Songs of the Cajuns: A History and Analysis of Joie de vivre: Five Impressions of Acadian-America

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SONGS OF THE CAJUNS:

A HISTORY AND ANALYSIS OF JOIE DE VIVRE:

FIVE IMPRESSIONS OF ACADIAN-AMERICA

by

Wendy K. Moss

Bachelor of Music
University of Houston
2002

Master of Music
Illinois State University
2006

A doctoral project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Doctor of Musical Arts

School of Music
College of Fine Arts
The Graduate College

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
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This doctoral project prepared by

Wendy K. Moss

entitled

Songs Of The Cajuns: A History And Analysis Of Joie De Vivre: Five Impressions Of Acadian-America

is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

Songs of the Cajuns:
A History and Analysis of Joie de vivre: Five Impressions of Acadian-America

by

Wendy K. Moss

Dr. Tod Fitzpatrick, Examination Committee Chair
Associate Professor of Music
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My exploration of Cajun song, from its origins as a French ballade into popular American song, will reveal the musical characteristics of Cajun music. My study’s purpose is to increase ones understanding of the history of Cajun song and its music, and then determine why it is missing from the canon of American song repertoire. My study will include an analysis, performance and recording of Cajun song settings composed and arranged by Arles Estes.¹ My investigation will research five traditional Cajun songs as they pertain to Estes’ settings in order to broaden the roots of American song literature and enhance its growing body of repertoire.

Cajun music enjoys popularity worldwide and though the songs that embody Cajun music are vast, the five traditional songs that I have chosen represent Cajun music in its most authentic form. These songs are emblematic of the cultural heritage of the Cajun people. Just as the Cajun’s cuisine displays the essence of the Cajun people, the texts of these five songs represent the Cajun’s struggles, the Cajun’s history and the Cajun’s spirit—their joie de vivre (exuberant

¹ Arles Estes II (born 1974) is a contemporary composer of various styles of music ranging from classical to modern musical theatre and popular genres. He received his Bachelors in Music Composition at Louisiana State University while learning and playing various indigenous Louisiana musical styles with the locals. He received his Master’s in Music Composition from University of Texas at Austin and is currently writing, arranging and performing in the Las Vegas area On and Off the Strip.
enjoyment of life). These five songs contain the primary musical characteristics that make up Cajun music and act as a banner for the Cajun civilization.

The Cajun ballad, “Allons à Layfayette,” exemplifies early Cajun music and is still performed by Cajun musicians today. The children’s song, “Cadet Rousselle,” is prevalent in Cajun song due to its jovial nature, rich history and ancestral lineage. The songs focusing on “Evangeline” and “Jolie Blonde” both present pictures of the Cajuns and their way of life. While one is emblematic of a tragic and dissolute past, the other represents the Cajun people living in their Louisiana bayous. The ideal of ‘going to Texas,’ a metaphor throughout Cajun music, is expressed in the up-tempo song, “Grand Texas,” and manifests a Cajun’s zest for life. As a whole, these five Cajun songs are fine descriptors of the Cajun culture. These traditional songs epitomize the Cajuns love for their culture, family, history, food, fun, dancing, music, their heritage, and their love of living. All these things come alive in their music and their songs. As we explore the songs of the Cajun people, one can amass a greater knowledge and appreciation of the Cajuns and their cultural heritage, and the traditional songs of the Cajuns can assume their position among American song.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take this moment to thank all my professors, faculty, teachers, directors, coaches, family and friends that have brought me to this moment to be able to research, study and write about the Songs of the Cajuns.

To Dr. Tod Fitzpatrick, my voice teacher and academic advisor, I say ‘Thank You So Much’ for all your guidance, insight, inspiration and patience shown to me while I have studied at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Because of you, I have reached so many of my performing and academic goals and learned what it means to be a professor of the voice—one that is continually learning and working to perfect one’s craft both as a performer and as a teacher. Thanks for being a great example of what type of vocal pedagogue I aspire to be.

To my other DMA committee members: Dr. Alfonse Anderson, Dr. Kenneth Hanlon, Professor Dave Loeb and Dr. Phil Hubbard, I would like to thank them sincerely for their patience shown to me while working to complete this document, thank them for teaching me about my biggest passion, music; and aiding me in reaching many of my professional academic goals. Your examples of being great music teachers I will never forget.

To Professor Luana Devol, Thank You for being my voice instructor, German diction coach, opera director and friend. Your unwavering professionalism and knowledge of High-art have truly inspired me to never give up and to always reach for my dreams.

To Dr. Karen McCann, I want to send you my never-ending gratitude for always being a great support system to me. Your willingness to always be there as a sounding board for me, I truly appreciate. Thanks for your wonderful insights into French song and French diction as well. Also, I wish to send my many thanks to you for your high-quality accompaniments which truly made our time working together deeply memorable moments for me.
I would also like to send my sincere thanks and immeasurable gratitude to Matthew Buk, Joann C. Zajac and Zeffin Quinn Hollis for their tireless efforts, encouragement, guidance and training as I worked to complete this study. Without their input and support, I would have never been able to acquire the endurance needed to be able to complete this work. *Merci beaucoup!*

To Arles Estes II, composer of *Joie de vivre: Five Impressions of Acadian-America*, which were commissioned and composed for this work, I say ‘Thank You So Much’ for all your intelligent, truly imaginative, inspiring and enduring work. Your ability to be a continuous source for me to go and bounce ideas off of, truly kept me on track with this project and helped me keep going, despite all the many obstacles. Also, your knowledge and insight into Cajun music greatly supported me and helped me find the courage I never knew I had to able to finish this musical document that is written to honor the music of an almost forgotten people—the Cajuns. To Arles and his wonderful wife, Erin Estes, I say: Thanks for being true friends to me and wish them always, *Laissez le bon temps rouler Chères!*
DEDICATIONS

This study of the Songs of the Cajun People and Their Music is dedicated to my paternal, great grandmother—Daisy Landry Moss (1889—1984), who was born in Morse, Acadia, Louisiana and moved to Port Arthur, Texas in 1908 to settle with my great grandfather—Luther Joseph Moss (1887—1970). Daisy Moss, I remember, spoke pure Cajun French and I could rarely tell if she was speaking in English or Cajun French!

This study is also dedicated to my maternal grandfather—George William Inman (1917—1966) who helped to make this composition of Cajuns songs possible.
The Cajuns, who lived primarily in Louisiana, are one of America’s first immigrant ethnic groups, and are descendants of French-speaking Acadians who occupied the present-day Maritime provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and also Northeastern Maine. The Acadians were exiled from Canada between 1755—1763 by the British because they sought to eliminate a future military threat posed by the Acadians and permanently cut the supply lines they provided to the French fortress of Louisbourg by removing them from the area.² This tragic event, known as le grand derangement (the Great Expulsion), separated families and forced people to flee with only the possessions they could carry. The British burned the homes, crops and villages of the Acadians; then placed them on boats under dreadful conditions to endure a passage. This removal resulted in more than half of the Acadian population losing their lives. This event is depicted in the epic poem Evangeline by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and remains a focal point of Acadian history.

² The word ‘Cajun’ originated in nineteenth-century Acadie (now Nova Scotia, Canada) when the Acadians began to arrive. The French of noble ancestry would say, "les Acadiens", while some referred to the Acadians as "les 'Cadiens", dropping the "A". Later, Americans who could not pronounce "Acadien" or "Cadien", pronounced the word "Cajun." Ryan André Brasseaux, Cajun Breakdown: The Emergence of an American-Made Music, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 8.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

From Beaumont, Texas, driving east along highway 90 clear to New Orleans, you drive through a country of cane, rice, swampland and a population that is predominantly French-speaking. These people are known as the “Cajuns” or, more politely, the “Acadians.” They have not forgotten that they are descended from Evangeline’s people who came to Louisiana from Nova Scotia (then known to the French inhabitants as Acadia) in 1765. They are proud folk and cling to their French speech, their thrifty peasant ways, their songs, and their dances.3

During the 1930s, the Library of Congress tasked John and Alan Lomax4 to explore and record the folk songs of America’s earliest settlers and communities. The Lomaxes hope, as father and son, was to present a different perspective on the cultural landscape of American music. In essence, they looked to find the unknown early songs of Americans so that they could learn to sing the songs from our diverse national canon.5 A small portion of their study focused on a handful of songs by Acadians, known today as Cajuns, who resided in South Central Louisiana. The Lomaxes are believed to be the foremost authority on the songs of the Cajuns, yet the shortness of their study can only be seen as a preface to the complete history of Cajun song. Wayne D. Shirley intimates that “a third of a century after their release we can see that rural and old-style bias of the early Library of Congress folk music recordings provided something less than the full range of American folk music. From a perspective in 1940, however, they are an

amazing document of taste, courage and confidence.”6 It is surprising to note that none of the currently recognized standard traditional songs of the Cajuns were included in the honored Lomax recordings. Cajun song was only “one segment of a nation-wide folksong survey.”7 These standard songs were not included because the American Field Study which was “dedicated to the preservation of the old songs and styles of the folk with little attempt to document the new styles and songs that were emerging.”8 John Lomax, for this reason, decided to focus primarily on the “exclusively rural” songs of the Acadian-Cajun society and exclude the standards that were being documented on commercial and popular recordings.9 The unintended consequence of the Lomaxes’ decision prompted the segregation of Cajun song from American song and caused its classification to belong to the folk or popular musical idiom.

The Lomaxes’ authored two acclaimed anthologies, *American Ballads and Folksongs* and *Our Singing Country*, both of which are collections of transcribed melodies and texts of American Folk songs. In the assemblage of both anthologies only a small section is devoted to the songs of the Cajuns. In fact, they title that section “French Songs and Ballads from Southwestern Louisiana,”10 which does not identify the music as Acadian or Cajun song. It is not until the second book, published in 1941, that a short chapter gives attention to French songs. These do not include any transcriptions of what now are considered to be the standard songs of the Cajuns. In the one-thousand plus pages, only sixteen pages are dedicated to French song. Perhaps in the first half of the twentieth century not even the Library of Congress researchers

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7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
could segregate how Cajun song should be categorized. However, Dr. Barry J. Ancelet asserts that the significance of the Lomax studies is that “they catapult us much further back into the past than early commercial records, and thus shed light on the ancient roots of Louisiana French music.”  

The Lomax Recordings I and II Cajun Creole, compiled by Alan Lomax, are actual recordings taken from the Library of Congress study, but it was really in Irène T. Whitfield’s study that a true introduction to Cajun song is presented. The Lomaxes give praise to her work from the 1930s, and though it is not regarded by some as the most complete source for Cajun song, it is in my opinion, the definitive source. James C. Fields states of Whitfield’s study “she did not begin the song collection with the intention of publishing them, but of the 103 songs and associated information was considered to be of such importance that it was published as a book, *Louisiana French Folk Songs*, in 1939.” Her book focuses on the text and gives a transcription of the Cajun French used for each song with phonetic symbols shown as a pronunciation guide underneath the text. Her transcriptions of the Cajun melody, Cajun text and phonetic symbols can be viewed as original documentation of songs that were previously only preserved by oral tradition. Her work is the definitive guide, in my opinion, for reference when studying traditional Cajun song. Alan Lomax noted “the tradition of folk music that this region has fostered, has received little or no attention with a notable exception given to Miss Whitfield’s thesis on *Acadian Songs*.”

---

12 Irene T. Whitfield Holmes (1900–1993)
Ryan Brasseaux further pinpoints that “musicians and members of the Academy of Recording Arts today, which represent Louisiana, are coping with the repercussions of this scenario that Cajun musicians and their audiences helped to perpetuate for more than eighty years”\(^{15}\) as it pertains to the discontinuity of Cajun music. He affirms that Cajun music’s “authenticity” comes into question because of the “commercialization” it endured. “During the Great Depression, folklorists—including the Lomaxes and Irène Whitfield—constructed the ‘folk’ label through which Cajuns and others came to understand indigenous Louisiana music.”\(^ {16}\) These “folk/popular” music labels smeared the true nature of Cajun music.\(^ {17}\)

Thus one can ascertain that though the Lomax and Whitfield studies are honored and much needed for Cajun music’s history, and can be considered ‘must haves’ when it comes to the documentation of the Cajun’s musical oral traditions, the initial segregation of this American genre into “folk” and “commercial” areas led to its core identity being skewed for many generations.

In this exploration of America’s early song, I will examine the music of the Cajun people through the study of five traditional Cajun songs that will reveal Cajun musical characteristics. My study’s purpose is to increase one’s understanding of Cajun song and to produce an analysis of Cajun songs composed and arranged by Arles Estes in *Joie de vivre*. My research will survey five traditional Cajun songs from their roots to their modern settings.

Just as the spiritual, derived from the folk songs of slaves, has found a voice from the arrangements and compositions of Henry Thacker Burleigh and Moses Hogan. This type of substantiation has not yet been documented for traditional Cajun song. Slowly, with works


\(^{16}\) Ibid, 215.

\(^{17}\) Ibid, 214.
emerging by Frank Ticheli in his *Cajun Folk Songs*, 1 and 2, for orchestra and Mike Story’s arrangement of *Two Cajun Songs* for concert band, Cajun music is finding a small footing in the Classical musical repertory. Incorporation into the repertory of Arles Estes’s setting of *Joie de vivre: Five Impressions of Acadian-America* will now include these much needed Cajun songs in the American repertoire. In his work, Estes adapts five traditional Cajun songs into compositions appropriate for the concert stage. As works of this nature continue to emerge, traditional Cajun music can assume its place in the body of American art song.
CHAPTER 2

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAJUN MUSIC

By the 1990s, one could walk down Main street in Canada’s Moncton, New Brunswick, and have a choice of Cajun jambalaya or spicy shrimp at not one but two restaurants. You could hear a French Cajun band play the old Louisiana Standards in Paris and kick up your heels at the monthly Cajun dance in London’s Cecil Sharp House. Or you could just stay home and wash down your Amazin’ Cajun potato chips (from Dallas) with Original Cajun Flavored Beer (from Milwaukee).18

During the late Eighteenth century there were immigrants of many nationalities that came together to form the United States. These varied immigrants brought their own musical heritage with them that highly influenced the formation of Cajun music and were primary ingredients that seasoned their evolving songs. These assorted cultures allowed diverse styles and musical characteristics that conveyed specific sounds and elements to greatly influence the generation of Cajun music.

Stemming from the roots of Western France in the Poitou region, the Acadians migrated to Louisiana. The expelled Acadians, from the Nova Scotia region in Northern America, with their European and Micmac Native American customs, migrated and settled in Louisiana. These newly converged traits in Louisiana noticeably shaped the formation of traditional Cajun music and song. Their songs, birthed from their oral traditions, grew into the songs of the Cajuns that the Lomaxes and Irène T. Whitfield documented in their work.

Once settled in Louisiana, the French Acadians isolated themselves from other immigrants that occupied those same regions. Cajun song could not resist the influences of the depths of ethnic and cultural sounds that surrounded them despite their confinement. Alan Lomax stated

that “European and African settlers interacted with native tribes such as the Chitimaches and Houmas since the founding of Louisiana by the French in 1699; And the Acadians, before that by the Micmacs in Canada since the early 1600s.” In addition to their European and African influences, the Cajuns’ music was molded by the sounds of Native American Indians as well.

Due to the abundant rulers and nations reign over their territory, the Cajuns and their music were noticeably influenced by the profusion of these various nations, who implanted their own musical traditions and musical idioms upon them. Despite these strong influences, the Cajuns remained relatively isolated until the twentieth-century when Americanization ultimately removed the boundaries the Cajuns sought to uphold. R. Brasseaux summarizes this perception by stating that “Cajun music is woven of many strands which is the product of worlds in collision.” And further elaborates that the:

Gulf Coast expression germinated across generations through interaction and adaptation. Cajun musicians drew inspiration from, and built upon, musical principles derived from their European and Canadian lineages, while readily adapting and translating a varied complex of American influences into a Franco-Southern idiom that accommodated the ethnic group’s concerns, worldview and cultural orientation.

Alan Lomax “finds imprints of three main cultural traditions that encountered one another in Louisiana—the French European, the Caribbean African, and the Mississippi Indian.” He believes “that Cajun and Creole traditions are a unique blending of European, African and Amerindian qualities (See Table 2.1).”

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21 Ibid, 4-5.
Table 2.1. Musical Influences on Cajun Music’s Development.

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<th>European:</th>
<th>Afro-Caribbean:</th>
<th>Native American:</th>
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<tr>
<td>-Text is important</td>
<td>-Half of text repeated</td>
<td>-Irregular, shifting rhythms</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Delivered in a rapid and</td>
<td>-Isometrically designed two-phrased melody and runs in descending cadences</td>
<td>-High-Pitched cries of the lead singer</td>
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<tr>
<td>precisely enunciated manner</td>
<td>-Punctuated by blues notes</td>
<td>-Terraced-stepped melodic forms</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Narrow-voiced</td>
<td>-Has a highly syncopated and raggy, rhythmic style</td>
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<td>-Metrically regular</td>
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Cajun Historian Barry J. Ancelet remarks of creolization that “those who want to freeze the tradition lack an historical perspective of the importance of the creolization process in Cajun music. Today the blending and fusion at the heart of the development of Cajun culture continue to be essential to its music.”

Cajun music has a lengthy and complicated genealogy in the development of its music with most, but not all, of its songs being conceived from French ballads that existed before the twentieth century. Their songs tell stories of the Acadian-Cajun people as they struggled to grow, live and thrive in the New World. Their songs speak of their travels, heritage, and traditions. Having been passed down, mainly from one generation to the next through oral tradition, Cajun song continued to adapt to its cultural surroundings especially as it expanded and matured until the documentation process began circa 1930. Lineage and ancestry is another factor that had a great impact the development of Cajun music.

Acadian chansons would eventually evolve into early Canadian and Cajun songs as the Acadian heritage dissolved from its Francophone past. Acadian customs thrives for

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approximately a hundred and sixty years in Louisiana, but due to modernism in the twentieth
century, they eventually converted into traditional Cajun customs. This growth developed into
the establishment of Cajun song standards, or as the Cajuns call them—the Cajun classics. As
Cajun society became firmly established in Louisiana culture, so too did their songs. Thus, Cajun
standards today have ancestral musical pedigree, which stem from French chansons and Acadian
melodies, which, for the most part can be recognized as the genesis of Cajun music.

The Development of Musical Stages and Genres

The history and development of Cajun music can be divided into three musical stages framed
by Cajun historians Barry J. Ancelet, Ryan Brasseaux and Shane Bernard (See Table 2.3).24

(1) The formative stage (pre-1900s—1940s) which grew from before the turn-of-the-century
until the end of World War II. The formative stage is also known as the commercial era due to
the early recordings of the first Cajun songs. Barry J. Ancelet asserts “at the turn of the century,
Cajun music entered a highly creative period, which among other things combined song and
instrumental music in the same performance. By this time, Cajun music reflected the blend of
cultures in Southern Louisiana and calls it a formative period.”25 At the same time in Louisiana,
Creole music, a sibling genre to Cajun music, had its own maturation and evolution (See Table
2.2) and significantly influenced the first recordings of Cajun music. During “the formative
period, the most influential musicians were the black Creoles who brought a strong, rural blues

24 “History of Cajun music,” Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia,
2016).
Louisiana Studies, 1989), 19.
element into Cajun music.”  

Thus, the formative stage of music in Southern Louisiana produced two musical genres which are known now as Cajun and Creole music.

Barry J. Ancelet notes that it was the “recorded musicians” of Cajun and Creole music that set “the official style.”  

The first recorded Cajun song was “Allons à Lafayette” in 1928. Joseph Falcon, his wife Clèoma and his brother-in-law Amédée Breaux recorded it. “Allons à Lafayette” went on to sell “thousands of records in Louisiana, Texas and across the United States.”

Table 2.2. Musical Genres of Southern Louisiana.

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26 Ibid.  
The Cajun Renaissance stage (1940s—1970s), or commonly known as a “revival” of original Cajun music, began after World War II and lasted through the 1970s, with the Vietnam War halting much of the Golden Age of Development in the United States. Three divisions of musical genres developed during this musical time period: (a) the Cajun music revival, which sought to cement and solidify traditional Cajun music; (b) Swamp Pop, which borrowed elements from Cajun music, jazz, blues and country swing into forming this new genre and style that blossomed in the dance hall venues of Louisiana, and (c) Zydeco music, which is the evolution of Creole music from its birth during the formative stage.

The Cajun Renaissance, also called the Cajun revival, was a time in Cajun music history when its music became established, and was allowed to exist without the constraints of Americanization and Creolization restricting it from reaching its full potential.

By the end of the 1930s, much of the core repertoire of Cajun music already existed. Griffin Smith, Jr. expresses that “by 1950, three major things had changed: the oil and gas demand, which brought jobs; new roads, which ended rural isolation; and World War II, which thrust thousands of Cajun youths into the outside world.” As America began to thrive again post-World War II, this era became known as the Golden Age of Development in many aspects of the country from industrialism to economics.

Following this pattern of growth, Cajun music experienced what historians call “a Cajun Renaissance” in which many elements of traditional Cajun music, especially in their songs,

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became more mainstream as Cajun composers and musicians tried to hang on to their dying culture.\textsuperscript{31}

Lastly, (3) the modern stage (1980s—Present), which began during the 1980s and expanded into the contemporary Cajun music. A plethora of musical genres now exist in Southern Louisiana according to John Broven. He indicates that during the 1980s the music of:

\begin{quote}
South Louisiana thrives. Cajun music continues to reach a wider and appreciative audience. And he elaborates that a blossoming of genres ignited in Southern Louisiana which included many other genres outside of the Cajun music idiom ranging from R&B and Soul, to Dixieland Jazz, to Rockabilly, to Down Home and City Blues, to Country.\textsuperscript{32}
\end{quote}

Through this plethora of musical genres, traditional Cajun music remains steady through the works of popular Cajun musicians.

Ann Savoy states of modern Cajun music that “today, we in Louisiana are fortunate to have living representatives of many of its various styles and stages.”\textsuperscript{33} “All forms of Cajun music can be heard, from those who draw on a variety of elements from the broad history of Cajun and Creole music.”\textsuperscript{34}

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAJUN MUSIC TIMELINE</th>
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<td><strong>Before 1900s</strong>—1920s—1940s—1980s—2000s—**</td>
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**EARLY YEARS (1760s—1920s) from the Formative Stage**
- Not much known due to the isolation of the Acadians
- Acadian songs influenced by European, Afro-Caribbean, Spanish, German and Indians

- Oil Discovered in Texas & Louisiana (1901–1930s)

**EARLY RECORDING ERA (1920s—) from the Formative Stage**
- First Cajun song recorded, "Allons à Lafayette"
- Acadians now called "Cajuns" due to Americanization
- Delineation between Cajun and Creole music blurred

- Lomax Recordings I & II
  (1934 and 1937)

**CAJUN RENAISSANCE (1940s—) consisting of the Cajun Revival, Zydeco and Swamp Pop Genres**
- CODIFIL established and Cajun French allowed after the language ban
- Resurgence of Traditional Cajun songs
- Instrumentation influenced due to WWII loss of the accordion
- Two leading components to the revival:
  - 1964 Newport Folk Festival
  - 1975 CODIFIL produced Festivals Acadieux

**MODERN ERA (1980s—Present)**
- A division between Cajun, Zydeco, Swamp Pop, Jazz and R&B became clear and a New Cajun sound was formed mixing Rock, Blues and R&B by Wayne Toups called Zydecajun
- Traditional, Country and many other styles exist presently

CHAPTER 3

Musical Characteristics of Cajun Music

Music was important to the daily lives of the Cajun people who helped keep it alive in their homes and in the reveling in their homes and in their dance halls. Cajun music has its roots in the ballads of French-speaking Acadians of Canada. The first form of Cajun song began before the twentieth century in southern Louisiana. When the Acadians came from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia to Louisiana in 1764, they brought with them many beautiful ballads that told stories of bygone years. Many of their songs can be traced back to France, which then drifted to the bayou and the prairie region of Louisiana via Nova Scotia and New Orleans. These ballads are not widely performed today but were the basis of what is now accepted as Cajun music.35

The early subject matter of Cajun song included tall-tales, which speak of lost love and subjects that deal with the Cajuns trails and sufferings as a developing ethnic group in America. The vocal style of Cajun song includes a mix between a rich, lyrical voice with a plaintive, high-voice cry that is commonly associated with Cajun singing. The musical accompaniment of Cajun song can range from simple melodies sung over simple musical material to the dance tunes that use a full complement of all the Cajun instruments: accordion, fiddle, guitar, triangle and modernly—percussion.36

In the late nineteenth century, affordable accordions were introduced in Louisiana and were adopted by both Cajun and Creole musicians. These sister Louisianan genres grew parallel of each other especially in the genres of dance tunes with the Cajun two-step and waltzes.

36 Ibid.
The songs of the Cajuns are the essence of Cajun music and continue to display the authenticity of what the Cajun culture represents. The most important aspects of Cajun music are intrinsic elements found in the body of their song repertory. These elements include the texts of their songs, the venues where the songs are performed and their overall musical structure. These innate components embody the essence of what constitutes Cajun song.

Text Usage and Delivery in the Songs

The text of Cajun songs developed largely from improvisation. First, the text is full of metaphors and imagery that evolved from oral traditions. Second, nearly all the songs have numerous versions as a result of Americanization. Third, the delivery of the text, by the Cajun singer, is a unique display of vocal production that separates it from other genres. It may be noted that “many of the old Cajun folk songs have French equivalents while others are based on European dances or incorporate elements from Anglo-American or Caribbean traditions.”37 The texts of Cajun song are of significant the forefront of importance in the analysis of the repertory.

Cajun musicians regard the texts of their songs as oral poetry which speak to everyday life and exhibit their emerging culture. The words from the text form images and poetic conventions that can be found in many Cajun songs and create traditional imagery found in Cajun song text and poetry. Caralyn Ware maintains that “Cajun music has its own conventions which make up its particular poetic vocabulary and their use of images is one of the most interesting forms of poetics.”38

The most common images to be found are those of la maison (the house), and those of le chemin (the road). The home can be seen as the idyllic place of refuge for a Cajun consisting of

38 Ibid, 1.
love, marriage, fidelity, peace and rest. While the road, or leaving home, can be seen as discord or the opposite to being safe at home. On the road, a Cajun is typically seen as homeless, unhappy, and looking for a way to find a connection to a home, family and a community.\textsuperscript{39}

Another significant traditional viewpoint in Cajun oral poetry regards abandonment. “The husband or lover who has been abandoned is a common figure in Cajun music, and he often uses the image of the empty house to refer to his unhappy state, complaining that he is left alone there, suffering.”\textsuperscript{40} Barry J. Ancelet also supports this use of imagery by noting that a continuous “theme has long preoccupied the Cajuns and the Creoles of Louisiana of separation and loss of family, loneliness and sorrow.”\textsuperscript{41} In general it can be noted that imagery regarding the home represents security and joy while the road represents destruction and despair. “These images of ‘\textit{la maison}’ and ‘\textit{le chemin}’ have then become metaphors which have cultural meaning far beyond their literal definitions. These symbols can travel from song to song as words and phrases, carrying their many levels of meaning with them.”\textsuperscript{42}

How a Cajun song is expressed is not only in its text usage, poetic imagery or improvisation but in how the performer sings the song. Before amplification, singers had to be loud to be heard over the stomping of feet and the accordion in the Cajun dance halls. Cajun singers developed a vocal technique that considerably shortened the sound of the vocal tract and also that included a modest opening between the lips for a narrowed, oral cavity opening.\textsuperscript{43} “The vocals, usually in

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid, 2.
\textsuperscript{43} Griffin Smith Jr., “The Cajuns: Still Loving Life.” \textit{National Geographic} (178, no. 4 October 1990), 56.
French, are nasal and shrill enough to be heard over the sound of dancing feet.”\textsuperscript{44} Through their use of the French language, now more than just a dialect of the standard Francophone language, speech and singing became more informal as it evolved into contemporary Cajun French.\textsuperscript{45}

Ann Savoy, referring to the Cajun singing style, mentions that “in the old days…there were no amplifiers or microphones, but the dance halls were packed full of people drinking and having a good time. For the singer to be heard, he had to sing high and loud. For a man to sing in the key of C or D (Major), he had to really belt his vocal out with no holding back.” Savoy goes on to conceive that “this high, loud singing is still the most popular form of traditional style singing”\textsuperscript{46} in Southwestern Louisiana.

Another integral component of Cajun song which evolved from improvisation, was the creation of “the Cajun yell.” Carolyn Ware defines it as a “high-pitched, emotional singing style characteristic of Cajun music which works with the melody and words to establish the mood of loneliness and unhappy love at the heart of many Cajun songs”\textsuperscript{47} Conversely “the Cajun Yell” is used to exhibit joy and happiness as an exclamation of Cajun life.

The Venues of the Songs

The songs and music of the Cajun people can be categorized by the venues in which they are presented and delivered. Ryan Brasseaux in Cajun Breakdown separates Cajun music performance venues into three categories. (1) Home music: which for the most part were the venues for celebrations, gatherings and bals du maison (house dances) until the end of the

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{45} See Appendix I for Cajun French Pronunciation Guide.
formative stage. (2) Ritualistic music: which represents songs that were performed for formal functions that included weddings, funerals, Mardi Gras and Lent celebrations. And (3) Dance hall music: which brought the Cajun dances out of le maisons to the clubhouses and halls of the mid-twentieth century and also assisted in the establishment of the two most popular dance forms: in the waltz and the two-step (See Table 2.4). Brasseaux remarks that these three venue types played “distinct roles within the Cajun community” and affected the overall growth of the Cajun’s music.

Table 3.1: The Venue of Cajun Song.

| Home Music:                          | - Thrived at bals du maison
|                                     | - Explores poetry of text, rich compositions
|                                     | - More freedom for improvisation with no accompaniment
|                                     | - Allowed to abbreviate/extend, change mode & meter mid-song
|                                     | - Ballads, laments & complaints most popular genres to deliver oral history and reinforced family and cultural ties
| Ritualistic Music:                   | - Occurred at weddings, funerals, Mardi Gras and Lent celebrations
|                                     | - Unaccompanied singing assumed ritual form
|                                     | - Complaintes were typically sung at weddings (elaborate in writing)
|                                     | - Ballads took the form of cantiques at funerals (hymns)
| Dance Hall Music:                    | - Cajun songs now very metered
|                                     | - Dance styles can be categorized between European and American varieties
|                                     | - Reels à bouche became out of style as electronics and amplification became more popular
|                                     | - Dance Halls first appeared during the Late-1920s
|                                     | - The ‘Cajun Two-Step’ became the style of Cajun song and dance that was adapted from the earlier Fox Trot


In Home Music, songs were “sung a capella for pleasure in a domestic setting for friends, family or personal enjoyment.” Ritualistic Music included “recitation for songs, or song texts, at significant events straddling secular and religious social spheres.” And lastly, Dance Music, which was “performed at bals du maison” initially, and “later moved to the dance halls—which

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became a distinctive style that would be exploited commercially in the early twentieth century,"49 and greatly influenced the development of the genre of Swamp Pop music.

The Structure of the Songs

As music during the Cajun revival continued to grow and evolve amidst text and dance song adaptations, a definitive form and structure came into existence for Cajun songs. Alan Lomax noted in his studies of the early songs of the Acadians that they are “strophic in form and have regular rhythms” which can contain some “virtuosic passages at first tempi.” Of singing the melodies of the early Cajun songs, Alan Lomax reveals that texts are set in “extremely regular registers with many repetitions occurring of the text.” Of the intervallic relationships, Lomax expounds on Cajun melodies that singers are required to sing “big vocal leaps and wide melodic note intervals.” He goes on to point out that most melodies have descending intervals and patterns as they approach harmonic cadences. And the rhythmic patterns generally are isometric with an oscillating pattern occurring over and over against an alternate syncopated rhythm.50

The structure of the Cajun song does not follow the traditional patterns of a classical art song, nor even a more modern country or pop song. Its structure, as defined by Raymond E. Francois, is “not a rigid structure,” but typically consists of an alteration between the main “tune” and the main “turn.” François elaborates:

usually a (Cajun) song has a tune of eight (or nine) measures and a turn (tourne in French) of eight (or nine) measures. The ‘turn’ is an extended bridge providing a contrast for the tune. When a Cajun band plays a song, usually all instruments, led by the accordion, first play the tune, or possibly the turn, together. Then the vocalist takes the

49 Ibid.
lead, singing the tune. Then the guitar takes the lead for two tunes or two turns; then the violin for two. This order of play repeats, begins with the accordion.51

The “tune” of a Cajun song can be considered the main melodic material while the “turn” is secondary and more connecting material of the main tune. When the vocalist takes his turn with the main melody, “he can improvise and embellish according to his taste and talent,” explains Francois. He goes on to add that “there are no explicit rules to the complete structure of Cajun song. The structure, even with its tune and turn can be improvised and subjected to the desire of the musicians and singer. The singer “can change the words of the song to suit himself and he can also improvise musically or sing the harmony instead of the tune.” Francois stresses the importance of improvisation to Cajun music as do other Cajun music historians noting that “you can’t assume that the vocal part of a song will be the same as the tune.” Improvisation will always be an integral stylistic feature in Cajun songs, despite the set tune and turn.52

I. Berkley in his article “An Old-fashioned Connectionist approach to a Cajun Chord Change Problem” from *Connection Science* indicates of Cajun music elements that it “is one of the traditional styles of music that originates in Southwestern Louisiana that has a fairly distinctive tone and structure. It is often very limited in terms of the keys and note ranges it employs.”53

The key and harmonic structure of most Cajun songs follow this identifying characteristic of being straightforward in its fundamental tonic to subdominant to dominate template. Berkeley supports this concept by summarizing that “The melody is relatively simple and its chord structure is minimal in the Cajun music repertoire. Most songs have been through multiple

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52 Ibid.
versions and recordings by numerous artists throughout the years,”54 yet maintain their integrity of key structure and harmonic function.

Improvisation is another important characteristic. Ryan Brasseaux states that “the disposition, character, and fundamental values of Cajun music are grounded in improvisation.” He calls this improvisation “an adaptive cultural mechanism” which is at the “very heart of the Acadian experience.” And adds that:

like a displaced African slave who encountered a world in Louisiana completely removed from the one they left behind, Acadian refugees traversed a new cultural landscape when they arrived in Bayou Country—adapting musical ideas and stylistic traits into their repertoire. This improvisational experiment led to the development of a new musical form, as the Acadians nestled as another thread in south Louisiana’s cultural fabric.55

After looking at many of the musical elements that exist in Cajun music through their songs, the musical characteristics of Cajun music are:

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Primary:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Secondary:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Melody (the Tune) is prevalent</td>
<td>Singers use a more closed, nasal sound for projection and employ a high-pitched, Cajun Yell for exclamation or to exhibit grief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most song texts are strophic</td>
<td>A drone note or figure can be heard, typically, under the melodic material to increase the overall volume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagery is displayed in the text</td>
<td>Waltzes and the Two-step are the primary dances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetitiveness in text and structure</td>
<td>Instrumentation follows an alteration pattern with accordion, the fiddle or the singer takes the lead against accompanying material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvisation in text and structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contains simple key signatures and simple chord structures</td>
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These characteristics are the criterion for any Cajun song despite its musical stage or the musicians playing of the music.

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54 Ibid.
CHAPTER 4

JOLIE BLONDE

The immensely popular Cajun song—“Jolie Blonde”—permeated the Cajun culture in the 1930s, and plunged into the American popular music stream in the eras that directly followed the end of World War II. Ryan Brasseaux called “Jolie Blonde’s” adoration and growth a “phenomenon” which “began in Cajun country before the song’s popularity and influence diffused throughout America.”56 Brasseaux elaborates on this Cajun song that is now recognized as the Cajun national anthem:

‘Jole Blon’ is arguably the most famous Cajun song of all time. Considered by many the ‘Cajun National Anthem,’ the waltz apparently began life as a folk melody in French Louisiana. First recorded by Cajun musicians in 1929, the song emerged as a standard within the Cajun musical canon, and, after 1946, as part of the national American songbook. Though the title is often rendered in various ways—including ‘Jolie Blonde,’ ‘Jolie Blond,’ and ‘Jole Blon’—all refer to a pretty (jolie) blonde woman. The song’s lyrics recount the tale of a jaded man, who is left heart broken when his lover ‘ma quitter pour t’en aller…avec un autre’ (left me for someone else). Harry Choates’s 1946 recording remains the catalyst for Cajun music’s integration into American popular music.57

Though Cajun musicians have stated that the tune for “Jolie Blonde” was “about two hundred years old,” the song was first recorded in 1929 by Amèdè Breaux during the Formative stage of Cajun music’s development and was entitled “Ma Blonde Est Partie” (My Blonde Went Away and Left Me). Working its way through other titles and text changes, the recording that is most revered by Cajuns, and in the American song repertory, was Harry Choates’s rendition from

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1946. Choates’s recording is the version with which all other “Jolie Blonde” interpretations intersect. Countless depictions of “Jolie Blonde” exist today, yet Choates’ “Jole Blon” is the most universal, and the one seen as heralding the Cajun culture into the American culture.

Table 4.1. “Jolie Blonde” Timeline

Composer Arles Estes notes that “he found thousands of versions of ‘Jolie Blonde’ in French, English and Cajun French”\(^\text{58}\) when performing his research. Cajun Historian Ryan Brasseaux indicates of the spelling change of the “Jolie Blonde” title to “Jole Blon” that it is an “anglicized label” for American “interpretations of the Cajun waltz.”\(^\text{59}\) He goes on to add of “Jolie Blonde’s importance: “Unlike other crossover Cajun tunes such as ‘Grand Texas,’ ‘Jole Blon’ exploded across the nation. American’s embraced the novelty of the Louisiana waltz. Cajuns viewed the song’s popularity as positive validation contrasting the prejudice that often underscored relationships between Francophones and Anglophones. The composition’s enormous popularity along the Gulf Coast and in the United States coincide with the nation’s blossoming ethnic consciousness.”\(^\text{60}\)

As the traditional song “Jolie Blonde” helped bring Cajun culture and ethnicity into the acceptance to America, the Cajun people adopted this most popular song as their culture’s national anthem. “Jolie Blonde” for the Cajun community, even over their Evangeline emblem, “transcended its original Cajun cultural context and evolved with each Anglo-American adaptation. Peeling back the layers of history and meaning that the song accumulates on its way toward becoming a classic in the American songbook.” This “is the key to understanding the complexities of ‘Jole Blon’—or the Cajun national anthem.”\(^\text{61}\)

The subject matter for this initial version of “Jolie Blonde” is sung by the lamenting man who grieves over the loss of his pretty blond-haired love who left him to be with another man. The


\(^{59}\) Note: How Bill Quinn actually changed the name cuz of misspelling.


\(^{61}\) Ibid, 159-60.
singer exclaims through the verses that their “are plenty of other pretty blonde women out there that he can find.”

Ryan Brasseaux asserts that “the initial 1929 Breaux family recording generated strong demand for the song within the Cajun community, a demand continuously reinforced by subsequent Cajun string band interpretations.”

It was not until 1936 that the song title, “Jolie Blonde,” appeared for the first time on an actual recording. That was the recording made by the Cajun band, the Hackberry Ramblers; who’s version for Bluebird Records, was completed ten years prior to the infamous Choates’ ‘Jole Blon’ depiction. “In 1936, the Hackberry Ramblers forever altered the song’s identity by renaming the tune ‘Jolie Blond,’ a reference to the protagonist’s lost love. The Ramblers’ swing version of the tune became a crowd favorite.”

Harry Choates’ “Jole Blon”

When one thinks about the traditional Cajun song “Jolie Blonde,” it is not the Breaux version, or the Hackberry Ramblers, or Bruce Springsteen’s, or Buddy Holly and Waylon Jenning’s adaptation, nor Moon Mullican’s, nor the many country artists, or the Rock ’n’ roll depictions, or the Zydeco interpretation by Clifton Chenier—that most people think of. The version that one thinks of, with the most familiar tune, is Harry Choates’ (1922—1951) “Jole Blon.”

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31, 1946, Choates recorded the most famous version of ‘Jole Blon’ backed by the Texas-based group the Swingsters at the Gold Star Studios in Houston, Texas.”

What set the Choates’ rendering apart? Of the “Jole Blon” sensation, Ryan Brasseaux argues it was “a case of being in the right place at the right time” for Choates’ rendition. Contributing to Choates’ success for his “Jole Blon” was “the Houston-based independent record label which provided a commercial outlet for Cajun music. The increased availability of radios and the great reach of radio stations, as well as the emergence of juke boxes along the Gulf Coast.” And the “national record distribution for Choates’ 1946 recording.” This achievement led to the many “remakes by non-Cajuns, many of whom were nationally acclaimed recording artists.”

Ryan Brasseaux claims of “Choates’ interpretation of ‘Jole Blon’” that it is “arguably the single most important recording in the history of Cajun music.” This is because no other Cajun song has reached the stature of popularity as “Jole Blon” did on a national level. “On January 4, and again on March 8, 1947, ‘Jole Blon’ reached Number 4 on the national *Billboard’s* ‘Most Played Juke Box Folk Records.’” In addition, the country *Billboard* charts began in 1946 and Choates’ ‘Jole Blon’ was included in that Top 100 Country chart in 1947. It reached the Number 4 position on that chart as well.”

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68 Ibid.
the Top 100 Billboard charts by 1950 when Waylon Jennings recorded his version of “Jole Blon” with Buddy Holly on guitar.71

Choates’ hit recording of “Jole Blon”72 was made when “Choates went off to Houston and got in with a fellow by the name of Bill Quinn” says Leroy “Happy Fats” Leblanc73 (1915-1988). John Broven elaborates of this legendary records making stating: “‘Jole Blon’ was recorded in 1946 for Bill Quinn’s Houston-based Gold Star label. The reaction was such that the tiny Gold Star pressing plant could not keep pace with demand and work was farmed out in all directions, leading to widespread bootlegging. Eventually Quinn was forced to lease his hot record for national distribution to Modern of Los Angeles.”74 Ryan Brasseaux adds of Quinn’s releasing of “Jole Blon” under other labels that “despite tremendous record sales, neither Choates nor Quinn received any royalties for their efforts because they never took the time to copyright ‘Jole Blon’—an oversight that proved quite costly when other musicians began to record the tune.”75

The significance of “Jole Blon’s” 1946 recording over all other settings is relevant because it launched during a time in Cajun musical development when it could traverse with American music and give its culture recognition on a national level for the first time.

Other contributions in the mid-twentieth century included Hank William’s adaptation of “Grand Texas” in his hit, “Jambalaya” which had its own noteworthy impact upon Cajun and American cultures. Ryan Brasseaux summarizes this distinction best:

unlike any other Cajun composition, ‘Jole Blon’ evolved in different directions simultaneously on the local, regional, and national levels. Choates’ recording also had an

71 Ibid.
72 Note: Bill Quinn of Gold Star Records did not know the correct spelling of “Jolie Blonde” and he changed the spelling without knowing, to “Jole Blon.” This new spelling is now known as the Anglo-American spelling versus the Cajun French spelling.
73 Note: Happy Fats was a previous band member of Choates in Leo Soileau’s Cajun swing band
advantage over previous Cajun releases, because it emerged during a critical moment in history when tremendous social changes and technological advances converged. While Joe and Clèoma Falcon’s debut release ‘Allons à Lafayette’ changed the way Cajuns viewed their own music, the record’s impact was largely limited to a regional audience…Jole Blon’ spread through the channels of mass culture and eventually changed the course of American music. Cajun music subsequently became a fixture in the American consciousness for the first time as the French tune crossed cultural, ethnic, racial and socioeconomic boundaries. In the wake of the song’s tremendous commercial success, French and English versions of the waltz cropped up around the country…The tune’s national popularity stirred the imagination of the country’s top musicians. For instance, as music writer Kevin Coffey argues, American icon Hank Williams Sr.’s Cajun-influenced hit ‘Jambalaya’ is rooted in the fertile cross-cultural musical legacy created in the wake of the plaintive waltz.  

“Jolie Blonde” Analysis

The lively waltz Arles Estes composed for his setting of the traditional Cajun classic “Jolie Blonde” is haunting and unsettling, yet simultaneously lyrical and romantic. Estes observes of his setting of the famous Cajun waltz, that like his setting of “Allons à Lafayette,” “it is a lament;” and that “the only way to sing about the sad” subject matter is “if we are dancing.” He goes on to add regarding the influence he gleaned from other versions of “Jolie Blonde” that he “always found them very pretty. Simple and pretty. So ultimately, even with some modernizations made to the melody and meter, he tried to keep it sweet (pretty) and accessible (simple), so it could be as fun to play as it is to dance to, or listen to.”

Estes presents his “Jolie Blonde” in a bitonal and cellular structure derived from twentieth century classical writing techniques. The overall texture Arles states is “fast, running notes” which create ostinato patterns throughout which are reminiscent of Cajun accordion playing. Estes explains of the texture and tonality that there are only a “maximum of three chords in the

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76 Ibid, 158-9.
piece with a *moto perpetuo* (perpetual motion) oscillating figure that sounds like the accordion.”\textsuperscript{78}

The meter for this through-composed vocal piece with piano, guitar, violin and cello, is irregular and alternates between $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{5}{4}$ and $\frac{6}{4}$ with one measure of $\frac{4}{4}$ at the end. The structure is divided between an A section (mm. 1 – 36), a B section (mm. 42 – 65), two transitions (mm. 37 – 41 and mm. 65 – 71), and ending with a Coda (mm. 72 – 79). There are symmetrical bitonal phrases in meter and rhythm throughout with the text and melody fitting into that pattern like a separate, yet integrated thread. Estes observes of the melody and meter that he sought to “dress the melody up quite a bit and not be too literal with it.” And explains that “he wanted to preserve some of the $\frac{3}{4}$ ‘Waltziness,’ from the original versions ‘because so many of the Cajun songs are in $\frac{3}{4}$ meter. I wanted to modernize it slightly by alternating it with the $\frac{5}{4}$ in there. The result is a mixed meter but it remains danceable.”\textsuperscript{79}

The A section is comprised of two motive cells—cell 1 and cell 2—which become the generative cells that source the structure of this section (See Figure 4.1). Some bitonal chords of F and C Major are formed between the horizontal writing in the piano and the vertical writing in the guitar. Most of the harmony is derived from the folk strums of the guitar.

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid.
Figure 4.1. Cell 1 and Cell 2 from Estes’s “Jolie Blonde” measures 1-8.


Cell one contains alterations of thirds that ascend slightly over four measures and alternates through the meters of $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{5}{4}$ and back to $\frac{3}{4}$. Cell two also alternates thirds that act like ostinati and have an ascending skip in a tri-tone interval in the fourth measure that then descends. This is characteristic of Cajun musical phrases which tend to end in big leaps, and then resolve with a descending phrase.

The voice enters with the text that Estes chose to set from the original “Ma Blonde Est Partie” in measure nine, after cells one and two have fully sounded. In measure 33 – 36, a combination of both cells is presented (See Figure 4.2) and a bitonality of G and F Major is heard.

Figure 4.2. Combination of Cell 1 and Cell 2 from Estes’s “Jolie Blonde” measures 33-36.

The tempo is marked “suddenly very slow” as the transition begins in measure 37 and the accompaniment is sparse and not cell-based. There is a sonority of C Major sounding before the strings enter for the first time in measure 40, and the tempo returns to “Lively.” Some hints of cell one occur in the cello, and in many ways the oscillating pattern mirrors the initial cell of this piece.

The B section begins in measure 42 and returns to the symmetrical bitonal phrases but now comprised of cell three and cell four. These now oscillating figures are not in thirds like previous cells, but are in single notes which still mimic the original phrases created by cells one and two (See Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3. Cell 3 and Cell 4 from Estes’s “Jolie Blonde” measures 42-49.


Verse three enters in measure 50 where it represents the original “Jolie Blonde” melody and in measure 53, the right hand of the piano part and the cello accompany the voice by bitonal sonorities created from their repetitious interplay between instruments and the voice.

Variations of cell three and four begin in measure 58 and extend to measure 65. The difference between these new oscillations are in the notes used and not in the rhythmic pattern (See Figure 4.4).
The second transition also abandons the cellular motives for a sparse and chordal accompaniment. Bichords are stacked in combinations of A minor and G minor, to G min⁷ and C Maj♭⁷, to A minor and F♯ half-diminished, to G min⁷ and C Major. The transition ends with A minor, C Maj⁷, B dim, to an E♭ Major resolution before the coda.

Lastly, the coda section isolates the voice as it is heard over a tied E♭ Major chord and sings “Moi j’vois pas quoi faire si tu reviens pas” (I do not see what to do if you do not come back). Then, measure 74 has no accompaniment present while the voice sings a B♭ Major sonority. In measure 75, the accompaniment reenters on beat two with a B Major chord. The last four measures are in C minor, for the most part, with one C Major chord added in the penultimate measure, then Estes’s depiction of the Cajun traditional waltz ends on a V⁷ chord from C minor (See Table 4.2).
Table 4.2. The Musical Form of Estes’s “Jolie Blonde”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Transition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subsections:</td>
<td>a. (cell 1)</td>
<td>b. (cell 2)</td>
<td>a. (cell 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures:</td>
<td>1 – 4</td>
<td>5 – 8</td>
<td>9 – 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meter:</td>
<td>( \frac{3}{4} - \frac{5}{4} ) (Repeats)</td>
<td>( \frac{3}{4} - \frac{5}{4} ) (Repeats)</td>
<td>( \frac{3}{4} - \frac{5}{4} ) (Repeats)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempo:</td>
<td>Lively</td>
<td>Lively</td>
<td>Lively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonality:</td>
<td>G Major</td>
<td>C Major</td>
<td>Bi chordal tonality:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text:</td>
<td>Verse 1 added</td>
<td>Verse 2 added</td>
<td>Verse 3 added</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The multiple portrayals of “Jolie Blonde” and many more, brought the Cajun culture into the American culture, making “Jolie Blonde” not just a Cajun classic, but an American classic as
well. Defending “Jolie Blonde’s” great significance in the American and Cajun context, Ryan Brasseaux states:

the contribution of ‘Jolie Blonde’ to American music lies in the song’s role as a primary cultural text. Burgeoning regional mass media projected Choates’ arrangement across cultural boundaries where the waltz demonstrated Cajun music’s capacity to speak broadly to diverse audiences despite the persistent marginalization of the community…The long and winding history of ‘Jolie Blonde’ changed the course of Cajun music by transforming a regional genre into an American musical style. Nationally famous recording artists catapulted their interpretations of the Cajun experience into the American mind’s eye. Each adaptation, interpretation, and performance of ‘Jolie Blonde,’ affixed a new layer of meaning to the song. The plaintive waltz began its meteoric flash through the American musical firmament in the Cajun repertoire. Along the way, the song accumulated an assortment of cultural implications that compounded and shifted over time depending on the song’s context…The legacy of ‘Jolie Blonde’ helped Cajuns understand that they, too, could contribute to the American songbook.80

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The traditional Cajun song, “Allons à Lafayette” (Let’s Go to Lafayette), became popular in standard Cajun repertoire when the accordion was surfacing to replace the violin as the primary instrument for Cajun musicians during the early Twentieth century. This song would become “the most sung song in the Cajun repertory.”

The subject matter for “Allons à Lafayette” “tells the story of a young man’s love for the woman he wants to marry and thus change her name to Madame Canaille Comeaux (Mrs. Mischievous Comeaux).” He wants her to run away with him to Lafayette so they can elope. In Arles Estes’s setting of “Allons,” he changes the meaning from ‘mischievous’ to ‘naughty,’ and creates a more sensual version of the Cajun song in his contemporary setting.

Gérard Dôle claims that the text line of “Madame Canaille Comeaux” may be misinterpreted in its translation or changed by oral tradition and “suggests the line could be ‘Madame canaille comme moi,’ or ‘naughty, like me.’ Thus Estes’s sexy tone many reflect the true intention of the piece’s subject matter.

Estes sets “Allons à Lafayette” narrative as a letter to the fictional Cajun young woman, “Mlle. Comeaux,” which she is reading; and titles his piece: “Mlle. Comeaux Reads a Letter” with a subtitle that “Madmoiselle Comeaux reads a letter from her young, and hot-headed lover.” Estes notes that his song works “like an opera not written. It’s a teen-age love story.” Estes’ “Allons,” now in a more provocative manner than the traditional Cajun song, takes lyrics from

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82 Ibid.
“Lafayette Two-Step” and “Lafayette” for his modern setting while also including his own original text for the ending line.

“In 1928, Columbia records was interested in music which was played in the southern states” and sent A&R talent scout Frank Walker to “set up remote recording studios” in New Orleans.83 In a 1962 interview, Walker spoke of “his discovery of Joe and Cléoma Falcon” by remembering:

so I went up to Lafayette for a weekend. I happened to know something of the story of the Cajuns and was astounded at the interest that there was in their little Saturday night dances. A single singer would have a little concertina-type instrument and a one-string fiddle and a triangle, those were the instruments, but they would always have a singer and of course they sang in Cajun. And to me it had a funny sound. So I brought down a little group. I think his name was Joe Falcon. I brought him down to New Orleans, and we recorded just to have something different. We put it on the market, and it had tremendous sales. There were definitely local sales extending all over the state of Louisiana and some of Texas, because there is a great many of the Cajuns living over in Texas. It was amazing that you could sell fifty or sixty thousand records in a locality of that size.84

Consequently, from just a small recording, which Columbia A&R man (Walker) called “something different”—the recording of “Allons à Lafayette” sold tremendously in Cajun country and “kicked off an entire genre of music which is still going strong.” After this, “more recording companies chose to begin recording Cajun music.”85

Barry J. Ancelet exclaims that “the first Cajun record to be released, including Joe and Cléoma Falcon’s ‘Allons à Lafayette,’ was pioneering” for Cajun music and “was a new song, a two-step, adapted from an older tune, ‘Juenes gens de la campagne’ (Young Country People).”86

84 Ibid.
85 Ibid.
Ironically, “Allons à Lafayette” was not supposed to be the first Cajun song to be recorded, it was initially the B side of the record. On “April 27, 1928, Clèoma and Joe Falcon entered a studio in New Orleans to record ‘La Valse qui m’a porté à ma fosse’ (The Waltz that Carried Me to my Grave)” and “in a fortunate turn of events, instead of retaining the name of a song lamenting the death of a dearly beloved, history tells us that the first recorded Cajun song was in fact the B side.”

Joe Falcon recounts the recording made that day in New Orleans that he was not even supposed to sing “Allons.” He recalls “Well, the one supposed to sing ‘Allons à Lafayette’ was Léon Mèche from Bosco. He got all ready, and he buttoned up his coat and this and that, and he was getting pale as a sheet, and he looked at me and said, ‘You better sing it yourself, I might make a mistake; so I took over and that’s how we make it and it went over big.”

Joe Falcon recorded “Allons à Lafayette”, that day in April 1928, while playing “a German accordion, probably a ‘Monarch,’ and Clèoma played guitar. The sound took the executives by surprise,” and as Joe recalls, “they came over to where we recorded and they said ‘Lord but that’s more music out of two instruments than we ever heard in our lives. We don’t understand nothing, but it’s a sweet sound.”

Barry J. Ancelet, conveys of “Allons à Layayette” that this song, “the first recorded, was typical of the new style, featuring an accordion lead with percussive guitar accompaniment and

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high-pitched, emotionally intense vocal reminiscent of the noisy dance halls before electric amplification.”⁹⁰

The traditional song was set to a quick tempo in the popular Cajun key of G Major. The music for the text is only nine measures long while there are three long verses with much of the text being repeated.

“Mlle. Comeaux Reads a Letter” Analysis

Estes sets his version of “Allons à Lafayette” for voice, piano and cello as a through-composed lament with a continuous, haunting melody throughout. This piece in A♭ Major, develops a counter melody in the cello and becomes more dramatic and sophisticated in the B section. It utilizes complex, and somewhat irregular, meters through the piece, which alternate between 12/8, 9/8, 6/8 and 15/8. Estes’s setting also contains A♭ and E♭ drones underlying throughout which is a common Cajun musical characteristic.

Table 5.1. The Musical Form of Estes’s “Mlle. Comeaux Reads A Letter”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections:</th>
<th>Intro</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>A’</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measures:</td>
<td>1–6</td>
<td>7–12</td>
<td>13–17</td>
<td>18–22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonality:</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>1–V9–I</td>
<td>I⁶/₄–V⁹/₅/vi–</td>
<td>B♭–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ab Major</td>
<td></td>
<td>V⁷/V (E♭ drone)-</td>
<td>V-G°-V-</td>
<td>D-minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>V9-I-IV-G°</td>
<td>I (p.a.c.)</td>
<td>(with hints of I)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections:</th>
<th>Interlude (Transition)</th>
<th>B’</th>
<th>A”</th>
<th>Coda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tonality:</td>
<td>I–V</td>
<td>Db minor–B♭⁵–</td>
<td>I-iii⁶/₄</td>
<td>Bi-chords of Ab and D♭–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G-minor – F Major</td>
<td>-ii7-I</td>
<td>I – VII♭–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>V7 – IV7 – vii</td>
<td></td>
<td>I(A♭Maj♭7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The A section (mm. 1 – 22) begins with a sweeping introduction while the harmony in mm. 1 – 6 remains relatively in tonic. The accompaniment becomes more chordal as the voice enters and melody develops into a lyrical and flowing tune opposite the cello’s counter melody in mm. 22 – 24. A short cadence appears in m. 12 with an elongated V-I cadential point transpiring in mm. 16-17. The harmonic function for mm. 7 – 17 is I-V9-I-V⁷/V over the E♭ drone, then V9-I-IV-G°-V-I with a perfect authentic cadence. When A returns in mm. 31 – 35, the harmonic progression is I-iii⁶/₄-ii7-I and the voice and cello melodies mature together.

Estes transitions from A to B in mm. 22 – 24 by writing a sweeping, ascending interlude which offers a short cadenza in the piano. The tonality is I – V and is not consistent. The composer notes of this section that “during the middle sections it is more D♭-minor to B♭⁵ to G° and he would not say that the piece modulates, but is more of a planned, descending harmonic passage through some more dissolute material.”
The B section is more developed and sophisticated as the voice is set in a higher tessitura and is operatic in its melodic delivery. The voice continues to interplay with the cello as original melodies are carried forward. The harmony is comprised of B♭ – D-minor sonorities with some hints of I in A♭ Major from mm. 18 – 22. Then as B progresses, the harmonic function is more individually chord based of D♭-minor to B♭° to G-minor then F Major returns for the ending to use V7-IV7-vii before the ending of the piece.

The coda ending for Estes’s “Allons,” works like a postlude, as the cello plays the counter melody and the piano sweeps up, with the voice requesting a wish to the lyrics: “Retrouve moi a Lafayette” (Meet me in Lafayette). No resolution occurs in the final tonality sounding. The ending has a I-V feeling, but also acts like there is no resolution. Bi-chords of A♭ and D♭ make up mm. 36 – 40, and then I-VII♭ (borrowed)-I occurs at the end which is A♭Major7.

The Cajun song, “Allons à Lafayette,” is significant because, besides it being the first Cajun song to ever be recorded, it is one of the top five Cajun songs to be set by Cajun musicians throughout the twentieth-century. This sets “Allons à Lafayette” apart from other songs in the Cajun repertory and marks it as still relevant today. “In 2010, ‘Allons à Lafayette’ came in a No. 3 in Robert Dimery’s book ‘1001 Songs You Must Hear Before You Die: And 10,001 You Must Download.’ And in 2013 the song was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame.”91 Shane Bernard remarks of Randy and the Rockets “Let’s Do the Cajun Twist” modern remake of the classic “Allons à Lafayette” song, that it incorporated many popular Cajun-colored emblems which “for their version, the Rockets composed new English lyrics with local-color references,

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including one to Jolie blonde, the blonde-haired, blue-eyed rustic maiden who personified Cajun culture as a sorda working man’s Evangeline.”92

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CHAPTER 6

GABRIEL AND EVANGELINE

During the middle of the Nineteenth century when Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–1882) was writing his literary epic poem, *Evangeline*—which depicts the expulsion of the Cajuns’ ancestors, the Acadians, from their northern American French settlements—Do you think he could have known how far-reaching his fictional Acadian protagonist would grow? Longfellow sets the story of the Acadians brutal exile by the British, known as *le grande derangement*, through the eyes and experiences of his fictional heroine “Evangeline.” Could Longfellow have envisioned the emblem of survival she would become for the Acadian descendants—the Cajuns? Did he know that by just stating her name and seeing her image one would have the Cajun experience brought to one’s mind?

Evangeline, the fictional heroine, has become the emblem of survival for the Cajun people. Though it is widely accepted that Evangeline and Gabriel were fictional characters; in 1988, Carl Brasseaux puts to rest the story of Evangeline without mocking the tradition from which it came. "Longfellow wrote a beautiful poem, but poetry is not history. Even if Evangeline did not exist, there were plenty of women who lived, suffered and died like she did. It is likely that the legend perseveres because of its romantic appeal and its testimonial to the enduring spirit of the Acadian people."93 The name Evangeline, and her heroic tale, is a beacon of hope for the Cajun people to remember despite the hardships they faced through exile, relocation and isolation. Evangeline’s name became ubiquitous in Cajun country. When driving through Louisiana one can see parishes

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named Evangeline, schools named Evangeline, and businesses named Evangeline. Edward Wagenknecht states of Evangeline’s vogue:

not so long ago every school child in America would recite the opening lines of Evangeline: The Tale of Acadie. It was the first long poem in American literature to live beyond its own time, and it would be impossible to exaggerate its vogue. Its popularity cut through all class distinctions. There have been plays, films, songs and musicals set to it; and in 1934, the Longfellow-Evangeline State Park was established in Louisiana.94

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s Evangeline

Longfellow95 is one of the first American writers known worldwide and was a contemporary of his Bowdoin College friend and fellow American literary figure, Nathaniel Hawthorne. After the publishing of his work, The Belfry of Bruges (1845), Longfellow attended a dinner party with Hawthorne and their mutual friend, Reverend Horace Lorenzo Conolly. It was at this dinner party where Connolly relayed the story he heard from a parishioner to Longfellow after “Hawthorne declined to undertake it.”96 The story was of:

a young couple in Acadie. On their marriage-day all the men of the Province were summoned to assemble in the church to hear a proclamation. When assembled, they were all seized and shipped off to be distributed through New England—among them the new bridegroom. His bride set off in search of him—wandered about New England all her lifetime, and at last when she was old, she found her bridegroom on his deathbed. The shock was so great that it killed her likewise.97

95 His works are important roots of American literature in the nineteenth century. His poems greatly affected the emerging American musical scene of song and opera. Over 150 settings of Longfellow’s prose or poetry have been set to music. Some American composers who set his works include: Ives, Chadwick, Homer, Beach, Foote and White, Thomas and Rice. At his death, Longfellow was known as “the first of the front-ranking American poets of his generation” and his death marked “the end of an era.” Sources: Emily Ezust, “Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882),” The LiederNet Archive (Last Update: December 4, 2015) http://www.lieder.net/lieder/get_author_texts.html?AuthorId=1680 (accessed May 6, 2011) and Edward Wagenknecht, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: His Poetry and Prose (New York: Ungar Publishing, 1986), 19.
97 Ibid, pg. 7.
After hearing the account from the Reverend, Longfellow “asked his friend Hawthorne: ‘If you really don’t want this incident for a tale, let me have it for a poem.’” This became the inception of the epic poem, *Evangeline*, which eloquently and sophisticatedly delivers the tragic history of the Cajun people. Longfellow published *Evangeline* in 1847 as a book-length, epic poem about the expulsion of the Acadians and their migration to Louisiana choosing dactylic hexameter\(^{98}\) as the poetic meter for his verses.

Gilbert Youmans comments on the meter choice that “it is fitting that the meter of one of Longfellow’s best-known narrative poems, *Evangeline*, is dactylic hexameter with frequent trochaic substitutions. It is also the meter of Goethe’s *Dorothea* which Oliver Wendell Holmes called ‘the German model’ for the measure and the character of Evangeline.”\(^{99}\)

The structure Longfellow used for constructing *Evangeline: A Tale of Acadie* was organized by *canto’s*, a principal form of division in a long poem.\(^{100}\) *Evangeline’s* design is divided between four sections: the Introduction, Part the First (I — V), Part the Second (I — IV) and the Epilogue.

After the publication of *Evangeline* on October 30, 1847, not even a century after the true expulsion of the Acadians in 1755, Longfellow wrote “the public takes more kindly to hexameters than I could have imagined.” And Charles E. Norton states that “there was an

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outbreak of hexameter usage after Longfellow’s use” and that “the story of ‘Evangeline’ was the incentive to much historical inquiring”\textsuperscript{101} since the poem’s premiere.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, Longfellow’s colleague and friend, “wrote a few days after” as well, “to say that he had read it ‘with more pleasure than it would be decorous to express.’ And Longfellow thanked him in reply ‘for resigning’ to him the ‘legend of Acady. This success I owe entirely to you.’”\textsuperscript{102}

Charles E. Norton acclaims of Longfellow’s epic poem that “the publication of Evangeline doubtless marks the period of Mr. Longfellow’s greatest accession of fame, as it probably is the poem which the majority of readers would first name if called upon to indicate the poet’s most commanding work.”\textsuperscript{103}

“Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres”

From \emph{canto XVI}, Part the First, lines 412-414 of \textit{Evangeline}, Longfellow names two folk songs that were popular tunes of the Acadians before their devastating exile. The lines read:

Gayly the old man sang to the vibrant sound of his fiddle,
\begin{quote}
\textit{Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres}, and \textit{Le Carillon de Dunquerque},
\end{quote}
And anon with his wooden shoes beat time to the music.\textsuperscript{104}

He wrote of these early French songs in his April 29, 1846 dairy entry, “looked over \textit{Recueil de cantiques à l’usage des missions}, (Quebec, 1833). A curious book, in which the most ardent spiritual canticles are sung to common airs and dancing tunes.” He ultimately found “Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres” (All the Villagers of Chartres) in \textit{Cantiques de Saint-Sulpice}, (Paris,

\begin{flushright}
\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{102} Ibid, 12.
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid, 17.
\textsuperscript{104} Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, \textit{Evangeline, the Song of Hiawatha, The Courtship of Miles Standish}, Volume II (Cambridge, MA: The Riverside Press, 1893), 44.
\end{flushright}
1823) from *Le cataloque de la chanson folklorique française* and jotted down the text to the song. He also noted of the two Acadian folk songs that “the music which the old man sang these songs may be found in *La Clè du Caveau* (1811) by Pierre Capelle, Nos 564 and 739.”\(^{105}\) The tune for “Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres” can be seen in Figure 5.1 and this is the same melody known for this chanson contemporarily.

Figure 6.1. “Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres”.


This chanson, “Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres,” was originally composed by the French composer and organist Pierre Dandrieu (1667—1773) who wrote a book of chansons entitled *Noels, o filii, chansons de Saint-Jacques, Stabat mater, et carillons.*\(^{106}\) This chanson can be further traced back in its lineage to the tune “Hail to the Lord’s Anointed” written in the sixteenth century by Melchoir Teschner (1584—1635) who was a German cantor, composer and theologian.\(^{107}\)

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\(^{105}\) Ibid, 350-351


“Gabriel and Evangeline” Analysis

In Arles Estes’s modern setting, “Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres” becomes the melodic source material for his setting of the Tale of Acadie by adapting Longfellow’s Evangeline text into his song titled, “Gabriel and Evangeline.” Estes expounds of his quoting and use of “Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres” that “the quote is heard in a few structural places, but I also drew from it in less obvious ways to create the rest of the music. In a way, much of the entire piece grows out of that old Acadian tune.”¹⁰⁸

The use of “Tous Les Bourgeois” in this setting can be seen in mms. 1 – 14 and mm. 53 – 62. The first sounding of the dance begins the piece, while the return of the dance is an interlude where the composer weaves this Acadian folksong with Theme I (Evangeline’s theme), in mm. 24 – 29. The first three measures of “Tous les Bourgeois” can be heard over mm. 1 – 8 of Estes setting in variation of the original Acadian melody. It is not until mms. 8 – 15 that Estes quotes the original folk song from its mms. 5 – 13 with only a slight variation occurring in note values and rhythmic patterns.

For his next quote of “Tous les Bourgeois” in the interlude, Estes uses the variation of the original tune as initially set at the beginning of the song. Then, as his exact quote occurs in mms. 60 – 62. He abruptly stops the quote and uses an ascending C-Major scale with an F♯ that gives a slightly unsettling sound and feeling. He ends the interlude on a relatively dissonant chord—A♭ minor 6/9 over E♭ which is sounding under Theme I.
Both dances are set in G-Major as the introductory section ends with a I-V7-I, authentic cadence before abandoning any tonality for this through-composed, and essentially atonal piece. The second dance ends dissonantly as Estes transitions out of G-Major now by way of F♯ø for this thematically developed composition which he has written for high voice, piano, violin, cello and guitar.

The A section is the development of Evangeline’s theme called out by Gabriel in mm. 24 – 52. This A section contains five subsections from the statement of Theme I to the a, b, transition and c subsidiaries. Theme I is comprised of ascending Perfect-fifths in the voice over a Perfect-fourth held chord in the piano, while the strings and guitar enter after the initial statement to echo Gabriel’s cry. The accompaniment is sparse under the paraphrased text adaptation which is sung in the modern American-English vernacular. As A continues, at m. 37, an ostinato figure begins in the guitar as the accompaniment becomes thicker pushing into the transition of mm. 46 – 47, which heightens and extends Theme I. As the A section is approaching its ending, iridescent arpeggios are heard in the piano as the accompaniment becomes sparse again dying to nothing in mm. 51 – 52, as the voice sings a capella: “Silence. Only cruel silence. Lost. And Gabriel wandered alone.” (See Table 6.1).

The B section works to develop Gabriel’s theme as called out by Evangeline and is divided similarly to the A section with the only difference being that there are two transitions instead of one. Theme II is comprised of descending, chromatic notes from A♭ to E♭ sung by the voice in a high tessitura as the piano echoes it, and Theme I can he heard underlying this new theme in the other accompanimental instruments. As Gabriel’s theme continues to evolve, Evangeline’s theme is interspersed throughout the B section, always connected to Gabriel’s theme. There are many suspensions and drones that fill this accompaniment as their sparser texture grows denser in the
first transition of mm. 85 – 89. The tempo swells here and states an eerie sounding of Theme I underneath the chromatic, Gabriel theme. A counter melody occurs in m. 94 as the guitar plays a Major third above the voice. And in mm. 95 – 97, Theme I and Theme II are combined for the first time. The accompaniment drops out again for the solo voice singing: “observed only by the solemn owl who make not a sound” alone in mm. 106 – 07. (See Table 6.1).

The apex of the song, or the axiom of this whole piece, is heard in mm. 114 – 115 of the coda as a melodic line is sung stating: “Love, a phantom ever wanders from their lips,” over a E half-diminished sonority. The accompaniment becomes long, extended extensions and stretched E diminished notes, with an F drone in the cello, as the piece comes to a close, as they respond to the sounding of the combination of Gabriel and Evangeline’s themes. At the end there is only silence and no resolution is made from the final diminished E chord sounding.

Composer Estes reflects on his writing aspirations for this song in which he says will be the “most involved song from the set” and it will act as the “apex of all five songs.” He goes on to add that “the violin plays a big part of the Evangeline song, as it is reminiscent of the fiddle player from Longfellow’s poem, that will bring the listener back to before the deportation in Canada. The violin states the Acadian folk song melody in the beginning and as the whole story unfolds of Gabriel and Evangeline, it will be a journey displayed in parts where after the horror occurs, there is a nice moment and the early Cajuns dance, and have peace and joy again. But at the same time, they remember being exiled and know that even though their lives will never be the same again, it will be alright.”

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Table 6.1. The Musical Form of Estes’s “Gabriel and Evangeline”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections:</th>
<th>Intro</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>(Trans)</th>
<th>Interlude</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subsections:</td>
<td>Medieval Dance</td>
<td>Theme I</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Theme I Again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keys:</td>
<td>G Major</td>
<td>No Key</td>
<td>G Major</td>
<td>No Key</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meter:</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempi:</td>
<td>Lively Dance</td>
<td>Very Mysterious</td>
<td>More Motion</td>
<td>Growing Excitement</td>
<td>Slowly Again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>♩ = 140</td>
<td>♩ = 50</td>
<td>♩ = 60</td>
<td>♩ = 70</td>
<td>♩ = 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonality:</td>
<td>I-V-I-IV-I-IV-V7-I</td>
<td>-Perfect 5ths over a Perfect 4th sonority</td>
<td>-Theme I echoes in the strings &amp; guitar after the voice</td>
<td>Sparse accompt.</td>
<td>-Heightened extension of Theme I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I6-IV7-I</td>
<td>in 3rds &amp; P5ths begins</td>
<td>-Theme I in guitar</td>
<td>-Theme I and Theme II combined</td>
<td>-Oscillating occurs in stings and guitar, resembles water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Quotes Acadian Folksong from Longfellow’s Evangeline</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Theme I and Theme II combined</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections:</th>
<th>(Trans)</th>
<th>(Trans)</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>Coda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subsections:</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>Theme II</td>
<td>Themes I and II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures:</td>
<td>72 – 75</td>
<td>76 – 85</td>
<td>85 – 94</td>
<td>90 – 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keys:</td>
<td>No Key</td>
<td>No Key</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meter:</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempi:</td>
<td>Tempo Swells</td>
<td>Slowing Gently</td>
<td>More Motion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>♩ = 70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonality:</td>
<td>-d” dim over a F# drone</td>
<td>-Drones glissando ↑ in 3rds</td>
<td>-Erie sounding of Theme I in piano</td>
<td>-Theme I and Theme II combined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-m. 73: Theme II heard</td>
<td>-Sparse accompt. with just guitar on d” dim</td>
<td>-Thicker texture in accompt.</td>
<td>-Oscillating occurs in stings and guitar, resembles water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-C# and B drones begin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Theme I and Theme II combined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-16”s arpeggios in piano, increase wave oscillation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-E dim. before the Themes return</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Estes reflects on his writing aspirations for this song in which he says will be the “most involved song from the set” and it will act as the “apex of all five songs.” He goes on to add that “the violin plays a big part of the Evangeline song, as it is reminiscent of the fiddle player from
Longfellow’s poem, that will bring the listener back to before the deportation in Canada. The violin states the Acadian folk song melody in the beginning and as the whole story unfolds of Gabriel and Evangeline, it will be a journey displayed in parts where after the horror occurs, there is a nice moment and the early Cajuns dance, and have peace and joy again. But at the same time, they remember being exiled and know that even though their lives will never be the same again, it will be alright.”

Through Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s epic poem and work, “Evangeline” became a Cajun heroine and icon. She came to life and grew to be a symbol of the Cajun spirit, which Dave Petitjean explains of being “Cajun, that it means: Hang in There!” This is what Evangeline represents and inspires for the Cajuns. Petitjean elaborates “what we Cajuns have is our mystique, our outlook on life. Cajuns don’t let things destroy them. Not even our odyssey could destroy us.” This is the essence of their joie de vivre, which Longfellow depicted in his elegiac poem created from the story he was given by Hawthorne. To honor Longfellow’s Evangeline work, Oliver Wendall Holmes stated:

I should not hesitate to select Evangeline as the masterpiece, and I think the general verdict of opinion would confirm my choice. The German model which it followed in its measure and the character of its story was itself suggested by an earlier idyl. If Dorothea was the mother of Evangeline, Luise was the mother of Dorothea. And what a beautiful creation is the Acadian maiden! From the first line of the poem from its first words, we read as we would float down a borad and placid river, murmuring softly against its banks, heaven over it, and the glory of the unspoiled wilderness all around—This is the forest primeval.

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11 Dave Petitjean is a popular Cajun humorist, from Griffin Smith Jr., “The Cajuns: Still Loving Life.” National Geographic (178, no. 4 October 1990), 64-5.
12 Ibid.
CHAPTER 7

THE CADET ROUSSELLES!

The oral songs of the Cajuns included tall tales, drinking songs, traditional ballads and humorous, comic songs as displayed in the children’s song “Cadet Rousselle.”\(^{114}\) The song’s subject matter focuses on the buffoonery of the once soldier, Cadet Guillaume Rousselle (1743—1807).\(^{115}\) This song mocks everything about Rousselle, from his clothes, to his mannerisms, to his home and his pets, and his loved ones. They all are multiplied in numbers of threes and repeated throughout the song. The text of the traditional “Cadet Rousselle” contains up to fourteen verses that continue to shame Rousselle’s dogs, and coats, and shoes, and his hats, to his death; mocking three times, that Rousselle cannot die “because before he walks no more, they say he has to learn his letters so he can make himself his epitaph.”\(^{116}\)

In his modern setting, Arles Estes composes a tongue-in-cheek tribute to the Cajun children’s song titling it “The Cadet Rousselles!” His piece, unlike the traditional song, is more complex and sophisticated in its use of melody, tonality, textures, tempi and accompaniment, and is set for high voice, cello and piano. Estes pays homage to the traditional “Cadet Rousselle” by setting his version in strophic verse with a small variation occurring in mms. 70-98 (See Appendix B). Like the standard children’s song, Estes’ arrangement is brisk and jaunty, while the text is crisply articulated.

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\(^{115}\) Note: The Frenchman “lived during the 18th—early 19th centuries in Auxerre, France.” Source: Ibid.

\(^{116}\) Ibid.
The original setting of “Cadet Rousselle” emerged to have many versions and various other settings. This children’s song is relevant to Cajun music heritage because of its genealogical links between the French, to Acadian, to the modern Cajun setting. The song remains in Canada, as well, and has become a national song for the nation by replacing the tune “My Boy Willie” as the official march music of the Royal Canadian Army Cadets by J.L. Wallace in the 1940s.\textsuperscript{117}

In addition, this traditional song was set by other nationalistic musicians in their compositions. “In 1919, John Ireland, Arnold Bax, Frank Bridge and Eugene Goosens wrote \textit{Variations on ‘Cadet Rousselle’} as an encore piece for voice and piano.”\textsuperscript{118} The piece is considered to be a multi-composer piece and marks each section that each composer wrote by labeling their name. Goosens would “later orchestrate the piece for small orchestra” in the 1930s and “the jaunty melody received (from Goosens) a correspondingly humorous treatment in which almost every instrument of the orchestra had its moment.”\textsuperscript{119}

In all likelihood, the most distinguished use of the traditional “Cadet Rousselle” is Tchaikovsky’s usage of this children’s tune, along with others, in Act II of his ballet, \textit{The Nutcracker} from 1892.

Barry J. Ancelet observes, in his \textit{Cajun Music: Its Origins and Development}, that even though the songs of the Cajuns were “preserved through oral tradition, sometimes change in tunes and lyrics reflected the New World and especially in the new Louisiana context.” Some alterations occurred by changing particular words in the test to make it relatable to the New World and cultivated more and more the removal of its European origins.\textsuperscript{120}

\begin{flushleft}\footnotesize\textsuperscript{117} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{120} Barry Jean Ancelet, \textit{Cajun Music: Its Origins and Development}, Louisiana Life Series, No. 2 (LA: Center for Louisiana Studies, 1989), 10.\end{flushleft}
In ‘Cadet Rousselle’s French version, one finds French architecture. In the early Louisiana version, there are changes which reflect the *poteaux-en-terre* (post in the ground) building technique used in New France and Acadia.” Ancelet also notes that the grammar in the now Acadian version is less formal than its original French version.\(^{121}\) By the time of the Cajun Revival during the 1960s, “further modifications can be seen in the ‘Cadet Rousselle’ collected in Mamou, Louisiana by Harry Oster.”\(^{122}\) Joshua Caffery also remarks on the Cajun-ized version of “Cadet Rousselle” that he is now a “good old boy (*c’est un bon garçon*) in the Cajun version regarding his house with birds, three worthless sons, three girls who clearly had no suitors, three fine horses which were so scrawny they pierced their saddles and he had an enormous field—which he jumped from one side to the other.”\(^{123}\)

“The Cadet Rousselles!” Analysis

Arles Estes “Cadet Rousselle” could also be called “The Many Keys of Cadet Rousselle,” as Estes takes the buffoon Rousselle through the keys of C-Major, some E-Major, G-Major, A-Major, C-Major again to B-flat Major at the end. There is a contrasting, non-happy key used in section C of A-minor (mm. 70-98).

The selection begins quite traditionally for the first two verses (See Table 7.1), then unravels to many different threads. The beginning, through the A section (mm. 1-42), is brisk and military-esque with the harmonic function alternating between C-Major and E-Major\(^7\) for the

\(^{121}\) Ibid, pg. 7.
\(^{122}\) Ibid, pg. 8.
introduction. The harmonic progression follows I-V7-I-IV6-V9-I pattern which repeats for verse two.

Estes uses chromatic passing tones in the transitionary mm. 39-42, which lead to the new key of G-Major. This B section is now a lyrical and lilting waltz section with a tempo the equals 60 from mm. 43-67. Estes employs a harmonic progression of I-IV7-V9-V7 and then I-V7-IV-V-I. The text Estes sets for this verse three is of Rousselle having a sword which does not see much action in battle and only fights “sparrows and swallows.” Estes set the tessitura now in the D5 through D6 range while the first two verses remained on the staff, approximately C4-C5. The singer must employ a March-like texture while delivering the text regarding Rousselles’ three houses that have no roofs and three coats which are so thin they are not good for keeping someone warm.

To transition out of the waltz and into a new, more complex section, Estes utilizes an alteration of A-Major and B-minor in mm. 64-66. And in m. 67, he gives an A-minor I chord with a C-natural to foreshadow the coming of a more disparate, tonal section in part C.

One of the most exclusive compositional aspects of Estes’ set appears in the middle of this song as Estes presents the traditional happy melody of “Cadet Rousselle” in a retrograde pattern for the cello and piano. It starts lightly with the piano in m. 70, as a statement of the triple-pattern, A-minor brooding sounding sonorities, which introduces the cello, who first voices the melody in a retrograde solo from mm. 75-86. When the Cajun voice enters, it is on a non-syllabic “ah,” and sings their “A-minor, forward version of the melody with a vocal staccato texture.” The piano enters with their “partial statement of the retrograde melody,” two measures after the

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voice, and plays “a partial statement that mirrors the cello in the left hand”126 to integrate their part of this three-voiced, contrapuntal section.

To exit the retrograde fugue, Estes changes the meter to $\frac{4}{4}$ and the tempi to a Quick Jazz equaling 100, while using chromatic passing tones to ascend into C-Major for the D section. The text for D is about Rousselle’s three cats who are so lazy they do not even chase rats with one also having no eyes and it cannot see. The tessitura is set higher ranging from G4-High C and varies from the original “Cadet Rousselle” melody significantly. In mm. 109-110, there is a sequential pattern of Major-third intervals which heighten the apex of the phrase leading into the refrain: “Ah! Ah! Ah, oui vraiment!” with an elongated “Cadet Rousselle!” and contains no “est bon enfant!” as all the other verses end. This section ends on a dominant, half cadence to illicit further exasperation with Rousselle’s eccentric belongings and his annoying behaviors.

The last verse setting, Section E, is now in B-flat Major and is marked Quick and Triumphant (equaling 130) for the text which bullies Rousselle’s inability to even die and be buried because of his being illiterate. The harmonic progression is I-$V^4/3$-I6-V6-ii6-$V^7$-IV-V7-I (See Table 7.1). The melodic line for the last section is a combination of the traditional melody mixed with newly added, higher tessitura material which extends the melody up to the long, final note of high B-flat.

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126 Ibid.
Table 7.1. The Musical Form of Estes’s “The Cadet Rousselles!”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections:</th>
<th>Intro</th>
<th>A (verse 1)</th>
<th>A (verse 2)</th>
<th>Interlude: (transition)</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keys:</td>
<td>F Major</td>
<td>G Major</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempi:</td>
<td>Brisk March</td>
<td>Waltz</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonality:</td>
<td>C Major/E Major7 alteration</td>
<td>I-V7 alteration V7-I-I6/4-Iv6-V9-I</td>
<td>→ (repeats) Ascending chromatic passing tones leading to G major</td>
<td>I-I7-V7-V9-V7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections:</th>
<th>(Transition)</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>(Transition)</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keys:</td>
<td>A Major</td>
<td>a minor (retrograde)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>C Major</td>
<td>B♭ Major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempi:</td>
<td>More Quickly ♩ = 85</td>
<td>Slow ♩ = 60</td>
<td>Quick Jazz ♩ = 100</td>
<td>Quick, Triumphant ♩ = 130</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonality:</td>
<td>I in A Major (borrowed from iv of a minor) -17 in a minor</td>
<td>-m. 77: Cello retrograde of melody -m. 86: vocal stacatti of a minor-forward melody -m. 88: piano retrograde statement like cello -All parts staggered for contrapuntal nature</td>
<td>Ascending, chromatic passing tones leading to C Major I-V-V7/Iv6-V9-I (sequence) -V-IV</td>
<td>I-V-V7/Iv6-V9-I (sequence)</td>
<td>I-V-V7/Iv6-V9-I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The musical characteristics of Cajun music that Estes’s “Rousselle” possess are that the melody is primary, the text is repetitive and the B section contains a waltz dance. This through-composed song is in a duple feeling, $\frac{6}{8}$ meter, visiting $\frac{9}{8}$ up to measure 99; then the piece switches meter to $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{4}{4}$ for the Quick sections, as $\frac{3}{4}$ ultimately becomes the dominant meter to the end. The form of this ‘many Rousselle’s’ is A, interlude, B, transition, C, D and E—which moves through five keys and includes a retrograde section in C.
Modernally, “Cadet Rousselle,” with its multiple versions and existence in three separate nationalities, marks this children’s song as unequalled in its historical heritage. Traditionally, “Cadet Rousselle” is a popular children’s song in France, Canada and Louisiana. “Cadet Rousselle” became so popular that “it spread through all levels of society” in France, having been “introduced to the Armée du Nord” by volunteers from Auxerre.\textsuperscript{127} Joshua Caffery from his book \textit{Traditional Music in Coastal Louisiana} comments of “Cadet Rousselles” popularity that it “extends beyond oral traditions; it can be found widely in printed children’s literature, various novels and French popular culture at large.”\textsuperscript{128}

For Cajun music and song, its ancestry characteristically joins the Acadian-American culture to its Francophone lineage. The oral conveyance of “Cadet Rouselle” to many generations of French, to Acadians, to modern Cajuns, makes this song a staple in American song despite its humorous and shaming text of the clown, Rousselle. Caffery exclaims of this children’s song that it “chronicles the shenanigans of Cadet Rousselle, a ‘\textit{bon garçon}’ with a curious house, worthless sons, and skinny horses.” Because of the ‘\textit{loggia}’ Rousselle added to his home in Auxerre, France, “a hapless act that engendered the song and two centuries of unabated ridicule.”\textsuperscript{129}

CHAPTER 8

GRAND TEXAS-ON THE BAYOU!

One of the most impactful episodes to occur during the Formative stage of Cajun music was the Texas Oil Boom from the early Twentieth century. The discovery of oil in Texas and Louisiana had vast repercussions on Cajun music’s development. “White business men from outside of Louisiana attempted to force the Cajuns to adapt, even outlawing the use of the French language in 1916. Despite the law, many Cajuns still spoke French at home and musical performances were in French.”130 With the discovery of oil in 1901 at the “Spindletop salt dome in the south portion of Beaumont, Texas,”131 many “Cajuns went to Texas in search of employment”132 and with the hopes of finding a better way of life, leaving their once isolated lives behind. The Cajun song that most illustrates this movement is “Grand Texas.”133

This experience was so impactful for the Cajun’s cultural heritage that it could not help but be actualized in their music. Moving to Texas meant more than just a move west for the Cajun. Along with the possibility of a better life, Texas represented a place where excitement and adventure existed. “If the Cajun thinks of far-away lands, the main place he sings of is Texas. This is attributed to the fact that during the early days in LA, Texas represented the far-off country of the unknown, the country of great adventure.”134 This was an appealing for the Cajun community.

133 Note: It is also known as “Gran Texas” or “Big Texas”.
The traditional Cajun song that embodied the Cajun movement to Texas was “Grand Texas.” Recorded in 1948 by Chuck Guillory (1919–1998) and his band in Cajun French. The Cajun French text is:

Tu m’as quitté pour t’en aller,
Pour t’en aller, toi tout seul, (z)à Grand Texas.
Criminelle comment je va faire mais moi tout seul?
Tu m’as quitté pour t’en aller (z)à Grand Texas.

“Guillory would go on to record the tune a number of times during the 1940s. And between 1956–1959, he recorded it for Dr. Harry Oster’s study and recordings of Cajun songs and music.”

During the 1950s, on the heels of Guillory’s “Grand Texas”, Julian Lamperez (1920–1999), otherwise known as ‘Papa Cairo’, recorded his version of this traditional Cajun song, and called it “Big Texas”. He ultimately recorded the song twice for Feature Records in Cajun French and in Cajun English. The English lyrics are:

You left me and went away to Grand Texas,
You went all by yourself to Grand Texas,
It’s sad, how will handle being by myself?
You left me and went away, went away.

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138 Ibid.
Hank Williams “Jambalaya—On The Bayou”

Hot on the tail end of Papa Cairo’s popular “Big Texas”, came the nascency of the most famous Cajun song to ever be recorded: “Jambalaya—On The Bayou!” by country music artist, Hank Williams, Sr. in 1952. Ryan Brasseaux asserts “Williams supposedly devised the lyrics to his Cajun anthem while en route between Caravan shows in a train dining car with members of Dudley Leblanc’s Hadacol Caravan.”

Others tell the story of “Jambalaya’s” creation by recalling a story that occurred at a dance club in Basile, Louisiana.

One Saturday night, a group of well-dressed strangers, led by a conspicuous gentleman dressed all in white, entered the club and sat together at a table adjacent to the bandstand. The accordionist, Nathan Absire, gazed curiously at the dapper, ivory-clad interloper—who ignored local custom by wearing his cowboy hat indoors—then continued the dance with his interpretation of ‘Grand Texas,’ a Western swing-tinged French composition about Cajuns living in the Lone Star State. After the tune, a member of the entourage approached the bandleader and declared, “Mr. Hank would like you to play that song again.” Abshire obliged, never realizing that “Mr. Hank” was, in fact, Louisiana Hayride personality and country music recording artist Hank Williams. Eight months later, the accordionist tuned his radio to a broadcast of Williams’ Cajun anthem ‘Jambalaya.’ ‘Hank picked up on that rhythm, melody line,’ recounts the late accordionist’s cousin and understudy Ray Abshire, ‘and made ‘Jambalaya’ out of ‘Grand Texas’.

Many contradictions exist about who wrote “Jambalaya” between Hank Williams, or Moon Mullican (1909–1967)—who received writing royalties for the song—and between Papa Cairo and Chuck Guillory. “With a melody based on the Cajun song, ‘Grand Texas,’ some sources claim that the song was co-written by Williams and Moon Mullican with Williams credited as

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the sole author and Mullican receiving ongoing royalties.” Mullican would go on to “record
his own version of ‘Jambalaya’ because he was under contract with King Records.”

Despite the tanglement of “Jambalaya-On The Bayou’s” origins, and “Papa Cairo’s claims
that Williams stole the song from him,” Hank Williams had a hit Number One record in his
repertoire that remained there for fourteen non-consecutive weeks on the U.S. country charts.

“William’s song resembles ‘Grand Texas’ in melody only. ‘Grand Texas’ is a song about a lost
love, a woman who left the singer to go with another man to ‘Big Texas’; ‘Jambalaya,’ while
maintaining a Cajun theme, is about life, parties and stereotypical food of Cajun cuisine.”

Williams “Jambalaya” text is:

Goodbye Joe, me gotta go, me oh my oh.
Me gotta go pole the pirogue down the bayou.
My Yvonne, the sweetest one, me oh my oh.
Son of a gun, we’ll have big fun on the bayou.

Jambalaya and a crawfish pie and fillet gumbo.
’Cause tonight I’m gonna see ma cher a mio.
Pick guitar, fill fruit jar and be gay-o.
Son of a gun, we’ll have big fun on the bayou.

Other differences between “Grand Texas” and “Jambalaya” is the language used for the text
which changes from Cajun French to Southern vernacular English.

141 “Jambalaya (On the Bayou),” Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia,
2016).
142 Ibid.
http://earlycajunmusic.blogspot.com/search/label%22Big%20Texas%22%20-%20Julius%20-%20Papa%20Cairo%20
Lamperez (accessed September 1, 2016).
144 “Jambalaya (On the Bayou),” Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia,
2016).
145 Ibid.
The structure of music and text changes from the Cajun “tune and turn” form to the popular, country “verse and chorus” form. The length is longer in “Jambalaya” since it contains three verses with the chorus. And more literally, the subject matter changes from the Cajun notion of “Going to Texas,” and all that evokes; to the more Americanized version as “the narrator leaves to ‘pole a pirogue’ down the shallow water of the bayou to attend a party with his girlfriend, Yvonne, and her family.”

“‘Jambalaya—On The Bayou!’—named for a Creole and Cajun dish—spawned numerous cover versions and remains one of Williams most popular songs today.” Elvis Presley recorded his version of “Jambalaya” for RCA Records in 1975. David Neal from his book *Roots of Elvis* observes of Elvis’s cover that “surely everyone knows that ‘Jambalaya’ and Hank are inseparable, with his record from 1952. Maybe so, at least with that title, but ‘Jambalaya’ is based on a slightly earlier number by Julius Lamperez (Papa Cairo) in 1949. The original title was ‘Big Texas’, so perhaps ‘Jambalaya (On the Oilfield)’ would have been more appropriate.”

“Grand Texas—On The Bayou!” Analysis

From his set of Cajun songs, *Joie de vivre*, Arles Estes combines “Grand Texas” and “Jambalaya” into a song appropriate for the concert stage. Set for high voice, piano, violin, cello and guitar, Estes pokes fun at the traditional, Cajun swing dance tune and the country, hillbilly ‘Jambalaya.’ Estes organizes his version, entitled “Grand Texas—On The Bayou!”, by having an

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148 Ibid.
Introduction, then two sections which reflect “Grand Texas”. Next comes a transition section, which Estes calls “a Cajun cadenza”, followed by two sections which represent “Jambalaya”. Estes, then ends his setting with a combination of the two popular songs by writing a Coda. As follows, the first half of the song, mm. 1 – 42, are in Cajun French while the second half, mm. 50 – 84, are in English. Both languages and songs coalesce for the last fourteen measures.

A closer examination of each section for the F♯-Major to G-Major piece reveals that the Introduction (mm. 1 – 8) is moderately expressed in 2/4 as it quickly accelerates into a V7, descending glissando half cadence before reaching the A section. The intro works off a circle of fifths, chromatic ascending pattern to V7.

The first verse, Section A (mm. 9 – 24), is a straight-forward and traditional setting the closely resembles “Grand Texas”. Not much chordal structure is present because of the lack of accompaniment. The harmonic function progresses from I-vi-V7-I⁶/⁴-I-V7-IV-V-I as the meter alternates from 4/4 to 6/4 to 3/4. The tempo adjusts between a lyrical feeling to a light and bouncy feeling.

For A’ (mm. 25 – 42), Estes composes a short waltz in the unusual time signature of 4/4. The harmonic progression grows from I-V7-vi₃-V⁷/iii-iii-V⁷/IV-V, and then I-V⁹-V⁶/⁴/iii-ii-IV6-V2. Interesting features in this verse two section of A prime, is in m. 37, where the cello plays the text “Tonnerre m’ecrase un va avoir un bon temp” (Thunder crushes me and we will have a good time) with the voice. Then in mm. 39 – 40, the accompaniment drops out for the solo voices in duet, then the high voice sings alone in mm. 40 – 41; and this acts as an extended V7-I progression into an authentic cadence in m. 42.

The transition between Este’s setting of “Grand Texas” and “Jambalaya” becomes what he calls, “a Cajun Cadenza,” where the vocalist is singing wide, octave leaps on “A-Yi”—which is a
call that Cajun singers legitimately cry out as they are performing. Harmonically, Estes writes an abrupt modulation which occurs in perfect-fifth intervals in the piano, with one descending in m. 47. The abruptness occurs between m. 45 – 47 as Estes transfers the pitches for D#7 down a semitone to D7, and reaches G-Major from F#-Major and moves to a V7 in the key of G.

A“ and A”” (mm. 50 – 84) are Estes setting of Williams “Jambalaya.” Estes uses the last verse and last chorus from William’s number one country hit in a 2/4 meter. The harmonic progression is a repetition of I-vii◦-IV-I throughout these two sections. The tempo begins slowly with \( \textit{}= 60, \) which gradually accelerates to \( \textit{=} 110 \) in m. 81. Also, unique to this section, Estes asks the violin to play in a “fiddle style” from m. 68 to the end of A””.

For his coda ending (mm. 85 – 99), Estes suddenly begins slower, and wants a rubato feeling for his fusing of songs regarding going to Texas and having fun on the bayou with great Cajun cuisine. At m. 90, the tempo increases to \( \textit{=} 120 \) and Estes alternates between a 2/4, 3/4 and 2/4 again meter to the end. The harmonic progression is V-I-vii◦-V6/5-I as the vocalist switches languages between Cajun French and Cajun English—a trend for most Cajun musicians and singers.
### Table 8.1. The Musical Form of Estes’s “Grand Texas-On The Bayou!”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections:</th>
<th>Intro</th>
<th>A Verse 1</th>
<th>A' Verse 2</th>
<th>Transition “Cajun Cadenza”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measures:</td>
<td>1–8</td>
<td>9–24</td>
<td>25–42</td>
<td>43–49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keys:</td>
<td>F♯ Major → G Major</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempi:</td>
<td>Moderate, then Quickly Accelerating -mm. 8–9: Delicate, Lyrical feel -m. 11: Light, Bouncy -m. 12: Lyrically, etc. m. 35: Short Waltz Freely</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meter:</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>Alteration of ¾, 6/4 and 3/4 4/4 ¾</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language:</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Cajun French</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 8.1 (cont.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections:</th>
<th>A&quot; Verse 3</th>
<th>A&quot;&quot; Chorus</th>
<th>Coda (Tag)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measures:</td>
<td>50–68</td>
<td>69–84</td>
<td>85–99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keys:</td>
<td>G Major</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempi:</td>
<td>Slow ½ = 60 (gradually speeding up) -m. 60: ½ = 70 (getting faster) ½ = 80 (getting faster) -m. 73: ½ = 90 (getting faster) -m. 77: ½ = 100 (getting faster) -m. 81: ½ = 110 (getting faster) Suddenly slower, Rubato -m. 90: Fast ½ = 120</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meter:</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>2/4, ¾, ¾ to end</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language:</td>
<td>Cajun English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The composer, Arles Estes, reflects on his inspiration and work in setting these two popular and always connected Cajuns songs, explaining:

because it is obviously known for being a country/folk tune, I really got a kick out of superimposing it into a ‘classical’—chamber setting. It almost makes fun of itself in a way—it is presented so prim and proper before the cadenza. The cadenza itself, I find almost hysterical to sing lowbrow country with a soaring
opera voice. But then, as if to soothe the cognitive dissonance, the music just can’t help getting back to its roots, with the violin becoming a fiddle right before your eyes and the guitar starts folk strumming to the danceable rhythms. I also like presenting the text in both languages so that the general audience can learn that this simple country song has long and prestigious roots! This song will always put a smile on my face.150

Either being born out of the undesirable vigilantes kicked out of Louisiana after the Civil War ended, or Cajun Cowboys that drove cattle in Texas, or the migration to Texas of so many Cajuns in order to find a better way of life; the ideal of “Going to Texas” resonated throughout the Cajun community and in the works of many Cajun musicians to become part of the Cajun cultural heritage.

Ryan Brasseaux proclaims of the “crossover Cajun country tune ‘Grand Texas’” that though it was is not as big as “Jolie Blonde” nationally, “it signified the community’s admittance into the annals of American popular culture.”151

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

No longer an isolated group hidden by the bayous and marshes of South Louisiana, the twentieth century brought the Cajuns out of the swamps and gave them the realization of what the original French Acadians settlers hoped to establish—their own culture and community. Though the expulsion from the Nova Scotia area of Canada hindered the Acadians continuous growth and development as their own civilization, their deportation ultimately led to the synthesis of the Cajun way of life. ‘Les bon ton rouler’ (Let the good times roll) is a way of life for the Cajun people. It is a phrase, a motto to the Cajuns that means, ‘No matter what life throws at me, good things can be acquired’ in life.

The emerging music of the Cajun people was not popular as it is today. It began in isolation and continued to find ways to stay alive through the confining effects of Americanization, creolization, their struggles, and through popular musical idioms. Thanks, in part, to the many Cajun musicians that sought after their old songs, the Cajuns learned how to express their culture’s music as it was passed down to them by oral tradition. Cajun music, with all its complexities and musical genres, is the essence of what comprises a Cajun’s joie de vivre—the delight of being alive or having a zest for life. The Cajuns “joy of life” is not fully perceived unless it is captured in their music.

Griffin Smith notes of the Cajun joie de vivre that “after all the adversity the Cajuns have known—working in salt mines, suffering in the oil bust, picking cotton for a dollar a day, getting expelled from Acadie and sailing the seas in search of a home, watching their bayous silt up and their coastline wash into the Gulf—How can (the Cajuns) say that life has loved them back?
Despite everything Smith concludes, “Life has loved the Cajuns back, not least because they willed it so.” “When the French language is barely a memory in South LA, when the lilting Cajun music is kept in a cupboard for connoisseur’s delight, when the gumbo and the crawfish and the jambalaya have given way to fast foods…what still will remain, like a lingering smile of grace from the bayous and the prairies” is the Cajun “disposition of the mind of heart,” their infectious *joie de vivre.*”\(^{152}\)

What does the music of the Cajuns bring to America’s ‘stewpot’? “The music they brought with them was vocal and included French traditional unaccompanied ballads that soon took on imagery from the American frontier.”\(^{153}\)

As singer Thomas Hampson asserts in his study of American song repertory: “Our songs have become as varied as our people. The plethora of songs and styles that existed in 1860 America were the hymns of the East, the cowboy songs of the West, the work songs of the North, the spirituals of the South. All were part of the American experience and provided the ground from which the American concert song sprang.”\(^{154}\) There is beauty, truth and acceptance of American’s “stewpot” of style and song in Hampson’s observation, yet sadness as well; for nowhere in it are the songs that are representative of the Cajun people.

Recent work by Cajun scholars: Barry Jean Ancelet, Carl A. Brasseaux, Ryan André Brasseaux, Shane Bernard, and Marc and Ann Savoy advocate for the need to replenish the missing ingredients of Cajun music from America’s ‘stewpot.’ Their studies are just the starting

\(^{152}\) Griffin Smith Jr., “The Cajuns: Still Loving Life.” *National Geographic* (178, no. 4 October 1990), 64-5.


point for current scholarship, and the addition and significance of Cajun music will be compelling for American song.

When trying to define essentially what is Cajun music beyond the Cajun’s *joie de vivre*, Ryan Brasseaux asks questions in determining the boundaries of Cajun music. He asks: “Does the music have to be made in Louisiana to be true Cajun? Does it even have to be made by Cajuns? Does it have to be sung in French? Or have certain instrumentation? Or only be made up of traditional waltzes and two-steps? Ultimately, Brasseaux questions the boundaries of Cajun musical expression, and who has the authority to dictate those parameters?”

In my opinion, Cajun music does not have to originate in Louisiana to be Cajun especially since one of the most popular Cajun songs—“Jolie Blonde”—grew in its popularity from its Texas recording. Also, since many Cajuns migrated to Texas and live in the Cajun Lapland, which borders Texas and Louisiana, it would be hard to support a notion that Cajun music must come from Louisiana only.

Do Cajun songs have to be made by Cajuns or sung in Cajun French? No. Many well-known Cajun songs had their versions created by other ethnicities for example, Hank Williams, Sr.’s hit, “Jambalaya.” Also, many Cajun songs are sung in Cajun English now due to the result of President Theodore Roosevelt’s Americanization polices from the Progressive era.

The instrumentation for the Cajun band, and the accompanying instruments for the Cajun song, evolved through time. It is hard to say that Cajun music can only be accompanied by an accordion, fiddle, washboard, triangle and guitar since the instrumentation adapted throughout the twentieth century to facilitate the genres they are playing and the venues where they are performing.

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Ann Savoy gives the best answer in response to Brasseaux’s questions. She asserts:

describing Cajun music would be like summarizing one hundred years of the evolution of a people. It is a lone ballad singer singing song stories as remembered from French and Acadian ancestors; it’s the acoustic wail of an accordion heard echoing for miles from the porch of an isolated house on the prairie; it is the music played by friends crowded together in the kitchen corner playing music and drinking beer while spicy odors of a sauce piquante fill the room. Cajun music is also the slick, electric band with accordion, steel guitar, and twin fiddles in the dim, smoke filled club, filled with gliding dancers; it’s the rubboard and the triple row accordion driving to the beat of an electric bass in a black club in a Creole community; it’s a lonely song with a fiddle seconding the beat, while the lead fiddle plays its heart out.156

She elaborates further that “Cajun music is a major lifeforce of the Cajun culture. Those who can identify with the music can identify with the people because the music is a reflection of their lives, strengths, sorrows, and joys of the people.”157

As this study’s purpose is to provide the American “stewpot” with “a flavor” that will add “to the whole;”158 I ask: Where are the copious settings and arrangements of America’s authentic song? If these missing and neglected adaptations are truly the “ground from which the American concert song sprang,”159 further arrangements and settings need to be generated to fill what is missing from America’s song repertory.

In my opinion, as Ann Savoy stresses—If ‘Cajun music is the lifeforce of the Cajun culture’, then American song should be the American’s lifeforce as well.

American music is far more ethnic and folk then previously regarded, and an appraisal of American music needs to transpire. There are many songs, as compiled by the Lomaxes, which support the demand for this much-needed assessment. American song needs to broaden its roots

157 Ibid.
beyond the songs with European influences, the songs of Stephen Foster and the arrangements of African-American Spirituals. The Lomaxes transcriptions included songs of “cowboys and convicts, lumberjacks, hobos, miners, plantation slave, mountaineers, soldiers and many more.”160 These songs and others ought to have more suitable arrangements created to be performed on the concert stage.

As Arles Estes’ “Joie de vivre” setting of five traditional Cajuns songs now exist, these overlooked standards have seasoned America’s musical stewpot.

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APPENDIX A:

PERFORMANCE PRACTICE GUIDE

Joie de vivre:

Five Impressions of Acadian-America

with

TEXT, TRANSLATION, IPA

and

MUSICAL SCORE
“Jolie Blonde”

Poetic Translation:
Pretty blond, look at what you’ve done!
You’ve left me to go away,
To go away, yes, with someone else.
What hope and what future can I have?\(^{161}\)

Word-by-Word Translation and IPA Transcriptions:
Jolie blonde gardez donc quoi c’est t’as fait
ʒoˈli blɔ̃ɡarð dɔ̃ kœ tɔ ˈsa fe
pretty blond so keep what it did to you

Tu m’a quitté pour t’en aller
ty ma kiˈte pur tœ naˈle
you left me to go away

Pour t’en aller avec un autre que moi
pur tœ naˈle a ˈvek ɛ nat kɔ mwa
to go away with someone other than me

Quel espoir et quel a venir je peux m’en avoir
kel esˈpwaː r e kel aˈvniɾ zpœ mɔ naˈvwaːr
What hope has come and what I can get me

Jolie Blonde:  
Jolie blonde, regardez donc quoi t’as fait,
Tu mais quitté pour t’en aller avec un autre,
Quel espoir et quel avenir, je vais avoir?

Jolie blonde, tu m’as laissé, moi tout seul,
Pour t’en aller chez ta famille.
Si t’aurais pas écouté tous les conseils de les autres,
Tu serait ici t’avec moi aujourd’hui.

Jolie blonde, Tu croyais il y avait juste toi,
Il y a pas juste toi dans le pays
Pour moi aimer.
Je peux trouver-just une autre jolie blonde,
Bon Dieu sait, moi j’aimie tant.

Jolie blonde, mourir ça serait pas rien
C’est de rester dans la terre aussi long temps.
Moi j’vois pas quoi faire si tu reviens pas,
T’en revenir avec moi dans la Louisiane.\(^{162}\)

Text: Translation by Ann Allen Savoy
Pretty blonde, look what you’ve done,
You left me to go, to go off with another,
What hope and what future am I to have?

Pretty blonde, you left me, myself,
To go away to your family.
If you would not listen to advice of others,
You would be here with me today.

Pretty blonde, you thought that it was just you,
You’re not the only one in the country
For me to love.
I can find just another pretty blonde,
God knows, that I love so much.

Pretty blonde, to die, it would be nothing,
It’s just staying in the ground for a long time,
I do not see what to do if you do not come back,
Come back with me in Louisiana.


“Allons à Lafayette”  

**Poetic Translation:**
Let’s go to Lafayette to change your name!
We’ll call you Madame, Madame Rascal Comeaux!
Little one, you’re too cute to do me wrong.
How come you believe that I can make it all alone?
But you, pretty heart, look what you’ve done!
So far as I am from you, why it’s pitiful!163

**Word-by-Word Translation and IPA Transcriptions:**
Allons à Lafayette, c’est pour changer ton nom
Going to Lafayette is for change your name

On va t’appeler Madame Canaille Comeaux
We will call you miss naughty Comeaux

Trop petite et trop mignonne pour faire ta criminelle
Too small and too cute to do your criminal

Qui sait que ton petit coeur peut faire sans mon petit coeur
Who knows your little heart can do without my little heart

**Mlle. Comeaux Reads A Letter:**
(Madmoiselle Comeaux reads a letter from her young and hot-headed lover)

Allons à Lafayette, c’est changer
Let’s got to Lafayette, to change
Ton nom-on va t’appellar Madame,
Your name, to Mrs. Madame
Madame Canaille Comeaux.
Madame Naughty Comeaux!
‘Tite fille trop mignonnon,
You’re too cute,
Pour faire la criminelle,
To act so bad,
‘Quo faire tu me fais tout ça,
Why do you do this to me,
Oh, oui, ma si amiable.164
Oh, Yes, my friendly?
Mais toi, mais c’est deme voir,
Yes, but that is me,
Si lion de toi, mignonnon
So far from you, cutie,
Tu peux me crever le Coeur,
You can burst my heart,
Oh, jolie! Oh, jolie!
Oh, pretty, pretty
Jolie fille.165
Pretty girl.
Le monde parle mal de toi!
The world speaks ill of you,
Tu danses mai trop-collee!
For you dance too close!
Quoi’ faire tu me fais comme ça?
Why do you do this to me?

C’est juste pour me faire fache?  
Is it just to make me angry?  
Allons à Layfayette, c’est changer  
Let’s go to Lafayette, to change  
Ton nom-on va t’appeller Madame,  
Your name, to Madame,  
Madame Canaille Comeaux.  
Madame Naughty Comeaux.  
Retrouve moi a Lafayette.  
Meet me in Lafayette.

“Gabriel and Evangeline”

Longfellow’s Evangeline, Selected Lines:
THIS is the forest primeval.  
Entered the sacred portal.  
The murmuring pines and the hemlocks,  
with loud and dissonant clangor  
This is the forest primeval;  
Closed, and in silence the crowd  
but where are the hearts that beneath it  
awaited the will of the soldiers.  
Where is the thatch-roofed village,  
Then uprose their commander,  
the home of Acadian farmers,  
and spoke from the steps of the altar,  
Scattered like dust and leaves,  
‘You are convened this day,’ he said,  
when the mighty blasts of October  
by his Majesty’s orders.  
Seize them, and whirl them aloft,  
Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings,  
and sprinkle them far o’er the ocean.  
and cattle of all kinds  
Naught but tradition remains  
Forfeited be to the crown;  
of the beautiful village of Grand-Pré.  
and that you yourselves  
Ye who believe in the beauty and  
from this province  
strength of woman’s devotion,  
Be transported to other lands.  
List to a Tale of Love in Acadie,  
Prisoners now I declare you;  
home of the happy.  
for such is his Majesty’s pleasure!’  
Merrily, merrily whirled the  
Rose, with his arms uplifted,  
wheels of the dizzying dances  
Flushed was his face and distorted with passion;  
Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline,  
Down with the tyrants of England!  
Benedict’s daughter!  
We never have sworn them allegiance!  
Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel,  
Death to these foreign soldiers,  
son of the blacksmith!  
who seize on our homes  
So passed the morning away.  
and our harvests!’  
And lo! with a summons sonorous  
Meanwhile, amid the gloom,  
Sounded the bell from its tower,  
by the church Evangeline lingered.  
and over the meadows a drum beat.  
All was silent within;  
Thronged erelong was the church with men.  
and in vain at the door and the windows  
Without, in the churchyard,  
Stood she, and listened and looked, till,  
Waited the women.  
overcome by emotion,  
They stood by the graves,  
Gabriel!’ cried she aloud with tremulous voice;  
and hung on the headstones  
but no answer!  
Then came the guard from the ships,  
Gabriel!’ cried she aloud with tremulous voice;  
and marching proudly among them

Poetic Meter Analysis of Selected *Cantos from Evangeline*¹⁶⁹

**Canto I:**

This is the/forest pri/meval. The/murmuring/pines and the/hemlocks,

\[ \ldots \]

Bearded with/moss, and in/garments/green, indi/stinct in the/twilight,

\[ \ldots \]

Stand like Dru/ids of eld./with voices/sad and pro/phetic,

\[ \ldots \]

Stand like har/pers hoar, with/beards that/rest on their/bosoms.

\[ \ldots \]

Loud from its/rocky/caverns, the/deep-voiced/neighboring/ocean

\[ \ldots \]

Speaks, and in/accents dis/consolate/answers the/wail of the/forest.

\[ \ldots \]

**Canto II:**

This is the/forest pri/meval; but/where are the/hearts that be/neath it

\[ \ldots \]

Leaped like the/roe, when he/hears in the/woodland the/voice of the/huntsman?

\[ \ldots \]

Where is the/thatch-roofed/village, /the home of/Acadian/farmers,

\[ \ldots \]

Men whose lives/glided/on like/rivers that/water the/woodlands,

\[ \ldots \]

Darkened by/shadows of/earth, but re/flecting an/image of/heaven?

\[ \ldots \]

Waste are those/pleasant/farms, and the/farmers for/ever de/parted!

\[ \ldots \]

**Gabriel and Evangeline:**

Evangeline! Evangeline!

Evangeline was the name he called,

The name he held in his heart

This young man, youthful and strong was he

Of no more than twenty-three winters

As he guided his craft carefully, steadily,

Through the bayous of Louisianne.

He drifted, he drifted in his heart

---

He drifted up river through memories
Of peace and family, of fire and sorrow,
The loss of his people,
The loss of his sweet true love
Her face floated before him,
Still and beautiful,
As gentle music to his heart
And his lips again called her name
Evangeline!

Listen!

An owl greeting the moonlight,
The wind whispering through the cypress
Silence. Only cruel silence. Lost.
And Gabriel wandered alone.
Gabriel! Gabriel!

Gabriel was the name she called
The name she drew on her heart
The name of every new dawning hope
The name of each of her young fresh tears.
Evangeline sailed down river

That else lie hidden in darkness!
Gabriel! Gabriel!

Ancient echoes awoke and there in the wild
Unknown they settled and ceased.
Like a sense of pain was the silence. Dark.
The spell of night falls heavy and thick.
Evangeline sleeps.

Along the same dark river comes Gabriel.
His oar makes not a sound as it divides the water.
Like a ghost he drifts…
Right past the mournful reeds selfishly concealing
Evangeline, as she…dreams,
Observed only by the solemn owl
Who made not a sound.

These two lovers, searching for each other,
Never would know how near they had come.
Love, a phantom ever wanders from their lips…
Evangeline!...Gabriel!...
Evangeline…Gabriel…Gabriel.170

Text: French Children’s Song

“Cadet Rousselle”

Poetic Translation:
Cadet Rousselle has three homes
That have neither rafters nor beams.
They are to shelter swallows.
What can you say of Cadet Rousselle?
Ah! Ah! ‘Tis quite so.
Cadet Rousselle’s a fine fellow.

Word-by-Word Translation and IPA Transcription:
Cadet Rousselle a trois maisons
kaˈdɛ ruˈsɛl a twa meˈzɔ
Cadet Rousselle has some homes

Qui n’ont ni poutres ni chevrons
ki ˈnɔ̃ niˈpu trɔ ni feˈvrɔ̃
which has neither beams nor rafters

Cadet Rousselle has three coats,
two of them yellow,
The other made of grey paper,
he wears the latter when it’s freezing,
Or when it’s raining or when it’s hailing.
Oh! Oh! Oh, Yes indeed
Cadet Rousselle’s a fine fellow.171

Deux jaunes, l’autre en papier gris,
two yellow the others of paper grey


C’est pour loger les hirondelles
it is to house the swallows
seˈpuˈloˈʒeˈleziˈrɔ̃delə
Il met celui-la quand il gèle,
he wears it when the freeze
I meˈseˈlipiləˈkɑ̃ˈlɛzə
Que direz-vous de Cadet Rousselle
how about Cadet Rousselle
kaˈdireˈvuˈdaˈkəˈde ruˈsel
Ou quand il pleut, ou quand il grêle.
or when the rain or when the hail
oˈkɑ̃ˈplɔ emocˈlɛsə
Ah Ah Ah Qui, vraiment
yes really
a a a wi vreˈmɔ̃
Ah Ah Ah Qui, vraiment
a a a wi vreˈmɔ̃
Cadet Rousselle est bon enfant
Cadet Rousselle est bon enfant
kaˈde ruˈsel eˈbɔ̃nɔ̃ˈfɔ̃
Cadet Rousselle is friendly
kaˈde ruˈsel eˈbɔ̃nɔ̃ˈfɔ̃

The Cadet Rousselles!:
Cadet Rousselle has three houses,
Cadet Rousselle has three houses,
Cadet Rousselle a trois maisons,
Cadet Rousselle a trois maisons,
Qui n’ont ni poutres, ne chevrons,
That have neither beams nor rafters,
Qui n’ont ni poutres, ni chevrons,
That have neither beams nor rafters,
C’est pour loger les hirondelles
They give lodging to the swallows,
Que direz-vous d’Cadet Rousselle?
What will you say about Cadet Rousselle?
Ah! Ah! Ah, oui vraiment,
Yes indeed,
Cadet Rousselle est bon enfant!
Cadet Rousselle is a good kid!

Cadet Rousselle est bon enfant
Cadet Rousselle is friendly

Text: French Children’s Song
Cadet Rousselle has three houses,
Cadet Rousselle has three houses,
Cadet Rousselle a trois maisons,
Cadet Rousselle a trois maisons,
Qui n’ont ni poutres, ne chevrons,
That have neither beams nor rafters,
Qui n’ont ni poutres, ni chevrons,
That have neither beams nor rafters,
C’est pour loger les hirondelles
They give lodging to the swallows,
Que direz-vous d’Cadet Rousselle?
What will you say about Cadet Rousselle?
Ah! Ah! Ah, oui vraiment,
Yes indeed,
Cadet Rousselle est bon enfant!
Cadet Rousselle is a good kid!

Cadet Rousselle a trois habits,
Cadet Rousselle has three coats,
Cadet Rousselle a trois habits,
Cadet Rousselle has three coats,
Deux jaunes,
Two of them yellow,
L’autre en papier gris,
The other made of grey paper,
Deux jaunes,
The other made of grey paper,
L’autre en papier gris,
Il met celui-la quand il gèle,
He wears the latter when it’s freezing,
Ou quand il pleut, ou quand il grêle.
or when it’s raining or when it’s hailing.
Ah! Ah! Ah, oui vraiment,
Yes indeed,
Cadet Rousselle est bon enfant!
Cadet Rousselle is a good kid!

Cadet Rousselle a une épée
Cadet Rousselle has a sword,
Cadet Rousselle a une épée
Cadet Rousselle has a sword,
Cadet Rousselle a une épée
Cadet Rousselle has a sword,
On dit qu’ell’ ne cherche querelle,
They say it only fights
Qu’aux moineaux
Against sparrow
Et qu’aux hirondelles.
And swallows.
Ah! Ah! Ah, oui vraiment,
Oh! Oh! Oh, Yes indeed,
Cadet Rousselle est bon enfant!
Cadet Rousselle is a good kid!

Cadet Rousselle a trois beaux chats,
Cadet Rousselle a trois beaux chats,
Qui n’attrapent jamais les rats,
Que n’attrapent jamais les rats,
Le troisième n’a pas de prunelles,
Il monte au grenier sans chandelle.
Ah! Ah! Ah, oui vraiment,
Cadet Rousselle!

Cadet Rousselle ne mourra pas,
Cadet Rousselle ne mourra pas,
Car avant de sauter le pas,
Car avant de sauter le pas,
On dit qu’il apprend l’orthographe,
Pour faire lui-même son epitaphe.
Ah! Ah! Ah, oui vraiment,
Cadet Rousselle est bon enfant!173

Cadet Rousselle has three big cats,
Cadet Rousselle has three big cats,
One that never chases rats,
One that never chases rats,
The third one has no eyes,
It goes up to the attic without a candle.
Oh! Oh! Oh, Yes, indeed,
Cadet Rousselle!

Cadet Rousselle will not die,
Cadet Rousselle will not die,
Because before taking the plunge,
Because before taking the plunge,
They say he’s learning how to spell,
To write his epitaph himself.
Oh! Oh! Oh, Yes, indeed,
Cadet Rousselle is a good kid!

“Grand Texas”

Poetic Translation:
You left me to go to big Texas,
To go so far with another.
Criminal, how do you believe I can make it?
Your left me to bit Texas.174

Word-by-Word Translation and IPA Transcriptions:
Tu m’as quitté pour t’en aller au grand Texas

you left me for you go to the big Texas

Pour t’en aller au si loin avec un aut’

to go away to so far with another

Criminelle, comment tu crois moi j’peux faire

Criminal how do you think I can do

Tu m’as quitté pour t’en aller au grand Texas

you left me for you go to the big Texas

Grande Texas—On The Bayou!
Tu m’as quitté por t’en aller au Grand Texas.
Pour t’en aller au si loin avec un aut’
Criminelle, comment tu crois moi j’peux faire
Tu m’as quitté pour t’en aller au Grand Texas.¹⁷⁵

Thibodeaux, Fontenot, la place apre sonner,
Ça vien “an tas” pour voir Yvonne par les douzaines.
Fair bien l’amour, et fair le fou,
Fair la musique.
Tonnerre m’ecrase un va avoir
Un bon temp.
Tonnerre m’ecrase un va avoir
Un bon temp.


Goodbye Joe. Me gotta go, me oh my-yo.
Gotta go pole the pirogue down the bayou!
My Yvonne the sweetest one, me oh my-yo!
Son-of-a-gun, we’ll have big fun-on the ba-yo!¹⁷⁶

Jambalie, and a crawfish pie, filét gumbo
‘Cause tonight I’m gonna see my che-rie amie-yo!
Pick guitar, fill fruit jar, and be ga-yo!
Son-of-a-gun we’ll have big fun on the bayou!

Tonnerre m’ecrasse un va avoir un bon temps!
Son-of-a-gun!
We’ll have big fun!
On the bayou!
A-Yi!¹⁷⁷

Text: Cajun Folksong & Country Song
You left me to go to big Texas,
To go so far with another.
Criminal, how do you believe I can make it?
You left me to go to big Texas.

Thibodeaux, Fontenot, the place is buzzin’,
Kinfolk come to see Yvonne by the dozen.
We made love well, let’s go crazy,
Making music,
Thunder crushes me and we will have
A good time.
Thunder crushes me and we will have
A good time.

¹⁷⁵ For verse 1: Source: Raymond E. François, Yé Yaille, Chère! Traditional Cajun Dance Music (Raymond E. François: Thunderstone Press, 1990), 375.
¹⁷⁶ Lyrics for verse 2 and 3 by Hank Williams, Sr., A Cajun French Version of “Jambalaya” (Georgiana, AL: September 17, 1923) http://hurricanearrassband.nl/jambalaya-2/ (Accessed 9/16/16)
Arles Andrew Estes II

Joie de vivre:

Five Impressions of Acadian-America

For High Voice, Piano, Violin, Cello and Guitar

I. Jolie Blonde
II. Mlle. Comeaux Reads a Letter
III. Gabriel and Evangeline
IV. The Cadet Rousselles!
V. Grand Texas-On The Bayou!

2017

This work was commissioned by Wendy Moss in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts in Performance at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Las Vegas, Nevada
Copyright 2017
Jolie Blonde

18

autre,
Quel es-poir et quel av-en-ir, je

Pno.

22

vais av-loir?
Jo-o-bie

Pno.

Gtr.

Vln.

Vc.
Jolie Blonde

Jo - e-lle blonde, tu cro - yais il y a - vait juste toi.
il y a pas juste toi dans le pays pour moi aimer

Je peux trouver just une autre jolie
Jolie Blonde

blonde

Ben Dieu sait mais, j’aime tant

mf Jo - lie

Pro.

Gtr.

mp

mp

Pno.

Gtr.

mp

mp

Pass.

Vln.

Vc.

bleue mort - rir on se - rait pas rien \\
\textit{C'est de res - ter dans la ter -}
Suddenly Very Slow

re aussi long-temps.
Moi j’vois pas quoi faire si tu reviens pas....

Slowly Waltz to a Stop

P’te re-ve-ar a-vez moi dans la Lou-i-si-ane.
Mlle. Comeaux Reads a Letter

9x

c'est changer ton nom va t'appeler Madame, Madame Co-nai-lle Co-

10x

meaux. 'Tte fille trop nig-monne, pour

11x

Freely

fai-re la cr-i-mi-nelle, 'quo fai-re tu me fais tout ça. Oh, oui, non si u-mi-
a wish...

P Re-trou-ve moi à La-Fa-yette...
Gabriel and Evangeline

Lively Medieval Dance  \( \frac{\text{d}}{\text{4}} = 140 \)

Arles Estes

Voice

Piano

Guitar

Violin

Cello
heart this young man — youth-ful and strong was he of no more than twenty-three win-ter -

as he gui - ded his craft care - ful-ly stea-di-ly through the ba-vous of Lou-i-si-an -
He drifted he drifted in his heart He drifted up river through memories of peace and fa-

mily of fire and sorrow the loss of his people the loss of his sweet true love Her face
Growing Excitement $\textit{d} = 70$

Floated before him, still and beautiful as gentle music to his heart and his lips again called her...

name Evangeline! Listen!
Slowly Again

An owl greeting the moon-light
the wind whispering through the cypress

Lost and Gabriel wandered alone.
Gabriel and Evangeline

Gabriel was the name she called the name she drew on her heart the name of every new downing hope the name of each of her young fresh tears.
Evangeline sailed down river in hopes of finding him somewhere in the wild.

Across the waters at nightfall she listened.
The sound of be-nce return-ing to the ce-darl. A dis-tant owl greet-ing the
moon-light. To the owl she re-plied "Wheth-er my heart has gone, there fol-lows my hand. For the heart il-la-mines
and there in the wild unknown they settled and ceased. Like a sense of pain was the silence.

Steady, Solemn

Dark.

The spell of night falls heavy and thick.

Evangeline
Gabriel and Evangeline

sleeps. Along the same dark river comes Gabriel. His ear makes not a sound as it divides the water. Like a ghost he drifts... right past the mourn...
Those two lovers, searching for each other, never would know how near they had come.

Love, a phantom ever wanders from their lips. Evangeline! Gabriel!
The Cadet Rousselles!
Quick Jazz $\frac{\text{d}}{\text{t}} = 100$

accel.

Pno.

Vc.
piz. like an upright jazz bass

selle a trois beaux chats Cadet Rou-selle a trois beaux Ch-at.
Qui n’a-trap-ent ja-mais les rat!

syncopated

Qui n’a-trap-ent ja-mais les rat!
Le troi-sien n’a pas de prune-lies.
The Cadet Roussilles!

Quick, Triumphant \( \text{\textit{\textfraction}} = 130 \)

\[ \text{Ca-det Rou-selle ne mou-rra pas. Ca-det Rou-selle ne mou-rra pas.} \]

\[ \text{Car a-vant de sau-ter le pas!} \]

\[ \text{On di-\textit{\textfraction} qu'il a-\textit{\textfraction} apprend l'\textit{\textfraction} e-tho-\textit{\textfraction} gra-} \]

\[ \text{\textit{\textfraction}} \]

\[ \text{\textit{\textfraction}} \]
Score

Grand Texas - On The Bayou!

Moderate, Quickly Accelerating

Arles Estes

Delicate, Lyrical Feel $\frac{d}{d} = 120$
Grand Texas - On The Bayou!

S

so-

zaines.

Pno.

Pro.

Vln.

Vc.

Gtr.

ça vien "aun-

ta" pour voir Y-

vonne par les doc-

Fair bien l'a-

mout, et faire le faux, faire la

126
Grand Texas - On The Bayou!

Slow \( \text{\textit{t}} = 60 \)
Gradual Accel. to End

\( \text{S} \)

\( \text{Pno.} \)

\( \text{Vln.} \)

\( \text{Vc.} \)

\( \text{Gtr.} \)

59

59

59

59

\( \text{S} \)

\( \text{Pno.} \)

\( \text{Vln.} \)

\( \text{Vc.} \)

\( \text{Gtr.} \)

\text{\textit{m}} \text{p} \text{ Goo} \text{d-b} \text{y Joe. Me go} \text{ta go, me oh my yo. go} \text{ta go pole the pi-rouge down the}
Grand Texas - On The Bayou!

Slow \( \text{\( \frac{1}{4} \)} = 70 \) (getting faster)

S

\( \text{hu-you!} \) \( mf \) My Y-vonne the swee-test one, me oh my - y! son-of-a-gin, we'll have big

Pno.

Vln.

Ve.

Gtr.

\( \text{\( \frac{1}{4} \)} = 80 \) (getting faster)

S

fun - on the ba - yo! \( f \) Jam-ba - lic, and a craw-fish pie, fi - let

Pno.

Vln.

Ve.

Gtr.
Grand Texas - On The Bayou!

S

\[ \text{gum-bo} \quad \text{\textquoteleftcause to-night I\textprime m gonna see \textquoterightche-rie amie-yel\!'} \]

Pno.

\[ \text{f} \quad \text{mf} \quad \text{f} \]

Vln.

Ve.

Gr.

\[ \text{\textquoteleft100} \quad \text{\textquoteleft110} \]

S

\[ \text{Pick gui-tar fill fruit jar, and be gayol son-of-a-} \]

Pno.

\[ \text{mf} \quad \text{f} \]

Vln.

Ve.

Gr.
Grand Texas - On The Bayou!

CONDUCTED, if necessary.
APPENDIX B:

HOW TO PRONOUNCE CAJUN FRENCH

with a

A CAJUN FRENCH
PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

and

INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC
ALPHABET CHART
HOW TO PRONOUNCE CAJUN FRENCH

As the music of the Cajun people progressed to receive many awards and achievements during the Twentieth century, the development of the Cajun’s language was almost lost, and still struggles to survive amidst the effects of Americanization and creolization. While many would argue that Cajun French is just a derivative of Standard French, the Cajun people, and with the support from the linguistic studies of Rev. Msgr. Jules O. Diagle and Albert Valdman in their Cajun French dictionaries, claim the definitive existence of Cajun French as its own separate language apart from Francophone French. Carl Brasseaux from his book French, Cajun, Creole, Houma: A Primer on Francophone Louisiana delineates that “after the beginning of the Cajun Cultural Renaissance…and the national notoriety that Cajun music and cuisine attracted in subsequent decades, new generations of scholars, often of French descent, again turned their attention to the state’s long-neglected French-speaking groups.” CODOFIL, the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana, was formed in 1968 to counter the egregious effects modernization had upon the Cajun language primarily, and to assist in the reinforcement of the Cajun communities’ cultural heritage so that it would not become lost contemporarily.

The ability to speak Cajun French begins with the basic knowledge of speaking Standard French. Once this is obtained, one can start to learn the Cajun French language and adjust their speaking and timbre to the sound a Cajun makes when he speaks.

To speak in Cajun French, one must relax the embouchure and narrow the opening of the mouth. Cajun speakers use a shortened vocal track to create the “ang” (twang) part of the timbre in their sound. This slimmer mouth opening and smaller tube for sound release creates a

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shrillness in the Cajun’s timbre of speech. This shrill sound combined with speaking loud are two integral factors of speaking like a Cajun. Also, a Cajun speaker will over-nasalize the vowels as they loosely articulate, the Cajun French language. Thus, the description of how to sound like a Cajun is to have a sound that is loud and shrill, with an overly nasalized and slurred articulation in pronunciations.

Valdman states that it is easiest to “determine the salient characteristics of Cajun French by focusing on the differences (it has) with Standard French.” In simplest terms, Cajuns “pronounce all consonants in Cajun French roughly the same as in English;” and “just like Standard French, Cajun French words are usually stressed on the last syllable.”

Since Cajun French is a relatively new language, having not been transcribed until the 1970s, and only been transmitted orally before this, many Cajuns “run many words together and shorten others when they speak.” For example, a Standard French speaker would say “a cette heure,” while a Cajun would pronounce it quickly and compress the words together and say, “aseteur”—both meaning “at this time or now.”

Other generalized traits that are found in Cajun French states Francois are that “a lot of words in Cajun French are contracted, and sometimes leave out syllables; for example, (Cajuns) never say the last syllable of words like ‘table’ and ‘autre;’ and (Cajuns) usually leave out the first syllable of ‘petit’ (and just say ‘tit’). Also, Cajuns only use ‘pas’ when making a negative verb, not ‘ne…pas.’”

179 Albert Valdman, Senior Editor, *Dictionary of Louisiana French: As Spoken in Cajun, Creole, and American Indian Communities* (Jackson, MI: University Press of Mississippi, 2010), xiii.
Irene Whitfield, in her studies of Louisiana Folksongs, also lists the following differences for the Cajun French speaker contrasting that of Standard French by observing that Cajuns:

- “say ‘a’ instead of ‘elle.’
- say ‘je vas’ instead of ‘je vais.’
- say ‘hier au soir’ instead of ‘hier soir.’
- say ‘plombeau’ instead of ‘pommeau.’
- say ‘quoi sta fair?’ instead of ‘qu’est-ce que tu as fait?’”

An in depth look at Cajun French and how it differs even more from Standard, Francophone French is seen in the Cajun French Pronunciation Guide shown in Table 8.1. Albert Valdman discusses these diversities and lists how to pronounce Cajun French in a detailed manner.

One can also use the Cajun French International Phonetic Alphabet chart as a pronunciation guide when speaking Cajun French. See Table 8.2 for this IPA Chart.

In conclusion, Cajun French is a vital language that struggled to survive, despite the many obstacles it has endured, just as the whole of the Cajun cultural heritage fights. But by the efforts of many modern protectors, the Cajun culture and its language, Cajun French, are thriving.

Richard Fausset, from his *New York Times* article comments, “the issue of language and culture tend to play out in complicated ways in Louisiana. The Cajuns were once pushed to assimilate, specifically through laws discouraging them from speaking French in school. But today, their culture thrives in a conservative area, where patriotism runs neck and neck with fierce regional pride.” And Barry J. Ancelet remarks of the degradation of Cajun French and the many hopes to reinvigorate it by asserting, “sure there’s every indication that this is dwindling at an alarming rate, but there are also indications of remarkable activity and creativity.”

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186 Ibid.
Cajun French Pronunciation Guide

Vowels

Vowels of Louisiana French are not substantially different from their Standard French counterparts. However,

1. Standard French often preserves the nasal vowel [œ̃] (pronounced with the lips slightly rounded) as in ‘lundi’ (Monday) [lœ̃di] which in Louisiana French has largely been replaced by [ɛ̃] (pronounced with the lips spread).

   lejeune [lœʒœn] > [ləʒɛn]

   Though [œ̃] may be merging with [ɛ̃] in Louisiana as well.

2. A distinguishing feature of Louisiana French is the widespread nasalization of the vowels [a], [e], [ɛ], [œ], [o], [ɔ], and, less frequently, of [i], [y], and [u], when they occur before a nasal consonant:

   femme (woman): [fam] > [fəm], [fɔm]
   chêne (oak tree): [ʃen] > [ʃən]
   pomme (apple): [pɔm] > [pɔm]

   As seen with femme—the nasal vowels [ə̃] and [ɔ̃] are often conflated in Louisiana French, with words that in Standard French are pronounced with [ə] frequently being realized with a vowel more closely resembling [ɔ]:

   ensemble (together) [ʒəsəm]
   campagne (country) [kəpəʒ]

   Cajuns would transcribe these words with [ə] but one may often hear them pronounced with [ɔ] as well.

   [əsəm]
   [kəpəʒ]

3. Regarding the oral (non-nasal) vowels:

   a. When the vowel occurs before [r], especially at the end of a word or before another consonant, the vowel [ɛ] of Louisiana French frequently lowers. The degree of lowering varies. The vowel [œ], which is similar to the sound of the vowel in the English word ‘cat’, is most commonly heard. However, some speakers will lower further to the vowel [a], as in the English exclamation ‘ah’:

   frère (brother): [frɛr] > [frɛr] > [frar]
   personne (no one): [pɛrsn] > [pɛrsn] > [parsn]

   b. The low back vowel [a], which is intermediate in quality between the vowels of the English words ‘father’ and ‘caught’, it is much more common in Louisiana French than in Standard French, appearing regularly in words such as:

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187 Albert Valdman, Senior Editor, *Dictionary of Louisiana French: As Spoken in Cajun, Creole, and American Indian Communities* (Jackson, MI: University Press of Mississippi, 2010), xxxviii-xl.
avalasse (downpour): [avalas]
mal (bad): [mal]

and after “w”:
moi (me): [mwa]
loi (law): [lwa]
croire (to believe): [krwar]

However, since there are no words that can be distinguished purely on the basis of being pronounced with [a] versus [a], and since both vowels may potentially be heard in the same word, (Cajuns) use [a] to represent both, except in the case of English loan words such as ‘park’ [paɪk].

c. Lowering of high rounded vowels—front [y] and back [u]—to mid-rounded vowels [ø] and [o] respectively is sometimes encountered. Lowering occurs most commonly before [r], but for the back rounded high vowel [u], it is not uncommon in other contexts as well:

pure (pure): [pyr] > [pur]
ouragan (hurricane): [urag å] > [orag å]
oublier (to forget): [ublije] > [oblije]

d. Finally, the front rounded vowels of Standard French are sometimes unrounded, so that [y] becomes [i], [ø] becomes [e], and [œ] becomes [ɛ]. Perhaps the most common example of this is the second person singular subject pronoun ‘tu’ (you) [ty], which is frequently pronounced ‘ti’ [ti].

Consonants and Glides

Louisiana French possesses all of the consonants and glides found in Standard French. However,

1. The palatal nasal consonant [ɲ], as in ‘tignon’ (turban) [tjin3], is rare, and when it occurs between two vowels it is generally replaced by the palatal glide [j]. Also, the trace of the nasal consonant usually remains in the form of a nasalized preceding vowel, however, and often the glide is nasalized, as well: saigner (to bleed): [sɛ̃jɛ]

2. Similarly, the alveolar nasal [n], if followed directly by a palatal glide [j], will sometimes be replaced by nasalization of the preceding vowel, with possible nasalization of the glide as well:

   panier (basket): [panje] > [pũje]
   manière (manner): [manjer] > [mâjɛr]
   opinion (opinion): [opinj] > [opĩjɛ]
   prunier (plum tree): [prynje] > [prũjɛ]

3. In the case of [vw] clusters, the presence of labio-velar glide [w] may lead to loss of the preceding labiodental fricative consonant [v]:

   savoir (to know): [savwar] > [sawar]
   voisin (neighbot): [vwazɛ] > [wazɛ]
   voilà (there is/are): [vwala] > [wala]

4. Louisiana French possesses three consonants not found in Standard French, though all three were present in the French of France at earlier stages. The three consonants are:
a. The glottal fricative [h] (like English, *home*) as in:

\[\text{honte} \text{ (shame): [hɔ̃t]}\]
\[\text{haler} \text{ (to pull, haul): [hale]}\]

b. The palatal affricates [tʃ] (like English, *church*) and
c. The palatal affricate [dʒ] (like English, *judge*) as in:

\[\text{tcharabo} \text{ (rifle): [tʃaraba]}\]
\[\text{badjo} \text{ (uneducated person): [badʒo]}\]

Often the occurrence of [tʃ] and [dʒ] results from the consonants [t] and [d] appearing directly before the palatal glides—whether unrounded [j] or rounded [ɥ]—or directly before the vowels [i], [y], [e], or [ø] as in ‘tiens’ (Here), pronounced [tjɛ̃] or [tʃɛ̃] and ‘diable’ (devil) pronounced [djɛb] or [dʒɛb].

5. One consonant that has notably different pronunciation in Louisiana and Standard French is the one represented by the letter ‘r’. Whereas, in Standard French, this consonant is velar, meaning that it is realized by a constriction formed between the back (or root) of the tongue and the soft palate; in Louisiana, it is most often apical, meaning that it is realized as a light top of the tip (or apex) of the tongue against the alveolar ridge located just behind the upper incisors.

While not typical of Standard French pronunciation, the [r] of Louisiana is found in many parts of the French-speaking world—Quebec, Acadia and Francophone Africa.

A notable feature for Louisiana [r] is its weakening in word-final position after a vowel, which can sometime result in its being dropped altogether. Most often, however, a trace of the [r] remains in the lengthening of the preceding vowel.

\[\text{frère} \text{ (brother): [frær], [fræː]}\]

where “:” (represents a lengthening of the vowel), or [fræ].

6. The reduction of clusters of consonants at the end of words is hallmark feature of Louisiana French pronunciation. While also typical of informal spoken French in France and other Francophone parts of the world, in Louisiana, such simplification is common in all registers and can be said to be nearly categorical.

It is most systematic in the case of the liquids [l] and [r] occurring after another consonant, as in ‘table’ (table) [tab] and ‘quatre’ (four) [kat].

These consonants are virtually never pronounced…unless they are followed by a word beginning with a vowel, as in ‘quatre ans’ (four years) [katˈʁ].

Consonant cluster reduction also affects other consonants, however, as in ‘masque’ (mask) [mas] and ‘insect’ (insect) [ɛsɛk].

7. Another feature of pronunciation that is not unknown in informal registers of French elsewhere in the world but is nearly systematic in Louisiana, is the change of the consonants [b] and [d] to [m] and [n] when they occur in word-final position after a nasal vowel. This frequently occurs when [b] and [d] find themselves word-final position due to the dropping of [l] or [r].

\[\text{ensemble} \text{ (together): [dɔ̃sl] > [dɔ̃s] > [dɔ̃m]}\]
8. The final feature of pronunciation that merits comment involves the vowel [ɛ], which switches places with a preceding consonant in certain contexts, but especially in the words ‘je’ (I) and ‘le’ (the), and in the prefix ‘re’:

\textit{je mange} (I eat): [ʒɛmɑ̃ʒ] > [əʒmɑ̃ʒ]  
\textit{recevoir} (to receive) [ʁəsvwar] > [ɔrsavwar]
## Cajun French IPA Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowels IPA:</th>
<th>Cajun French:</th>
<th>Examples:</th>
<th>Consonants IPA:</th>
<th>Cajun French:</th>
<th>Examples:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[a]</td>
<td>father / la</td>
<td></td>
<td>[b]</td>
<td>ball / beau</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ɑ]</td>
<td>dark / pale</td>
<td></td>
<td>[k]</td>
<td>kite / kilo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ɛ]</td>
<td>ray / été</td>
<td></td>
<td>[ʃ]</td>
<td>shall / chaut</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ɛ]</td>
<td>red / forêts</td>
<td></td>
<td>[d]</td>
<td>dog / doux</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[i]</td>
<td>need / gris</td>
<td></td>
<td>[f]</td>
<td>figure / enfant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ɨ]</td>
<td>kiss / –</td>
<td></td>
<td>[g]</td>
<td>get / grave</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[o]</td>
<td>go / mot</td>
<td></td>
<td>[n]</td>
<td>onion / compagnon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ɔ]</td>
<td>rose / doter</td>
<td></td>
<td>[ŋ]</td>
<td>onion / compagnon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[u]</td>
<td>blue / vous</td>
<td></td>
<td>[h]</td>
<td>hall / heure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ʌ]</td>
<td>glove / –</td>
<td></td>
<td>[m]</td>
<td>month / Mardi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[œ]</td>
<td>dove / parle</td>
<td></td>
<td>[n]</td>
<td>nine / neige</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[y]</td>
<td>lute / murmure</td>
<td></td>
<td>[tʃ]</td>
<td>church / –</td>
<td></td>
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APPENDIX C:

GLOSSARY OF TERMS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term:</th>
<th>Definition:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acadians:</td>
<td>The descendants of the original French settlers in the Maritime region of Canada during the 1600—1700s.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Americanization:</td>
<td>The process of anglicizing distinct cultural elements to become part of the American culture and was most popular during the Progressive era in America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America’s Stewpot:</td>
<td>A term to reflect many flavors of nationalities to create one body. “American musical life became not exactly a melting pot but perhaps a stewpot.”[189]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cajun:</td>
<td>A distinct American ethnic group that live in South Louisiana and are the descendants of French-speaking Acadians who occupied the present-day Maritime provinces of Canada during the 17th to 18th centuries who were ultimately exiled by the British.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cajun French:</td>
<td>Commonly called Louisiana French and is a variety of the French language which is spoken primarily in Louisiana.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cajun Lapland:</td>
<td>The overlapping of the Cajun culture from Louisiana into Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cajun music:</td>
<td>A coalescing of music and songs that derived through oral traditions of the Cajun people’s lives, work, struggles, joys and joie de vivre.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cajun Renaissance:</td>
<td>Commonly known as a revival of original Cajun music and began after World War II and lasted through the 1970s (1940s—1970s). The Renaissance stage sought to cement and solidify traditional Cajun music.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CODIFIL:</td>
<td>“The Council for the Development of French in Louisiana” whose mission is to support and grow the French language in Louisiana.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial era:</td>
<td>A part of the formative stage in Cajun music and refers to the many recordings made of Cajun songs during the 1920s and 1930s.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creole:</td>
<td>A non-Cajun black, white, or mixed-race Louisianan usually of French-Speaking heritage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creole music:</td>
<td>A sibling genre to Cajun music which had its evolution during the formative stage of music in Louisiana. It significantly influenced the first recordings of Cajun music and has a strong, rural blues element to it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creolization:</td>
<td>The blending of influences from outside cultures upon a distinct, separate culture (i.e.: the outside influences on the Acadian/Cajun culture).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formative Stage:</td>
<td>The beginning stage of musical development for Cajun music (pre-1900s—1940s) and grew from before the turn-of-the-century until the end of World War II. It is also known as the commercial era due to the early recordings of the first Cajuns songs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>Francophone:</th>
<th>A person of French heritage who typically speaks French in some form.</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Joie de vivre:</em></td>
<td>Joy of living; exuberance for life</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Laissez les bon temps rouler:</em></td>
<td>A Cajun French term meaning “Let the good times roll.”</td>
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<td><em>Le Grand Dérangement:</em></td>
<td>(The great upheaval) This title for the Acadian exile from their Canadian homes by the British during the 18th century before their migration to Louisiana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Stage:</td>
<td>The current stage of musical development (1980s—present) where traditional Cajun music remains while a plethora of musical genres exist in Southern Louisiana. Most genres are outside of Cajun music and range from R&amp;B and soul, to Dixieland jazz, to rockabilly, to blues and country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swamp Pop:</td>
<td>This Louisianan genre of music developed in the dance halls and is a sister genre to Cajun music and Zydeco which began during the Cajun Renaissance and grew by borrowing elements from Cajun music, jazz, blues and country swing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zydeco:</td>
<td>A sister genre to Cajun music and Swamp Pop which derived during the Cajun Renaissance and is a blending of blues, R&amp;B and indigenous Louisianan styles of music to create this new genre.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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