according to the standard practice.
>
> When pressed on this point, the officials responsible tried to justify this process, probably unique in the history of music, by saying that material would be drawn from the "thematic roots" of Mathieu's works to create two songs, and even an "Olympic song" with the help of a professional arranger, Vic Vogel.[22]

Familiar with Mathieu's compositional style, Potvin highlights the difficulties in arranging his music for use in the Games; "essentially pianistic," the music is melodic, often with large intervallic jumps, and the accompaniment (usually in the left hand) is frequently arpeggiated, making it difficult to transfer to other groups of instruments. For Potvin it is important that Vogel preserves the original character of Mathieu's works; which "Bienvenue à Montréal" failed to do:

Michael Dwyer, "Black Cab: *Games of the XXI Olympiad*," *Rolling Stone*, 10 November 2014, http://rollingstoneaus.com/reviews/post/black-cab-games-of-the-xxi-olympiad/884.

[21] "Olympic Song to be Chosen After Games," *Globe and Mail*, 9 July 1976; "Olympic Notebook: Some Big Names, but not Carlos," *Globe and Mail*, 2 August 1976; Christian St-Roch and Jean Robitaille, *Je t'aime*, Solo SO-11401, 1976.

[22] Gilles Potvin, "André Mathieu: un jeune Mozart à l'heure," *Le Devoir*, 25 October 1975. « Sans qu'il y ait consenti, André Mathieu devient donc un genre de compositeur "officiel" des Jeux, ce qui n'a pas manqué de soulever un certain mécontentement chez les compositeurs d'aujourd'hui qui avaient espéré la tenue d'un concours comme moyen de trouver la musique officielle d'un tel événement, selon la pratique habituelle.

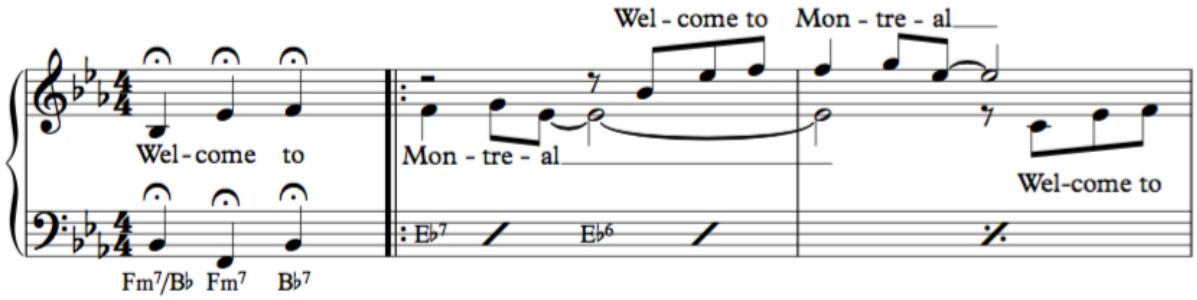
Pressés de questions, les responsables ont tenté de justifier cette opération probablement unique dans l'histoire de la musique en disant que l'on puiserait aux "racines thématiques" de l'œuvre de Mathieu pour créer deux chansons et même une "chanson olympique" avec le concours d'un arrangeur professionnel, Vic Vogel. »

"It is very difficult to find André Mathieu in the 'Welcome Song' regarding style or even 'thematic roots'."[23] Indeed, the song's melody deviates from Mathieu's original theme (see Figs. 3.1 and 3.2), maintaining the intervallic relationship for the first iteration of "Welcome to Montreal." The rest of the song's melody is derived from this small fragment. It is accompanied by schmaltzy, sentimental strings and brass in a throwback to 1960s big-band arrangements of mainstream jazz. Simard sings legato with a wide vibrato through the many semitone modulations (some of which are faithful to the original material), while the background singers parrot the simple lyrics in a call-and-response style.

Welcome to Montreal (Welcome to Montreal)
Welcome to Montreal (Welcome to Montreal)
We're glad to welcome you
Our word is "Bienvenue"

Welcome to Montreal (Welcome to Montreal)
Welcome to Montreal (Welcome to Montreal)
We'd love to say
Bonjour, we hope you're on your way.[24]

Figure 3.1: Vic Vogel, "Bienvenue à Montréal" / "Welcome to Montreal" (1975), mm. 1–10.



[23] Ibid. « On ne sait encore ce que seront la deuxième chanson ou la cantate mais dans la "Chanson de bienvenue", il est bien difficile de retrouver André Mathieu, sur le plan du style ou même des "racines thématiques". »
[24] Claude Lacombe and René Simard, first chorus to "Welcome to Montreal," Vic Vogel *fonds*, HA 815, Concordia University Library, Montreal.

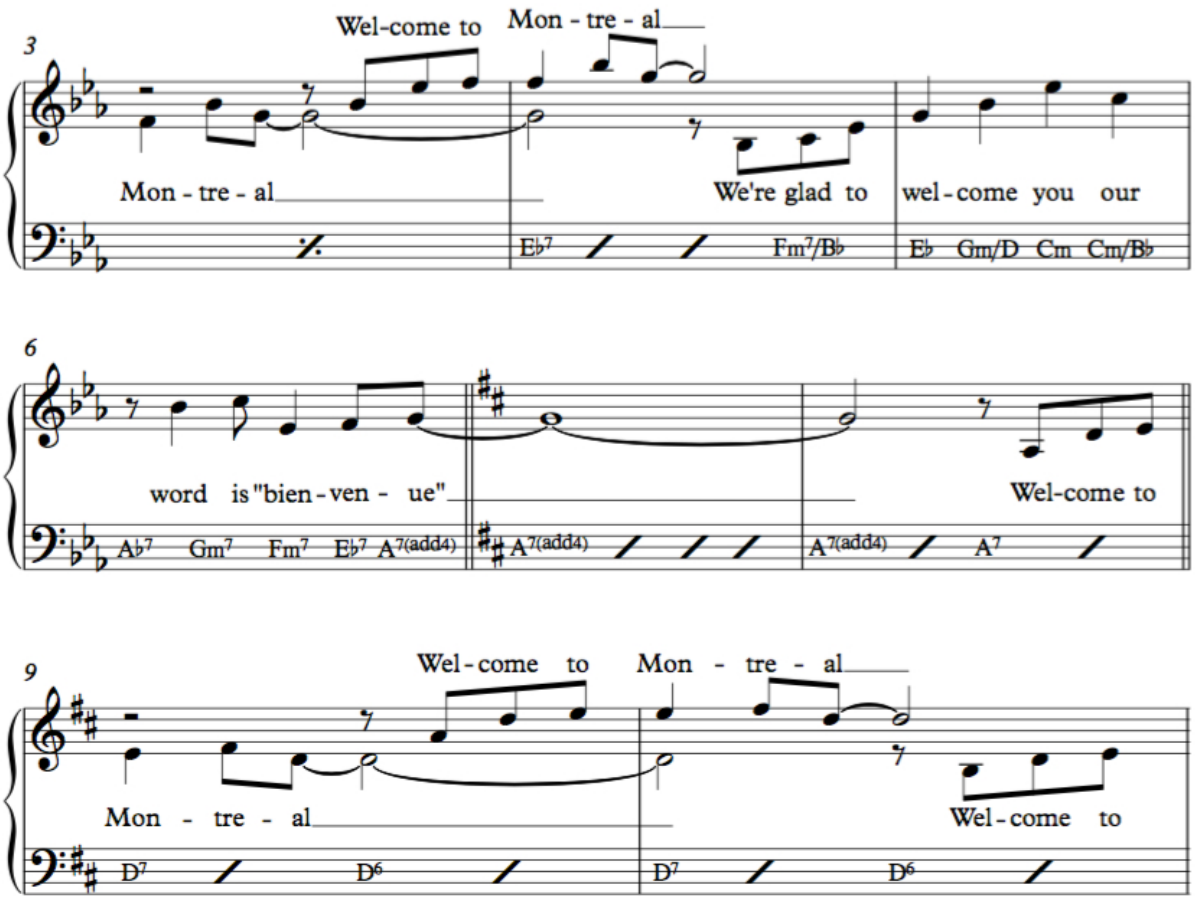
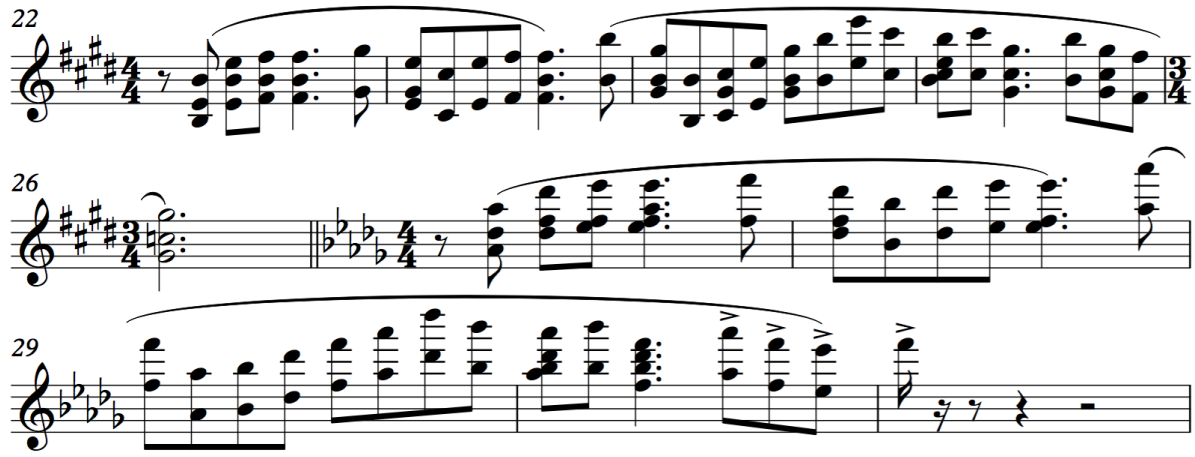


Figure 3.2: André Mathieu, arr. Gilles Bellemare, *Rhapsodie Romantique* (1951/2005), Theme B, R.H. solo piano, mm. 22–31.



For the rest of the music arranged for the ceremonial components of the Games, the approach is similar to "Bienvenue à Montréal"; Vogel strips Mathieu's themes of their accompaniment and sets them in various styles according to the intended ceremonial use: marches, fanfares, ballets, and anthems. The results for the opening and closing ceremonies were fortunately more successful in conveying the organizers' musical concept in a sentimental and accessible manner. Renowned for his musical arrangements for several Canadian events, including arranging and conducting music for the *Man and His World* exhibition (1968–84, a continuation of Expo 67),[25] Vogel was selected as the lead arranger for the ceremonies due to his skills in arranging music in an easy listening genre that bridged mainstream jazz, funk, rock, and Mathieu's ballad-like neo-romanticism:

> To execute this work required a composer from the same school as Mathieu who would also be arranger and orchestrator. This person would have to write the descriptive passages that matched the scenarios without betraying Mathieu's original work, but transposing it to emphasize the brass and percussion that have become associated with Olympic music. Finally, the composer would have to work to an extremely limiting timetable.[26]

Vogel considered Mathieu his friend and called him "the Gershwin of Quebec." In an interview after the opening ceremony, Vogel describes his approach to the arrangements as breaking with the mould of previous Games: "Music at the Olympics, since 1936, has always been too military and too stiff—too monotonous—and now the whole world can see that Canada has music of such a calibre that our temperament can be recognized around the world. Canada has soul."[27] Vogel worked on the score for two years and the music was recorded in advance of the ceremony to preserve sound fidelity in the stadium; it was released on Polydor on 10 July 1976 as a

[25] "Vic Vogel," in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Historica Canada, 1985–. Article published 12 April 2007, online.
[26] Comité organisateur des Jeux olympiques, *Games of the XXI Olympiad*, 311.
[27] Linda Diebel, "Composer is Dead: Canada 'Has Soul'," *Toronto Star*, 19 July 1976.

collector's item.[28] During the ceremony, Vogel was the conductor of the Olympic Orchestra, which was assembled in the stadium in the case of technical failure.[29]

The two ceremonies attracted the largest domestic and international audiences out of all of the events featured at the 1976 Olympics. Over 73,000 spectators filled the Olympic Stadium and an estimated half-billion people—around 1/8 of the world's population—tuned in from 5 continents and heard André Mathieu's music.[30] Traditionally, the modern Olympic ceremonies are an extravagant expression of musical nationalism by the host nation, which creates a lavish pageant that showcases regional folk music and culture.[31] It is notable that for all of the nationalist fervor in selecting Mathieu's music to represent Canada internationally, there is nothing inherently Canadian sounding in his original themes, nor in the arrangements by Vic Vogel (if Canadian art music can be said to have a sound). Conscious of the large audience tuning in, the organizers decided for accessible arrangements that would maintain forward momentum through the mandated elements of the ceremonies, including the march of the athletes, national anthems, speeches, oaths, and the relay of the Olympic Flame (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2 for the order of the ceremonies).[32]

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[28] André Mathieu and Vic Vogel, *Games of The XXI Olympiad - Montréal 1976 (Original Soundtrack)*, Polydor 2424 124, 1976. Art Phillips is credited as the arranger of the "March of the Athletes" Nos. 1–3. André Morin is credited as "Management (Artistic Adviser)." The record was apparently very popular with athletes, and many bought a copy in a magazine shop at the Athlete's Village after the opening ceremony. It was a big seller along with sex magazines and cigarettes. James Christie, "Sport and Sex Magazines Popular with Athletes," *Globe and Mail*, 23 July 1976.

[29] Comité organisateur des Jeux olympiques, *Games of the XXI Olympiad*, 313.

[30] "Cérémonie d'ouverture," Les Jeux de 1976, Ville de Montréal, http://ville.montreal.qc.ca/portal/page?_pageid=3056,3514006&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL (accessed 11 July 2017).

[31] There is a considerable amount of scholarship about the links between sports and nationalism, but scholars have not often explored the function of music in these events. As Ken McLeod states in *We are the Champions: The Politics of Sports and Popular Music*, "the combined spectacle of music and sport serves as an effective tool in nation building and image consolidation." Music also factors into the glorification of the athletes who win each event: "Likely the most overt nexus of sport, music, and nationalism occurs at the Olympic Games in the medal ceremonies that are capped by the national anthem of the victorious country." Ken McLeod, *We Are the Champions: The Politics of Sports and Popular Music* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 158.

[32] To assemble his scores for the Games, Vogel had copies of the following works by Mathieu (at least): Piano Concerto No. 3 (*Concerto de Québec*), *Rhapsodie Romantique*, *Été canadien*, *Printemps canadien*, *Laurentienne*, Concertino Op. 10, No. 1, *Valse pour enfant*, *Hommage à Mozart*, *Les Mouettes*, Étude No. 4, "Le Chant du soldat,"

Table 3.1: Order of Opening Ceremonies, Olympic Stadium, 17 July 1976.[33]

Ceremonial Element	Description	Artistic Component	Description
Announcement of the arrival of Queen Elizabeth II	Conduction of Queen Elizabeth II, Prince Philip, and Prince Andrew to the royal box	Announcement preceded by brass fanfare, *Sonneries Royales*	
National anthem of host country		"God Save the Queen" "O Canada" (arr. Vogel)	Performed by a youth orchestra with members from 30 countries
Parade of Nations	Athletes from the 94 participating nations proceed alphabetically by nation around the track, starting with Greece (originator of the Olympics) and ending with Canada (host nation)	Fanfares (*Sonneries Olympiques l'appel des athlètes*) followed by *March of the Athletes* pt. 1, 2 & 3 (arr. Vogel and Art Phillips)[34]	Music based on themes from ***Rhapsodie Romantique*** and ***Concerto de Québec***
Official Addresses	Charles de Lotbinière Harwood, Chief of Protocol, introduces Roger Rousseau. president of the COJO, and Lord Killanin, president of the IOC	N/A	
Opening of the Games	Queen Elizabeth II announces in French and English: "I declare open the Olympic Games of Montreal, celebrating the XXI Olympiad of the modern era."	N/A	
Procession of the Olympic flag into the Stadium, Hoisting the Flag	Flag to be flown in Montreal for duration of Games is carried by 8 male athletes and accompanied by 4 female athletes to represent Canada's ten provinces and two territories.	*Sonneries du drapeau olympique* Accompanied by the official Olympic anthem, Spyridon Samara's *Olympic Hymn* (arr. Vogel). Instrumental for the procession, *a cappella* for hoisting the flag	Choral version performed by the Orpheus Choir, made up of Canadians of Greek ancestry
Symbolic transfer of the 1920 Official Olympic flag from Munich to Montreal	Mayor of Munich, George Kronawitter hands official flag to Lord Killanin, who passes it to Jean Drapeau	Adolf Scherzer's *Bayerischer Defiliermarsch* followed by a Bavarian polka and	The Munich delegation (64 dancers, 16 musicians, and 8 singers) in traditional Bavarian

"Chanson du Carnival de Québec," "La Marche du Bloc Populaire," "Si tu crois" (poetry by Jean Laforest), "Les Chères Mains" (poetry by Paul Verlaine), "Youpe Youpe sur la rivière" (incomplete), "Le Chant des ténèbres" from *Poème symphonique* (incomplete), *Hantise* (Symphony No. 1) (incomplete). The majority listed are not quoted in Vogel's arrangements. Vic Vogel *fonds*, HA 808, Concordia University Library, Montreal.

[33] Comité organisateur des Jeux olympiques, *Games of the XXI Olympiad*, 296–305.

[34] "The crowd, exhilarated and carried away by the music, greets the athletes with unparalleled enthusiasm.…The score has a powerful effect on the athletes and spectators. This vibrant, communicative music of the neo-romantic school brings out the joyous, ardent, and exuberant nature of a ceremony that unfolds with 'pomp, dignity, and grandeur.'" Comité organisateur des Jeux olympiques, *Games of the XXI Olympiad*, 296.

		then a medley of Quebec folk music: *Danse de la plongeuse*, *Auprès de ma blonde, Marianne s'en va-t-au moulin*, *Danse des ceintures*, and *Reel des cinq jumelles*. Ending with a Traditional Quebec march.	costumes meet a similar configuration of Québécois dancers in traditional French colonial costumes in front of the officials on the track. The Munich delegation performs a polka. After the flag is passed, the Quebec delegation performs folk dances. The two troupes combine to perform a waltz to music of both regions. They walk off the track to the Quebec march.
Arrival of the Olympic Flame	Salvo of three cannon shots; eighty women release pigeons from five containers (symbolizing the 5 rings and the 80th anniversary of the modern Olympic Games); flame arrives in the stadium carried by Sandra Henderson (Toronto) and Stéphane Préfontaine (Montréal) (symbolizing the two sexes and the two colonizers of Canada)	Fanfare *Chimes of the Olympic Flame* as the flame enters the stadium *Olympic Cantata* (arr. Vogel, words by Louis Chantigny) plays as the torch bearers light the cauldron	Performed by the Petits Chanteurs de Mont Royal, the Disciples de Massenet, and singers from the Union des artistes de Montréal Music based on 3 themes from ***Rhapsodie Romantique*** **(see Figs. 3.2–3.7)**
Homage to the Athletes	Montreal students and young gymnasts from around the world perform a seven-minute rhythmic gymnastics tribute	*Homage to the Athletes* Ballet (arr. Vogel) followed by *Homage to the Athletes* "Rock Movement" Ballet	Music based on themes from ***Concerto de Québec***
Oath by Athletes, Officials	Flag-bearers from the 94 participating nations form a semi-circle behind the stage as Canadian weightlifter Pierre Saint-Jean takes the athletic oath on behalf of all participating athletes; judge Maurice Forget takes oath on behalf of judges and officials	Followed by "O Canada" (arr. Vogel)	Performed by Olympic Orchestra led by Vogel
Closing of Ceremony	Athletes, officials, and audience leave the stadium	Accompanied by *March of the Athletes (Finale Musicale)*	

Table 3.2: Order of Closing Ceremonies, Olympic Stadium, 1 August 1976.[35]

Ceremonial Element	Description	Artistic Component	Description
Entry of the Officials	Lord Killanin, Roger Rousseau, and Jules Léger, Governor General of Canada, enter the royal box	Brass fanfares (arr. Vogel) *Ballet d'Accueil – Prologue Musical*	500 school girls dressed in white perform choreography, flip costumes to form 5 coloured rings
Entry of the athletes	Athletes enter led by 75 dancers in indigenous costumes, followed by 525 more dancers in similar dress. Performance of a ballet by indigenous dancers around 5 tipis set up on the centre field in the shape and colour of the Olympic rings	Accompanied by *March of the Athletes* (arr. Vogel) then *Ballet of the Closing Ceremony*	The march is "augmented by Amerindian folk instruments such as tom-toms, rattles, and small bells."[36] Music based on themes from ***Danse sauvage*** and ***Rhapsodie Romantique***
Transfer of the Games	Three flags are raised: first, the Greek flag; second, the Canadian flag; third, the flag of the USSR, selected as the next host of the Games to be held in 1980	Greek national anthem followed by the Canadian national anthem and the national anthem of the USSR	Performed by the Olympic Orchestra
Closing of the Games	Lord Killanin declares the Games of the XXI Olympiad closed. The Olympic flag is lowered	*Deuxième sonneries* (*Second Fanfare*) As the flag is lowered, Spyridon Samara's *Olympic Hymn* is sung *a cappella*. Flag is removed to *Farewell Song* (arr. Vogel), five cannon shots	Performed by the Orpheus Choir Music for *Farewell Song* based on themes from ***Mistassini*** Symphonic Poem and ***Rhapsodie Romantique***
Extinguishing the Flame	Flame is extinguished	Accompanied by a solo trumpet fanfare *Chant d'adieu*	Performed by Montreal jazz musician Maynard Ferguson Music for *Chant d'adieu* based on themes from ***Rhapsodie Romantique***
Exit	Scenes from Moscow are shown on screens in the stadium; Athletes, officials, and dancers leave the stadium; End of the Games	*Finale*	

[35] Comité organisateur des Jeux olympiques, *Games of the XXI Olympiad*, 306–9.
[36] Ibid., 306.

The cantata was the first element Morin conceived within his integrated musical concept and it features three themes from Mathieu's *Rhapsodie Romantique*, which is perhaps the best example of Mathieu's modern romanticism (see Figs. 3.2–3.7). Performed by the Olympic Orchestra with combined adult and children's choirs (the Petits Chanteurs de Mont Royal, the Disciples de Massenet, and singers from the Union des artistes de Montreal), the *Cantata* marked the end of the torch relay as two young athletes, Sandra Henderson from Toronto and Stéphane Préfontaine of Montreal, lit the cauldron. This was the first time two athletes lit the cauldron simultaneously, and the choice represented both the unity of the sexes in the pursuit of athletic greatness as well as the union of English and French culture in Canada. The tradition of the Olympic cantata began in 1896 at the first modern Games in Greece with Spyridon Samara and Kostis Palmas's *Olympic Hymn*, which was adopted as the official Olympic anthem in 1958 to be played as the Olympic Flag is raised and lowered.[37] By placing a Canadian cantata with themes from Mathieu's *Rhapsodie Romantique* at the consequential ceremonial juncture when the flame from Athens, Greece is transferred to the host city, Morin linked Mathieu's legacy with Montreal. This was a deliberate act that finally corrected the record from the Expo 67 and Montreal 325 anniversary concert, when Mathieu was unable to meet the deadline with his orchestration of *Rhapsodie Romantique*. Morin ends his "Notes on the Integrated Musical Concept," with the following nationalist justification:

> In addition to allowing us [to realize] a musical integrated concept, unique in the history of the Games, the Mathieu subject illustrated the spirit of the Games, [true] to Baron de Coubertin's thought who saw in the Games the marriage of muscle, spirit of the sport and of the culture. [*sic*] In that same frame of mind the music[al] testament of André Mathieu and the tragic and unique story of our fellow-countryman allow us to reveal to the world music…worthy of our heritage.[38]

[37] Bill Mallon and Jeroen Heijmans, *Historical Dictionary of the Olympic Movement*, 4th ed. (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2011), 244–45.
[38] André Morin, "Notes on the Integrated Musical Concept," Vic Vogel *fonds*, HA 815, Concordia University Library, Montreal.

The lyrics of the *Olympic Cantata*, written by COJO Executive Committee member Louis Chantigny, exemplify Olympic ideals of international cooperation, universality, youth, and joy in athletic pursuits. Vogel constructs the melody entirely from three themes from the *Rhapsodie Romantique*, simplified into a homophonic choral texture. He orchestrates the work in a nostalgic, grandiose style—reminiscent of a golden age movie musical—with heavy strings punctured by short brass fanfares at the end of phrases. Theme A, a gently rising and falling linear melody, is repeated twice, first by a children's choir followed by the addition of adult voices (see Figs. 3.3 and 3.5). Theme B, similar to its use in "Bienvenue à Montréal," is the material for the refrain (see Figs. 3.2 and 3.4). The climax of the *Cantata*—"Athletes will rise to the heights of Gods"—follows a long stepwise ascent, quoting the Olympic motto in the lyrics "*citius, altius, fortius*" ("faster, higher, stronger"), a prophecy credited to Apollo, the Greek god of music, light, and truth. Vogel uses word painting by pairing "au rang des dieux" ("the level of Gods") with the peak of the melody in mm. 50–51, outlining dominant harmony that flows back into Theme B (see Figs. 3.6 and 3.7). The simplification of Mathieu's original material from the 1951 two-piano version of the *Rhapsodie Romantique*, of which Vogel had several copies in his collection, transforms the sophisticated late-romantic composition into a nearly unrecognizable choral anthem. Though Morin intended for Vogel's Olympic arrangements to restore Mathieu to the collective consciousness of Québécois citizens, the attention was fleeting; the incidental works did not serve any ceremonial purpose beyond the Olympics and the inclusion of Mathieu's music in the 1976 Games became a footnote in history.

***Olympic Cantata* (sung in French)**[39]

Sing in praise of the Olympian Flame, lit with the rays of the sun. (Theme A) And the victor's laurels woven from the branches of the olive. (Theme A)

Joy, love and glory shall be your rewards in this supreme contest, this fraternal gathering. (Theme B)

All the world breathes as one to the beat of your heart; the brotherhood of man pays homage with this song. (Theme B)

From the summit of Olympus, Apollo's divine oracle proclaims this day through my voice: *citius, altius, fortius*.

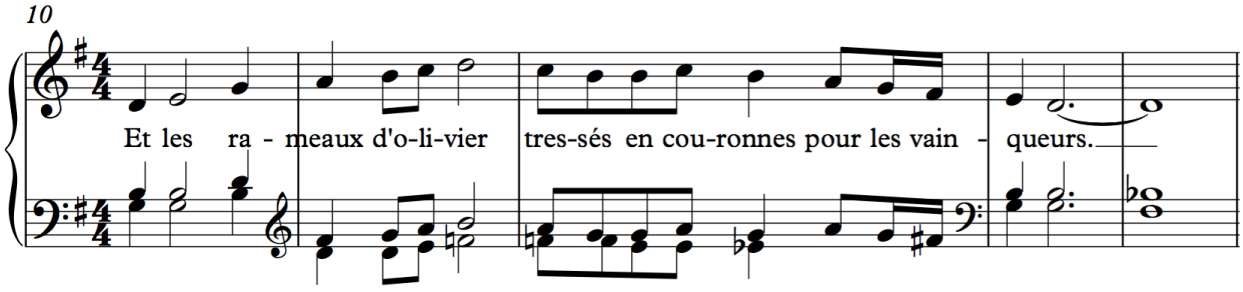
Thus was the truth spoken: "When mortals must strive, their true worth is always proven, and athletes will rise to the level of Gods." (Theme C)

Joy, love and glory shall be your rewards in this contest supreme, this fraternal gathering. (Theme B)

All the world breathes as one to the beat of your heart; the brotherhood of man pays homage with this song. (Theme B)

Brightly shine the Olympian Flame, lit from the rays of the sun. (Theme A)

Figure 3.3: Vic Vogel, *Olympic Cantata* (1976), Theme A, choral reduction, mm. 10–14.



[39] « Chantons la Flamme d'Olympie allumée aux rayons du soleil. Et les rameaux d'olivier tressés en couronnes pour les vainqueurs. La joie, l'amour, la gloire seront ta récompense en cette lutte ardente, au rendez-vous de l'amitié. Tout l'univers respire au rythme de ton cœur; de la terre des hommes, monte ce chante en ton honneur. Du sommet de l'Olympe, l'oracle divin d'Apollon proclame en ce jour par ma voix: *Citius, altius, fortius*. Telle est la vérité: "C'est toujours à l'épreuve que les mortels se révèlent, que les athlètes s'élèvent au rang des dieux." La joie, l'amour, la gloire seront ta récompense en cette lutte ardente, au rendez-vous de l'amitié. Tout l'univers respire au rythme de ton cœur; de la terre des hommes, monte ce chante en ton honneur. Brille la Flamme d'Olympie allumée aux rayons du soleil. » Comité organisateur des Jeux olympiques, *Games of the XXI Olympiad*, 302. Words by Louis Chantigny.

Figure 3.4: Vic Vogel, *Olympic Cantata* (1976), Theme B, choral and orchestral reduction, mm. 15–21.

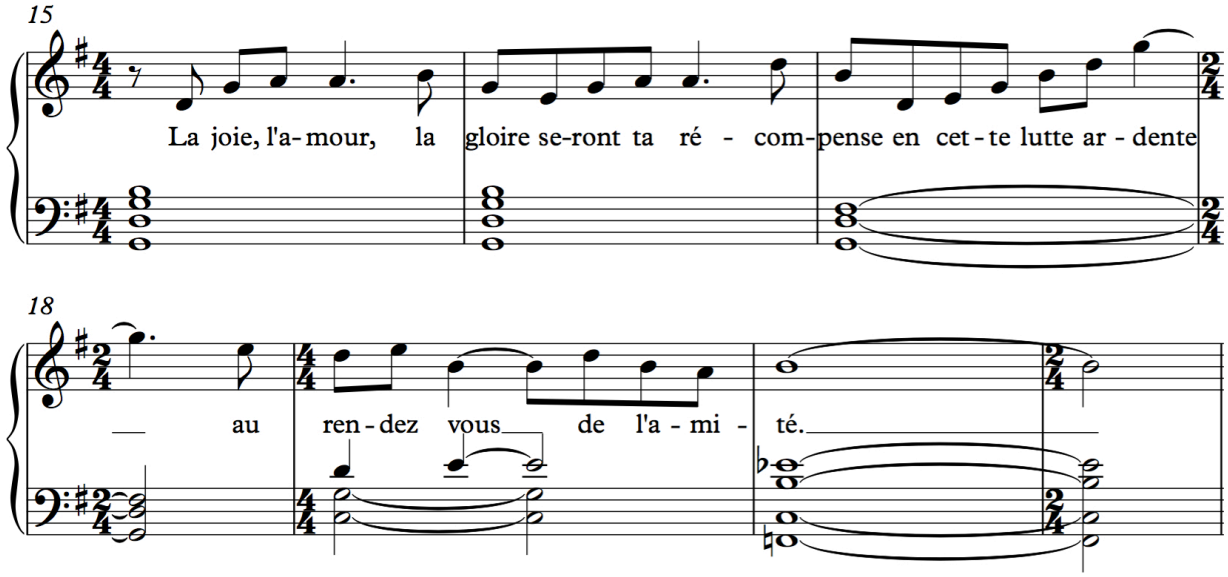


Figure 3.5: André Mathieu, arr. Gilles Bellemare, *Rhapsodie Romantique* (1951/2005), Theme A (red), R.H. solo piano, mm. 11–15.

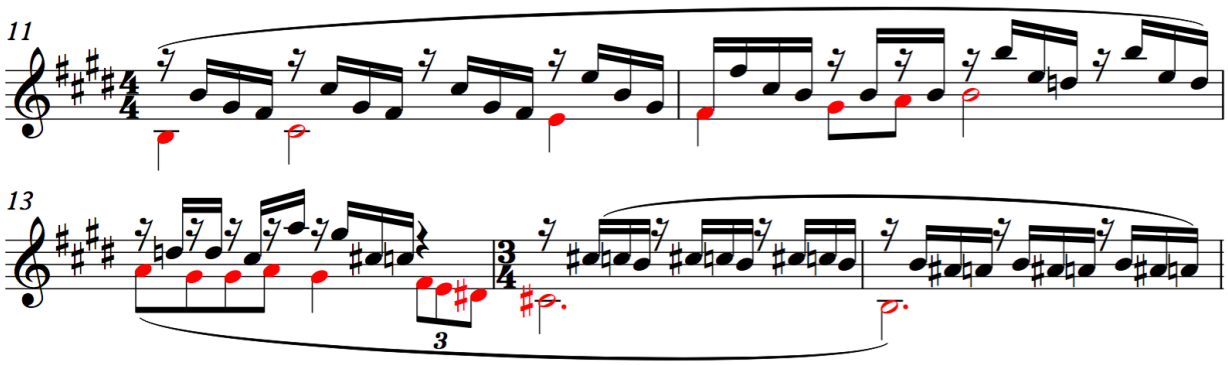
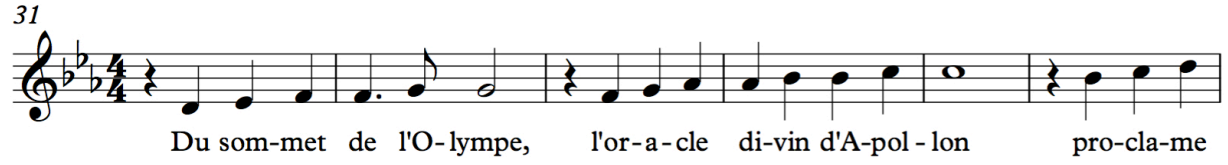


Figure 3.6: Vic Vogel, *Olympic Cantata* (1976), Theme C, melody, mm. 31–51.



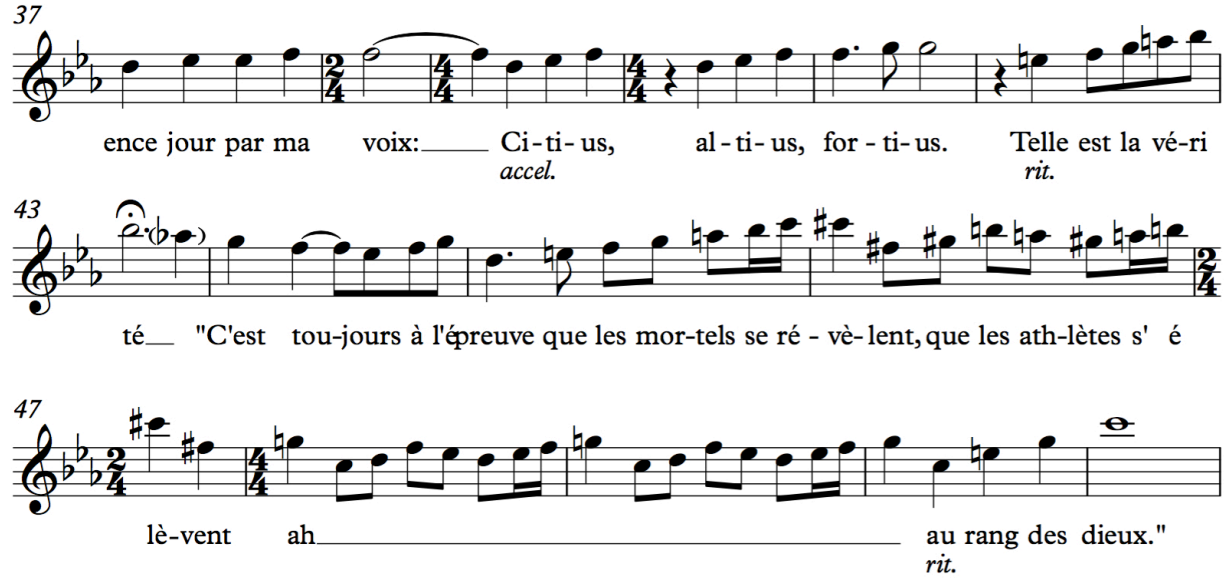
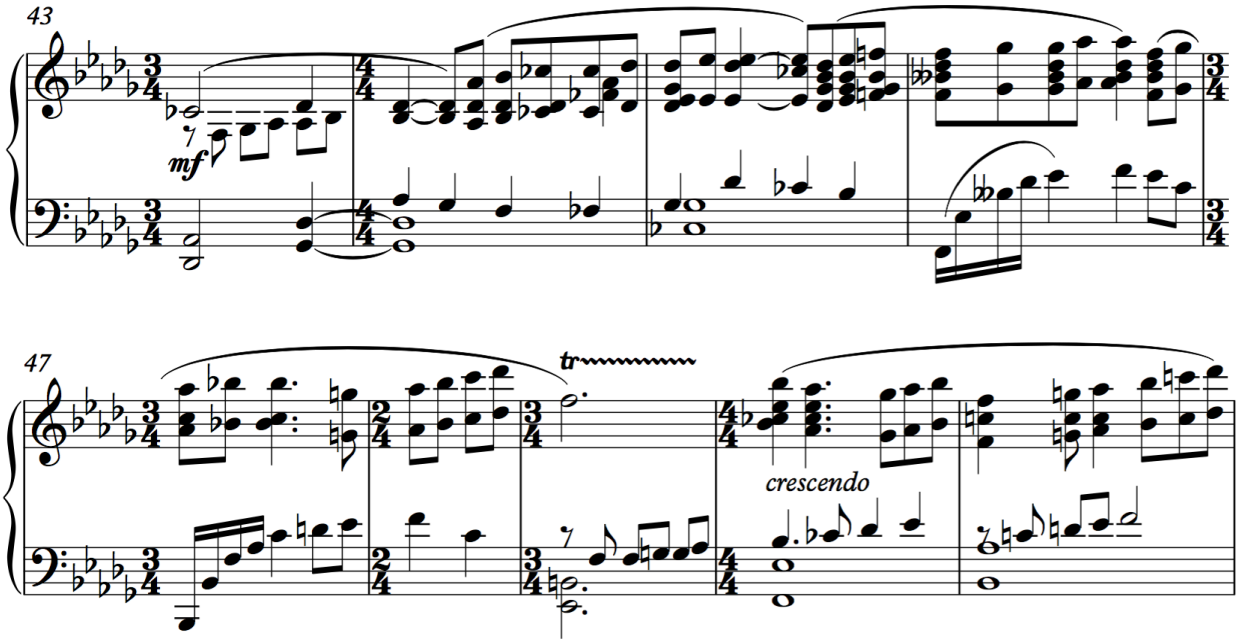
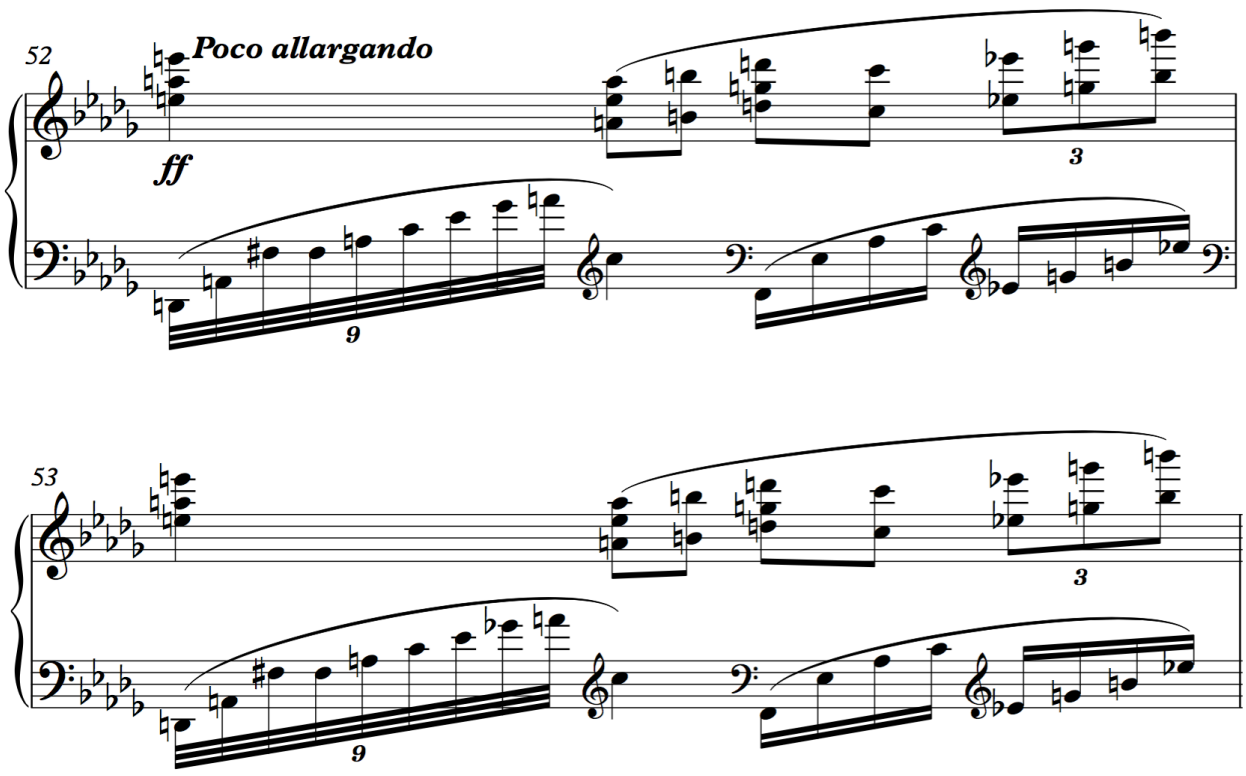


Figure 3.7: André Mathieu, arr. Gilles Bellemare, *Rhapsodie Romantique* (1951/2005), Theme C, solo piano, mm. 43–53.





One outcome of Vic Vogel's arrangements of Mathieu's works was a concert in Tunis, Tunisia on 28 April 1977. According to the concert program, "Tunisia is the first of thirty-two countries that had announced their intention to give a concert of the works by the composer of the music for the official ceremonies of the Montreal Olympic Games."[40] However, there is no documentation that any other country produced a concert of André Mathieu's works post-Olympics. The Tunisian concert, a collaboration of the Tunisian national cultural committee and La Fondation André-Mathieu (founded in 1976 to preserve and promote Mathieu's works), included works for solo piano performed by André-Sébastien Savoie (b. 1935), Quintet for Strings and Piano (1953) by the Ensemble Mathieu, and the world premiere of *Dans les champs*

[40] « La Tunisie est le premier des trente-deux pays qui ont annoncé leur intention de donner un concert des oeuvres du compositeur de la musique des cérémonies officielles de Jeux olympiques de Montréal. » Concert André Mathieu, Théâtre de la ville de Tunis, Tunisia, 28 April 1977, Mathieu family *fonds*, MUS 165/B5,4, Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.

from *Scènes de ballet* by the Orchestre Symphonique Tunisien under Ahmed Achour (b. 1945). Concluding the concert was a definitive version of the *Concerto de Québec* produced by La Fondation André-Mathieu with Quebec-born Raymond Dessaints (b. 1932) conducting.[41] The Ensemble Mathieu, made up of Johanne Arel and Claude Hamel (violins), Marc Bélanger (viola), André Mignault (cello), and Savoie (piano), was formed before the recording of the official music of the 1976 Olympics to revive interest in the chamber works by Mathieu and his father. According to the concert programme, the ensemble hoped to travel to several countries to play the works of Mathieu; however, it is unclear if such plans ever were carried out.[42]

There were only a handful of appearances of Mathieu's music after the 1976 Olympics: notably, several concerts by long-time champion, Mathieu's friend Paul-André Asselin (who self-published a memoir in 2004), a 1978 recording of the *Concerto de Québec* by Philippe Entremont and the Orchestre du Capitole de Toulouse under Michel Plasson taped in Montreal during an international tour, and a 1993 documentary *André Mathieu, musicien* by Jean-Claude Labrecque.[43] Labrecque worked on the film for 16 years: "It took all that time...to make the film because Téléfilm was afraid of the project. It was the period when they told themselves that there should be heroes in film, and for them, Mathieu was a loser."[44] Evidently, Mathieu's posthumous

[41] Savoie gave a solo recital of Mathieu's works at the Conservatoire Trois-Rivières on 24 March 1977 in advance of his trip. According to the *Canadian Encyclopedia*, this concert was repeated that summer at the Maurice Richard Arena in Montreal, the Olympic building for wrestling. Nadia Turbide, "André-Sébastien Savoie," in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Historica Canada, 1985–. Article published 2 July 2009, online. In Diebel "Composer is Dead: The Music: Canada 'has soul'," Lucien Brisson is credited as being the president of the "André Mathieu Federation," but other than a few concerts, I could find no record of any of the Foundation's activities, nor anything about Brisson himself.

[42] Concert André Mathieu, 28 April 1977.

[43] Paul-André Asselin, *Le Rappel d'un songe ou la rançon du génie: André Mathieu, hommage posthume* (Montréal: Self-Published, 2004); *Concerto No. 3 (Concerto de Québec) et Scènes de ballet*, with Philippe Entremont (piano) and the Orchestre du Capitole de Toulouse, conducted by Michel Plasson, 1978, re-released by Analekta, AN 2 9803, 1995; Jean-Claude Labrecque, *André Mathieu, musicien* (Montréal: Cinéma Libre, 1993).

[44] Labrecque first heard Mathieu's music at the 1976 Olympics: « J'ai écouté ces thèmes plus étonnants les uns que les autres et je suis retourné voir M. Morin, le directeur artistique des cérémonies d'ouverture, qui m'a donné une tonne de documents de première main. Là, j'ai étudié l'oeuvre, ce que je pouvais trouver de Mathieu, et j'étais tout à fait ravi, évoque-t-il. Ça a pris tout ce temps, entre 1977 et 1992, pour réussir à faire le film, parce que Téléfilm avait

image needed an overhaul; incidentally, the person who was at the forefront of this effort was himself in the midst of transforming his career.

Alain Lefèvre: The Architect

Pianist-composer Alain Lefèvre, born in Poitiers, France in 1962 and raised in Montreal, is one of Quebec's preeminent pianists. After making a name for himself as an interpreter of romantic repertoire—namely Rachmaninoff, Brahms, Chopin, and Liszt—Lefèvre signed with major Québécois classical music label Analekta in 2001 after the release of *Lylatov*, an album of his own compositions.[45] *Lylatov* represented a big shift in the style of repertoire Lefèvre performed and recorded; though he would continue to play works from the classical canon, he began producing a parallel stream of recordings in an accessible, middlebrow neo-romantic idiom. In his biography by CBC/Radio-Canada personality Georges Nicholson, Lefèvre states,

> My compositions, I do not know what they are; we cannot say that they consist of popular music, nor that they consist of classical music. I do not know to which category they belong. For me, they have been exorcisms in moments of great happiness or great pain. It was also another, different way of reaching the public.[46]

The genre in which he composes—a kind of classical easy listening—is difficult to classify, but shares many musical features with the works of André Mathieu; short, melody-driven character pieces that evoke the colour of late-romanticism and impressionism while retaining the

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peur de ce projet-là. C'était la période où ils se disaient qu'il faudrait des héros au cinéma et, pour eux, Mathieu était un *looser* [*sic*]. Ils craignaient que ce soit démoralisant. » Josiane Ouellet, "*André Mathieu, musicien: Regain de mémoire*," *VOIR*, 12 April 2006.

A review of the film states, « Un pays qui a la mémoire courte court vers un destin funeste.…*André Mathieu, musicien* sera l'occasion de réparer jusqu'à un certain point l'erreur d'une passé récent qui consiste à oublier nos meilleurs ambassadeurs. Oui. Nos racines one toujours soif de justice et de souvenance. » Janick Beaulieu, "André Mathieu, musicien," *Les directeurs photo*, no. 167 (November-December 1993): 40–41.

[45] Alain Lefèvre, *Lylatov*, Audiogram, ADCD10131, 2000.

[46] « Mes compositions, je ne sais pas ce qu'elles sont ; on ne peut pas dire ce soit de la musique populaire, ni que ce soit de la musique classique. Je ne sais pas à quelle catégorie elles appartiennent. Pour moi, elles ont été des exorcismes aux moments de grand bonheur ou de grandes peines. C'était aussi une autre manière de rejoindre le public, différente. » Georges Nicholson, *Alain Lefèvre: Portrait* (Montréal: Druide, 2012), 231.

immediate digestibility of a pop song. Often emotionally candid and transparent, the pianistic works still require great skill and facility from the performer.

During a period of steady decline in classical CD sales around the world, Analekta developed a marketing and production strategy that appealed to audiences in Quebec: the democratization of classical music performed—and often composed—by internationally-renowned Québécois musicians. The democratization of the label occurred for a number of years before Lefèvre signed; violinist Angèle Dubeau (b. 1962) along with La Pietà, her all-female string ensemble (formed in 1997), released dozens of best-selling records. Their discography includes albums with minimalists Arvo Pärt, Philip Glass, and Ludovico Einaudi, video game music, Christmas music, and movie soundtracks (including works by Québécois film composer François Dompierre).[47]

Analekta's model is successful because of the distinct media landscape in Quebec as compared to English-speaking Canada; a landscape that is sustained by the physical and social infrastructure that emerged out of the Quiet Revolution.[48] Involved in the creation and maintenance of a vibrant Québécois market for media created by fellow nationals who had first gained recognition in conventional art music avenues, Analekta has made this genre of classical easy listening profitable. As Nicholson states, "This music, simultaneously sophisticated and accessible, is also an excellent marketing tool in all of the regions that organize tours. As well-funded as they are, it's no secret that the cultural centres that sprouted like mushrooms during the

[47] "Angèle Dubeau & La Pietà," Analekta, https://www.analekta.com/en/artistes/?angele-dubeau-la-pieta.html (accessed 24 July 2017). In 2012, Analekta released an album of Dompierre's works recorded by Lefèvre.
[48] In English-speaking Canada there was never the same social imperative to preserve language, culture, and history compared to Quebec. As a result, other English-speaking cultures—especially American culture—have greater prominence and influence in the rest of Canada. That is not to say that there are not regional celebrities in English-speaking Canada, but the comparative concentration and renown of Québécois celebrities within Quebec is a provincial phenomenon, a concerted effort in opposition to perceived foreign cultural and linguistic hegemony. This translates to increased public and private patronage in the province for many types of artists, including actors, directors, pop musicians, artists, writers, composers, and classical musicians.

Quiet Revolution have trouble 'selling' classical concerts."[49] Not only does this genre of music fill a niche, Alain Lefèvre is promoted and received like a pop star in Quebec, with large billboards advertising his latest release by the highway, in the métro, and on the sides of buses. This commercialization is correlated with increased album sales, sold-out concerts, and other opportunities for advancement, including a weekly show on CBC/Radio-Canada entitled *Dans les carnets d'Alain Lefèvre*.

Lefèvre's revival of André Mathieu's music falls squarely within this strategy of democratization. With perhaps the exception of Rodolphe or Mathieu himself, no person has worked as hard or so steadfastly to promote Mathieu's works. Within a couple of years of signing with Analekta, Lefèvre released his first recording of Mathieu, the *Concerto de Québec*, recorded with the Orchestre Symphonique de Québec under the direction of Yoav Talmi.[50] Through his work, Lefèvre became the privileged interpreter of Mathieu's music, leading to many high-profile concert engagements, including several premieres. In 2013, Lefèvre commemorated the 70th anniversary of Mathieu's second and final Carnegie Hall appearance with a reconstruction of the Piano Concerto No. 4. The piece premiered in Tucson, Arizona in 2008 and was followed by performances with orchestras in Montreal, Quebec City, Trois-Rivières, Laval, Regina, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, and Victoria.[51] In 2017 alone—the

[49] « Cette musique à la fois sophistiquée et accessible est aussi un formidable outil de prospection dans toutes les régions qui organisent des tournées. Aussi bien équipés soient-ils, les centres culturels qui ont poussé comme des champignons depuis la Révolution tranquille, ce n'est un secret pour personne, ont de la misère à "vendre" les concerts classiques. » Nicholson, *Alain Lefèvre: Portrait*, 232.

[50] Alain Lefèvre, *Concerto de Québec; Concerto de Varsovie; Concerto en fa*, Orchestre symphonique de Québec, conducted by Yoav Talmi, Analekta AN 2 9814, 2003. The album also contained Gershwin's Concerto in F and Richard Addinsell's *Warsaw Concerto*. As written in the notes, "Each concerto is linked to or associated with a different city—Quebec, Warsaw, and New York—but all three are united by their romantic fervor, audience appeal, and use in film scores."

[51] Nathalie Petrowski, "Faire revivre André Mathieu à Carnegie Hall," *La Presse*, 10 December 2013; Marie-Josée Montminy, "Alain Lefèvre au Carnegie Hall: Gilles Bellemare a pris part au projet," *Le Nouvelliste*, 10 December 2013.

150th anniversary year of Canadian confederation and the 375th anniversary of the founding of Montreal—Lefèvre has had several Mathieu-related engagements across the country. For the Canada 150 Mosaic celebrations organized by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Lefèvre performed the *Rhapsodie Romantique* in the opening concert. It was Mathieu's Toronto premiere: "To tell you the truth, it's surprising…I'm moved, it's emotional for me. I've been defending Mathieu for the past 35 years. Of course, there's a little part of myself that does not understand why I have to wait until 2017 to play Mathieu in Toronto."[52] In May 2017, Lefèvre was a judge for the piano edition of the Concours musical international de Montréal (CMIM), and Mathieu's *Laurentienne No. 2* (1946) was the compulsory Canadian work for the quarter-finalists, a work he reintroduced to Québécois audiences in a 2005 recording.[53] In April 2017, Lefèvre gave the Canadian premiere of a new orchestration of the Piano Concerto No. 3 by Québécois conductor Jacques Marchand with the Orchestre symphonique régional de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue, a reconstruction based on recently authenticated scores from the 1940s.[54]

Lefèvre's extensive discography of Mathieu's compositions is released exclusively on Analekta, including *Hommage à André Mathieu*, solo piano works by Mathieu (2005); *Rhapsodies: Mathieu, Rachmaninov, Gershwin* with the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal under Matthias Bamert (2006); *Concerto No. 4* with the Tucson Symphony Orchestra under George Hanson (2008); *Franck, Lekeu – sonatas / Mathieu – Ballade fantasie* for violin and

[52] Nicholas Godsoe, "Alain Lefèvre on the Eve of a Canadian Legacy," *Musical Toronto*, 20 January 2017; Arthur Kaptainis, "TSO Drops a Quarter into the Canadian Jukebox for Launch of Canada Mosaic," *Musical Toronto*, 22 January 2017.
[53] Frédéric Trudel, "Alain Lefèvre: André Mathieu toujours présent," *ICI Musique (CBC/Radio-Canada)*, 1 May 2017. « Composée en 1946 par un jeune homme de 17 ans, cette œuvre colorée et virtuose devrait procurer beaucoup de plaisir aux demi-finalistes et au public…Et sans doute aussi à Alain Lefèvre, qui figure parmi les membres du jury du concours. »
[54] Émilie Parent-Bouchard, "Première canadienne du Concerto no 3 d'André Mathieu en Abitibi-Témiscamingue," *CBC/Radio-Canada*, 25 April 2017; "Jacques Marchand revisite les partitions d'André Mathieu," *CBC/Radio-Canada*, 5 March 2015.

piano with his brother David Lefèvre (2009); *Mathieu, Shostakovich, Mendelssohn: Concertino & Concertos* with Mathieu's Concertino No. 2, Op. 13 (2009); *L'Enfant Prodige,* soundtrack to the biopic of the same name with re-rereleases of recordings; and the new arrangement by Marchand of the Piano Concerto No. 3 with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra under JoAnne Falletta to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the work's composition (2017).[55] Although the series is one of the most commercially successful of its kind in Canada, the prevalence of American orchestras on the records highlights the difficulty Lefèvre initially experienced persuading major Canadian orchestras to perform Mathieu.

Although Alan Lefèvre is the public face of the revival, he has worked with an extensive list of collaborators, most notably composer and conductor Gilles Bellemare (b. 1952). Until Bellemare's intervention, many of Mathieu's mature works were unplayable, existing as incomplete sketches, recorded improvisations, or piano reductions; Bellemare orchestrated *Rhapsodie Romantique* for piano and orchestra and *Les Quatre Chansons* for choir and orchestra, transcribed and orchestrated Concertino No. 2 for piano and orchestra, transcribed and edited the Trio for violin, cello, and piano, as well as the Quintet for piano and string quartet. Lefèvre helped Bellemare edit the piano parts; in the case of the 2003 version of the *Concerto de Québec*, Lefèvre has admitted to making hundreds of corrections to the piano part.[56] The Piano Concerto No. 4 is the most extensively reconstructed work. After a concert, Mathieu's ex-lover Denyse White entrusted sketches for the piece to Lefèvre in a number of plastic bags. Using these along with wax recordings of Mathieu's improvisations, Bellemare constructed the score for the Fourth

[55] Alain Lefèvre, "Discography," http://alainlefevre.com/en/discographie.php (accessed 28 July 2017). This list does not include the re-releases of the works in atmospheric compilations by Analekta.
[56] Achille Michaud, "André Mathieu, ce musicien oublié," *Ici Musique (CBC/Radio-Canada)*, 5 December 2003. « Ça a été treize mois de ma vie. J'ai fait au-delà de 700 corrections parce que tout avait été mal fait. C'est vrai, on voit dans l'écriture que tout va vite dans sa tête. Il est génial, alors il ne prend pas le temps de finir. Il y a des choses, des histoires extraordinaires. Par exemple, à un moment donné, il y a des partitions d'orchestre qui sont à la place des partitions de piano. »

Concerto, with the *Rhapsodie Romantique* serving as the second movement.[57] Bellemare's scores are published by his own firm, Les Éditions Orchestra Bella. In interviews, neither musician has attempted to conceal the amount of labour each has invested in the rehabilitation; however, criticisms of the methods behind the rehabilitation and of Mathieu himself are not received well by Lefèvre, who once claimed, "André Mathieu is being killed by his own people, 50 years after his death."[58] It remains to be seen how such criticisms could hurt anything but Lefèvre's own endeavors.

However, the project has been received with general enthusiasm by Québécois audiences, with Lefèvre's 2003 recording of the *Concerto de Québec* remaining on the Top 5 and Top 10 Canadian Classical bestselling records list for over 69 weeks after its release.[59] Lefèvre justifies his fascination with Mathieu with the following testimony on his website, quoted at length:

> I opened the door and plunged into André Mathieu's world—I wasn't looking for him but he found me.…Our encounter, I believe, was ruled by fate. Sadly, I was much too late for this meeting, about ten years too late. André Mathieu was already on the other side of the mirror when, through a closed studio door at Collège Marguerite Bourgeois where a piano teacher was working, I heard for the first time his *Prélude romantique*, a striking work with a strange and melancholy beauty. Overwhelmed, I opened the studio door to find out who the composer was. I was told, "André Mathieu." I was fifteen years old and I knew then that, since I had missed our first meeting, I would never miss another one. From then on, André Mathieu was part of my musical memory. I would respond to his call, his distress and his wounds—those which leave a print on the tragic destinies of

[57] Petrowski, "Faire revivre André Mathieu à Carnegie Hall," *La Presse*, 10 December 2013; Gilles Bellemare, "André Mathieu Collection," Les Éditions Orchestra Bella, http://orchestrabella.com/andre_an.html (accessed 28 July 2017).

Alain Lefèvre asked Bellemare to reconstruct the Concerto. "For the first movement, three recordings of different lengths were used to create the final score. After the main opening theme, Mathieu demonstrated various possibilities for linking other secondary themes with varying degrees of contrast. The result here reflects the choices most frequently made by Mathieu.…For the third movement, we possess Mathieu's only hand-written manuscript, a few pages on four staves, two for the piano and two for an orchestral reduction. The manuscript sketches out the first minute of the music for the third movement. Once again, Mathieu also offered various versions of the movement in the recordings that he made shortly before his death." André Mathieu, *Quatrième concerto pour piano et orchestre: Reconstitution et orchestration de Gilles Bellemare* (Trois-Rivières: Les Éditions Orchestra Bella, 2008).

[58] Daniel Coté, "'André Mathieu se fait assassiner 50 ans après sa mort,'" *Le Quotidien*, 9 September 2010.

[59] Lefèvre, "Discography."

> rejected geniuses, left to their sad fate and who sink into a sea of bitterness, where they are neither understood nor supported.[60]

The intensity of Lefèvre's rhetoric reveals his reverence for the composer as well as the urgency with which he pursues the project. Lefèvre's work is an act of restorative justice; by reintroducing Mathieu to the Québécois canon and repairing his posthumous legacy, Lefèvre and his colleagues are amending the perceived wrongs Mathieu endured in the latter half of his life in addition to his earlier posthumous reception.

Romanticising Mathieu: Myth, Movie, Memorial

Both substantial twentieth-century revivals of Mathieu's music were justified in nationalist terms; whereas the 1976 Olympic revival tended to efface the composer as a nameless participant in a phenomenon larger than himself, Lefèvre's efforts place Mathieu himself at the forefront. By necessity, his revival involves revisiting Mathieu's biography; the rehabilitation reframes the composer as a tragic victim of fate and Lefèvre's mediation directly feeds the romantic myths surrounding Mathieu. As indicated on Lefèvre's website, he "entrusted Georges Nicholson with the mission of writing about André Mathieu's life."[61] In an interview with the author published in the front of the resulting book, Lefèvre states, "It was very important for me that this biography be honest. It had also to be written by someone who knows the History of Quebec, who understands the music and the musical milieu of the time, and who understands the music of the 20th century."[62]

[60] Alain Lefèvre, "André Mathieu," http://www.alainlefevre.com/en/andreMathieu.php (accessed 7 December 2015).
[61] Lefèvre, "Discography."
[62] « Je me suis senti aussitôt beaucoup plus fort parce que c'était très important pour moi que cette biographie soit honnête. Il fallait aussi qu'elle soit écrite par quelqu'un qui connaisse l'Histoire du Québec, qui connaisse la musique et le milieu musical de l'époque et qui comprenne les musiques du 20e siècle. » Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 31–32.

From 2006 to 2010, music biographer Nicholson researched and wrote *André Mathieu: biographie*, published by les Éditions Québec Amérique. The mandate of Québec Amérique is to create a national body of literature while "maintaining a rigorous and consistent editorial policy."[63] Nonetheless, the book deserves scrutiny for its lack of impartiality, in both its conception and execution. Considering the stakes for Lefèvre, who authorised the book to support his other Mathieu projects, objectivity will always remain an issue with the biography. The final result is methodologically suspect as well; as Trottier notes in his review, Nicholson depends on three types of evidence: existing literature, archives, and testimony from those who knew Mathieu. Nicholson's account did not uncover anything about the music itself that had not been previously published in Marie-Thérèse Lefebvre's much more succinct *André Mathieu: pianiste et compositeur québécois (1929–1968)* from 2006. Although the book draws on an impressive body of research, the increased length of Nicholson's biography is due to the nine appendices, testimonies, and extended stretches of psychoanalysis. The testimonial evidence from those who knew Mathieu personally is problematic for Trottier, who states, "many of these stories were influenced by the mythical aura that surrounds Mathieu's heritage. The duty of memory is not the duty of the historian!"[64]

Nicholson's main intent was to discover the truth underneath the slander that had tarnished Mathieu's reputation. As he writes in the foreword of the biography,

> To step back in time and rediscover the true face of the composer-pianist, it was necessary to lift layers of legends, understand and verify the rumours, separate the facts from the unfounded claims, and, finally, discover a truth even more fascinating and tragic than all of the fabrications under which it had been buried.…Most of those witnesses who were still alive had ended up incorporating

[63] « Depuis maintenant 40 ans, Québec Amérique s'applique à soutenir et à enrichir une littérature nationale, tout en maintenant une politique éditoriale rigoureuse et cohérente. » "Historique," Québec Amérique, https://www.quebec-amerique.com/historique/ (accessed 24 July 2017).

[64] « Beaucoup de ces témoignages ont été influencés par l'auréole mythique qui ceinture son héritage. Les devoirs de mémoire ne sont pas les devoirs de l'historien ! » Trottier, "André Mathieu: Encore bien des questions…" 130.

> this exciting petty gossip that stimulates certain types of imagination at the detriment of the truth.[65]

However, the negative aspects of Mathieu's reception are met with an equal and opposite reaction from Nicholson. The biographer reifies Mathieu by emphasizing his achievements and understating his failures—or dismissing them outright. The starkest example of this is in the account of the Pianothons, where Nicholson maintains Mathieu's aura as a tragic genius by framing the concerts as bids for independence from his parents, who were overbearing to a fault. Throughout the book, Nicholson fails to maintain a position of neutrality, favouring positive concert reviews while taking issue with critics who he feels unfairly criticized Mathieu. Though he maintains a careful balance given the precedent of gossip and innuendo in Mathieu's reception, Nicholson often speculates about circumstantial events, suggesting alternatives to known facts or finding alternate explanations for Mathieu's failures, often placing blame on malicious actors who were jealous of the composer.[66] Quebec society as a whole is characterized

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[65] « Pour remonter dans le temps et retrouver le vrai visage du compositeur-pianiste, il a fallu soulever des couches de légendes, entendre et vérifier les rumeurs, séparer les faites des affirmations sans fondement et, finalement, découvrir une vérité encore plus passionnante et tragique que toutes les affabulations sous laquelles on l'avait enseveli....La plupart des témoins de sa vie encore vivants avaient fini par incorporer ces ragots de bas-étage si excitants, qui stimulent certains types d'imagination au détriment de la vérité, toujours. » Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 11.

[66] Dahlhaus highlights the tensions of the musical biography in *Foundations of Music History*, stating that the genre is limited as a quasi-positivistic method, a "conflation of the Romantic aesthetic of expression and an urge to locate tangible facts as a sort of surety for the scientific quality of history." The biographical method of music history often has little to do with art itself. According to Dahlhaus, "music history fails either as *history* by being a collection of structural analyses of separate works, or as a history of *art* by reverting from musical works to occurrences in social or intellectual history cobbled together in order to impart cohesion to an historical narrative."

Nicholson's history fails on both accounts. In the former instance, it fails as history because of its inadequate contextualization of Mathieu in his cultural milieu, thus sacrificing the continuity of a chain of cause and effect outside of Mathieu's own psyche. In the second instance the biography fails as a history of art for its lack of musical analyses; in Nicholson's story, the music itself takes the backseat to its production and works become entries in a timeline. For all of his extensive writings, Mathieu is not portrayed as an intellectual in the execution; the biography reads like a novel. As Trottier notes, the biography was written for the target audience of Alain Lefèvre's fans; the most damning evidence of this is the interview with Lefèvre he inserted between the *Avant-Propos* and the first chapter of the book. Carl Dahlhaus, *Foundations of Music History*, trans. J. B. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 19–33; Trottier, "André Mathieu: Encore bien des questions…" 131.

Danick Trottier raises certain ethical concerns with the biographical method in relation to Mathieu. Though Nicholson places Mathieu in a social context in *André Mathieu: biographie*, he fails to account for how such contexts influenced Mathieu, thus separating the individual from the social and elevating his achievements: "One

as too immature for his prodigious gifts to fully develop and the false start of Mathieu's career is not principally attributed to a personal dimension, but rather the outbreak of WWII and the underdeveloped French Canadian music scene to which he had to return. The infantilizing account effectively removes agency from Mathieu, casting him as the victim in a melodrama—forever the fallen child prodigy who, given the right conditions to flourish, could have enjoyed every success.

It is vital in Lefèvre and Nicholson's account that Mathieu composed all of the music himself, even with the extensive editing of Mathieu's later works in addition to the concerns about authenticity that circulated during Mathieu's life. Moreover, criticisms of the music itself are not taken kindly. As Lefèvre states, "What deeply disgusted me during this Mathieu adventure, is the dishonest bias of certain people who said this was backward-looking music, simple, tacky, or badly composed. It's not true!" According to Lefèvre, such criticisms are leveled against Mathieu's music because he was Québécois, and against Lefèvre's interpretations specifically because they were jealous of his success. "The same people who criticized Mathieu's work seemed to be angry with me because I was trying to pay tribute to him and I was successful."[67]

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cannot simply use a biographical approach that takes stock of the environment in which he evolved; this results in the isolation of the musician and the exemplification of genius. This is particularly the case with Mathieu when considering his musical trajectory as described by his supporters, who often completely omit discussion of the social conditions and constraints under which his career emerged, rose, and declined." Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 669. Trottier cites German sociologist Norbert Elias's book *Mozart: Portrait of a Genius* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993) as a successful epistemological model for dealing with this issue for the way it combines biographical, historical, and sociological information. Its original German title, *Mozart: Zur Soziologie eines Genies* (*Mozart: The Sociology of Genius*) perhaps better captures the aim of the scholarship.

[67] « Ce qui m'a profondément dégoûté dans tout l'aventure Mathieu, c'est le parti pris très malhonnête de certaines personnes qui on dit que c'était de la musique passéiste, facile, quétaine ou mal composée. Ce n'est pas vrai!…En fait...Mathieu était uniquement critiqué parce qu'il était Québécois. Parallèlement, ces mêmes personnes qui critiquaient l'œuvre de Mathieu semblaient m'en vouloir parce que je tentais de lui rendre hommage et que j'avais du succès. » Nicholson, *André Mathieu: biographie*, 29.

Without doubting the sincerity of the creators—indeed, for Lefèvre and his colleagues, the revival is a labour of love—it is, however, important to note certain methodological concerns with the revival since Mathieu's romantic mythology is now inextricably mixed with Lefèvre's own personal mythology. For years Lefèvre was the sole public ambassador of Mathieu's music, and he not only edited and recorded almost all of his works for piano but he effected control over the narrative as well. Lefèvre also entrusted Nicholson with writing his own biography, *Alain Lefèvre: Portrait* (2012), a flattering mid-career likeness.[68] Lefèvre's involvement in the 2010 biopic by Luc Dionne, *L'enfant prodige, l'incroyable destinée d'André Mathieu* as the musical director, composer, and pianist, allowed him to position his interpretations of Mathieu next to his own incidental compositions for the film, rendering them virtually indistinguishable from one another.

The ultimate canonization of Mathieu is *André Mathieu – Le Concerto de Québec*, a statue of the composer unveiled in front of l'Appartement Hôtel at 455 Sherbrooke Street West in Montreal in May 2015. The sculpture, created by brother and sister team Céline and Jean-Guy White, features a youthful bust of Mathieu supported by instruments featured in the *Concerto de Québec*. Since Mathieu composed the piece when he was thirteen "in the springtime of his life," the Whites decided to create a garden with instruments and foliage. "The garden is in André Mathieu's own image, at the height of his fame, with wonderful opportunities stretching out before him at this stage of his life until the Second World War came to cast a tragic shadow on

[68] In the foreword, Nicolson describes his methodology: « Portrait et non biographie…Une biographie s'engage à retrouver la cohérence et la logique d'une trajectoire qu'on balise et qui s'éclaire à la lueur des événements, des choix, des gestes, des conséquences et des retombées d'une vie qui a fini sa course. Le portraitiste choisit un angle, éclaire ou estompe une courbe, détourne le regard ou jette une ombre pudique sur des événements sensibles, préserve l'anonymat de certaines personnes ou, sans trahir la vérité, glisse sur des blessures dont les cicatrices sont encore lancinantes… »

his dreams."[69] The sculpture was commissioned by the building's owner Roger Fournelle, who approached the Whites with the story of Mathieu and the *Concerto de Québec*. States Fournelle, "We had discovered that even on his tombstone there is absolutely nothing, so we wondered why we might not offer a sculpture in Montreal in tribute to André Mathieu. And we thought we could place it on Sherbrooke Street because it lies next to the McGill University faculty of music."[70] Fournelle, who became aware of Mathieu after hearing Lefèvre's recordings, installed a high-quality stereo system that plays Lefèvre's album of the *Concerto de Québec* with the Orchestre symphonique de Québec on loop. At the unveiling ceremony, Lefèvre played the version for solo piano.

As Trottier states, Lefèvre's goal with this project "was to create an enduring record of Mathieu's body of work, which would be assigned cultural significance fed by nationalism."[71] With his statue on Sherbrooke Street and other instances of patrimony, such as the Salle André-Mathieu in Laval, Mathieu has become part of the landscape and soundscape of Montréal. Alan Gordon documents the contest between English and French citizens of Montreal over public space and memorialization in *Making Public Pasts: The Contested Terrain of Montréal's Public Memories*. Public memory, he states, is needed to establish and maintain identity, and the Québécois "have long waged an open battle over the symbols, myths, and meanings of their collective past in their political rhetoric and artistic production."[72] The placement of the statue so close to McGill's Schulich School of Music, one of Canada's premier English-language musical

[69] Céline and Jean-Guy White, "André Mathieu - Le Concerto de Québec," *White et White: Artists-sculptors*, http://www.whiteetwhite.com/andre-mathieu_en.asp (accessed 30 July 2017).
[70] « On avait découvert que même sur sa pierre tombale, il n'y a absolument rien, alors on s'est demandé pourquoi on n'offrirait pas une sculpture à Montréal en hommage à André Mathieu. Et on s'est dit qu'on pourrait la placer sur la rue Sherbrooke puisqu'on est à côté de la faculté de musique de l'université McGill. » Éric Clément, "Une sculpture en hommage au compositeur André Mathieu," *La Presse*, 28 May 2015.
[71] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The Emblematic Case," 668.
[72] Alan Gordon, *Making Public Pasts: The Contested Terrain of Montréal's Public Memories* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 9.

institutions, is an act of cultural recolonization, a reclamation of territory for a francophone artist who was overlooked in the Québécois canon for years. Beyond the English/French dimension, the statue is also a statement about Mathieu's rejection in Montreal. However, the *Concerto de Québec* is a peculiar choice given the city; no doubt chosen because it is representative of Mathieu's modern romantic style and the second movement is one of Mathieu's most recognizable works from its use in *La Forteresse* (1947), the title of the work refers to Quebec City, not the province of Quebec.[73]

Stripped of their original meanings and contexts through the work of memorialization, symbols associated with Mathieu are elevated to represent the entire province of Quebec, creating new frontiers of memory and new constructions of identity for its citizens, while the sentimentality of Mathieu's music itself serves to further the nationalist aims of the rehabilitators. Once again celebrated as Quebec's child prodigy, years after his death, Mathieu has been restored to contemporary Québécois cultural consciousness as a figure worthy of reverence.

[73] The difference between the two in French is apparent with the use of the feminine article instead of the masculine: « La ville *de* Québec » vs. « La province *du* Québec. »

Conclusion: Anti-Modernism and Melancholy Nationalism

Though the revival of André Mathieu through the work of Alain Lefèvre has enjoyed critical and commercial success, it has also been met with skepticism—especially within the academic and art music communities in Quebec. Calling the media circus around Mathieu an exercise in "bad taste" and a "cult of personality," Paul Bazin argues that the quasi-canonization of Mathieu is indicative of a strain of anti-modernist thought from members of the concert-going public in Quebec.[1] Mathieu's music is appealing to *mélomanes* who favour canonical romanticism over twentieth-century musical modernism. Echoing similar concerns that were raised by the Quebec Songwriters and Composers society after André Morin announced Mathieu as the official composer for the 1976 Olympic Games, Bazin considers the enthusiasm for Mathieu instead of a living Quebec composer a reaction against the alleged present-day aesthetic hegemony of the Québécois avant-garde school of composition that developed with the serialists and post-serialists of the 1950s and '60s. By supporting the canonization of Mathieu, *mélomanes* reinforce the divide between paying audiences and new music concerts, paradoxically defending a Québécois composer at the expense of the livelihood of a living composer.

For Québécois musicians who compose and perform in a romantic idiom, however, Mathieu's music may serve as an important link between the European late-romantic tradition and a contemporary post-modern Québécois compositional milieu. Reflecting the diversity of style found in contemporary art music around the world, Quebec composers have embraced

[1] Paul Bazin, « Entendu dans *Cette ville étrange*: les conséquences néfastes d'un appareillage intermédiaire proéminent, » *Circuit: musiques contemporaines* 24, no. 1 (2014): 74. « Au cours de cette entreprise, on a creusé le filon Mathieu comme on aurait suivi une prodigieuse veine d'or pour en excaver jusqu'au dernier gramme ; on a orchestré, sous le grand chapiteau médiatique, tout un cirque où l'on s'est targué de défendre la modernité musicale alors que tout pointait en fait en direction d'un *star-system* de mauvais goût, d'un culte de la personnalité sentant fort le parfum bon marché et les drames d'enfance prémâchés à l'intention des mélomanes bien-pensants. »

romantic idioms as viable modes of expression in addition to twentieth-century avant-garde techniques. Although Lefèvre's outreach to democratize art music may be interpreted as both symptom and cause of present-day anti-modernist sentiment, as a celebration of Québécois heritage that was historically neglected, the music may also serve as a window into art music for middlebrow audiences who would otherwise be unlikely to seek out and consume less immediately accessible art music. Indeed, Lefèvre has maintained a career that balances promoting André Mathieu and other romantic composers while also premiering more avant-garde works by living composers.

When evaluating his reception history, the influence of nationalism cannot be overlooked in the production and consumption of recent media about Mathieu. Danick Trottier has met each successive wave of media about Mathieu with reproof and considers Lefèvre's project as the peak of a nationalist cultural drive to monumentalize the composer.[2] As he notes, "Mathieu's posthumous reception has targeted a specific objective—to exemplify the musical genius of a nation, Quebec, while seeking to make amends, in some way, for the rejection that he endured in the 1950s and 1960s."[3] For him, part of the problem with Mathieu's current reception is that it fails to account for problems with Mathieu's reception when he was alive. Historically, creative precocity in musical composition has been recognized retrospectively (such as Beethoven, Schubert, and Mendelssohn). However,

> in Mathieu's case, this value was proclaimed during his childhood because of its association with instrumental precocity, as it was with Mozart. This happened in such a way that the body of work was acknowledged as soon as it was received by the public, partly because of the media's incessant repetition of promotional messages. This also explains why this artistic precocity is the subject of animated discussions; not only does it fail to respond to the dictates of innovation,

[2] Danick Trottier, « Monumentaliser la culture québécoise: Qu'aurait pensé Nietzsche de la canonisation d'André Mathieu? » *Le Devoir*, 29 May 2010. See also Trottier, « André Mathieu: Encore bien des questions…»
[3] Trottier, "André Mathieu (1929–1968): The emblematic case," 667.

> originality, and perfectionism of creative practices in the 20th century, but it mines the idioms and stylistic conventions of piano repertoire.[4]

Although Mathieu's past and present reception as a prodigy is peculiar, his current reception is not unique in the cultural history of Quebec. Recently, there has been interest in artistic works of all forms from before Quebec's alleged cultural maturity, attained after the Quiet Revolution. This cultural reckoning—the counterpoint between the marginalized Québécois culture of that period and the neo-Imperialism of English-speaking North America, as well as between an underdeveloped Quebec of the past and its current incarnation—is sustained by a narrative of a pre-Quiet Revolution Quebec society that was too immature to support French Canadian artists. The recent exhibit of the Beaver Hall Group at Montreal's Musée des Beaux Arts or the recognition of queer poet Émile Nelligan form part of this trend.[5]

The impulse behind this nationalism is to "exorcise a past that is murdering the present."[6] In *Quebec Identity: The Challenge of Pluralism*, Jocelyn Maclure describes how Québec's majority-minority cultural imagination is formed in large part by two dominant paradigms: melancholy nationalism and cosmopolitan internationalism. Melancholy nationalism is a

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[4] Ibid., 681–2.

[5] On 30 October 2015, Montréal's Trio Hochelaga performed a concert of Québécois composers with works by André Mathieu, his father Rodolphe Mathieu, and his father's student Auguste Descarries (1896–1957), entitled *Mathieu, père et fils*. The concert was presented in Salle Bourgie in connection with the Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal's exposition *Colours of Jazz, 1920s Modernism in Montréal: The Beaver Hall Group*. This was the first major exhibition of the Beaver Hall Group, a group of Montréal painters who were neglected in the shadow of Tom Thompson and the Ontario-based Group of Seven.

In addition to Mathieu's rarely-performed trio, the concert featured the world-premiere of Descarries' unfinished *Quatuor pour violon, alto, violoncelle et piano*, completed by Aleksey Shegolev. However, since Trio Hochelaga's pianist Charles Richard-Hamelin had just recently returned from competing in the 17th International Fryderyk Chopin Competition, where he was awarded the Silver Medal, Rodolphe Mathieu's piece was replaced by *Sonate-Idylle en sol majeiur* by French composer Nicolaï Madtner (1880–1951), performed by pianist Paul Stewart.

[6] Jocelyn Maclure, *Quebec Identity: The Challenge of Pluralism*, trans. Peter Feldstein (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003), 21.

Émile Nelligan (1879–1941) has a tragic biography that mimics Mathieu's own. A prodigious poet who composed his entire oeuvre between the age of 16 and 19, Nelligan was institutionalized in 1899 until his death decades later. Nelligan's mother and friend Louis Dantin published his collected works before his death, but critical editions only appeared after his death. Similar to Mathieu, much of Nelligan's posthumous reception echoes the rhetoric of wasted potential. See Jacques Michon, *Emile Nelligan: les racines du rêve* (Montréal: Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1983).

collection of theories by Fernand Dumont, Pierre Vallières, Hubert Aquin, and other French-Canadian thinkers that try to account for the sorrowful, childlike, and resigned aspects of Québécois identity. Cosmopolitan internationalism is a more recent school of thought that accounts for an experience of dual or various belonging. Though there are certainly many thinkers outside of this nationalism–internationalism dichotomy—especially in a time of increasing pluralism in Quebec, as intensified by a growing generational gap from changing demographics, and where inclusion depends on citizenship rather than shared ethnicity, culture, or language[7]—the paradigm of melancholy nationalism provides one model for understanding the curious reception of André Mathieu.

As Maclure states, "There exists in Quebec a whole discourse about the fragility, the precariousness, the tragic existence, the fatigue, the modesty, the phillistinism [sic], the mediocrity, the immaturity, and the indecision of the Québécois people."[8] For generations, Québécois intellectuals have tried to reckon with this latent feeling of grief, searching for its unidentifiable source.[9] With this perspective, it is possible to understand how André Mathieu was forgotten in Québec's cultural memory until recently. Alain Lefèvre's rhetoric of melancholy nationalism works on two levels regarding André Mathieu; on the one hand there is a kind of cultural nativism, an impulse to rescue one's own past; on the other hand, Mathieu is an eminently rescuable figure, with regards to his ignominious biography. This rescue narrative

[7] "Québec is increasingly being told as a dissensual, plural community of conversation in which different narratives tolerate, hybridize, and intermingle with one another, without thereby being tagged as inauthentic." Maclure, *Quebec Identity: The Challenge of Pluralism*, 20.
[8] Ibid., 19.
[9] Ibid., 20. In Maclure's words, melancholy nationalists have searched for the source in many shameful historical moments. "The causes of our mourning are variously asserted to be the defeat on the Plains of Abraham and the British Conquest, the abandonment of New France by the motherland, the conqueror's domination and the persistent threats of assimilation (of which the Durham Report was the most glaring manifestation), the repeated failures to refound the country (1837–38, 1980, 1995), the constitutional "humiliation" of Quebec (unilateral repatriation of the Constitution in 1982, failure of Meech Lake in 1990), U.S. economic and cultural neo-imperialism, and the North American and global hegemony of the English language."

forms a large part of Alain Lefèvre's rhetoric around Mathieu. As he states in the interview published in *André Mathieu: biographie*, "For me, Mathieu is the possibility of an unbridled romanticism, a powerful romanticism, and an immaculate romanticism, that of the whiteness of the snow of Quebec, this white wind of Quebec, and the naiveté of a people who were humiliated."[10]

There is a spectre haunting the Québécois people; as Maclure states, this "trauma is repeated (unconsciously) in every cowardly act of the community, in every missed rendezvous with History; and this phenomenon explains Québec's difficulties in coming to maturity, its arrested development."[11] The Québécois melancholy nationalist narrative is unique in that it rests on the certainty of the abnormality of Quebec's condition, both past and present, due to its distinct colonial history. Moreover, "the thorough repression of an overtly painful past and the internalization of the infantilizing gaze of the Other are said to be the source of a perpetually juvenile, inhibited, fatigued Québécois identity, an identity with which its holders have not really come to terms."[12] Despite the affirmation of Québécois identity with the Quiet Revolution, for

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[10] Nicholson, *André Mathieu*, 32. « Pour moi Mahieu c'était la possibilité d'un romantisme effréné, d'un romantisme puissant et d'un romantisme immaculé, celui de la blancheur de la neige du Québec, ce blanc du vent du Québec et de la naïveté d'un peuple qui s'est fait humilier. »

According to Ramsay Cook, in almost every part of the world during the past last half-century, there has been an "ethnic revival," where ethnic minorities have wrestled with their autonomy in an increasingly homogenous world. He cites British social philosopher Ernest Gellner in stating that nationalism is a modern phenomenon, a result of an industrializing society that has broken loyalties to religion, family, and region. It is an ideology that endeavors to preserve the uniqueness of a society, but in practice constitutes extensive social change. Therefore, nationalism is an acute paradox: "It preaches and defends continuity, but owes everything to a decisive and utterly profound break in human history." Increasingly, as Maclure emphasizes in *Quebec Identity*, such frameworks are insufficient because they are "are increasingly unable to serve as exhaustive, all-structuring frames of reference." And this phenomenon has led to self-reflection not only in weak, small, or occupied nations, in recent years, "even the great powers, such as France and the United States, once thought to be immune to adolescent soul-searching, can no longer abstain from problematizing their identity" (Maclure, 9). See Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, NY, 1983), 57, 125, quoted in Ramsay Cook, *Watching Quebec: Selected Essays* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 31–32.

[11] Maclure, *Quebec Identity: The Challenge of Pluralism*, 20. This drive towards cultural maturity is paradoxically sustained by a narrative predicated on an unbroken cycle of immaturity.

[12] Ibid. Leading melancholy nationalist sociologist, Fernand Dumont explores the consequences of the 1760 English Conquest of New France on what he called the "Québécois collective unconscious." Québécois identity is "indecisive, ailing, flirting more or less consciously and intensely with the conditions of its own ruin." For Dumont,

Dumont and other melancholy nationalists, the situation has not changed in the present. With "'the persistence of our mental colonization, our exile in representations that are not really ours,' we are still characterized by flight from the past in the compensatory work of dreaming and utopia."[13] Thus, to escape this mental colonization, Québec must reconcile itself with its often inglorious past, a "history strewn with pitfalls and defeats."[14]

There is no such reconciliation in the revival of Mathieu by Lefèvre and his colleagues, who obscure the image of the composer, framing him as a tragic victim while revising his music, which previously did not exist in such a complete form. This revisionism presents an ahistorical image of the composer, augmenting many of the myths that elevated Mathieu during his life. The ironic thing about receiving Mathieu as a genius in a romantic sense is that his legacy is and has always been completely mediated by those in Quebec who derived significance from his precocity, often couched in racial terms. As the province's first child prodigy to achieve some level of international success, Mathieu was elevated in Quebec beyond what he was capable of realizing during his lifetime; it was only after his death that his supporters were able to "correct" the mistake of his tragic life.

André Mathieu's history is as much the saga of the work of the people who brought him to his current prominence as it is an account of his own feats. For Québécois audiences and performers who realize his works, Mathieu represents the possibility of a Canadian late-romantic tradition as well as the manifestation of musical prodigy from within the borders of Quebec.

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the birth of French Canadian society is an "abortion," a "failure," an "interruption," or a "trauma," based upon the European dream of a New France. There is a deep feeling of inferiority ingrained on Québécois consciousness: "No doubt we had appropriated the gaze that the conqueror directed at us, which oscillated between pity for our backwardness and tenderness for our folkloric ways." See Fernand Dumont, *Le sort de la culture* (Montréal: L'Hexagone, 1987) and Fernand Dumont, *Récit d'une émigration* (Montréal: Boréal, 1997), quoted in Maclure, *Quebec Identity: The Challenge of Pluralism,* 42.

[13] Dumont, *Le sort de la culture*, 242, quoted in Maclure, 43.

[14] Maclure, *Quebec Identity: The Challenge of Pluralism,* 20.

Using a biographical approach in an effort to redress some of the historical and personal circumstances that tarnished Mathieu's image, recent actors maintain the image of Mathieu as an "Eternal Child." Though Lefèvre's intervention into the myth of Mathieu has privileged himself over any other actor, Mathieu has been restored in Québécois cultural consciousness and his music has begun to proliferate independently of Lefèvre.[15] Yet, the story of Mathieu is intriguing not only historiographically in terms of his discontinuous reception and the nationalist impulses behind his canonization; Mathieu's revival highlights the singularity of a type of present-day Québécois nationalism that honours Quebec's cultural heritage with romantic, and often revisionist, acts. Using the case study of Mathieu with regards to Quebec's distinct national media sphere—which has created a flourishing market for art music, the likes of which are relatively unknown in the rest of Canada—we may enhance our understanding of a kind of performative musical nationalism. Contrary to prevailing understandings of musical nationalism in art music that are largely based on national signifiers in the music itself, this nationalism is demonstrated solely through the posthumous revision and realization of works, publication of scores and books, release of films and records, and the dedication of monuments. Mathieu's twenty-first century reception is an example of how the incessant need to understand and honour one's own heritage can become a self-sustaining culture unto itself. Further, we can witness the phenomenon of a modern reception supplanting the historical record unambiguously and in real time.

[15] Recent records include Jean-Michel Dube's *André Mathieu: L'oeuvre complète pour piano solo* (Music Hall, 2016) and Jean-Philippe Sylvestre, *Mathieu: Concerto de Québec; Rachmaninov: Concerto pour piano n^{o} 2* (ATMA, 2017). See Appendix I for complete discography of Mathieu's works.

Appendix I: Discography (Organized by Soloist)

Dubé, Jean-Michel. *André Mathieu: L'oeuvre complète pour piano solo*. Music Hall SMD2771, 2016.

Dubeau, Angèle and Louise-Andrée Baril. *Opus Québec*. Analekta Fl23150, 1999.

Entremont, Philippe. *André Mathieu (1929–1968): Symphonie romantique for piano and orchestra (Concerto de Québec)*. Orchestre du Capitole de Toulouse, conducted by Michel Plasson. Analekta AN 2 9803, 1995.

Lefèvre, Alain. *André Mathieu: Concerto No. 3*. Buffalo Symphony Orchestra, conducted by JoAnn Falletta. Analekta, 2017 (forthcoming).

———. *André Mathieu: Concerto No. 4; Oeuvres pour orchestre*. Tucson Symphony Orchestra, conducted by George Hanson. Analekta AN 2 9281, 2008.

———. *César Franck, Guillaume Lekeu - Sonates; André Mathieu - Ballade-Fantaisie.* David Lefèvre, violin. Analekta AN 2 9282, 2009.

———. *Concerto de Québec; Concerto de Varsovie; Concerto en fa*. Orchestre symphonique de Québec, conducted by Yoav Talmi. Analekta AN 2 9814, 2003.

———. *L'enfant prodige: L'incroyable destinée d'André Mathieu*. Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, London Mozart Players, Tucson Symphony Orchestra, and Orchestre symphonique de Québec. Analekta AN 2 9284-5, 2010.

———. *Hommage à André Mathieu: oeuvres pour piano seul*. Analekta AN 2 9275, 2005.

———. *Mathieu, Chostakovitch, Mendelssohn: Concertino et Concertos.* London Mozart Players, conducted by Matthias Bamert. Analekta AN 2 9283, 2009.

———. *Mathieu, Trio & Quintette; Chausson, Concert*. David Lefèvre and Quatuor Alcan. Analekta AN 2 9286, 2011.

———. *Rhapsodies: Mathieu, Rachmaninov, Gershwin*. Orchestra symphonique de Montréal, conducted by Matthias Bamert. Analekta AN 2 9277, 2006.

Mathieu, André. *André Mathieu joue André Mathieu (la collection privée de Georges Nicholson)*. Fidelio FACD700, 2010. Recorded 1933–1942.

Simard, René, Claude Lacombe, and Vic Vogel. *Bienvenue à Montréal*. Nobel NL-5713, 1975.

Sylvestre, Jean-Philippe. *Mathieu: Concerto de Québec; Rachmaninov: Concerto pour piano n^{o} 2*. Orchestre Métropolitain, conducted by Alain Trudel. ATMA ACD2 2763, 2017.

Appendix II: André Mathieu, interview with Andréanne Lafond, 2 February 1968.

A.L.	Mais...Quelle est la réaction d'un enfant quand les adultes lui disent que c'est un petit génie...quelle a été votre réaction ?	But...what is the reaction of a child when adults tell him that he is a little genius...what was your reaction?
A.M.	Je n'aime pas l'expression « petit génie »	I do not like the expression "little genius"
A.L.	Grand génie !	Big genius!
A.M.	J'aime mieux... Je ne suis pas prétentieux, mais je sais exactement ce que je veux, pas plus, mais pas moins... Pour moi c'était surtout le plaisir de jouer du piano... Du moment que je commence à jouer, je ne sais plus qu'il y a du public... Là, c'est fini, je suis tout seul avec ma musique, avec mon art. Et c'est ça qui compte. J'ai trente-cinq ans.* Je m'aperçois que je n'en ai plus quinze ou vingt...Et ça m'a manqué, ça m'a manqué de jouer avec les autres...Mais j'ai eu un si bon père, qui était tellement compréhensif...je l'ai déjà dit ici, à la télévision de Radio-Canada, quand j'ai perdu mon père, je lui ai fermé les yeux, j'ai perdu mon meilleur ami. Ça, je tiens à vous le dire.	I like that better... I'm not pretentious, but I know exactly what I want, no more, no less...For me it was above all the pleasure of playing the piano... From the moment I start playing, I am no longer aware of the audience... There, that's it, I'm alone with my music, with my art. And that's what counts. I am thirty-five years old.[1] I realize that I do not have more than fifteen, twenty...And I missed, missed playing with others...But I had such a good father, who was so understanding...I have already said on CBC/Radio-Canada television, when I lost my father, I closed his eyes, I lost my best friend. That, I make a point of telling you.
A.L.	L'adolescent, comment a-t-il pris la célébrité ?	The teenager, how did he take fame?
A.M.	Je l'ai accueillie comme on accueille un invité, quelqu'un qui vous est sympathique en tout cas.	I welcomed it as one might welcome an invited guest, someone who is nice to you anyway.
A.L.	Alors il y a eu cette éclipse, puis on vous a retrouvé dans un fameux pianothon, en 1959. Pourquoi avez-vous fait le pianothon ?	Then there was this break, and we rediscovered you in a famous pianothon in 1959. Why did you do this pianothon?
A.M	C'était un pari. C'était une expérience que je tentais. Je n'ai pas joué une note d'un autre compositeur, je n'ai pas cessé de jouer une seconde pendant 96 heures.* J'ai joué simplement toutes mes compositions à cette époque et j'ai improvisé par la suite.	It was a gamble. It was an experiment I was attempting. I didn't play a note by another composer, I didn't stop playing for 96 hours.[2] I simply played all of the compositions I had at the time and I improvised after that.

[1] He is actually 38 years old at the time of the interview.
[2] The pianothon only lasted 21 hours.

A.L.	Comment ça s'est passé ces 96 heures ? C'est dur !	How did you play for 96 hours? That's hard!
A.M.	Comme je vous le disais tout à l'heure, Andréanne, j'ai joué ma peau, et je l'ai sauvée, heureusement.	As I said earlier, Andréanne, I played to save my skin, and I saved it, thankfully.
A.L.	...96 heures sans dormir...	...96 hours without sleeping...
A.M.	Et sans arrêter.	And without stopping.
A.L.	Vous avez mangé quand même ?	You ate nonetheless?
A.M.	Non, c'était du pablum dans du jus d'orange, et je n'ai mangé rien de solide. Mais c'est tout de même une éxperience extraordinaire.	No, I had Pablum in orange juice and I never ate anything solid. But it still was an extraordinary experience.
A.L.	Mais André Mathieu, pour revenir à vos éclipses, certaines ont dit que vous étiez malade, il y en a d'autres qui ont dit que vous étiez retirés dans un tour d'ivoire, il y en a d'autres qui ont dit que vous buviez trop...	But André Mathieu, to go back to your breaks, some have said you were sick, others who said you had retired to an ivory tower, there are others who say that you drink too much...
A.M.	Je ne bois plus que Jacques Normand !	I don't drink any more than Jacques Normand!
A.L.	Alors tout ce que les gens ont dit, ce n'était pas vrai. Simplement, vous vous étiez retiré volontairement.	Then everything that people said was not true. Simply, you were retired voluntarily.
A.M.	Complètement faux ! Je me suis retiré volontairement.	Completely false! I retired myself voluntarily.
A.L.	Mais vous enseigniez ?	But you teach?
A.M.	Oui, j'ai 17 élèves à l'heure actuelle.	Yes, I currently have 17 students.[3]
A.L.	Alors, vous avez l'impression de repartir?	So you feel like you're making a comeback?
A.M.	Une deuxième carrière. À 35 ans, je pense que je suis encore assez jeune.	A second career. At 35, I think I'm still young enough.
A.L.	Est-ce que ça vous a gêné d'être un enfant prodige. Est-ce que ça gêne l'adulte?	Did it bother you as a child to be called a child prodigy. Does it bother you as an adult?
A.M.	Je vais vous dire un chose, Andréanne, j'ai cessé d'être un enfant mais je n'ai pas cessé...Ha la, la, je vais me vanter...Mais je pense que les auditeurs auront compris...	I would like to tell you one thing, Andréanne, I have stopped being a child but I have not stopped...Ha, la, la, I'll brag...but I think the listeners will understand...
A.L.	Vous voulez dire que vous n'avez pas cessé d'être un génie?	You mean to say that you haven't ceased to be a genius?
A.M.	Génie, c'est un grand mot...	Genius, that's a big word...
A.L.	On l'a dit de vous...	It was used to describe you...

[3] An embellishment.

A.M.	Oui!...[longue pause]...C'est une longue patience	Yes...[long pause]...You have a lot of patience
A.L.	Vous travaillez toujours beaucoup ?	You are still working hard?
A.M.	Oui, toujours.	Yes, always.
A.L.	Vous pratiquez toujours beaucoup ?	You are still practicing hard?
A.M.	Toujours !	Always!

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