

## *Introduction*

THE BOULEVARD DU PRINCE-EUGÈNE was inaugurated in spectacular fashion on December 7, 1862 (figure 1). Named after Emperor Napoléon III's maternal uncle and the stepson of Napoléon Bonaparte, the boulevard connected two central squares on Paris's Right Bank: the place du Trône (now the place de la Nation) and the place du Château d'Eau (now the place de la République). Today, a road completion might involve a mayor, a ribbon cutting, and a photo op for the local newspaper. But in the Paris of Napoléon III's Second Empire (1852–70), a boulevard inauguration was a multimedia spectacle worthy of national attention. During those years, the very act of urbanization—plowing through congested neighborhoods and constructing uniformly designed thoroughfares and buildings—was itself a theatrical performance.

Soldiers, flagbearers, surviving veterans from the First Empire's imperial guard, and band musicians lined the new boulevard early in the morning. The largest crowds assembled around a new *arc de triomphe éphémère*, designed by the famed architect Victor Baltard specifically for the occasion, which framed the head of the boulevard at the place du Trône. Like its more famous, permanent counterpart over the avenue des Champs-Élysées, this triumphal arch functioned at once as a stage, a frame, and a monument. To further define the boulevard intersection as a space of celebration, a semicircular colonnade was erected. At the other end of the boulevard, at the place du Château d'Eau, crowds awaited the imperial procession. On horseback and flanked by state and military officials, Napoléon III rode like a conqueror down the boulevard. Upon arriving at the *arc de triomphe éphémère*, the emperor was greeted by army commander Bernard Pierre Magnan, one of the chief architects of the 1851 *coup d'état* that led to the declaration of empire.

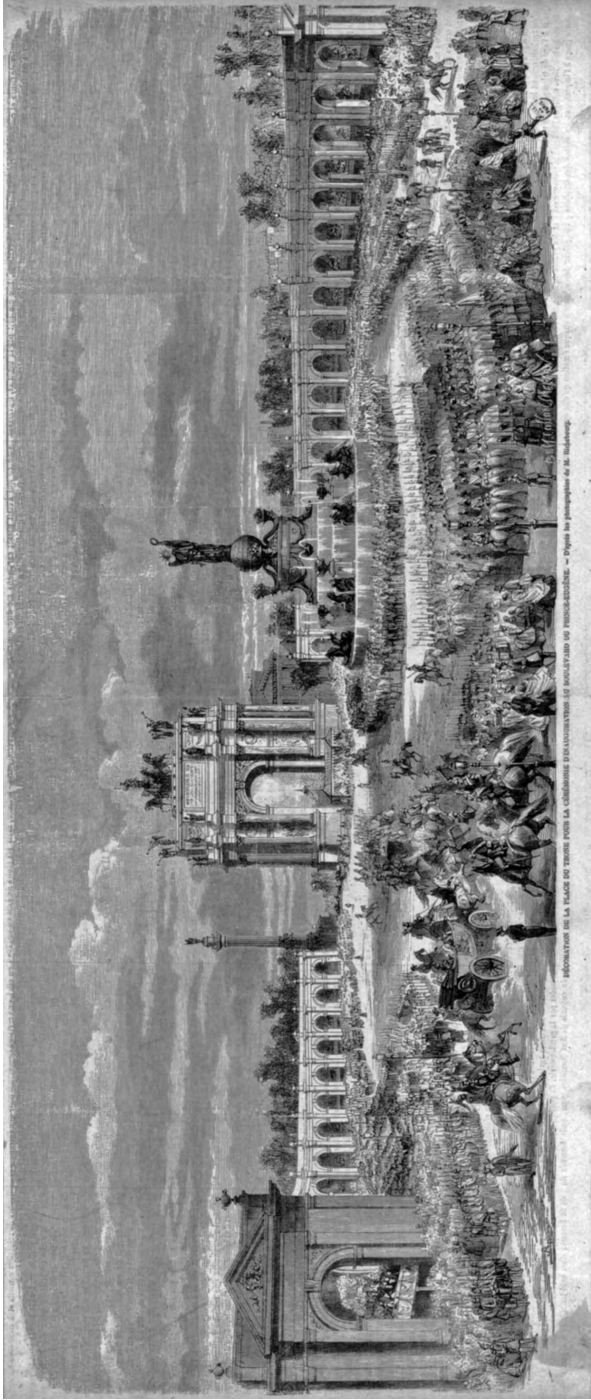


FIGURE 1. The inauguration of the boulevard du Prince-Eugène, 1862. Image: Musée Carnavalet.

But the crowd gathered on the western side of the arch could not yet see the imperial cortège, for in their way was a giant curtain. Adorned with golden bees—an old royalist symbol of immortality and resurrection—the curtain was drawn, revealing the vista to the emperor and the emperor to the crowd. Amid trumpet fanfare and chants of *Vive l'Empereur*, the new boulevard was inducted into the city's imperial landscape.

Waiting for the fanfare to subside was Georges-Eugène “Baron” Haussmann (1809–91), Parisian, barrister, illegitimate baron, and, as Prefect of the Seine, chief overseer of the urbanization of Paris. Despite being well versed in Greco-Roman literature and philosophy, Haussmann was, by all accounts, a mediocre orator. In a speech directed more to the emperor than the crowd, Haussmann detailed how the plans for the new boulevard stemmed from blueprints he had studied in Dieppe in 1853, his first year as Prefect of the Seine. He went on to justify how the newly inaugurated boulevard fit a master urban plan that included previous work on the rue de Rivoli, the Château d'Eau, the rue de Turbigo, the rue Lafayette, the Canal Saint-Martin, and the recently annexed towns of Ménilmontant and Charonne, which now formed part of the twentieth *arrondissement*.<sup>1</sup> Hardly riveting stuff for the bystander Parisian, less so for the non-Francophone tourist in the crowd.

Napoléon III, a seasoned orator, spoke next. Whereas Haussmann saw the new boulevard as a utilitarian node in his urban infrastructure network, Napoléon framed the new thoroughfare in aesthetic terms: “To transform the capital, to make it both more expansive and more beautiful, it is not enough to rebuild more houses than we knock down, nor to provide employment for a host of various industries; rather, it is to reintroduce everywhere the habits of order and the love of the beautiful.” The transformed city, Napoléon proclaimed with his characteristic overstated eloquence, was a work of art—and as such, a product of the nineteenth-century urban imagination. The “work” of fashioning a city into a work of art extended beyond demolition and construction. Framing urbanization as a moral imperative, the empire invested in a variety of media campaigns, from boilerplate newspaper announcements and posters to poems, songs, and cantatas. So momentous was this occasion that it disrupted the weekend's concert schedule; even Jules Pasdeloup's famed *Concerts populaires* series was postponed on account of the boulevard inauguration.<sup>2</sup>

In the months leading up to the inauguration of the boulevard du Prince-Eugène, Parisians were treated to all sorts of celebratory literature hyping the event. Songs, odes, hymns, and choral works flooded the Parisian press, announcing the boulevard not only as a feat of engineering, but also as a

monument to the new brand of imperial urbanism brought forth by Napoléon III and executed by Haussmann. The famed street singer Eugène Baumberster published lyrics for a “Souvenir du Prince-Eugène,” to be sung to the then-popular tune *la Colonne*. Adopting the familiar second-person “tu,” Baumberster addresses the boulevard directly, as if it were a living organism having just come to life:

Greetings! Splendid boulevard,  
Who bears such a glorious name;  
An eager crowd has come to see you,  
With a radiant collective grin.<sup>3</sup>

Other songs focused less on the boulevard and more on the family after which it is named. Arthur Halbert d’Angers published a song that praises Prince Eugène’s mother (and Napoléon Bonaparte’s first wife) the Empress Josephine. Also adopting the informal “tu,” Halbert’s lyrics ring of more traditional imperial propaganda: “Honor to you, angelic woman,/ No one could deny your virtues.”<sup>4</sup> The new boulevard functioned not only as a new public utility, but rather—perhaps more so—as a monument to the imperial family.

One of the longer meditations on boulevard inauguration was by Joseph Desbrières, who published a poem dedicated to Baron Haussmann titled “Paris nouveau: Le boulevard du Prince-Eugène.”<sup>5</sup> The twenty-two page ode deploys a plenitude of metaphors for modernity, from the corporeal to the metaphysical; in the opening stanza, Desbrières likens the city to a body, alludes to the inevitable passage of time, and cites Haussmann, the city’s “chief magistrate,” as the catalyst of progress:

Another new and marvelous artery  
To shake off the dust of old Paris  
And which alone would secure the celebrity  
Of the great city’s chief magistrate.<sup>6</sup>

A common thread linking these celebratory poems and songs is their metacommentary on how the city *should* look and sound. To supporters of the empire, this imagined “old city” needed to be effaced from the urban imagination before real urbanization could take place. In Desbrières’s verse letter, demolishing *le vieux Paris*—a fictional, nostalgic version of the city that became something of a literary trope in the 1860s—was akin to sweeping away the dust of the past.

We see this theme of sweeping away the old city in an anonymous cantata text “on the occasion of the inauguration of the boulevard du Prince-Eugène,” submitted to censors on November 7, 1862, one month before the inauguration.<sup>7</sup> While I find it hard to imagine an audience of theatergoers being treated to a choral work about a public works project, the French cantata was a musical genre often deployed to such propagandistic purposes, from justifying overseas war to glorifying the mundanities of urban development. So it was the case that this anonymous cantata, which was slated for performance at the Théâtre Lyrique, monumentalized individual acts of urban renewal. The cantata doubled down on evoking “Old Paris” by referencing “Lutèce,” the ancient Roman city upon which the medieval city of Paris was built. In an era of space-time annihilation, such works served the purpose of placing urban projects onto a historical continuum:

Upon the debris of old Lutèce  
 Every day, new Paris  
 Valiantly flattens the creases  
 Of its coat, full of wealth.  
 In one of those creases, one discovers  
 A splendid and grand boulevard  
 That already accommodates the flag  
 That we see flying atop the Louvre.  
 Let all grateful hearts  
 Make a joyful noise  
 That resounds in the azure vault  
 Of the regenerated city.<sup>8</sup>

There is some striking imagery in this rather opaque stanza, which I have tried to capture in as figurative a translation as possible. The expression “azure vault,” a metaphor for heaven, appears in political and religious cantata texts throughout the nineteenth century. These cerulean pathways are lined with trumpet-bearing angels performing a heavenly fanfare; the text thus brings the celestial world into contact with boulevard life. This joyful noisemaking is mirrored in the last two lines of the cantata, likely intended to depict the cheering crowds and military musicians lining the new boulevard. “Debris” appears again, here representing not only the pre-Haussmannian city—the city of Balzac and the 1789, 1830, and 1848 revolutions—but also the old Roman city that stood in the way. Debris, of course, is a byproduct of urban development, a pollutant and a nuisance that temporarily made everyday life unbearable for citizens. Lutèce

had long been an obstacle to Parisian urban planners. Its Latin name *Lutetia* (“city of mud”), signified an era before urbanization, when city administrators had little control over infrastructure, and therefore little control over how citizens used urban space. Lutèce did not disappear from Parisian cultural memory, however; in the 1840s, Nouvelle Lutèce was a district that stretched from the Pont Neuf to Notre-Dame.<sup>9</sup> A few decades later in 1869, the archaeologist Théodore Vacquer uncovered a small Roman arena on the city’s Left Bank, which turned out to date from circa 200 AD. Haussmann rejected Vacquer’s plea to preserve the site, and he designated it for a new omnibus depot; in the early 1880s, following a bitter feud between municipal administration and preservationists, the arena was spared.<sup>10</sup> It is known today as the Arènes de Lutèce, one of the few remnants of the old city predating *le vieux Paris*.

Boulevards welcomed, districts sanitized, arenas excised. Haussmann the urbanist and bureaucrat fashioned himself as Haussmann the surgeon and psychologist. As he wrote in his recollections of the urbanization of Second Empire Paris, “The free circulation of air and water and the access to light serve to combat the effects of crowding, of the concentration of foul air, of the exhalation of miasmas and of evil odors. The straight line therefore reconciles the needs of beauty, the needs of hygiene and the needs of commerce.”<sup>11</sup> Marxist readings of Haussmannization have framed it as a strategy of geographic and financial redistribution of capital, enforced through tactics that attempted to curate sensory experience of the city: in short, an urban aesthetics. Paris, then, was not merely the space where human bodies lived; it was perceived *as* a body, sentient and mortal, able to see, hear, and smell. Not only was Haussmann plowing a hole through the metaphorical body of *le vieux Paris* but in doing so, he was altering the perception of urban time and the sensation of urban space.

Maps and urban plans reveal much about how planners hoped their cities would function in the abstract, rational sense. They do not necessarily articulate how cities were actually *used*, nor how different urban communities would have experienced the city. Nineteenth-century press illustrations, pamphlets, posters, guidebooks, poems, and, indeed, musical compositions, all helped to envision idealized, homogenized uses of city space. These documents reveal an infrastructure network of sights, sounds, texts, and spaces that defined the modernizing city for its inhabitants and visitors. But no infrastructure network is devoid of power structures that curate the urban experience on behalf of others. Urban soundscapes, like maps and plans, offer one part of the story. The case of the inauguration of the boulevard du Prince-



Eugène, and the media apparatus around it, hints at a central claim of this book: that the musical activity directly emerging from Haussmannization—from fanfare and cantatas to café and street music—shaped, in no small way, the empire’s ability to narrate its own urban history.

## FANFARE FOR A CITY

*Fanfare for a City* examines the intersections between musical and urban history in the Second Empire. By exploring the sonic and spatial worlds of World’s Fairs, cafés, and city streets and markets, it shows how popular and ceremonial music in the city became an integral theme in modernist narratives about *le nouveau Paris*: a metropolis at a crossroads between its treasured medieval past and its cosmopolitan imperial future. This interface between urban policy and music resulted in the flourishing of new popular musical institutions, such as the café-concert and operetta. Yet urbanism was also central in debates about civic heritage, censorship, and theatrical deregulation. Musicians played a significant role in these debates, as laws and infrastructure necessitated new ways of thinking about music. In their capacity to erase liminal cultural memory, the boulevards functioned similarly to emerging musical canons and their effect on musical consumption. Just as canons constitute far more than repertory lists, boulevards signified much more than urban mobility: their vastness and straightness represented uncompromising, linear progress that, like canons, drew clear-cut lines between history and the future. In Second Empire Paris, urban planning decisions shaped, and were shaped by, the musical spaces, institutions, and communities discussed in this book.

Readers of this book may be familiar with some of the musical genres most associated with the Paris of the 1850s and 60s: *opérette* (with Hervé and Offenbach leading the charge), *vaudeville*, late-stage *grand opéra*, the Orphéon choral concerts, the revival of older repertories (especially Gluck), the *opéras-comiques* of Auber, Bizet, Gounod, and Meyerbeer, and the influence of Italian and German opera, namely those by Donizetti, Verdi, and Wagner. The December highlights of the 1862 opera season provide a microcosm of what awaited Parisian operagoers as they traversed the new boulevards: at the Opéra, Donizetti’s *La Favorite* and *Lucie de Lammermoor* (in French translation); at the Opéra-Comique, Adam’s *Le Postillon de Lonjumeau*, Auber’s *Le Domino noir* and *Fra diavolo*, Boieldieu’s *La Dame blanche* (its thousandth performance) and *Jean de Paris*, David’s *Lalla-*

*Roukh*, and Massé's *Les Noces de Jeannette*; at the Théâtre-Italien, Donizetti's *Lucia* (in the original Italian) and Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (with star Adelina Patti singing the role of Rosina). The city's other major opera house, the Théâtre Lyrique, had a new home near the centrally located place du Châtelet, where the company had moved following Haussmann's demolition of the boulevard du Temple earlier in 1862. The occasion was marked with a revival of Gounod's *Faust*.

Resonating deep within the walls of the *grands théâtres*, Paris's operatic spectacles are a litmus of bourgeois tastes, but they do not give the full spectrum of what it meant to listen to urban life. Indeed, the study of operatic modernity, or what Anselm Gerhard calls the "urbanization of opera," says little about the political and aesthetic impact of music *on* urbanization.<sup>12</sup> Moving away from the politics and poetics of the city's theater industry frees ample space to listen to musics *of* the city, and not only in the highly curated edifices located *in* it. Yet *Fanfare for a City* is not a book about "popular music," at least not overtly so. While extant studies of "popular" music in nineteenth-century France tend to frame the years 1852–70 as a sort of "prequel" to the popular music "revolution" of the Belle Époque, *Fanfare for a City* homes in on those middle years of the century to argue that imperial urban planning cannot be separated from the spatial and artistic fields of cultural production.<sup>13</sup> My intention in this book is not to revisit the historiographical frictions between "popular" and "art" music, nor is it to give "voice to the voiceless" (which, as recent scholars of sound studies have shown, is more a neoliberal project of carving out newness than one of unpacking power structures).<sup>14</sup> *Fanfare for a City* looks for music in diverse socioeconomic spaces: train cars, boulevard corners, cafés, salons, exhibition halls, on walls, in police records. My aim is to show music's prevalence in the planning of Paris: how the city was designed, policed, mythologized, and ultimately homogenized as a modern metropolis.

## THE POETICS OF URBANIZATION

Second Empire politics and culture permeated every aspect of urbanization. The city map morphed from a serpentine web of alleys into a streamlined graph of intersecting boulevards and avenues. This symbolic metamorphosis occurred both above and below ground. An intricate and organized sewer and aqueduct system modernized the city's water supply. The sewers immediately became a tourist attraction: a visual, acoustic, and (one can imagine) olfactory