The Major Influences on the Emergence of the French School of Flute Playing

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements For the degree of Master of Music in Music, Performance

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ABSTRACT

The major influences on the emergence of
The French School of flute playing

By

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Master of Music in Music, Performance

The French School of flute playing, characterized by an emphasis on a wide spectrum of tone colors that were both unique and euphonious, had its genesis in Paris in the 1860s, and it matured during the following decades of the 19th century. One seminal influence was the development of the Boehm-style flute system, which Theobald Boehm first demonstrated in Paris in 1833. The improved sonority was acclaimed by all who heard it, but universal acceptance of the flute was not immediate. One reason for this was that established professional flutists were not willing to take the time needed to learn the new ring-key and rod fingering system that Boehm had devised. In 1847 Boehm introduced a revision with a cylindrical bore as opposed to the original conical bore. In 1855 Boehm began the production of silver flutes for the first time, and by the 1860s, most flutists were playing on the new flute. The 1860s also saw the rise to prominence of the great flute virtuoso Paul Taffanel. Taffanel played in the orchestra for the Paris Opera and he also was instrumental in establishing various chamber groups with other top musicians in Paris. His recognized virtuosity and great artistry made him influential in most aspects of French musical life; later in his career he taught at the Paris Conservatory and he also became the
Principal conductor of the Paris Opera. He came to maturity just after France’s defeat to Germany in the Franco-Prussian War (1871). The French cultural focus had turned inward and Taffanel became one of the leaders of the Paris music community. The silver flute allowed Taffanel to play with a much wider range of tone colors and with an unforced brilliancy. This was the style that he taught to the next generation of French flutists. This paper proposes that it was the confluence of two moments in time that helped to establish the French School of flute playing. The first was the universal acceptance of the Boehm system flute, and the second was the artistry of Paul Taffanel as he played on that flute.
INTRODUCTION

The French School of flute playing is a style that began in the 1860s in Paris and that flourished well into the second half of the 20th century. It is distinguished from previous playing styles by its emphasis on a richer and more vivid palette of tone colors and sonorities. Its origins are found in several events and developments that occurred in the middle decades of the 19th century. Among these are the introduction, by Theobald Boehm, of his ring-key and rod system flute in Paris in 1833, his improvements to the flute in 1847, and his introduction of an all-silver model in 1855. Another seminal development was the rise to prominence of the great French virtuoso Paul Taffanel (1844-1908). Taffanel’s performances were of such a high caliber that he became a cultural celebrity in Paris and throughout much of Europe. He went on to teach and mentor many of the finest young flutists of the day, some of whom eventually came to the United States to take positions in the Boston Symphony and the New York Philharmonic, and also to take teaching posts at the New England Conservatory and at the Juilliard School. Yet another influence was France’s inward-looking nationalism after being defeated by Germany in the Franco-Prussian War (1871). Before and during this time, German and Austrian influence upon musical styles were the dominant influence in France and, indeed, throughout all of Europe. French music certainly did have some singular distinctions but, after France’s defeat, many of her finest artists and musicians shunned any German trends at all and began to develop an even more uniquely French art and musical style.

Prior to this time, the flute was largely ignored as a solo instrument, and, during the first half of the 19th century, there were very few significant compositions for solo flute. Notable among those few is Franz Schubert’s Variations on Trockne Blumen but, when these modern French composers heard the new more expressive sonorities that the Boehm flute had to offer, especially
in the hands of Paul Taffanel, they began to compose more and more solo flute literature. When Taffanel began his tenure as professor at the Paris Conservatory, he was able to commission new works by such masters as Camille Saint-Saëns, Gabriel Faure, Georges Enesco and others who wrote flute music in a new style that became the genesis of the French school of flute playing.
Chapter 1: THE PARIS CONSERVATORY

The main centers of music in Paris during the first half of the 19th century were the Opera Comique, the Paris Opera and the Paris Conservatory. The two opera companies each employed many orchestral musicians, many of whom were trained at the Conservatory. The Paris Conservatoire Nationale de Musique (the Paris Conservatory) opened in 1795 during the turmoil of the French Revolution. It soon became one of the world’s most important schools of music, and it has held continuous classes for over two hundred years.

The Conservatory was chartered by the Convention Nationale, the French provisional governing body at the time, by merging two previously existing schools: L’Ecole Royale du Chant (Royal School of Voice) was established in 1784 by the administrators of the Paris Opera, who felt the need for a school for voice; Francois Joseph Gossec was the first director. The Institut Nationale de Musique (National Institute of Music) was a school for instrumentalists, but it did not have a mission to train professional music performers. Rather, it was a place for amateur musicians to learn music, and also a place for instrumentalists to train for the many French military bands that were prevalent at this time. During and after the French Revolution, nationalism was on the rise and Napoleon Bonaparte was beginning his efforts to conquer Europe. Musicians found that they could play in these military bands in lieu of infantry service.

When the Conservatory opened its doors, many of the finest musicians from these bands were asked to take faculty posts. Among these were flutists Francois Devienne, Antoine Hugot, and Jacques Schneitzhoeffer. From its beginnings, the Conservatory was tasked with the diffusion of musical knowledge and, by doing so, it ended up producing a number of experienced teachers.
who then helped to raise the general standards of study.\textsuperscript{1} Over the years, many of the greatest 19\textsuperscript{th} century French flutists were at various times on the faculty; prominent among these were the above-mentioned Francois Devienne (from 1795-1803), Jean Louis Tulou (1829-1859), Louis Dorus (1860-1868), Henri Altes (1869-1893) and, most notably, Paul Taffanel (1893-1908).

Beginning in 1824, the Conservatory has held and continues to hold annual competitions called \textit{Concours}. The purpose of these competitions is to evaluate the progress of its top students. These students are generally given a set composition that were chosen by the faculty, and they are allowed up to six weeks to prepare. The prizes that are awarded are called \textit{Premiere Prix, Deuxieme Prix, Premiere Accessit} (certificate of merit), and \textit{Deuxieme Accesit}. Since the examinations are held against a set standard as well as against the other students, more than one Premiere Prix may be awarded. On the other hand, it may be withheld altogether. When Jean Louis Tulou was appointed professor in 1829, he chose his own compositions for the contest pieces (\textit{Morceaux de Concours}) every year until his retirement in 1859. These pieces were in the somewhat formulaic Grand Solo style that was so popular at that time. This Grand Solo style generally featured many extensive passages that would display technical prowess separated by early romantic-style lyrical interludes. When Henri Altes became professor in 1869, he also often chose his own compositions, which were in a similar style to Tulou’s, for the yearly examination. Though these compositions by Tulou and Altes served a pedagogical purpose for the time period, they are generally not considered “masterworks,” and have not survived in the standard repertoire today.

\textsuperscript{1} Isidor Philipp and Frederick M. Martens, “The French National Conservatory of Music”.\textsuperscript{2} The Musical Quarterly vol.6, no. 2 (1920): 214
Today’s modern flute can trace its origins back to the 18th century Baroque era flute. Those flutes were constructed from various woods, the most popular being grenadilla, cocoa and boxwood. They were generally pitched in D Major and they had six holes in the tubing. The pitch “D” was produced when all holes were covered, and the notes of a D Major scale were produced by uncovering the holes in succession. Pitches outside the D Major scale were produced using a series of forked fingerings and half-holing. This system created many problems with intonation and it also somewhat hampered a flutist’s ability to develop a truly virtuosic technique. During the mid and late 18th century, innovations to the construction of the flute, principally the addition of keys, helped to facilitate the increasingly chromatic technical demands that were becoming more commonplace. The first key to be added to the six-hole flute was operated by the little finger on the right hand which, when pressed, opened a 7th hole that produced a C# below the lowest D. Over time, other holes and keys were added that aided flutists in playing chromatic passages. By the early 19th century, professional flutists were playing flutes with from one key to as many as eight keys.

The 18th century flute seemed mostly adequate for contemporary composers and their music. It was a popular instrument in churches and royal courts throughout Europe, and composers such as George Philipp Telemann (1681-1767), Johann Joachim Quantz (1697-1773) and Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1788) wrote a vast array of sonatas, concertos and chamber works for the flute.

By the late 18th century, there were many different styles and types of flutes in common use throughout Europe. Flutists had many options to consider when choosing an instrument. As noted, the instruments were made from many different types of woods and with from 1 to 8 keys.
in the mechanism. Additionally, they were made at various pitch levels and with larger or smaller holes for the fingers to cover. Because of these factors, each flute seemed to have an individual uniqueness that made it increasingly difficult for composers to have confidence that their musical ideas would be accurately expressed. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, for example, had disdain for the flute, though he did write 3 concertos, one of which was paired with the harp, as well as one complete and two incomplete quartets for flute and strings. These pieces were all commissions, and Mozart produced them only with reluctance. Composers also realized that the quality of stringed instruments was superior to the quality of the flute. While 17th and 18th century stringed instrument design had been somewhat codified by makers such as Stradivari, Grancino, and Amati, flutes were not as refined nor as consistent in construction from one region to another.

Figure 1. One-key and four-key flutes, c. 1800
The Baroque style one-key flute was still being used sporadically as late as the second decade of the nineteenth century, and the four-key flute was commonplace as late as the 1840s. The significant intonation problems and awkward cross fingering left these flutes ill-equipped for the new, more virtuosic compositions that were becoming popular. The perception was held that the flute was simply an inadequate instrument for the emerging Romantic style of music. Of the woodwinds, the clarinet was more easily accepted as a romantic instrument because of its wide dynamic range and its dark, rich timbre. The early 19th century flute, by contrast, had a narrower range of tone color and weaker projection. About flute intonation, composer Felix Mendelssohn wrote in 1830, “I heard a solo on the flute, where the flute was more than a quarter tone too high; It set my teeth on edge.”

Francois Devienne, the first flute professor at the Paris Conservatory, played a one-key flute until his death in 1803. Devienne was also a composer of some skill and he wrote many concertos and much chamber music in the Classical style.

As performances became more frequent in public places, music as entertainment became more and more populist in nature. Virtuosos such as violinist Nicolo Paganini and pianist Franz Liszt became celebrities, and they were widely admired for their technical prowess as well as for their ability to convey a sense of the new Romantic-era expression. Flutists naturally desired to participate in the new trend of celebrity virtuoso performers, but they were held back by the limitations of the flute. They found it difficult to project a wide range of tone color and emotion into performance spaces that were becoming larger and larger. The intimacy of the 18th century royal court setting had been replaced with the large, public concert hall. Composers were finding that the flute was becoming less and less adequate for their needs and they began to ignore the

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flute as a solo instrument. Composing for the flute therefore was oftentimes left to the flutists themselves. Flutists such as Jean-Louis Tulou (1786-1865) wrote many showpieces for their own use (and specifically in Tulou’s case, for his students at the Paris Conservatory after his appointment as Professor in 1829). Though maybe not so well trained as other composers, these flutists had the advantage of understanding the flute and its various strengths and weaknesses. For example, the timbre of the flute was inconsistent from key to key as opposed to the violin, cello, or piano, each of which could play with a relatively homogeneous tone quality in all keys. This knowledge allowed flutists/composers to exploit or avoid these various characteristics as necessary.

Tulou’s solos were often written in the Theme and Variations showpiece style that was so popular at that time. Generally, a grand theme was presented, followed by scales, arpeggios and other rapid passages that may or may not be variations of the theme. This was usually followed by a slow section, often in the relative minor, and then a series of brilliant virtuosic passages would bring the composition to an end. Tulou, and other flutists who were composing solo flute music at that time, were not always skilled composers and many of the works that they produced were often lacking in developmental skills. It was seemingly up to the performer to inject any style or communicative character into the performance. One magnificent exception to the pedantic nature of these Theme and Variations showpieces is the Introduction and Variations on Trockne Blumen from the song cycle Die Schoene Muellerin D802 (1824) by Franz Schubert.

In the early 19th century, many flute makers started making 4-key, 5-key, 6-key and later, 8 and 9-key flutes. These new mechanisms eliminated a lot of difficult cross-fingerings, which made the increasingly more difficult 19th century literature playable. While these newer flutes made technical passages easier, they were also problematic. If a flutist who trained on an earlier version of the flute wished to switch to a newer model, he (or she, but mostly he) would be
required to learn a new fingering and key system. Established players of the one-key flute often resisted the change, either because they didn’t feel the need or because, though they may have felt the need, the learning curve was simply too steep. The amount of time that it would take for someone to learn a new key system, when they might have begun their studies in childhood, was often just too daunting a task. Furthermore, some might make the effort to switch from a one-key instrument to a 4-key instrument, only to then encounter the development of more modern 6-key flutes and later, 8-key flutes. This problem made universal acceptance of each successive newer flute unattainable. As long as the mechanical advancements that took place in the first decades of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century remained step-by-step and uncodified, it would take a generation of teachers willing to teach the new flute to their students before it became more widely played.

Some flutists who were unhappy with the state of the instrument, attempted to make changes to fit their own personal preferences. Charles Nicholson (1795-1837) was an English flute virtuoso who played principal flute in the Covent Garden Orchestra and also taught at the Royal Academy of Music from 1822 until his death in 1837. Nicholson had made alterations to his flute; specifically, he had enlarged some of the holes and spread them farther apart. This gave him a richer, more forceful tone quality, especially in the low register, as compared to the softer, more stylized sound of the typical flutes being played by Devienne, Tulou and other flutists of the day. As symphony orchestras were growing in size, more volume was needed from all of the woodwinds. Nicholson’s modification was helpful in that aspect, and it convinced many flutists that more fundamental changes in flute design were needed. On a trip to London in 1831, Theobald Boehm heard Nicholson play his “modified” flute and he was impressed. He noticed that Nicholson had very large hands that could cover the extra-large holes but that most flutists would not be able to cover the holes with their fingers. It was then that Boehm decided to attempt a new rod-and-key design for a flute that would accommodate larger finger holes that
were further apart. Years later Boehm wrote to a friend, “I did as well as any continental flutist could have done in London, in 1831, but I could not match Nicholson in power and tone, wherefore I set to work to remodel my flute. Had I not heard him, probably the Boehm flute never would have been made.”  

This was the state of the advancements in flute design during the first three decades of the 19th century. It would take the innovative creations of Theobald Boehm to set a new standard for flute design and construction. That new standard began in the 1830s and, with modifications, still exists today.

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Chapter 3: THE BOEHM FLUTE

Theobald Boehm (1794-1881), was a flutist, composer, acoustician and silversmith who realized early in the 19th century that the flute would have to be completely redesigned to meet the demands of the composers of the day, especially in their orchestral works. After much trial and error, he introduced his first conical bore flute in 1833. It featured more acoustically correct placement of the tone holes, as well as larger tone holes. This is an idea that he got from Nicholson. The most fundamental changes, however, were in the key system itself. There were fourteen holes to be controlled with nine fingers by means of horizontal rod-axles and ring keys. The right thumb was only used to support the flute. Also, trill keys were introduced for the first time.

Figure 2. Anatomy of the Boehm flute. This anonymous sketch was taken from the website of David Darling: http://www.daviddarling.info/encyclopedia_of_music/F/flute.html

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5 Ahmad, p. 62
6 Rockstro, p. 80
When Boehm introduced his new ring-key and rod system flute, he demonstrated it in Paris in 1833, where it was met with much skepticism. This came mostly from older, more established players who were reluctant to take the time and effort to learn this system. It took several decades therefore, for the Boehm system flute to gain universal acceptance. Notably, 20-year-old flutist Louis Dorus (1812-1896), recognized that the new fingering system would allow for an even more virtuosic technique. He began using the new flute as early as 1835 and eventually he would succeed Tulou at the Conservatory in 1860. Years later, Boehm wrote about introducing his new flute in Paris:

I decided, in 1832, to construct my ring-keyed flute, upon which I played in London and Paris in the following year, where its advantages were recognized by the greatest artists and by L’Academie des Sciences. As compared to the old flute, this one was unquestionably much nearer perfection. The tone-holes were placed in their acoustically correct position and, through my new system of fingering, one could play all possible tone combinations clearly and surely. 

Not all flutists were as enthusiastic about the new flute as Boehm might have implied. The fingering system on the new flute was an even more radical departure from the latest eight-key flute than the eight-key was from any of the earlier flutes. The acceptance of the Boehm system therefore was met with even more profound resistance. Top professional virtuosos such as Tulou and Nicholson saw no reason to learn the new system. Flute makers Louis Lot and Claire Godfroy were currently manufacturing flutes to the individual specifications preferred by Tulou and Nicholson. They were then entering into financial arrangements for the marketing of their endorsements. It was the younger less-established players such as Louis Dorus who realized the value of learning the new system on a superior instrument.

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7 Boehm, p. 43
Over the years, Boehm made needed revisions that aided in the attraction of the new flute. In 1847, he changed the tubing from a conical bore to a cylindrical bore with a tapered headjoint, The cylindrical tube gave the flute more volume and a quicker response, especially in the troublesome low register. It also greatly improved the third octave intonation.\(^8\) As noted above, Charles Nicholson improved the low register on his conical bore instrument by making alterations to the tone holes. Boehm now included those tone hole alterations and added the cylindrical feature to create what was then considered the best flute yet made. Other innovations included a newly designed thumb-key mechanism and a closed G# key over a new G# tone hole. Players were now able to play with extraordinary facility and velocity in all keys.

The Boehm flute did gradually begin to gain wider acceptance in Paris during the 1840s and 1850s. This was due in great part to the influence of Dorus and another young flutist named Victor Coche (1809-1881). Louis Dorus entered the Conservatory at age 10 and won the Premiere Prix at age 15, having studied with Joseph Guillot. By age 19 he was playing in the Orchestra at the Theater des Varietes. In 1835, he was appointed Principal Flute in the Paris Opera Orchestra, where he played until 1866.\(^9\) 1835 was also the year that the 23-year-old Dorus began playing on the Boehm system. In 1838, he patented the closed G# mechanism which was helpful to players who wished to transition to the new flute, and which Boehm integrated into his later revision. When Boehm introduced the 1847 cylindrical model, Dorus was the first Parisian to play it. In 1860, Dorus succeeded Jean Louis Tulou as professor at the Conservatory and it was then he was able to finally convince the administration to adopt the Boehm flute as the “official” flute; all students would thereafter use that flute for their studies. As the Boehm system flute gained wider acceptance, Louis Lot began to manufacture the new design and when the

\(^8\) Ibid., p. 105
Paris Conservatory adopted the design as its official flute, Boehm licensed Lot as the official supplier.10

Dorus was also a founding member of the Association des Artistes Musiciens, which was the first musician’s union in Paris. Through his influence, more and more of the younger Parisian flutists began playing on the Boehm system. According to Fetis: “Convinced by then of the superiority of Boehm’s improved flute as regards to its low notes, intonation, ease of playing in all keys and because it made possible the performance of many trills formerly well-nigh impossible, Monsieur Dorus did not hesitate to start practicing it.”11

Victor Coche (1809-1881) was another young flutist in Paris who was also one of the first to adopt the Boehm flute. He had studied with Tulou and he was appointed assistant professor at the Conservatory in 1831.

The slow-motion, gradual acceptance of the Boehm flute created a lot of turmoil in Paris during the middle decades of the 19th century. Tulou, who played on a 4-key flute, wrote and published a method for the old system in 1835, which he later revised in 1851. Coche wrote his own method in 1839 in which he endorsed the new system. Also, in 1839 Coche proposed the addition of a new course at the Conservatory specifically for the Boehm flute, but it was not approved. As noted, it would take another twenty-one years to be accepted.

Aside from the perceived impracticality of learning a new fingering system, some resistance to the Boehm flute was based on the assumption that it was not possible to sound as “charming” or as expressive on the new flute. The old-style flute did indeed have redeeming features. There

10 Mcvinney, Barry Dennis. “Paul Taffanel and the reinvention of flute playing for the Twentieth Century” (D.M.A. dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 1994). p. 37

was a brightness and delicate nature to the tone that had been well-suited for classical era music, and some flutists believed that the new flute lacked these expressive qualities. Though this was an early claim made by Tulou, it was disproved by the virtuosic and aesthetically profound performances of Louis Dorus, Henri Altes, and later by Paul Taffanel. Tulou was the professor at the Paris Conservatory from 1829 until 1859 and his adversarial resistance to the advancement of the Boehm flute delayed its universal acceptance among French flutists by several decades.

Boehm was also a silversmith by trade and in 1855 he introduced a solid silver version of his flute. The silver construction allowed the performer to create a wider range of expression through the use of tone color and a wider dynamic range. Nancy Toff described Boehm’s changes to the flute this way, “Although Boehm did make several mechanical innovations, his major contribution was the adaptation of pre-existing devices to newly discovered acoustic principles.”

In 1855 Boehm introduced a cylindrical bore, all-silver version of his flute. This change of materials from wood to silver was groundbreaking in terms of sonority and tone color. Players were now able to more easily produce a full range of colors; from dark, rich and mellow, to light, bright and vivacious. Boehm referred to his new silver flute this way: “upon a silver flute…the brightest and fullest tone can be brought out…But on account of its unusually easy tone-production, very often it is overblown.” Boehm states here that the new silver flute was so much easier to play that newcomers to the instrument needed to take care not to aggressively over blow. The use of silver was the finishing touch in the Boehm flute development. Silver gave the flute a much broader spectrum of tone color, and it was this model flute that finally

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13 Boehm, pp. 54-55
convinced the Conservatory leadership that the flute had been codified in the Boehm system, and that that system was the way of the future.

Figure 3. Silver Boehm flute c. 1875; manufactured by Louis Lot.

Over the succeeding years, flute makers have made minor modifications to this version, but the 1855 flute is essentially the same flute as the ones being played today. Boehm’s invention was a catalyst for the creation of a new school of flute playing which would eventually inspire a new school of composition for flute.

This is the flute that Paul Taffanel trained on as a student and this is the flute that he played for his entire professional career. After a time, he came to realize that the current state of composition for solo flute did not take full advantage of all that this “modern” flute had to offer.
Chapter 4: PARIS AT MID-CENTURY

In the first half of the 19th century, opera was the most popular mode of musical presentation in Paris. The two competing opera companies were the Opera Comique and the more prestigious Paris Opera. Most, if not all, of the finest instrumentalists in Paris were employed in the orchestras for these companies. A landmark event occurred in 1828 that helped to establish the Paris Conservatory as another center of musical life in Paris. That event was the creation of the Societe des Concerts du Conservatoire. This was the first large ensemble in Paris that was dedicated to presenting orchestral music, such as symphonies and concertos. The first performance of the Societe was on March 9, 1828 with many of the musicians from the two opera orchestras participating. The flute section was Tulou and Joseph Guillou, another member of the Conservatory faculty. The advent of these new Conservatory concerts was indicative of the changes in social structure that were happening in France during this time. Royal courts had given way to populist movements, and many musicians found that they had to fend for themselves. William Weber explains these changes, as they apply to musicians, this way:

Before the turn of the century performers had little ability to control the institutions and the activities within which they worked. During the expansion of the concert public in the first half of the century musicians became independent operators in an open commercial market and thereby played a role in musical life like that of industrial entrepreneurs in the manufacturing fields. 14

Professional musicians were realizing that they needed to be much more pro-active in their career pursuits. By taking the initiative to create new ensembles, many were successful in bringing more and more contemporary repertoire to an eager and receptive middle class that was rapidly growing in numbers. In fact, from 1828 to 1845 the number of public concerts in Paris

increased 500%. Later, in 1861, pianist and conductor Jules Pasdeloup created a series called *Concerts Populaire de Musique Classique*. This series featured solo and chamber performances as well as large orchestral performances that were also designed to appeal to “non-elite” audiences. It still exists today as the oldest orchestra in Paris.

During the middle decades of the 19th century Paris also experienced many changes of a more broad cultural nature. In 1855 Paris held its first Universal Exposition. It was the first of five “fairs” that ended up being held every eleven or twelve years and that were meant to help establish the city as the primary cultural center of Europe. Louis Napoleon, the nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte, established the Second Empire in 1851 and named himself Emperor Napoleon III. He then set about to re-design the architecture of Paris. By 1855, demolition and construction were well under way and the Exposition was a way to show the world many of the new innovations that were happening in the city. These innovations included developments in science, commerce and industry, as well as art and music. The 1847 model Boehm flute was exhibited at that first fair as an example of technical advancements in musical instrument design, where it won a first-place gold medal.

The 1855 fair promoted French art through the government-sponsored Salon Exposition. Its official name was “The Exposition of Living Artists,” and the message conveyed was that this was a new, post-romantic art, and that it was reflective of a more modern man and a more democratic society. In 1863, the government-funded *L’Ecole des Beaux-Arts* was granted full autonomy from any governmental influence and was soon after training painters such as Pierre-August Renoir who were later to introduce Impressionism to the world.

With all of the growth in artistic expression that was taking place in Paris at this time, French music lagged behind the post-romantic concept that was starting in the 1860s. Audiences did not seem ready to accept music that was out of their comfort zones, such as the symphonies of
Beethoven and Mendelssohn, as well as the many Italian opera overtures that were so popular at
the time. Innovative composer Hector Berlioz was never fully appreciated in France until after
his death in 1869 and Georges Bizet’s early music was booed and hissed when it was performed
in Pasdeloup’s orchestra.

The state of solo flute literature during this time was still very conservative as well. Tulou
was producing his yearly contest pieces and Henri Altes – Principal Flute in the Paris Opera
Orchestra – was beginning to compose similar styled solos, which he would later use as contest
pieces during his tenure (1869-1893) at the Conservatory. In Germany, Theobald Boehm wrote
many popular works for flute, including his Grande Polonaise and Variations on “Nel Cor Piu.”
His music is generally considered superior to that of either Tulou or Altes and much of it has
survived in the standard repertoire.
Along with the development of the Boehm flute, the next profound influence on the beginnings of the French school of flute playing was the rise to prominence of the great flute virtuoso Paul Taffanel (1844-1908). His legendary performance career included the position of Principal Flute in the orchestra of the Paris Opera as well as premiering solo and chamber works by many Parisian composers. Upon his appointment to the faculty of the Conservatory in 1893, Taffanel – at age 49 – retired from performing and was appointed Principal Conductor of the Opera.

Paul Taffanel was born in Bordeaux in 1844. His father, Jules Taffanel, was a cornet player and also an instrument maker. Young Paul showed an interest in music at an early age and, at age seven, his father began to teach him solfège. He also gave him instruction on flute, violin, and piano. Paul immediately displayed remarkable talent on the flute, and so the violin lessons were discontinued. His piano studies continued with a local teacher named Joseph Schad. Tafannel always maintained that a knowledge of piano was necessary for any aspiring musician. It is not known on what type of flute Taffanel began his lessons. Among his father’s papers is a receipt for keys and other accessories for an eight-key flute, dated May 27, 1850, so it is possible that Jules made his son’s first flute. Paul did change to a Boehm system flute early on, however. He may have been influenced by a local amateur flutist named Paul Guercy. Guercy was a friend of Louis Dorus and had studied in Paris with Joseph Guillou, the successor to Devienne at the Conservatory. Not a lot is known of Guercy except that, after he heard Taffanel play, he

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15 Blakeman, pp. 6-7.
16 Ibid, p. 7.
recommended him to Dorus. He also procured an 1847 wood model Boehm system for him – exactly when is not known.\textsuperscript{17}

Jules recognized his son’s talent and, in 1858, he moved his family to Paris so that Paul could study with Louis Dorus. Dorus gave him private lessons for two years until, in 1860 at age 16, Paul entered the Conservatory; he won the \textit{Premiere Prix} that same year. The set piece for that year’s \textit{Concours} was Tulou’s 5\textsuperscript{th} Concerto. As a result of winning the \textit{Concours}, Taffanel was presented with a new nickel-silver Boehm flute made by Louis Lot.\textsuperscript{18} In 1862, at age eighteen, Taffanel was appointed third chair of the \textit{Opera-Comique} orchestra. By this time, the Boehm flute was gaining wider acceptance among the orchestra players in the Parisian orchestras.

By 1863 Taffanel, then 19 years old, was becoming recognized as not just another fine flutist from the Paris Conservatory, but as the virtuoso artist that he would ultimately become. He concertized with his teacher – now mentor – Louis Dorus and with several other flutists as well. It was around this time that Taffanel began playing concerts of duets, trios, and quartets with local flutists Johannes Donjon, Firmin Brossa and Eugene Walkiers. These were each fine players who were living in Paris at this time. Johannes Donjon (1839-1912) – one of Tulou’s last students – played in the Opera with Taffanel. Along with fellow Dorus student, Firmin Brossa (1839-1915), they would meet regularly at the home of Eugene Walckiers (1793-1866). Walckiers was more than a generation older than the other three and still played on the old-style, 8-key flute. He was an early student of Tulou, had played in the Theatre in Le Havre, and later moved to Paris to study composition with Anton Reicha. He composed quartets for the gatherings with Taffanel and the others, and the four flutists would often host public

\textsuperscript{17}Ibid, p. 15.
\textsuperscript{18}Ibid, p. 18.
performances of Walckiers’ compositions. These 1860s era salon concerts were successful in part due to the changes that were happening after the introduction of the silver Boehm flute in 1855. They became a “breeding ground” for what would become the French school of flute playing, though it would take another thirty years to fully develop. The torch was finally being passed from the generation of Tulou and Walckiers to the generation of Johannes Donjon, Firmin Brossa, Henri Altes and most importantly, Paul Taffanel.

There were, however, still some holdouts throughout the 1860s. Ludovich Leplus was third chair in the Opera orchestra and he played an old-style wooden flute. He tried the Boehm flute, but he never felt comfortable with it, and he never did overcome the many differences between the two types. Leplus then went back to the old-style flute, which he played until he retired in 1866. Taffanel had begun to play auxiliary flute as early as 1864, and he would replace Leplus as third chair in 1866. This then marked the first time that all of the flutists in the most prestigious orchestra in Paris played on the all-silver Boehm system flutes.

Dorus retired from the Opera in 1869, the same year that he retired from the Conservatory, and Altes moved up to Principal Flute, while Taffanel moved to second chair. The new third chair was Johannes Donjon. When Altes retired in 1876, Taffanel was elected Principal Flute, Donjon moved up to second chair, and Eduard Lafleurance (1836-1897) was appointed third chair.

Altes was eighteen years older than Taffanel, had been a Conservatory student of Tulou, and won the Premiere Prix in 1842. He eventually succeeded Dorus at the Conservatory when Dorus retired in 1869. Taffanel was in consideration to replace Dorus, but he was deemed to be too young (he was 25) by the committee that eventually hired Altes (he was 43). Altes’s 24-year

\[\text{19} \quad \text{Ibid, p. 24} \]
\[\text{20} \quad \text{Ibid., pp. 26-27} \]
tenure 1869-93) is the third longest tenure, after Tulou’s 30 years (1829-59), and Gaston Crunelle’s 28 years (1941-69) of any flute professor in the history of the Conservatory. One wonders how the flute literature would have developed if Taffanel had succeeded Dorus instead of Altes. It took Taffanel until 1898 before he was able to commission a major French composer to write a contest piece for the Conservatory Concours.
The French nationalism resulting from the humiliation of the Franco-Prussian war helped to inspire the founding of the *Societe Nationale de Musique Francaise* in 1871. The two founders of the *Societe* were composer Camille Saint-Saëns (who had recently returned from wartime National Guard duty), and Conservatory voice professor Romaine Bussine. The first meeting was attended by Cesar Franck, Ernest Guiraud, Camille Saint-Saëns, Jules Massenet, Jules Garcin, Gabriel Faure, Henri Duparc, Theodore Dubois, and Paul Tafannel.\(^{21}\) Although the first meeting of the *Societe* took place on February 25, 1871, the first public performance was delayed until November, as the surrender to the Prussians in January of that year brought much turmoil and civil unrest to Paris. In April, the Prussians marched into Paris, thereby ending the Second Empire of Napoleon III. Saint-Saëns and other prominent musicians fled to London to escape the violence that occurred almost daily from March until June, and the first concert of the *Societe Nationale de Musique Francaise* did not take place until November 25, 1871.

The *Societe* was a latter-day version of the Conservatory concerts that began in 1828, but now, for the first time, a group was formed for the performance of French music exclusively. This group represented an emerging French school of composition. With less and less outside influence, these composers began to develop their own trends and styles; this was true both structurally and harmonically. These composers all knew Taffanel and, when he performed for them, they heard the unique tone qualities of the silver flute. This new sound added to the developing desires of some of the *Societe* composers to begin to experiment with music that valued tone aesthetic, and not just virtuosity. Years earlier, at a Salon exhibition in 1859, poet

\(^{21}\) Ibid., p. 39
and critic Charles Baudelaire presented an essay on the role of artistic technique. This discussion referred to technique in painting and sculpture and argued that such skill and craft were merely the tools used to create a higher expression of the imagination. As he said:

> The more imagination one has, the better the technique needed to accompany it in its adventures and to overcome the difficulties which it avidly courts. And the better one’s technique, the less should one make a virtue of it and display it, so that the imagination may be allowed to burn with its full brilliance.\(^{22}\)

When Baudelaire talks about “imagination,” if one equates that to “musical expression” in flute playing, then the relevancy to musical performance becomes clear. So many early pieces for the flute were simply technical fingering tours-de-force with very little thought to a higher aesthetic. With the Boehm flute now accepted as the official instrument at the Conservatory, technique would no longer be taught for its own sake but as a means to achieving the more subtle aspects and capabilities of the new flute; namely the study of the embouchure and breath control to create a wider palette of tone colors and a wider range of dynamics. Unfortunately, Altes was not so imaginative. He taught a great discipline that was necessary to master the flute, but he never played with, nor taught, many of the very subtleties that the Boehm flute afforded. Again, it was not until decades later that Paul Taffanel was finally able to exercise his influence and to teach his new French style to the next generation of flute students.

If there is a seminal composition that was written specifically for the Boehm flute, it might be the *Romance* for Flute and Piano by Camille Saint-Saëns. This piece was premiered at the *Societe Nationale de Musique* on April 6, 1872. Taffanel played the flute, with Saint-Saëns at the piano. As Blakeman states, “Saint-Saëns’ *Romance* is a perfect vehicle for presenting the

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qualities of the new Boehm flute and a new approach to flute playing.” It was the beginning of a new breed of flute solo, designed to feature expressive nuance rather than finger dexterity. A thoughtless performance of this work would be tedious to hear. When played with carefully shaped phrasing, and attentiveness to the appropriate character of tone for each moment, the audience will be captivated. This was also the beginning of a career-long collaboration between these two great French musicians. They frequently concertized together throughout France, and they also toured together in Denmark and Russia on several occasions.

The 1870s saw another large increase in public performances due to the establishment of the many chamber ensembles that were formed to play in private “Salons.” These were generally held in the private homes of wealthy Parisians, and Taffanel and Saint-Saëns played many of these “soiree” concerts together. In 1872, Taffanel was a founding member of a chamber ensemble, the *Societe Classique*, which consisted of a double quintet comprised of winds and strings. Even so, over the next twenty years of the existence of the *Societe Nationale*, only a handful of composers wrote for the flute. There simply was no great nineteenth century tradition of creating solo works, or chamber works, for flute. As old habits die hard, the flute was only slowly being integrated into mainstream solo and chamber music. This mainstream was still generally reserved for violin and piano although among woodwind instruments, the clarinet was to become popular with some early and mid-nineteenth century German and Austrian composers. Notable among these were Carl Maria von Weber, who wrote 2 concertos, a Concertino and a Quintet with strings, and Johannes Brahms, who composed 2 sonatas, a trio, and a quintet with strings.

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23 Blakeman., p.44.  
24 McVinney, p. 40  
25 Ibid., pp. 40-41
This continuing dearth of contemporary music for flute prompted Taffanel to try his own hand at composition. He had studied harmony and composition with Henri Reber while at the Conservatory, and he took First Prize in harmony in 1862. Most Parisian composers at that time were still mainly interested in opera, but Reber wrote many chamber and symphonic works in addition to his dramatic compositions. Unlike most flutist/composers of the time, Taffanel was well-equipped to compose substantial works that were to be heard throughout Paris. In 1872, he wrote a three-movement quintet for the winds of the Societe Classique. The instrumentation of flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and French horn was reminiscent of the many compositions for quintet written earlier in the century by Conservatory composer Anton Reicha. Reicha wrote 25 woodwind quintets between 1811 and 1820 and Louis Dorus’s flute teacher at the Conservatory, Joseph Guillou, was the flutist for many of the premiere performances. Among Reicha’s composition students were Hector Belioz, Franz Liszt, and Charles Gounod.

In 1874, Taffanel wrote Grande Fantasie sur “Mignon,” opera d’Ambroise Thomas. The success of this piece prompted him to write four more fantasies. These new works were based on: Weber’s Die Freischutz (1876), Rameau’s Les Indes Galantes (1877), Delibes’s Jean de Nivelle (1881), and Thomas’s Francoise de Rimini (1884). All of these compositions had the same formulaic construction: an introduction followed by a brief cadenza, followed by themes and variations based on themes from the various operas. This showpiece style of composition was still a very popular format at the time. Taffanel thought that this style and other such “virtuosic” styles were very superficial, but their popularity as “salon music,” along with Taffanel’s own growing popularity as guest artist at these Parisian soirees, prompted him to perform them many times. These pieces, and their reception among audiences in Paris, are another example of how difficult it was to bring a new style of music to a skeptical public. Even Taffanel’s celebrity and advocacy could not sway his audience. As Fitzgibbon says:
The public was not educated. It was the age of the *air variee*. The great professional soloists naturally played the kind of music which pleased their auditors and pupils most. Every suitable or unsuitable opera aria ... was adapted by them for the flute and tortured into all sorts of interminable scales and exercises ... written to show off the executive skill of the performer and to make the audience wonder how it was all done.\textsuperscript{26}

Though he was a leading advocate for the new French musical ideal that was forming, Taffanel still felt the need to please his patrons with a familiar musical format. At these concerts, he also often played the *Concours* pieces composed by Tulou and Altes. The formulaic nature of these pieces made them easy to listen to, and audiences knew what to expect.

\textsuperscript{26} Fitzgibbon, p. 109
Chapter 7: IN THE STYLE OF PAUL TAFFANEL

Although Paul Taffanel was passed over for the flute professorship at the Conservatory in 1869, he was nevertheless invited to become a member of the jury for the annual Concours. His comments on the contestants’ performances show that he valued tone quality above all other aspects of flute playing. Examples of these comments are: “wooly sound (1876) … good phrasing, must get rid of the throaty wobble (1878) … constantly out of tune (1884) … very big sound, warmth in the playing, shows good taste” (1892).  

The low register of the flute had always been the weakest register in terms of response and also in the brilliance of the tone. Taffanel had developed a flexibility of embouchure and of airstream that allowed the tube to resonate with the column of air. This gave an expansiveness to the low register without forcing. English and German flutists, on the other hand, generally learned to overcome the low register issues by tensing the lips, thereby forcing the airstream. The result produced more volume, but with an “edgy” quality and a narrower range of color. Among Taffanel’s papers are 8 unsigned articles about the history of the flute from antiquity to that present time. One of these articles clearly expresses his opinion about the current state of the flute and flute playing:

The capabilities of the flute are in large part responsible for the vulgarity, monotony and disagreeable nature of the playing of certain virtuosi who, lacking all taste, abuse their technical knowledge in trying to produce cascades of notes rather than musical sounds, and end up like conjurors who appeal more to the eyes than to the ears.

However, when treated properly, the flute is a beautiful instrument … its middle range has great softness, a resonant and persuasive smoothness, and its low notes have a moving nobility, a velvety quality, a mysterious sadness which is unequalled. If one would seek an idea of the true role of the flute …

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27 Anon. La Flute, Papers of Paul Taffanel
it is in the admirable orchestral parts of Gluck and Weber, to name only a few, that one should look.\textsuperscript{28}

This quote from Taffanel shows that he was somewhat dismayed with what he heard from other players and also with the style of composition that was so popular. As stated earlier, one cannot simply wish for the situation to improve aesthetically. It takes true innovation, such as Taffanel’s unique abilities with tone and color, and it takes time. Time for the public sophistication level to evolve. Time for composers to experiment with these new qualities that the silver Boehm flute had to offer.

Altes retired from the Opera in 1876 and Taffanel, who was 32 at the time, was unanimously elected Principal Flute. During this time, most musicians considered him to be the greatest flute virtuoso in France and probably in the world. The reviews of his playing were always stellar and he began to achieve his own celebrity status. This status made him an even more influential musical icon as time went by. This status also allowed him to perform and popularize earlier disregarded eighteenth century works. Since the flute had fallen out of favor for so many years, many audiences were not even aware of the rich literature from that period. At the Paris Exposition of 1878 he gave the Paris premiers of Mozart’s Flute Quartet in A Major, K. 289 as well as the Flute and Harp Concerto, K. 299. He also revived the Bach Suite in b minor and Gluck \textit{Scene d’Orphee}, later to become known as Minuet and Dance of the Blessed Spirits.\textsuperscript{29}

Henri Altes retired from the Paris Conservatory in 1893 and Paul Taffanel, at age 49, was finally appointed professor of flute at that time. Altes had published his \textit{Methode de Flute} in 1880 and Taffanel had been privately critical of Altes both as a performer and as a teacher. “My predecessor, very narrow in his views and completely of the old school, knew and taught only a

\textsuperscript{28} Anon. \textit{La Flute}, Papers of Paul Taffanel, p.295. Quoted from Blakeman, p.34.
\textsuperscript{29} Blakeman, p. 70
very limited number of old-fashioned works which had no musical value whatsoever,”\(^{30}\) wrote Taffanel to the Danish flutist Joachim Andersen after succeeding Altes at the Conservatory. Altes was a strict yet pedantic teacher, without much imagination. His \textit{Method} emphasized the development of technique; fluid fingerings and facile articulation. While Altes did include exercises for tone quality and focus, he did not teach tone and tone color to the full extent made available by the silver Boehm flute. He was a Tulou student and, in many ways, he still thought of the old-style flute capabilities in his playing and his teaching. After consideration of Altes’ teaching style, Taffanel began to write notes and compile sketches for his own flute method. He did not finish it before his death, but it was completed and published by his student, Phillipe Gaubert in 1923.

One of Taffanel’s first ambitions at the Conservatory was to effect change in the style of the \textit{Morceaux de Concours}. It did take several years however, as the Conservatory administration was very conservative when it came to artistic changes. They had had thirty-two straight years of Tulou Concertos followed by twenty-five years of a combination of Tulou and of similarly-styled works, mostly by Altes. The first contest piece that Taffanel chose, for the 1894 concours, was the Flute Concerto by the Bohemian composer, Ferdinand Langer (1819-1897). This piece was written in 1867 and it was not in the popular “showpiece” style of Tulou or Altes. Rather, it was in a more modern style, and Taffanel felt that it had a lyrical quality to it that captured the color palette of the new silver flute, even in the virtuosic passages that are the necessary evil of most concertos. Langer was a cellist in the Mannheim Court Orchestra, and he had heard the Boehm flute while visiting Paris. When he was commissioned by the resident Mannheim flutist, Franz Neuhofer, to compose a flute concerto, Langer, who had never written for the flute, made

\(^{30}\) Letter from Taffanel to Joachim Andersen, 5 May 1895 (Duke University). Quoted from Blakeman, p. 187
an exhaustive study of the new flute’s sonorities with the result being a Romantic flute concerto well suited for the Boehm flute. Taffanel also felt as if the concerto was composed with the new flute in mind.

The next year, Taffanel persuaded the administration that the logical next step would be for the Conservatory to ask a living composer outside the Conservatory to write a flute piece specifically for the Concours. For the 1895 Concours, he contacted Joachim Andersen, co-founder and Principal Flute of the Berlin Philharmonic, to write the piece. Andersen was a prolific composer of solo flute literature and, in a letter to Andersen, Taffanel gives a description of the style required. “The piece should be short: 5 or 6 minutes at the most. I will leave the form entirely up to you, whether an Andante followed by an Allegro, or a single movement, but it needs to contain the wherewithal to test the examinees on matters of phrasing, expression, tone control, and virtuosity. The accompaniment should be for piano.”

What Taffanel really wanted, and what he was not able to find, was solo flute literature in the new French style. He once again approached the Conservatory administration about commissioning new works for flute, that would reflect the now-maturing French school. For the 1898 Concours, Taffanel asked Gabriel Faure to write the set piece. Faure agreed, and composed the Fantasie, which met with great success. With this success, the Conservatory agreed to commission new French works annually. For the following years of Taffanel’s tenure, the Morceaux de Concours for flute were:

1899 – Concertino by Alphonse Duvernoy.
1900 – 6th Solo by Jules Demersseman.
1901 – Andante et Scherzo by Louis Ganne.
1902 – Concertino by Cecile Chaminade.

31 Blakeman, pg. 131
32 Ibid. pg.
1903 – Ballade by Albert Perilhou

1904 – Cantabile et Presto by Georges Enesco

1905 – Andante et Presto by Louis Ganne; a repeat of the 1901 piece.

1906 – Nocturne et Allegro Scherzando by Phillipe Gaubert

1907 – Andante Pastoral et Scherzettino by Paul Taffanel

1908 – Prelude et Scherzo by Henri Busser

Taffanel composed Andante Pastoral et Scherzettino in 1907 specifically for the Paris Conservatory Concours and it is a good example of the new lyricism of the French school. This wonderful piece is an excellent example of a work that lays out the full potential of the silver Boehm flute in the hands of a capable and thoughtful performer. The work is in two sections and follows a form similar to many of the Conservatory commissions. The opening section features a lyrical melody, demonstrating the expressiveness of the flute, and segues into the faster Scherzettino, where the performers demonstrate their technical ability with rapid double-tonguing passages, technical passagework, and soaring melodic lines.

Letters from Taffanel to four of the Concours composers have survived. In each of their responses they defer to Taffanel’s sensibilities to a larger or lesser extent. In an 1898 letter to Theodore Dubois, the Director of the Conservatory, Gabriel Faure writes, “I have given Taffanel the flute piece. It is four-and-a-half minutes long. I have urged Taffanel to modify any passages that might be impractical.”33 In 1905, Faure succeeded Dubois as Director of the Conservatory. When Alphonse Duvernoy was asked to compose the Concours piece, he wrote to Taffanel, “Do tell me what the tempo of the flute examination piece and also the key.”34 The manuscript went

33 Paris, archives nacionales, letter from Gabriel Faure to Theodore Dubois, n.d. but annotated “June 98.” Quoted from Blakeman, p. 188.
back and forth as each man made changes before it was published. In a 1902 letter to Taffanel, Cecile Chaminade even asks advice on the title of the piece:

*Caprice* or *Fantasie* have been suggested, but I think those titles have an unfortunate ring to them, given all the horrors committed in their names … For the time being I have put *Concertino* … if you do not disapprove of this title we will leave it. If it does not seem good to you then please baptize it yourself. I accept your title in advance.\(^\text{35}\)

After so many years, Taffanel was finally able to guide the creation of a body of solo flute literature that pushed the capabilities of the flute to its limits, and his influence on the Paris Conservatory’s *Morceaux de Concours* had a far-reaching effect. He used the commissioned pieces as pedagogical tools to train a generation of French flutists. Even though Taffanel thought that the nineteenth century virtuoso Grand Solo pieces were outdated, he continued to use them as teaching tools as well, especially for all of the technical difficulties. He believed that once the instrument was mastered, only then could the student proceed to “better” music. Only then could they study Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Saint-Saens.

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Chapter 8: LEGACY

The results that Paul Taffanel achieved as a teacher are undeniably profound. He trained nearly all of the next generation’s world-class flutists. One of these was Phillipe Gaubert, winner of the Premiere Prix in 1894. Gaubert later taught at the Paris Conservatory, played Principal Flute in the Paris Opera and eventually followed Taffanel to become the Principal Conductor of the Opera.

By 1907, Taffanel was very ill and he sensed that he probably would not live to complete two projects that he had been working on for many years. He therefore tasked Gaubert to compile notes and sketches of a method book that he had been working on for many years. After Taffanel died in 1908, Gaubert completed the method and published it in 1923 as the *Taffanel et Gaubert, Methode Complete*. The other project was Taffanel’s idea for a comprehensive history of the flute. The notes that he had collected over the many year were given to another former student, Louis Fleury, who published them in 1927.

In the first two decades of the 20th century, several Paris Conservatory flutists came to the United States, where they played in American orchestras and taught at American music schools. Georges Barrere (1876-1944) was a student of Altes when Taffanel took over as professor of flute at the Conservatory in 1893. He then finished his studies with Taffanel, where he won the *Premiers Prix* in 1895. After leaving the Conservatory, Barrere played Principal Flute in the Collone Orchestra and Fourth Flute in the Opera Orchestra. Years later, Barrere wrote an autobiography which includes a section about how rewarding his two years with Taffanel had been:

Henri Altes was a great teacher, but I did not progress as well as I should under his tutorship. I still believe his very systematic teaching gave me no chance to develop [on] my own …
In October 1893, all the flute students of the Conservatory were called to the Director’s office and I still remember dear old Ambroise Thomas presenting to us our new master, Paul Taffanel. I always considered that the turning point in my life. While I have a reverent memory of Altes’s strictness and severe training, I must avow if it were not for all Paul Taffanel did for me, I should not, today, be tooting upon what the wood flute players so irreverently call the “Gas Pipe.”

Students Marcel Moyse and Louis Fleury also wrote reverently about Taffanel but, other than these letters, there is very little primary material about the man who is considered to be the founder of the “French Flute School.”

In 1905, Walter Damrosch invited Barrere to play Principal Flute with the New York Philharmonic. Barrere accepted the invitation, came to New York, and soon thereafter began to exert his influence in various musical activities. American flutists mostly played in the heavier German style and Barrere was able to quickly introduce the lighter, more brilliant French style that he learned from Taffanel. In addition to his duties with the Philharmonic, he formed a wind ensemble in 1910 that, by 1914, had become known as the Barrere Little Symphony. He also performed with the Isadora Dance Ensemble.

Many of Georges Barrere’s students went on to have distinguished careers themselves. Some of them recalled his outstanding technique and colorful phrasing. Bernard Goldberg was Principal Flute of the Pittsburgh Symphony when he stated that “the things he would do in articulation were not only beautiful and clear but they were simply charming and winsome.”

Other prominent students include Samuel Baron (Bach Aria Group, Juilliard), Arthur Lora (Juilliard) and William Kincaide – Principal Flute with the Philadelphia Orchestra from 1921-

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1960. Though Kincaide was thoroughly grounded in Barrere’s French style, he soon developed his own unique style that included a more intensely brilliant tone quality that served him well in an orchestra noted for its big sound and ensemble precision. He was America’s first flute virtuoso and, through his teachings at the Curtis Institute, his influence on flute performance is still felt today. John Krell was a student of Kincaide and also played with him in the Philadelphia Orchestra. He put it succinctly when he said, “To a great degree, he was responsible for developing a robust style that might be called the American school of flute playing.”

One of Phillipe Gaubert’s most prominent students was Marcel Moyse (1889-1984). Moyse played principal flute in various Paris orchestras, appeared widely as a soloist, and made many recordings. His trademark tone was clear, flexible, penetrating, and controlled by a fast vibrato. This was a characteristic of the “French style” of flute playing that was to influence the modern standard for flutists worldwide.

Moyse published many methods and exercise books that are still mainstays in the libraries of today’s flutists. Another of Taffanel’s students, Georges Laurent, was Principal flute of the Societe des Concerts. He emigrated to America after World War One, where he played Principal flute in the Boston Symphony and taught at the New England Conservatory of Music. All of these flutists, and so many more, trace their musical lineage to the master, Paul Taffanel.

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CONCLUSION

The changes that were made to the construction of the 18th century western flute, were in response to changes in the structure of western music itself. As music became more chromatic and more virtuosic, flutists found that the many awkward fingerings on the instrument were holding them back. Also, as the 19th century “airs variee” style of solo piece became more popular, the flute could not compete with the volume, power and pyrotechnics of the piano music of Lizst, or the violin music of Paganini. Composers essentially ignored the flute and flutists found that they had to write their own sets of airs, fantasies and variations. These were the pieces, composed by Jean Louis Tulou, Henri Altes and others that were used yearly as the Paris Conservatory contest pieces. Two seemingly unrelated events helped to change the public’s view of the flute as a solo instrument. The first, which was actually a series of many events, was the development of the all-silver Boehm system flute. This flute was louder and more colorful, and players found that they were able to play in a more expressive manner. The second event was, quite frankly, the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. After France suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of Germany, artists turned inward for their cultural expressions; all things German became taboo. With fewer outside influences, French composers began to experiment with new forms and styles on their own. This marked the beginning of the so-called French School of composition. One result was that composers “rediscovered” the new flute and they began to write for it again. All of this was happening at the time that Paul Taffanel was reaching his artistic and virtuosic peak. He was twenty-seven in 1871, the year that he helped form the Societe National de Musique. For the next 37 years, until his death in 1908, he was one of the leading voices in French music. His legacy lived on through his students, many of whom brought his teachings with them when they emigrated to the United States. The timing of Taffanel’s
ascendency, the universal acceptance of the Boehm flute, and the evolution of the French school all helped to create an atmosphere in which the flute once again became a prominent solo instrument, and for which quality literature was being regularly composed.
Ahmad, Patricia Joan. “The Flute Professors of the Paris Conservatoire from Devienne to Taffanel, 1795-1908” (M.A. thesis, North Texas State University, 1980)

Anon. La Flute, Papers of Paul Taffanel

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### APPENDIX A

The following is a chronological list of the flute professors at the Paris Conservatory from its beginning in 1795 until 1969. By the middle of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century the French School of Flute Playing had been disseminated throughout Europe and America and it was no longer an exclusive pedagogy of the Paris Conservatory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professor</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Francois Devienne.</td>
<td>1795-1803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antoine Hugot</td>
<td>1795-1803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georg Wunderlich</td>
<td>1803-1819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Guillou</td>
<td>1819-1829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean-Louis Tulou</td>
<td>1829-1859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louis Dorus</td>
<td>1860-1868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henri Altes</td>
<td>1869-1893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Taffanel</td>
<td>1894-1908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolphe Hennebains</td>
<td>1909-1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leopold Lafleurance</td>
<td>1915-1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phillippe Gaubert</td>
<td>1920-1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcel Moyse</td>
<td>1932-1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaston Crunelle</td>
<td>1941-1969</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

A list of contest pieces from 1832 until the end of Paul Taffanel’s tenure in 1908.

1832 – Jean-Louis Tulou – Solo
1835 – Tulou – Solo
1837 – Tulou – Solo
1838 – Tulou – Grand Solo
1839 – Tulou – Grand Concerto
1840 – Tulou – 6th Grand Solo
1841 – Tulou – Concerto
1842 – Tulou – Grand Solo
1843 – Tulou – Solo
1844 – Tulou – 10th Solo
1845 – Tulou – 11th Solo
1846 – Tulou – 12th Solo
1847 – Tulou – 13th Solo
1848 – Tulou – Solo
1849 – Tulou – 14th Solo
1850 – Tulou – 13th Solo
1851 – Tulou – Fantasie op. 99
1852 – Tulou – 11th Solo
1853 – Tulou – Fantasie on Marco Spada
1854 – Tulou – 13th Solo
1855 – Tulou – 12th Solo
1856 – Tulou – Fantasie
1857 – Tulou – 13th Solo
1858 – Tulou – Plaisir d’Amour op. 107
1859 – Tulou – 15th Solo
1860 – Tulou – 5th Concerto
1861 – Henri Altes – Solo
1862 – Peter Joseph von Lindpaintner – Grand Concerto
1863 – Tulou – 3rd Grand Solo
1864 – Louis Dorus – Concertino
1865 – Theobald Boehm – Fantasies sur des aires écossaise
1866 – Tulou – 4th Concertino
1867 – Giulio Briccialdi – Concertino
1868 – Tulou – 13th Concerto
1869 – Tulou – 12th Solo
1870 – Altes – 2nd Solo
1872 – Tulou – 1st Solo
1873 – Altes – 6th Solo
1874 – Altes – 3rd Solo in A
1875 – Altes – 4th Solo in A
1876 – Tulou – 2nd Solo
1877 – Tulou – 3rd Solo
1878 – Altes – 1st Solo
1879 – Tulou – 5th Solo
1880 – Altes – 5th Solo
1881 – Tulou – 8th Solo
1882 – Altes – 7th Solo
1883 – Tulou – 4th Solo
1884 – Altes – 8th Solo
1885 – Tulou – 5th Solo
1886 – Altes – 9th Solo
1887 – Jules Demersseman – Solo de Concert
1888 – Altes – 10th Solo
1889 – Tulou – 11th Solo
1890 – Tulou – 3rd Solo
1891 – Demersseman – 2nd Solo
1893 – Altes – 8th Solo
1894 – Ferdinand Langer – Concerto
1895 – Joachim Andersen – Morceau de Concours
1896 – Demersseman – 6th Solo
1897 – Andersen – 2nd Morceau de Concert
1898 – Gabriel Faure – Fantasie
1899 – Alphonse Duvernoy – Concertino
1900 – Demersseman – 6th Solo
1901 – Louis Ganne – Andante et Scherzo
1902 – Cecile Chaminade – Concertino
1903 – Albert Perilhou – Ballade
1904 – Georges Enesco – Cantabile et Presto
1905 – Ganne – Andante et Scherzo
1906 – Phillippe Gaubert – Nocturne et Allegro Scherzando
1907 – Paul Taffanel – Andante Pastoral et Scherzettino
1908 – Henri Busser – Prelude et Scherzo
APPENDIX C: Recital Program

California State University, Northridge
Mike Curb College of Arts, Media and Communication
Department of Music

Present

Lawrence Kaplan

In his Graduate Flute Recital

A student of Sandra Kipp Iles

with Mitsuko Morikawa, piano

Saturday, November 11, 2017, 4:30 PM
Cypress Recital Hall

In partial fulfillment of the Master of Music degree in Flute Performance
PROGRAM

Hungarian Pastorale Fantasy ...........................................Albert Franz Doppler
(1821-1883)

Sonata in E Flat Major BWV 1031.................................Johann Sebastian Bach
   Allegro
   Siciliano
   Allegro

Sonatine.............................................................................Henri Dutilleux
   (1916-2013)

INTERMISSION

8 Pieces for Flute alone....................................................Paul Hindemith
   (1895-1963)

Le Merle Noir......................................................................Olivier Messiaen
   (1908-1992)

Carmen Fantasy Brillante...............................................Francois Borne
   (1840-1920)