An Aesthetic of Contradictions

Jacques Demy, Choreography, and the Musical Genre

by

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Abstract

This work proposes a novel interdisciplinary methodology to study human movement in media with a historical and medium-specific focus. It answers key research questions in this domain, namely, how are dance and figure movement incorporated into the cinematic medium? More specifically, what narrative information does actors' movement communicate, in relation to a specific genre context especially, and how does the inclusion of dancers and danced content affect a film's mode of production? Chapter 1 provides a critical intervention in the way film scholars study figure movement and dance on screen. This methodology draws on the tradition of historical poetics, musical genre theory, and certain strands of dance history and description, specifically Laban Movement Analysis. French filmmaker Jacques Demy's inclination for aesthetic eclecticism makes his work ideal case studies to test the effectiveness of such a method, and this analytical approach, in turn, serves to illuminate the formal complexity of Demy's films. Chapter two dissects the claim that Demy's intent with *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort / The Young Girls of Rochefort* (1967) was to imitate the classical Hollywood musical model. Chapter three analyzes the genre hybridity that Demy creates in *Peau d'âne / Donkey Skin* (1970), from a juxtaposition of dance styles to the blend of musical and fairy tale conventions. And chapter four investigates Demy's final film, *Trois places pour le 26 / Three Seats for the 26th* (1988), allowing a comparison of his mode of production under different financial and collaborative circumstances. The project ultimately offers a revisionist history of Demy's career and relationship to genre cinema and the Hollywood musical through the application of the proposed methodology. This method, by identifying, categorizing, and analyzing human movement, significantly augments the way media scholars can discuss the human body on screen.

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Introduction

In *That's Dancing*, film critic Tony Thomas notes that, "dancing for the movie cameras is rather like film music in the sense that it is very hard to describe" (10). No doubt a precise and consistent analysis of the expressivity of human movement is a challenge. When we include in our analysis elements that contribute to the representation of movement on screen—cinematography, editing, mise-en-scène, sound, and all their stylistic possibilities—movement description may seem impossibly complex. The difficulties in writing with precision about the myriad stylistic elements mobilized in the mise-en-scène of dance combined with dance's status as a largely ineffable art form has resulted in a significant gap in the scholarly literature of film studies. This project answers key research questions in this domain, namely, how are dance and figure movement incorporated into the cinematic medium? More specifically, what narrative information does actors' movement communicate, in relation to a specific genre context especially, and how does the inclusion of dancers and danced content affect a film's mode of production?

The objective of this study is an historically grounded stylistic analysis of dance and figure movement in film. In my research I draw on the tradition of historical poetics, neoformal approaches, certain strands of dance history and description—specifically Laban Movement Analysis—and musical genre theory. I develop a sophisticated interdisciplinary methodology applicable to any type of movement in any moving images tradition. Such a methodology, by identifying, categorizing, and analyzing human movement, significantly augments the way media scholars can discuss the human body on screen.

I focus as a case study on three musical films by French director Jacques Demy—*The Young Girls of Rochefort / Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* (1967), *Donkey Skin / Peau d'âne* (1970), and *Three Seats*

for the 26th / Trois places pour le 26 (1988). Demy stands apart from other cinematic auteurs in his creation of an idiosyncratic cinematic world that uses figure movement as a primary form of expression. Demy's films are consistently filled with coincidental encounters and near misses between characters, convoluted mother-daughter relationships and absent fathers, unfulfilled or regretted romances, themes of incest, geographic narrative specificity, intertextual references, and bold, conspicuous stylistic choices. Moreover, such narrative threads and stylistic devices often link plotlines across films. In an interview, Demy hoped for the chance to "make fifty films that will all be linked to one another, in which their meanings will be mutually revealed through shared characters" (Caen and LeBris 12).[1] His films frequently display the fondness he had for the musical genre (Hollywood musicals in particular), and cinéphiles and scholars often refer to Demy's cinema as "magical." The sense of a fantastical or holistic aesthetic often guides the titles of works about his filmmaking: *Queer Enchantments: Gender, Sexuality, and Class in the Fairy-Tale Cinema of Jacques Demy*; *Le cinéma enchanté de Jacques Demy; Jacques Demy et les racines du rêve;* "En Chanté[2]: Music, Memory, and Perversity in the Films of Jacques Demy;" *Le monde enchanté de Jacques Demy*; "Demy Monde: Jacques Demy and The French New Wave"; "Demy Monde: the New-Wave Films of Jacques Demy."[3] Yet his films are also frequently odd or unsettling, blending a sense of wonderment with stylistic or narrative elements that feel out of place or out of touch with their contemporary audiences. These films' aesthetic eclecticism makes them ideal demonstrations of my methodology's potential.

Richard Neupert summarizes the appeal of Demy's work when he suggests that "all [Demy's] films involve stylish narrative experimentation" (*French New Wave* 360). Despite beginning his career at the same time as many filmmakers associated with the French New Wave, Demy differed from many of his contemporaries, and although his relationship to the French New Wave is not the focus of this project, where he fits into that movement remains a

topic of discussion among scholars and critics.[4] His path to a filmmaking career impacted the narrative and aesthetic choices we can observe in his cinema. Demy did not get his start through film criticism, unlike Eric Rohmer, Jacques Rivette, Claude Chabrol, Jean-Luc Godard, or François Truffaut, the cinéphiles-turned critics-turned filmmakers best remembered for their participation in the French New Wave (Neupert *French New Wave* 29). Nor did he have the bourgeois upbringing of Godard and Louis Malle or Truffaut's career-launching financial assistance (Neupert *French New Wave* 86, 87, 165, 208); Demy came from a provincial, working-class background, as Agnès Varda portrays in her film *Jacquot de Nantes* (1991) based on Demy's writings about his childhood. Although several of the French New Wave directors avoided the formal training available to film students at the Institut Des Hautes Études Cinématographiques (IDHEC) in Paris, now La Femis (Neupert *French New Wave* 65, 87), Demy took an entirely different route by attending l'École technique de photographie et de cinématographie (then on the rue de Vaugirard in Paris), now the École supérieure national Louis-Lumière (in Saint-Denis), which stressed the acquisition of technical expertise in cinematography (Berthomé 39). This technical formation was crucial to his working methods; Demy would remain closely involved in the detailed visual and auditory designs of his films through repeated collaborations with the artists overseeing the various components of his aesthetic vision.

Writings on Demy's unique aesthetic emphasize the role each aspect of film style plays in his artistic creation and the importance of collaboration to the successful implementation of his cinematic visions. Accounts of Demy's films mention foremost his extensive work with composer Michel Legrand, who scored the majority of his films. Bernard Evein, Demy's production designer on many films, is a close second, credited with the implementation of Demy's fantastical film environments and color schemes. Discussions of Demy's close collaboration with his costume designers, first Jacqueline Moreau, then his adopted daughter Rosalie Varda-Demy, often

emphasize the integration between production and costume design in creating close matches of color and patterns between settings and clothing. Accounts of his work sometimes mention his recurring interactions with his script supervisor, Annie Maurel, and occasionally his editors or cinematographers. And, of course, a discussion of the repeated collaboration with certain actors—most prominently Catherine Deneuve, Jacques Perrin, Michel Piccoli, Anouk Aimée, Danielle Darrieux, Jean Marais, and Marc Michel—contributes to an understanding of the interconnected worlds of his films, as perpetuated in similar (or vastly contrasting) characters played by the same actor.[5]

Missing, however, from these discussions is the role of choreography in Demy's cinema, both the collaboration with choreographers on the danced portions of his films and his organization of figure movement more broadly. If, for example, we study the physicality of Catherine Deneuve's character in *Peau d'âne* and the way she moves through the space of the frame, clear patterns emerge. There is an intrinsic consistency to the choreography of her seemingly mundane movements as well as a clear relationship between her movement quality and the stylistic choices made in films by Jean Cocteau, Marcel Carné, and Walt Disney, among others. Demy's precise mobilization of dance and human movement draws upon the codes of classical film and musical genre performances, yet proposes fresh ways of staging the human body in the film frame. My project analyzes this neglected aspect of Demy's aesthetic, revealing additional ways that Demy created films with a dense network of cinematic references.

My work also reveals new subtleties about the figure movement and generic implications in this group of films from France and Hollywood that significantly affected Demy's formal choices.

Although the term choreography can be used specifically to refer to the "making of dance,"[6] it can also be used more broadly, to understand "a structuring of movement, not necessarily the movement of human beings . . . both the kinds of actions performed and their

sequence or progression."[7] Given how important the musical genre was to many of Demy's film projects, scholars—in their focus on his use of music—have presented only a partial picture of his relationship to that genre. Studying how movement was choreographed for his films, specifically the interaction between dance and diegetically motivated figure movement, allows for a more detailed discussion of when Demy was drawing on influences from other cinematic and choreographic traditions and when he was experimenting with new cinematic norms. Looking at cinematic traditions beyond the Hollywood musical also allows for a better understanding of the unusual, and often contradictory, stylistic and narrative cues that Demy's films provide to audiences, permitting a clearer tracing of how Demy combined various threads of influence into one eclectic aesthetic. And finally, studying choreography in Demy's cinema gives us a better picture of dance history and culture in France, allowing us to more precisely understand the industrial conditions that shaped the (sometimes difficult) aesthetic choices Demy had to make to realize his artistic visions.

My research reconciles several disciplinary approaches to analyzing dance and film—as separate and sometimes overlapping media—to more rigorously answer several pertinent questions about this aspect of Demy's filmmaking. My questions include: How does choreography (dance and figure movement) function within Demy's larger filmmaking aesthetic? How does an analysis of those films that influenced his aesthetic help us better contextualize Demy's work and thus explain his stylistic and narrative choices? What is the relationship between Demy's films, the (predominantly American) musical genre that fascinated him, and audience expectations of both? And finally, how does a novel system of granular figure movement analysis serve these research questions, specifically, and the fields of film and dance studies, more broadly?

To answer these questions, I combine methods from film history and analysis with Laban Movement Analysis, as well as a new way to conduct an analysis of the more intricate aspects of the musical genre. Chapter one presents my strategies for combining film and dance studies and addresses the underlying tensions between these two fields that such a study must contend with. The analytical and historical frameworks of historical poetics, as elaborated by David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, provide a foundation for my film research. The method of historical poetics provides tools for analyzing a single element of film style in relation to the larger filmic context and results in an historically grounded understanding of changing stylistic norms over time. Conceptualizing choreography and dance as an aspect of film style is a potentially controversial move, however, given dance's status as an independent art form. Therefore, I seek to position my work as a bridge between film and dance studies. I build my study within the existing research on Jacques Demy's cinema, specifically discussions of his work in relation to the filmic traditions that influenced him and his fascination with the musical genre. Certain misapprehensions of his work are based on contradictions in literature about the musical genre, so I propose my own taxonomy of musical numbers to more precisely distinguish between a number's relationship to the surrounding narrative and stylistic norms as a way of better contextualizing musical numbers historically. Addressing viewer expectations, in relation to genre cinema especially, is also crucial to understanding how Demy's musicals differ from conventional iterations of the form and how those formal distinctions affected his films' reception.

Chapters two through four apply the methodologies developed in the first chapter to three of Demy's films that explore the musical genre and in which the choreography of dance and figure movement is prominent. I chose these films—*Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, *Peau d'âne*, and *Trois places pour le 26*—because they are the only films Demy made that feature extensive stylized dance and figure movement and are unequivocally identifiable as musicals. Although Demy's *Les Parapluies*

de Cherbourg (1964) remains his best-known film, it deviates from musical genre conventions by being entirely sung and does not feature extensive dancing. *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, *Peau d'âne*, and *Trois places pour le 26* show an awareness of both historical and contemporary dance culture, as well as a subtle and nuanced understanding of the American musical genre's conventions.

Chapter two, focusing on choreography, dissects the claim that Demy's intent with *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* was to make a musical *à l'americaine*. While some of the film's norms conform with Hollywood conventions, in part through developed cinematic references to earlier Hollywood musicals, *Demoiselles* develops these classical genre conventions to the point of stylistic excess, encouraging spectators to recognize and engage with the film's heightened stylistic patterns. Despite criticisms of the film that claim Demy's inexperience with the dance medium resulted in a choreographic failure, clear patterns in the organization of figure movement, repeated dance phrases that cite specific Hollywood musicals, and an innovative incorporation of bodies into the cinematic space suggest otherwise. Demy encountered a challenge in casting *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*: France lacked the dancers for such a production. The international cast Demy assembled reveals much about the differing industrial conditions for musical filmmaking in Hollywood and France.

Chapter three analyzes the genre hybridity that Demy creates in *Peau d'âne*, from a juxtaposition of dance styles to the blend of musical and fairy tale conventions. I argue that a complex series of stylistic choices reinforce Demy's film as a progressive adaptation of Perrault's fairy tale and reference an eclectic blend of aesthetic traditions, including French art cinema, early Disney animation, and the late 1960s counter culture in Los Angeles. Although the film lacks extensive dancing, his choreography of figure movement and physical labor draws attention to the differing conventions of the fairy tale and musical genres and points to Demy's aesthetic tendencies for incorporating musical numbers in the surrounding narrative.

Most of the discussions of Demy's career emphasize a narrative of decline, to the detriment of in-depth analysis of his later work. Chapter four investigates Demy's final film, *Trois places pour le 26*, allowing a comparison of his mode of production under different financial and collaborative circumstances. Working with an unprecedented level of financial comfort as well as a greater level of collaborative discomfort, Demy returns to the foundational principles of the backstage musical sub-genre—this time with studio sets and principal actors who can both sing and dance for themselves—in order to defamiliarize musical genre conventions.

The conclusion summarizes my findings by categorizing the aesthetic and thematic continuities in Demy's filmmaking that a study of figure movement and dance illuminates. The differing industrial conditions of French and American filmmaking affected Demy's approach to a historically expensive film genre. As Kelley Conway articulates, France "never developed the industrial infrastructure necessary to sustain a Hollywood-style genre system, musical or otherwise" ("France" 29). In France, Demy did not have consistent access to high budgets, large studio lots, extensive rehearsal time, and large corps of versatile trained dancers and singers. Nonetheless, Demy found ways to work within such constraints and even rethink the conventions of the musical. His films experiment with the diegetic motivation of musical numbers, a geographic specificity through location shooting, a functionality of movement, and the physical labor of his characters in ways that distinguish his work from American musicals made during the same period. The nature of French film and dance culture meant that Demy's films consistently drew on international financing, casts, and crews, but his persistence in working in a genre that was never prominent in France meant that his work created a lasting legacy of the French musical form. Although Demy's films, the later ones especially, received poor reception from contemporary audiences, he remains a pivotal figure in the history of the French musical and a significant influence on filmmakers intent on experimenting with the genre's form, in France

especially. Contemporary filmmakers, some of whom worked with Demy on his later musical films, continue to be inspired by the innovative, and at times contradictory, ways that he negotiated his distinctive aesthetic within the genre expectations of the musical form.

A critical intervention in the way we study human movement in moving images allows me to explore new research questions and provide an in-depth examination of Demy's formal strategies, creating in the process a revisionist history of his career and relationship to genre cinema and Hollywood musicals. My application of Laban Movement Analysis' vocabulary to movement in moving images leads to greater descriptive precision and helps illuminate the mixed critical and popular reception of Demy's films. Jacques Demy situated his art in relation to an eclectic corpus of media, and rigorous formal analysis of his filmmaking makes us question what we understand, not only about his films, but also about the works he references and our own reactions to the media we consume.

1

A new methodology for film movement analysis

This project proposes a new methodology for analysis and description of human movement in narrative film. A discussion of Jacques Demy's filmmaking, and existing research about his work, emphasizes how his films are the ideal case studies for a new method and stresses that reinvestigating his work in this way will reveal his films' greater historical and formal significance. Grounding my research in the foundations of historical poetics and dance history situates my method within well-developed research and analysis frameworks and bridges the gap between the two disciplines. My addition of the rigorous movement taxonomy from Laban Movement Analysis to the mix allows me to describe the movement I study with precision and consistency. Finally, to better establish the relationships between Demy's work, a specific genre tradition, and cinematic modes of production, I expand on musical genre scholarship by proposing a taxonomy of musical numbers to enhance my research's capacity for analytical comparison and historical contextualization.

Jacques Demy's Cinema as Case Study

Demy's stylistic breadth makes his work an ideal place to test a new interdisciplinary framework for formal analysis. The feature-length films that comprise the bulk of his work (made between 1961 and 1988) do not fit neatly into one film tradition. Instead, they invoke conventions of various periods in classical French cinema, film animation, and classical American cinema (especially the tradition of the musical genre). The three films I study—*Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* (1967), *Peau d'âne* (1970), and *Trois places pour le 26* (1988)—show an awareness of both

historical and contemporary dance culture, as well as a subtle and nuanced understanding of the American musical genre's varied conventions.

Because of his emergence in the filmmaking industry around the same time as figures important to the French New Wave, it is often as a New Wave filmmaker that scholars first approach Demy (Hill "Demy Monde: Jacques Demy, Hill "The Films of Jacques Demy", Lazen, Waldron 23–47). In his book on the French New Wave, however, Richard Neupert makes only a passing reference to Demy's work (*French New Wave* 360, 361), because he argues—correctly, in my view—that Demy fits uncomfortably in the existing definition of New Wave filmmaking. Rodney Hill explores the connection between Demy's early films and the New Wave, while also pointing out the ties that such works have to the French Tradition of Quality. The context of the French New Wave is less important to Demy's later films (and even, to some extent, to *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*), but it provides an important backdrop to Demy's filmmaking practices. Notably, some of Demy's narrative strategies (as I explore in my discussion of *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*) and their relationship to non-classical narrative traditions are associated, in part, with the New Wave.

The New Wave is not the only relevant context for Demy's films and focusing on that tradition to the exclusion of other cinematic influences causes us to miss important nuances in the filmmaker's work. Contemporary and classical American and French cinema is also essential to investigate in relation to Demy's storytelling and stylistic strategies. We can see references in his work to popular culture, but not necessarily what was popular during the period in which a particular film was made. Histories of French cinema during the period Demy was working remain thin,[8] emphasize art cinema traditions over popular work (Neupert *French New Wave*), focus on individual filmmakers rather than industrial conditions (White *French Cinema*), or remain

vague about the details of certain historical events (Frodon). Within this literature, however, Demy remains on the sidelines, his work frequently mischaracterized or excluded completely.

The scholarly writing that exists on Demy focuses on his earlier films, notably those made in the 1960s.[9] As a result, the latter part of Demy's career is less well remembered and less critically recognized. Demy remains best known for his earliest features—*Lola* (1961), *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* (1964), *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* (1967), and *Peau d'âne* (1970), in particular—while scholarship on his later films remains thin.[10] A historiographic study of the literature on Demy reveals the ways in which the periods of his career are stressed unequally. Accounts of Demy's late career usually focus on shortcomings: his struggles to get financing and his commercial and critical failures (*Parking*, especially). While they are not always intentionally negative, the result frequently leads to a scholarly and critical neglect of Demy's final films.

Variety provides an overall neutral recounting of Demy's career pitfalls in its obituary for the filmmaker:

> Demy was best known for his debut feature 'Lola' (1960) and the 1964 Cannes Golden Palm winner 'The Umbrellas of Cherbourg.' Although Demy continued directing until 1988, boxoffice success eluded him in the later years of his career. . . .[Umbrellas] was an international success, proved to be a turning point in the career of Catherine Deneuve and took Demy to critical and popular heights that he would struggle to reach again. . . . Critical acclaim failed to translate into commercial success, and although the 1971 Deneuve-starrer 'Donkey Skin" (Peau d'Âne) revived Demy's fortunes, many believed that the magical touch of the pre-'Model Shop' years had deserted him ("Obituaries" 93).

More often than not, however, histories that survey the full breadth of Demy's work structure these events into a rise-and-fall narrative that places negative value judgments on Demy's later work. This choice of emplotment of historical events, to use Hayden White's term

(46), is based to varying degrees on critical and financial evaluations of the films' success (or lack thereof) and on Demy and his collaborators' discussion in interviews of his films and their production circumstances. The Standard Version of Demy's career, to use David Bordwell's term (*Film Style* 9),[11] suggests that the quality of Demy's work went into decline after his *Palme d'Or*-winning *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* and *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, the latter made possible by the earlier film's success. The perceived exception to this aesthetic downward trend is *Une Chambre en Ville* (1982), but its poor box-office reception turns it into another turning point in the tragic narrative of Demy's career.[12] After *Demoiselles*, Demy's "career reached a summit that he would never touch again" Jean-Michel Frodon proposes (90).[13] Frodon oversimplifies Demy's career, arguing that his later films were merely attempts at re-creating the formula and success of his first features, that Demy was "determined to try and remake the same kind of film, to remake *Lola* and *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*" (91, 814). Taboulay argues that even after the success of *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*,

> Jacques Demy would continue to struggle to put his imagination into images. For, at the same time as his success, was born a perverse shift in the perception of his cinema, which would degenerate into fatal prejudice, reducing his deep strangeness to a seductive sentimentality. . . . A career in which the sparkle turned quickly to obscurity, during close to ten years, from which emerged a phoenix: *Une Chambre en ville*, followed by half-hearted epilogues (5).[14]

Similarly, Père and Colmant say of *Trois places*, "This last hurrah confirms in cruel fashion, after the painful and unfair failure of *Une Chambre en ville* and the predictable one of *Parking*, Jacques Demy's separation from spectators. . . . The visions and desires of an auteur of the people like Jacques Demy no longer corresponded with the taste and expectations of the general public"

(268, 270).[15] The language of peaks and declines, aesthetic assassinations, and cruelty on the part of the French public is common in discussions of Demy's career.

A few exceptions to this emplotment are Darren Waldron's monograph on Demy and Jean-Pierre Berthomé's *Jacques Demy et les racines du rêve*. Berthomé also describes Demy's career in a tragic light, but his account creates a clear distinction between a historical emplotment of Demy's career as a downward turn and his discussion of the aesthetic value of Demy's films. He, like many other commentators, marks the period of decline as beginning after *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, describing the transition to Los Angeles in 1968 as "a difficult, traumatic experience, that would in fact extend over ten or so years, since *Model Shop* is the first part of a goodbye to a past that would only find its conclusion with *Une chambre en ville*" (23).[16] Unlike other scholars, however, his assessment of Demy's career difficulties does not cause him to dismiss *Trois places*' place in the filmmakers' œuvre. On the contrary, Berthomé in many ways sees the film as a culmination of Demy's aesthetic efforts, given the unprecedented financial freedom the production experienced (380).

Because of the series of events that occurred in the later portion of Demy's career, it is not surprising that scholars and critics tend to paint the second half of Demy's career in a tragic light, and Demy's tone in interviews, especially towards the end of his career, would support such an emplotment of his career arc.[17] However, it is unfortunate that such historiographical choices lead to a dismissal of the later films' value. Such an emplotment of Demy's career becomes problematic when it affects scholars' and critics' thoughtful discussion of Demy's later work. These authors are not misrepresenting the second half of Demy's work by pointing out the challenges that occurred, and the filmmaker's pessimistic tone in many interviews during the late 1970s and early 1980s certainly contributes to such an impression. However, an emplotment of decline traps historians in their own arguments. Even though these authors have positive things

to say about *Trois places pour le 26*, their choice to place a higher value on the beginning of Demy's career colors their perception and analysis of the film, since by their own logic Demy's later films cannot hold up to earlier iterations. While these organizational choices make valuable contributions to a scholarly discussion of Demy's work, they also tend to undervalue the last few films Demy made, to the detriment of thoughtful scholarship on films like *Parking* and *Trois places pour le 26*. Even Berthomé's account is incomplete, as it lacks a full historical and generic context for Demy's final film.

My chapters on Demy's films provide more detailed, archivally-verified production histories in order to better contextualize the different stylistic and narrative choices Demy made with each new project, and I shed light on the uneven treatment given to Demy's films in my chapter on *Trois places pour le 26*. Demy's early on-set of cinéphilia (as portrayed in Agnès Varda's *Jacquot de Nantes,* 1991) links him to French cinema of the 1940s and 1950s as well, in particular to the work of Marcel Carné, Jean Cocteau, and Max Ophüls. Each of those filmmakers also made use of dance or highly stylized figure movement, and this impulse (and its stylistic similarity in Demy's films, often in the use of the same film stars) has yet to be thoroughly developed in any scholarly literature.

A discussion of dance from the period in which Demy was making films is also necessary,[18] and scholars have yet to provide such a context for his work or to thoroughly discuss Demy's use of dance and figure movement. Just as Demy was aware of his contemporary cinematic context, he was also aware of changes in dance culture inside and outside of his own national context, a knowledge that is especially important in contextualizing Demy within France's ballet-centric dance culture in the 1960s. Even though film, music, and art were more proximal influences on his work, Demy was conscious of live performance culture in his country and surroundings, as he frequently sought to include specific movement traditions in his work that were difficult to

implement in France at the time. If for no other reason, Demy became aware of French dance infrastructure while making his films because the work he sought to include in his films had to be executed by international performers, for a number of reasons that become clear through a closer study of *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*'s production history, in particular. By situating Demy's films within an understanding of contemporary French dance culture, we see that he worked in a mode of filmmaking that demanded choreographic attention during a time when such an infrastructure was lacking. Although his films are historically eclectic in their aesthetic and often align themselves with the style of previous decades of filmmaking, he was consistently ahead of changes in French dance culture.

Most significantly, one of Demy's acknowledged contributions is to the history of the film musical genre, a category of filmmaking that, when defined broadly, can apply to the majority of his corpus. Over half of Demy's films are musicals or have strong formal ties to the musical tradition. His work is heavily influenced by musicals and the French operetta tradition, and he is the French filmmaker most associated with the musical genre and continues to influence contemporary filmmakers who work in that tradition. Each of the three films I study can be defined within the musical genre, but *Peau d'âne* is rarely discussed within this context and accounts disagree about the relationship of the other two films—*Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* and *Trois places pour le 26*—to what they propose as the classical Hollywood model. Some critics discuss *Demoiselles* as Demy's musical *à l'americaine* (Alion 51, Morain 33) and scholars point out its close ties to the American musical genre (Berthomé 196, Waldron 61–72), but without explicitly or thoroughly defining what they consider to be Hollywood musical conventions. Other accounts contradict one another. One discussion suggests that Demy is doing something new by filming on location in *Demoiselles* (Berthomé 197), while another points out certain Hollywood films as a

precedent for Demy's choice to do so (Colmant and Père 92), further emphasizing that some consensus and elaboration on genre norms is needed.

The impact of French films of the 1930s and 1940s and certain key Hollywood musicals are often discussed in the few monographs (almost all in French) devoted to Demy—Darren Waldron's *Jacques Demy*, Jean-Pierre Berthomé's *Jacques Demy: les racines du rêve*, Camille Taboulay's *Le cinéma enchanté de Jacques Demy*, and Marie Colmant and Olivier Père's *Jacques Demy* (which includes primarily photographs and is intended for a popular audience), a new anthology from the Cinémathèque française, *Le monde enchanté de Jacques Demy*, a *Post Script* issue devoted to Demy's work—and to some extent in the small number of scholarly articles that exist on Demy's work, most of which focus on the films Demy made in the 1960s,[19] as well as popular and trade press sources.[20] Most of the film examples that I study to contextualize Demy's films are referenced in one or many of these texts. Despite these films' recognition as important influences, there is still more to say about the specific stylistic and tonal relationships between them and Demy's work. I also compare each of my case study films to other musicals made during the same period to emphasize where Demy's films depart from contemporary cinematic norms in French and American filmmaking. The departures in choreography and movement traditions between Demy's films and contemporary examples are particularly striking. Figure movement is not the only significant stylistic device in his films, but it is a frequently overlooked one that reveals much about his broader formal goals and work methods. However, given the importance to Demy's directorial approach of aesthetic continuity across stylistic devices, and the general understanding that elements of style interact with one another, my analysis does not completely isolate choreography from other stylistic devices.[21] Similarly, I have chosen to focus on what we can learn about Demy's films from the cinematic and choreographic context that surrounds them, but his prodigious appetite for literature, painting, music, and art more generally leaves

those domains open for fruitful analysis. I am choosing to work inductively from the films that are documented influences on Demy's aesthetic—as well as some examples that are contemporaries of my filmic case studies for context and contrast—to more thoroughly develop analyses of a manageable number of films.

My project provides needed context about Demy's relationship to the musical genre. A chapter on *Demoiselles* unpacks the assumptions behind these assertions in order to better understand the film's relationship to the American genre. The concept of a unifying set of norms for all of the Hollywood musical is also problematic, however, since the genre's conventions have shifted through cycles over time. Some film scholars mention this, creating further contradictions in their arguments (Colmant and Père 92, 268). The prevalence of discussions of the "backstage" musical in relation to Demy's work is also common (Berthomé 386, Angiboust 64), but although assigning this sub-genre to *Trois places pour le 26* is understandable, it is puzzling that it is so easily applied to *Les Demoiselles* as well. As we shall see, even Demy's last film deviates from some core conventions of that sub-genre, but Les *Demoiselles* especially is ill-fitted for the category, given that the premise of "putting on a show" is only a minor aspect of the plot. Demy's musicals do not easily conform to any of the classical Hollywood musical's sub-genres (as discussed by Rick Altman), nor do they sit comfortably in relation to the American musicals made after the studio system, in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

My work situates the relevant and significant filmic traditions that are important to understanding Demy's aesthetic, in relation to choreography, specifically. I give preference to those films that can be studied for their use of figure movement in ways that correspond to my three core analytical studies. There is still much comparative analytical work to be done on these films and their connection to Demy; existing discussions of these films rarely expand upon the full implications of such stylistic variety or go beyond a simple reference to more detailed stylistic

analysis, and existing discussions are often based on partial or historically inaccurate perspectives of these traditions (the musical in particular). Some scholars (Svea Becker & Bruce Williams especially) analyze a particular filmic relationship more closely—between *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* and *West Side Story*—but their argument mischaracterizes Demy's aesthetic goals for his film and overlooks some key stylistic links. Additional examples of films that affected Demy's aesthetic have also emerged more recently, many as a result of new interviews or conversations that occurred in connection with the Cinémathèque française's retrospective and exposition on Demy's work in the spring and summer of 2013. But the impact of dance is rarely expanded upon or even mentioned. The films and national traditions that Demy's cinéphilic appetite drew him to are fairly well known and documented in the films about Demy by Agnès Varda[22] and the numerous interviews that Demy gave to the French and American press. The stylistic blends Demy created in his films that are the result of these traditions deserve further analysis. Close analysis of Demy's work with the musical genre and figure movement reveals much about his own work methods within a film infrastructure that was not equipped to produce work in the musical tradition, which in turn provides insight into assumed conventions of the genre's form.

Film Foundations

Historical poetics and neoformalist analysis provide the broad foundation for my analytical framework. David Bordwell's *Poetics of Cinema* and Kristin Thompson's *Breaking the Glass Armor: Neoformalist Film Analysis* are the key texts that guide my approach. Central to their research projects is the systematic discussion of films as artworks. They seek to answer questions beyond the scope of understanding the work's meaning, to ground such lines of inquiry in relevant historical contexts, and to understand the film spectator as engaging in an active relationship with the films.

Both Bordwell and Thompson treat films as works that can be understood based on their intrinsic qualities. Thompson's approach to aesthetic analysis of films is based in a neoformalist approach, from the writings of the Russian Formalists. It involves an "extended, careful viewing of a film—a viewing that gives the analyst a chance to examine in leisurely fashion those structures and materials that intrigued him or her on initial and subsequent viewings" (5, 6). Bordwell's use of the term "poetics" reaches back to the writings of Aristotle, but his research project is also indebted to Russian Formalist theory. Poetics, he suggests, "studies the finished work as the result of a process of construction—a process that includes a craft component (such as rules of thumb), the more general principles according to which the work is composed, and its functions, effects, and uses" (*Poetics* 12). Both approaches stress the careful, systematic viewing of films and the importance of a systematic and rational inquiry (Bordwell *Poetics* 3, 22) in the search for appropriate descriptions of aesthetic qualities and the explanation of their existence. In Bordwell's work, especially, this frame of inquiry often takes as its central object the identification and explanation of stylistic conventions, or the norms of craft practice, which he describes as the "explicit or implicit guidelines that shape creative action" (*Poetics* 25). It is through an understanding of norms that an analytical poetics project becomes historical, he suggests (*Ozu* 1), and he divides the concept of norms into extrinsic (the "prevailing standards and practices" of larger cinematic traditions, like classical Hollywood cinema) and intrinsic ("particular workings of one film or a body of films") categories (*Ozu* 1).

Thompson undercuts the idea of a form-content split that she suggests dominated many aesthetic theories at the time of her book's publication. Whereas identifying the meaning of an artwork was prioritized over other concerns in earlier analytical approaches, she argues for meaning as one of an artwork's many "formal components" rather than the "end result" (12). Both Bordwell and Thompson stress that meaning, in a narrower sense, is primarily associated

with interpretation (as Bordwell suggests, a "reading" of the film, *Poetics* 16), which is not the primary goal of either scholar's research projects, nor is it mine. Thompson discusses meaning as the "work's system of cues for denotations and connotations" and further subdivides these cues into four categories. Denotative meaning can be understood as either referential or explicit, while connotative meaning (which requires interpretation) can be either implicit or symptomatic (12). These subdivisions are especially beneficial in an understanding of dance as a component of film analysis since a large subsection of dance research projects are still primarily concerned with the "reading" of dance to unpack meaning. Thompson and Bordwell, in contrast, consider meaning one of many equally valuable cinematic devices, and they define the latter as "any single element or structure that plays a role in the artwork" (Thompson 15). Any device, be it meaning, figure movement, editing, and so on, can be analyzed according to its functions and motivations within the greater filmic system.

Poetics more generally, according to Bordwell, can be analytical, historical, or theoretical in scope, descriptive or prescriptive, and traditionally addresses the thematics, large-scale form, or stylistics of the artwork (or works) in question (*Poetics* 13, 17). My research favors analytical and historical approaches to understand the stylistics of Demy's work, specifically in the domain of choreography and dance, with some further contextualization within the large-scale form and narrative of the artworks. Bordwell separates his discussion of poetics into two categories. Analytical poetics investigates the principles of filmic construction and the effects of those principles, whereas historical poetics seeks to further understand how and why those principles occurred and changed over time (*Poetics* 23).

My research project seeks to emphasize analytical precision in a study of movement on screen, but I seek whenever possible to establish historical causality in my study of Demy's films. An understanding of industrial conditions and limitations explain the choices Demy made and

how his films fit—or, as is more often the case, don't fit—into their contemporary film context. This is possible thanks to primary source production documents in Demy's archives at Ciné-Tamaris and the Fondation Jérôme Seydoux-Pathé, historical accounts of Demy and the cinematic traditions he interacted with stylistically, and contemporary accounts of the industry from newspapers, journals, and the trade press.

The extensive archival materials housed at Ciné-Tamaris allow for an in-depth examination of Demy's working methods, reveal more about the filmmaker's activities between cinematic projects, and confirm some of the struggles he had in putting his films into production. Agnès Varda's archival holdings at Ciné-Tamaris include extensive production materials for each of Demy's films. One exception is Demy's final film, *Trois places pour le 26*, whose more extensive archives are held at the Fondation Jérôme Seydoux-Pathé. These two archives include itemized budgets, production schedules, script drafts, and additional miscellaneous materials for each film, which allows for a comparison of costs and modes of production across Demy's projects. They do not include specific choreographic notes, however, beyond the rough overhead sketches Demy produced for *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*. More recent archival acquisitions at Ciné-Tamaris include extensive correspondence between Demy's producers and Seven Arts regarding pre-production schedules and post-production logistics for *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*'s release. In addition, a more detailed picture of Demy's day-to-day schedule and working process emerges from the many planners that are housed in Ciné-Tamaris' archives. In these, Demy made notes about films and theatrical performances he attended, people he met with, and additional thoughts that were on his mind. These planners are not complete—ones for 1966 and 1967 are not available, for example—and there is no way to confirm how many of the listed appointments Demy kept. Nevertheless, the information contained in his planners—and the other materials at Ciné-Tamaris and Fondation Jérôme Seydoux-Pathé—allow me to reinforce or refute claims

made about Demy's cinema found in the trade press and existing scholarly accounts, and also allows me to expand our knowledge of Demy's production practices.

Both Thompson and Bordwell argue for the importance of grounding any analysis of artworks in their proximate historical context. Bordwell characterizes his research method for understanding a film's historical context with six "P-words: particulars, patterns, purposes, principles, practices, and processing" (*Poetics* 24). In particular, he stresses the utility of a problem-solution model in understanding the history of film style and the artist's purpose. Filmmakers are confronted with constraints—industrially, financially, or technologically motivated—and one way to better understand their work is to understand why they chose a particular way to work with those constraints. Budget set-backs and struggles to find appropriate personnel for the sort of genre-specific films Demy wanted to make are recurring topics in contemporary discussions of Demy's films, making the problem-solution model an especially useful framework in understanding Demy's aesthetic decisions.

Expanding on this, Thompson also suggests three types of "background" knowledge that can provide historical context: the everyday world, used to understand referential meaning; an understanding of other artworks and their conventions; and the practical purposes of films, as distinct from their artistic functions (21). Thompson writes that "the film's adherence to and departure from its background norms are the subjects of the analyst's work" and that each film depends on a different combination of these backgrounds (21–23). Thompson's first two types of backgrounds are especially relevant to an understanding of Demy's cinema. A knowledge of dance history and the film industry context—especially the type of musicals being made in Hollywood—at the time Demy was making his films helps to explain the resources and constraints he had to work with. A comparison to other artworks, especially those that Demy and

others have mentioned as aesthetic influences, is essential in understanding the eclectic nature of Demy's stylistic choices.

Bordwell and Thompson's respective projects propose a research methodology for studying devices in film more generally. Several exemplary scholarly projects that explore one element of film style also serve as effective models for my work's specific approach to film analysis. Patrick Keating's *Hollywood Lighting from the Silent Era to Film Noir*, David Bordwell's *Figures Traced in Light: On Cinematic Staging*, and Scott Higgins' *Harnessing the Technicolor Rainbow: Color Design in the 1930s* all seek to analyze and explain the range and change in stylistic norms of their chosen stylistic device (lighting, staging, and color, respectively) with historical poetics as an underlying analytical framework.

Keating's project investigates the conventions of lighting in studio era Hollywood (1). He stresses the importance of the trade press as a tool for better understanding the large-scale conventions that cinematographers developed, and he works inductively from analyses of the films themselves. Bordwell's *Figures Traced in Light* traces normative practices of cinematic staging, but he isolates the work of individual filmmakers in order to distinguish their different strategies for arranging bodies in the cinematic space. Both projects emphasize the subtlety of the craft they analyze, however. "Cinematic staging remains a truly imperceptible art" Bordwell argues (*Figures* 8), and Keating notes that "the art of Hollywood lighting remains so subtle that it usually escapes our attention" (1). Both studies bring greater awareness to an aspect of film style that goes unnoticed to the uninitiated viewer. In contrast, Higgins' discussion of color emphasizes that at the time of three-color Technicolor's emergence, filmmakers expressed concern that "color would so challenge narrative's dominance that it would shift the game of defamiliarization away from story and toward the image as a graphic. Color, rather than story, might govern the viewer's attention" (5). Studying choreography in Demy's films demands attention to both

extremes. His organization of figure movement through staging and movement through the frame can be less obviously perceptible, whereas dance—especially within the context of a musical number—intentionally draws attention to itself.

Each of these exemplary studies of style also seeks to understand the various (often multiple) functions that their stylistic device provides. Bordwell suggests four functions for film style. Denotative or narrative functions encompass all information that a stylistic device gives us about the fictional story world and characters' actions, motives, and background. Expressive functions provide qualities that evoke emotions or set a particular tone. Symbolic functions evoke more abstract, associative, general, or conceptual meanings. Decorative functions emphasize patterned uses of style that are emphasized primarily for their purely aesthetic qualities (*Figures* 33, 34). Bordwell suggests that denotative functions are central and argues that it should be our analytical "point of departure" but also that stylistic devices tend to serve multiple functions at once. He points out that one of the fundamental aspects of stylistic denotation is directing the viewer's attention to help us focus on the important parts of the frame (*Figures* 36). He also suggests that viewers are most likely to fix their attention on bodies and faces, which emphasizes that additional study of how characters move on screen will help to more thoroughly explain how a viewer understands the story in question.

Because staging is the art of arranging bodies in space, Bordwell's project shares overlapping concerns with mine. He notes that spectators are particularly attuned to cues given to them by actors' bodies and facial expressions (*Figures* 37). He also emphasizes that cinematic staging was the film director's responsibility: "staging was the foundation of the director's craft. There were specialists in lighting and costume, set design and cutting, but the director was responsible for shaping the performances across the arc of the scene" (*Figures* 8). He refers to a complex instance of this craft as "fairly careful choreography," emphasizing the organizational

logic that underlies this aspect of film style. Although my project focuses more on the use of figure movement and dance within the context of musical numbers, I also point out places in Demy's films where the figure movement has formal similarities to the strategies used in the choreographed numbers to emphasize that he was as concerned with the organization of bodies in the frame as his choreographers were. Bordwell also emphasizes that his book should not be taken as a set of "auteur essays" because he does not explore each aspect of his filmmakers' "technique[s] and worldview[s]" (*Figures* 10). My research traces out the unique ways that Demy shaped his cinematic style, but it is similarly not meant to be a comprehensive overview of Demy's auteurist practices.

Bordwell suggests that viewers are "sensitive to the postures, gestures, and movements of those around us" without offering a way of describing the precise aspects of movement that attract our attention. Rather, his argument is based on cognitive science's understanding of the areas of the body and cinematic style that are most likely to draw the viewer's eye and how the director's stylistic choices guide us to the denotatively salient areas of the frame (*Figures* 37–39). In contrast, Higgins' research project on color confronts a similar challenge as my research: how to rigorously and systematically describe the stylistic device in question. He suggests that "in writing about color in art, it has become tradition to begin by acknowledging its elusiveness, its resistance to study" because "color has repeatedly proved one of the most challenging elements of art to theorists and historians. It throws up obstacles to description and the uncovering of a system or logic of design" (8). Developing a descriptive vocabulary that allows a comparison of colors across films is an important part of Higgins' contribution to discussions of color design (13–19). Similarly, a consistent, widely-agreed upon system for describing, analyzing, and contextualizing choreography in film is currently absent from discussions of this stylistic device, as is a way of more broadly integrating a study of dance with figure movement. And even the treatment of

choreography as an element of film style is a contentious issue that merits more thorough consideration.

Finally, both Thompson and Bordwell take into account the spectator's role in understanding the artwork's meanings and patterns. Thompson suggests a film's devices "constitute a set of cues that can encourage us to perform certain viewing activities" that are based on the historical contingencies of both the work and the viewer (25). She stresses that spectators are active, not passive, viewers, who "can cope with films to the degree that they have learned the norms appropriate to those films, and also to the degree that they have learned to be aware of and question those norms" (32, 33). To this discussion, Bordwell adds the context of cognitive activity (*Poetics* 43–54). Both stress that most viewers have some foundational, shared ways of processing the images they see and sounds they hear (schemata) that will contribute to a collective consensus about a particular film, but that viewers also bring their own unique perspective to that same film, appropriating it (Bordwell *Poetics* 43) in different ways.

Spectator expectations are crucial to an understanding of Demy's films and the various scholarly and popular responses to his work. Demy's films frequently left audiences and critics feeling bewildered, confused, or uncertain. This, in part, can be the result of his choice to give the choreography in his film greater responsibility in conveying subtle plot information. Dance tends to communicate more abstract information to its spectators, allowing for a wider range of connotative meanings to arise and often leading to individual predilections influencing our understanding of its denotative qualities. As a result, my methodology, through its blend of film and dance studies, can provide a clearer explanation of the movement patterns in Demy's films.

The relationship between Demy's formal choices and audience expectations of the musical genre also play a significant role in the mixed reception of his films. Kelly Kessler describes genre cinema as a "mutual contract" between filmmakers, film viewers, and contemporary culture (10).

Steve Neale, drawing on Tom Ryall and Andrew Tudor, stresses the importance of audience knowledge and expectations in understanding the facets of genre cinema (17, 18). He also stresses the role of the spectator in terms that parallel Bordwell and Thompson's approach to understanding film viewership, suggesting that, "genres do not consist solely of films. They consist also of specific systems of expectation and hypothesis which spectators bring with them to the cinema and which interact with films themselves during the course of the viewing process. These systems provide spectators with means of recognition and understanding" (31). Specific genres have stylistic norms and narrative practices that audiences expect when viewing a film through the lens of a particular genre tradition (Neale 32). Demy, however, while interested in the conventions of the musical form, never fully adhered to them.

An unpacking of the tensions between a film's formal qualities, the filmmaker's intentions for them, and the resulting observations from the spectator's viewing activity, in relation to the musical genre, especially, can shed light on the reception of Demy's films and how this affected his ability to complete later projects. As we shall see, Demy rigorously and intentionally created the tonal shifts and aesthetic incongruities in his films. But as his career progressed, these combinations did not result in favorable audience turnout, making potential French producers less likely to give him the funds required to fully execute his complex and costly ideas. Analyses of films that influenced Demy's work in comparison to the films being made concurrently with his helps to show that his ideas were often out of sync with contemporary trends. An analysis of Demy's unapologetic use of classical Hollywood musical genre conventions into the 1980s is equally important, and the concept of camp cinema is useful here. One of Susan Songag's descriptions of camp in "Notes on 'Camp'" is work that displays a "love of the exaggerated, the 'off,' of things-being-what-they-are-not" (518). Describing Demy's films exclusively from a camp sensibility is too limiting, but Sontag's notes provide guidance as to how to consider the tone and

reception of these films. A striking similarity between all three of Demy's films discussed here is the sincere and un-ironic way that musical numbers are used in relation to the plot, a position that distances these musicals further from their contemporary cinematic counterparts as Demy's career progresses.[23] Although there is a playfulness in the films, Demy's discussions and rigor in planning the musical numbers as well as the choices made in their incorporation into the larger narratives does not suggest that they are meant to be humorous moments. This fits Sontag's description of pure camp as "art that proposes itself seriously, but cannot be taken altogether seriously because it is 'too much,'" (523) whose "essential virtue is seriousness, a seriousness that fails" (522).

An appreciation of Demy's eclectic aesthetic and his approach to the musical genre requires a viewer with what Sontag describes as a camp taste, someone who "relishes, rather than judges, the little triumphs and awkward intensities of 'character'"; "camp taste nourishes itself on the love that has gone into certain objects and personal styles" (530). An understanding of the historical, stylistic, and narrative mixtures that resulted from Demy's aesthetic decisions reveals more about the difficulties he had in putting later films into production, and focusing on one of the more expensive aspects of musical productions—dancers and choreography—helps to narrow in on these pertinent issues.

Lighting, staging, and color design are all mentioned as an art in the research I discuss (Keating 1, Bordwell, *Figures* 8, Higgins referring to Josef Albers 8). Like staging, lighting, and color, choreography and dance can cross media to appear in a theatrical or filmic setting. Unlike staging, lighting, and color, however, dance is widely recognized as an independent art form, and as such some dance scholars might take issue with its subordination to the category of film style. Some grounding in the domain of dance studies is needed.

Dance Foundations

Research on specific dance forms is invaluable to better contextualize my research, especially given that Demy's films include an eclectic range of movement material. However, dance studies, as an independent academic discipline, grapples with questions and frameworks that are frequently at odds with the focus of historical poetics and aspects of film as an art form. These conflicts point to some of the reasons why a gap still exists between dance and film history scholarship on overlapping topics. Significantly, the scarcity of performance recordings or the perceived inadequacies of those recordings creates a lack of primary sources to study. As a result, the ability to re-watch and meticulously dissect a particular performance is less common, which results in a lesser emphasis on scholarly descriptive consensus or analysis of the dance's form in scholarly study. For many research projects, the absence of a need for descriptive consensus also implicitly negates the need for a consistent descriptive system to compare scholarly discussions of a piece. Much of the work that does explore the intersections between dance and film is primarily interested in studying the hybridity of the forms, rather than dance within the context of commercial filmmaking, as I am, and those scholars therefore pursue different research questions. Furthermore, that work also does not offer a method for consistent movement description. Needed for my methodology is a vocabulary for choreography and dance description and analysis, and while there are numerous approaches to understanding dance,[24] I find that for my purposes, the movement taxonomy provided by Laban Movement Analysis is the most useful system for describing dance and figure movement. My methodology for studying movement on screen—by drawing primarily on the tools from Laban Movement Analysis—takes a different approach from the work done in dance historiography or existing research on a hybrid understanding of dance and moving image work, often referred to as dancefilm or screendance.

Through a combination of historical poetics, film and dance history, and LMA's analytical toolkit, my methodology can fill the gap that exists between the disciplines within the scope of choreography and dance in narrative film.

Dance scholarship that explores historical inquiries is of particular utility to my areas of research,[25] and anthologies, *Dance History: An Introduction* and *Rethinking Dance History*, discuss the state of dance history and offer new lines of inquiry for the field. In contrast to the methods proposed by Bordwell and Thompson, certain research methodologies for dance analysis are focused on thematic interpretation. In the dance domain a focus on the meaning of the work in question remains in the foreground, as is clear by the emphasis on "reading" in many of these manuals' titles. Even the central work of the historian, one account suggests, is "the exploration of what … dancing might have 'meant' and how it meant different things to different people" (Carter 14).

More divergent from the perspective of my research project are the differing views on consensus in viewing and understanding dance. Susan Leigh Foster's framework for understanding choreographic structures in *Reading Dancing* is a useful addition to my focus on Laban Movement Analysis, but her approach to analyzing movement is supported by theoretical frameworks in cultural and literary criticism (Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Hayden White) with the aim of "active and interactive interpretation of dance as a system of meaning" (xvii, xix). Judith Mackrell's approach in *Reading Dance* is not concerned with consensus, in part because the aim of her book is to help the dance observer "interpret" and "judge" the information taken from a dance performance (8). She suggests that, "what is certain is that the work I see will never be the same as the one viewed by my neighbour. Even if we both come to the theatre with similar values and expectations, we'll inevitably notice different details of the performance" (6).

Part of Mackrell's argument is based on the idea that each spectator brings "prejudices, passions and blind spots" to every viewing (6), and the effect of the viewer's own predilections on what he or she will observe is important to acknowledge. Alexandra Carter also points out the inevitability of bias, and the importance of acknowledging predilections, in the writing of dance history (13, 14). Edward Carr discusses this issue in *What is History?* as well. When we attempt to answer the question his book poses, "our answer, consciously or unconsciously, reflects our own position in time, and forms part of our answer to the broader question, what view we take of the society in which we live" (5). "By and large, the historian will get the kind of facts he wants," he adds; "History means interpretation" of those facts (26). Complete descriptive consensus may not be attainable, but we can recognize the challenges of such an approach while working towards according historical accounts. This lack of consensus prevents the advancement of certain research questions, particularly in the precise comparison of work involving human movement. This approach is particularly relevant to studies of Demy's work. An evaluative judgment of an artwork is largely inevitable, but the historical reading of Demy's personal and professional life in a tragic light has affected the value of his later films to scholars, *Trois places pour le 26*, in particular. Regardless of a critical like or dislike of Demy's aesthetic choices, his combination of disparate cinematic traditions and historical periods was intentionally done, and we should not dismiss his later work out of hand without first studying it carefully. A strong incentive in choosing to incorporate Laban Movement Analysis into my analytical method is its focus on training the practitioner to understand her own movement preferences and patterns to make the resulting analytical observations as objective as possible. An important reminder taken from dance studies and Carr, however, is the constant presence of such predilections, a presence that LMA's method works to acknowledge and mitigate.

A recurring constraint in methodological discussions of writing dance history is the absence of complete primary sources. Carter points out that the key information in an understanding of this field is not written documents but "the dance itself" (15). Shirley McKechnie and Catherine Stevens add that often written records of performance are difficult to come by (40). Most scholars are quick to point out that film or video documentation exists of some historical works and that aspects of the original dance performance can be understood thanks to subsequent performances, re-stagings of the choreography, or audiovisual recordings. For many, however, the recorded dance work is problematic. Mackrell suggests that despite video's increasing sophistication, there is "no completely satisfying way of reproducing a live dance performance" (6). Some of the rationale for recordings' inadequacies is seen in June Layson's account that "[when using dance video as a historical source] the movement tends to be 'flattened,' the space and dynamic can be distorted and the small dancing image depersonalized" (23). For many dance scholars, ephemerality of performance is an inherent aspect of the art of dance, and as such the filmic medium is treated with reservation. For those scholars who see ephemerality as one of dance's medium-specific qualities, the suspicion towards methods of recording those dances, film and video, especially, is prevalent. However, Jo Butterworth and Liesbeth Wildschut suggest that the "ephemerality and transience" of the form is one of the key elements causing a "neglect" of the dance discipline (5).[26]

The filmic medium adds a layer of complexity to the already challenging task of describing and analyzing movement. Cinematography techniques also create an additional range of choices in portraying the material, particularly in the rendering of depth through focal length. However, it also adds the advantages of repeatability of viewings and the single sightline the camera provides. John Mueller, in his discussion of Fred Astaire's filmic dancing, sees the cinematic sightline as a disadvantage, writing that "any choreographer working with the camera must deal

with the space defined by the camera's peculiar point of view: a narrow triangle with its acute angle at the lens. Choreographing for the camera is something like choreographing for a one-eyed spectator who is wearing blinders, and the most interesting dimension tends to be to and from the camera rather than from side to side, as it is onstage" (*Astaire Dancing* 29). Mueller's criticisms touch only partially on the camera's flattening of depth, which certainly can make certain movements more difficult to convey clearly, but I disagree with him that the lateral (horizontal) dimension is unappealing, as Demy's films emphasize the advantages of movement along this dimension. And Mueller's comments do not address one of the advantages of the camera's sightline. As Lea Jacobs and Ben Brewster suggest in *Theatre to Cinema*, "the single viewpoint of the moving-picture camera solves the problem of blocking out positions so that the stage picture is visible (and reasonably similar) for as many of the members of the audience as possible, since anything which is visible to the camera is visible to all members of the cinema audience" (171). In cinematic dance numbers, this single viewpoint allows for a blocking of performers that can emphasize precise relationships and correspondences between and within bodies. It also permits—and encourages—repeated viewings of the performance, strengthening descriptive accuracy and analytical consensus.

Despite the existing disciplinary distance from recorded dance, a growing contingent of researchers and practitioners are exploring the interaction between the media of dance and film (or video).[27] This sub-discipline has the advantage of a confirmed, re-watchable primary source but much of this work emphasizes larger theoretical concerns over analytical inquiries and a descriptive vocabulary. As a result, the broad scope of some of these research projects frequently discuss dance interchangeably in relation to fictional, experimental, and documentary filmmaking practice without acknowledging the different production practices associated with these broad cinematic categories. Their research questions do not necessarily seek that historical

knowledge, but closer attention to the specific modes of production can illuminate shifting conditions in film and dance infrastructures, as my project does for dance and filmmaking in France. My emphasis on articulating the nuances of a particular mode of production is a main difference between my research project and that of other scholars' study of dance in film.

Much of this scholarship aims to study dancing in film as a new hybrid art form. Erin Brannigan's *DanceFilm: Choreography and the Moving Image* creates an interdisciplinary theoretical framework of works that blend dance and film forms. She argues—compellingly—that the existing literature on dance in film does not successfully reconcile critical theory from dance and film disciplines and that there has been little exploration of how dance theory can inform film studies and vice versa. For all of Branigan's discussion of dancefilm as a blend of both forms, however, there is less discussion—and description—of film form than of the movement of bodies. This leads to some slippery moments in her argument, as she does not fully contextualize her case studies in their modes of production and defines certain terms—like dance—in broad and inclusive ways. Brannigan's expanded definition of dance in film, including "micro-choreographies" of gestures and cinematic close-ups (44–64) assigns a higher status to dancefilms that might otherwise not be considered dancerly by traditional dance scholars and encourages closer study of broader types of figure movement. What remains unclear is where she draws the line between everyday, *un*choreographed bodily motion and choreographed gesture-dance, which weakens her otherwise compelling argument that we should study the performative shifts of film musical stars as they move in and out of musical numbers (141–160). I find it more useful to maintain traditional definitions of dance (as classical, ballroom, modern, and so on) and to instead contrast those forms to choreographed figure movement as a way to distinguish between the embellished and subtle uses of movement in Demy's films. Brannigan's theoretical moves are intentional, as they aid her goal of creating links and correspondences between a wide range of

artistic practices. They are equally problematic, however, as they create strained revisionist histories—of early cinema and the film musical, in particular—and overlook existing theoretical discourses—such as Sergei Eisenstein's theories of montage and Rick Altman's work on the musical—in her areas of inquiry.

Douglas Rosenberg's *Screendance: Inscribing the Ephemeral Image* is more focused in respect to modes of production. He limits his research to a specific type of dance and film, which he refers to as "screendance." He defines this narrower category not as one medium within the context of another, but rather as a "collaborative, hybrid undertaking" (1). His research proposes a new hybrid medium for what is predominantly an experimental (rather than documentary or fictional) art form, which balances the concerns of both filmmaking and dance. For the purposes of my project, however, the film medium must be given hierarchical preference over other forms.

To clarify the parallels and departures between the filmic examples of choreography I compare, I aim to explicitly contextualize the instances of combined dance and film media within the specific mode of production in which the artwork is made to better understand the constraints placed on both forms. Virginia Brooks objects that, "dancing was subordinated to plot" in the Hollywood musical and that Fred Astaire was "the most consistently successful . . . at faithfully presenting choreography" (57). This perspective on dance in Hollywood does not acknowledge that dance, as one of only many components contributing to the final film, was constrained within the industrial guidelines of the studio system's mode of production and the medium-specificity of film. Demy's films, like Hollywood musicals, were made within a commercial cinematic context and the dancing that appears on screen is one aspect of the larger production. The majority of the films I examine in relation to Demy's work are based in modes of fictional, commercial cinema, and many are within the even narrower scope of the musical genre.

Existing literature that does contextualize dance within the Hollywood industry provides a helpful precedent, but is focused on comparisons within the same dance tradition, which narrows its focus. A framing of dance (beyond studies of individual choreographers[28]) within the context of narrative, commercial film is rarer in scholarly literature, but is broached in projects like Jerome Delamater's *Dance in the Hollywood Musical* and Adrienne McLean's *Dying Swans and Madmen*. Delamater provides a historical/analytical discussion that is split between a chronological examination of the studio period and an auteur-based typology. His prescriptive argument situates Gene Kelly's work as the ultimate paradigm of choreography on film because of Kelly's unique (according to Delamater) development of medium-specific choreography, unlike Fred Astaire, who, Delamater argues, did not create choreography for a film-specific context. Although he bases his arguments on analyses of the films themselves, some of his conclusions are based on misrepresentations of the films he examines. While he correctly suggests that a better methodology is needed to more thoroughly study dance in the Hollywood musical, his work does not propose one. Overall, the book spends more time on biographical information about the various people discussed than it does on an elaboration of close analysis. McLean's book isolates one particular sub-section of dance—ballet—in order to study what ballet signified in different historical periods of the Hollywood cinema. Although McLean has a dance background that gives credibility to her discussions of formal qualities, her project is interested in social generative mechanisms that constructed the meanings and aesthetics associated with Hollywood's use of ballet. It also does not provide a methodology for analyzing the dance she discusses. McLean's project has the advantage of not needing to compare and contrast disparate forms of figure movement, making a broader movement analysis methodology more superfluous to her research project. In order to clearly demonstrate Demy's blending of figure movement and

dance forms from disparate aesthetic traditions, however, a flexible movement analysis methodology is essential to my research.

Laban Movement Analysis' Taxonomy of Human Movement

Central to my project is the necessity for consistent and rigorous description and analysis of figure movement. Moreover, my analysis focuses on the choreography of figure movement more broadly in order to trace patterns in figure movement staging as well as dance within these films. Jo Butterworth and Liesbeth Wildschut suggest that, "one of the basic difficulties [in studying dance] continues to be that bodily knowledge and artistry are not easily expressed in language, even where there is a will to do so" (5). Rudolf Laban and his students' research on the movement of the human body provides evidence to the contrary, allowing for a comparison of human movement across artistic forms and a structure for descriptive consensus.

Laban Movement Analysis (LMA), as this system is called, provides a foundation for thorough, pattern-based micro and macro analysis of the expressivity of human movement. Combined with an equally rigorous study of film style and its relationship to the staging of figures in the frame, LMA allows for a more precise discussion of how Demy incorporated figure movement and dance into his films. This taxonomy of human movement provides the added benefit of not being style or form specific. Much of the dance scholarship I mention above is focused on three of the major dance types: ballet (classical), modern, and postmodern. In contrast, more popular, commercialized dance types like jazz, Broadway, or social (ballroom) dance characterizes much of the dance seen in the Hollywood musical and some of what appears in Demy's films. Because the tools of LMA can describe and analyze any movement of the body,

not just dance, it provides the needed flexibility to compare dance types as well as to draw comparisons between dance and figure movement more generally.

Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) stems from the work Rudolf Laban (1879–1958) developed about human movement in the middle of the 20th century. Although Laban is associated with the dance community, his descriptive system was intended for analysis of any type of human movement and some of his most powerful work on human expression developed out of studying the repetitive motions of factory workers (Bradley 34). Because this work is not tied to a particular dance or movement tradition, it is particularly effective for comparisons of different types and traditions of human movement. Laban—and many current-day LMA practitioners—would object to the description of his work as a system, methodology, or theory, since they see the work more as a philosophy that generates a constant feedback loop between movement observation (of self and of others) and movement practice (to maintain basic body function and to achieve full movement expression). However, from an analyst's practical standpoint, this work provides a taxonomy of movement that allows description of the human body from a number of perspectives.

At its core, the work of an LMA-trained analyst is to discover movement essences: what makes someone's movement expressive within his or her unique context. The analyst often seeks to explain the movement choices through interpretation and analysis (what is the movement's meaning?), but these claims are founded on detailed descriptions. LMA does not propose a top-down hierarchy of movements with pre-determined meanings and prescriptive value judgments. Rather, the work encourages the analyst to understand the movement in question in relation to its context (what did the person do right before and after?) and the mover's broader movement patterns and preferences. Much of the movement taxonomy consists of breaking movement down and situating it within various spectra. As Karen Bradley has suggested, "Teasing

phenomena into polar opposites and defining continua along the polarities is at the heart of Laban's work" (xi). In many instances Laban's work consists of dividing categories into smaller and smaller subsections to isolate limited—and in some cases, bipolar—options that the body fluctuates between, which allows for greater precision in description and analysis. In some ways, this emphasis on polarities is reminiscent of Raymond Bellour's work in *The Analysis of Film*. However, Bellour takes such linear analysis further in his discussion of segmentation and units, whereas LMA does not offer a specific framework for analyzing compositional structure. Instead, there is an emphasis on nonlinear analysis of patterns to find moments of repetition and variation.

When Laban began his work on human movement, he initially divided his observations into two large categories, one more quantitative—Space—and one more qualitative—Effort. Space describes the directions and dimensions through which the body moves (away from and towards the body center), while Effort provides language to explain the qualities with which we move this way or that, with hints at the psychological motivations for our choices.[29] The study of these areas together describes what Laban called "the connection between outer movement and the mover's inner attitude" (*Choreutics* 27). Laban drew on music theory terminology as well as geometry to posit harmonic affinities between the various aspects of his system in order to emphasize how each aspect of his taxonomy is interrelated and dependent upon the others. Guiding the analytical toolkit are four overarching themes, each with its own dual qualities, that provide macro structures for understanding bodily movement: function and expression, exertion and recuperation, mobility and stability, inner and outer. The themes help to establish connections between aspects of the taxonomy and to understand how people move through cycles and phrases of movement.

The core of the LMA system consists of four sections, each of which seeks to answer a different question. These core concerns are repeated in Appendix 1 for easy reference:

Space asks where the body is in relation to the environment. Laban called the Kinesphere the space in which the body (and limbs) can move while remaining in place (*Choreutics* 10). He subdivides the body by dimensions—horizontal (right and left), vertical (up and down), and sagittal (forward and back)—and zones—low, middle, high and far, mid, and near, all in relation to the center of the body. This allows for a more precise way of describing the spatial pulls along which the body and body parts are moving. He saw one-dimensional movement (along axes) as most stable, two-dimensional movement (along planes and their diameters) as more mobile, and three-dimensional movement (along diagonals) as highly mobile. He also analyzed the various pathways through which the body could move from one spatial pull to another—called trace forms (*Choreutics* 5)—in order to better understand the more qualitative aspects of how the body changes its form.

Effort asks how the body's dynamics are an outer manifestation of inner expression. This is the most qualitative and theoretical aspect of Laban's work. He suggested that all dynamic changes in the body could be broken down into four motion factors that can fluctuate between two polar opposite qualities, also called Effort elements. These motion factors rarely manifest alone—usually in pairs or threes, depending on the intensity of the expression—and are usually fleeting and in constant flux. Laban scholar Vera Maletic has expanded the work on Effort in *Dance Dynamics* to suggest ways that our Effort lives can be phrased, adding to the vocabulary and descriptive language to describe Effort as it shifts temporally. She also provides concise descriptive explanations of each Effort factor, which can be difficult to process without visual examples. Space (Indirect or Direct) creates a sense of outer focus and attention, and "can be associated with the cognitive capacities of orienting, attending, and organizing." Indirect Space

Effort is flexible, encompassing, and multi-focused. Direct Space Effort is focused, narrowed, and pinpointed (14). Weight (Light or Strong) measures the shifting use of force and "may indicate sensing or sensibility for assuming light or firm 'Intention' towards an action, ranging from lighthearted to assertive." Light Weight Effort is delicate, sensitive, a fine touch. Strong Weight Effort is forceful, firm, or solid (16). Time (Sustained or Quick) measures the speed with which an action is performed, and "may indicate an intuitive readiness for 'Decision' making, either in a sustained manner or suddenly." Sustained Time Effort lingers, is prolonged, and often calm. Sudden (or Quick) Time Effort is immediate, unexpected, and often excited (18). Finally, Flow (Free or Bound) affects the continuity of movement and can "give either a controlled and careful or exuberant and outgoing 'Progression.'" Free Flow Effort is fluent, ongoing, and easy. Bound Flow Effort is withheld, restrained, and controlled (20). Laban saw these eight qualities as interacting in exponential ways; he suggested that generally people's Effort lives (how people move dynamically through combinations of different Efforts) would interact in pairs, which he called States. If three Effort factors were present at once, he called these more intense (and often quite brief) moments Drives. One half of the elements—Indirect Space, Light Weight, Sustained Time, and Free Flow—are described as indulging qualities, while the other half—Direct Space, Strong Weight, Quick Time, and Bound Flow—are seen as fighting qualities.

Body asks what parts of the body are moving and in what sequence. This category provides an understanding of certain fundamental movement patterns, developed primarily by Laban's students, Ingmar Bartenieff in particular. Discussions of the Body category provide useful reminders of the various body parts and joints, and encourages the analyst to study various anatomical and neuromuscular considerations.[30] Body attitude describes the particular shape that is held in the body during other actions. Body usage determines the most active body parts, isolations of movement in the body, and the initiation or part of the body that leads the

movement. Body part phrasing is a useful way to describe whether movements in the body are occurring simultaneously (the whole body moving at once), successively (a movement passing fluidly from one body part to another), or sequentially (disconnected body parts moving one after the other). Analysts have also proposed seven Basic Body Actions, which Ann Hutchinson Guest describes as "the prime actions and concepts of which movement is comprised" (vi): traveling (locomotion), change of support (supported weight shift), rotation (spins), flexion, extension, springs (jumps), and falling (uncontrolled weight shifts). These actions are particularly useful for describing the component parts of dance sequences, as they do not require knowledge of the names of dance steps.

Shape asks how the body is relating to its environment. There is disagreement in the Laban community about how to discuss this category,[31] but at its core are the Modes of Shape Change, which propose three ways to analyze whether the movement in question is causing people to extend their awareness to the environment or whether they are moving with a focus on their inner impulses. Modes of Shape Change asks whether the movement in question reveals an extension of awareness to the mover's environment or a focus on inner impulses Each type of movement can also be described spatially according to the dimensions Laban proposed in his discussion of Space, but are used to describe more qualitative observations in the body. Shape Flow movement results from an inner impulse, suggesting an attention to self (and usually also results in a lack of Space Effort). Directional movement—arc-like/curved or spoke-like/straight—bridges to the environment with a straightforward, clear purpose and is therefore usually less complex (and usually also results in the presence of Direct Space Effort). Finally, Shaping is a molding of the environment, often with three-dimensional movement that causes rotation in the joints (and usually also results in the presence of Indirect Space Effort).

Body-Effort-Space-Shape (BESS for short) is the foundation of Laban Movement Analysis. While LMA provides a rich and highly beneficial toolbox, a melding of its methodology with a foundation in historical and analytical poetics requires several caveats. LMA is not a comprehensive notation system, and as such was intended more for isolating the expressive essence of a movement (in words or with symbols) rather than plotting each intricate detail of the movement. Laban did develop a symbol-based notation system called Labanotation that is used today to record a series of movements comprehensively, but that system is dependent upon a mastery of a notation language and requires separate training. Because this work was not necessarily intended for extensive close analysis does not mean it cannot be used as such, but the system also does not propose models or frameworks for large-scale pattern or choreographic analysis, beyond the simple understanding of similarity and contrast. LMA is not a system for analyzing choreography or specific styles of movement or dance, and as such cannot be substituted for historical knowledge of a particular movement practice. But it allows an analyst to see patterns that are present in seemingly disparate movement practices. And LMA focuses on the individual moving body, rather than on the relationships among moving bodies or, as is especially relevant to my work, on the relationship between a moving body and a film camera.

Additional frameworks for analyzing and segmenting movement and film supplement this work. Susan Leigh Foster's work in *Reading Dancing* provides some additional material in this domain. She suggests the following "blueprint" for understanding choreography, separated into five categories: understanding a dance as a unique entity from the world (the "frame"); how the dance refers to the world around it (the "mode of representation"); the dance's uniqueness from a more general genre perspective (the "style"); the dance's basic units or "moves" (its "vocabulary"); and rules of selection and combination (its "syntax") (59). These categories share similarities with modes for understanding film genre conventions as well. Many of her concepts

are directed specifically at an understanding of dance choreography, which does not provide the needed flexibility for comparison across modes of movement. The idea of discrete units for analysis, for example, is a key issue that, for my purposes, needs to remain flexible. Foster suggests that "any movement that articulates a strong visual design, a clear, simple rhythm, or a recognizable dramatic gesture can easily be perceived as a distinctive moment in the dance." She adds that many pedestrian movements and tasks have a sense of "discreteness" and that the performer's breathing patterns can also identify basic "building block[s]" of choreography (90). Another method of segmentation that I find especially helpful is a moment of stillness to mark the end of a phrase. The unit of the shot is also an important measure of analysis, as Lea Jacobs discusses in her research on sound recording practices and their effects on editing, staging, and the resulting narrative pacing (*Film Rhythm* 3–5). The analytical frameworks provided by Bordwell and Thompson, of function and motivation, as well as my taxonomy of musical numbers, provides further ways to contextualize and compare the movement I analyze.

Unfortunately, the added linguistic value to LMA's vocabulary, while evocative of more easily recognizable movement qualities, is not always intuitive to non-practitioners. As such, part of the work involved in taking LMA into a new context is finding suitable explanations that will be understandable to film scholars. One of my core concerns as a scholar interested in both human movement and film is to find clear and concise ways to bridge the gap between disciplines, and as such this issue is worthy of a little more discussion. The combination of analytical systems can be challenging because film analysis—and even more so, LMA—assigns additional denotative value to words that already have fixed meanings in a language system instead of creating new terms with a distinct meaning and value.[32] At times, this plurality of meanings in LMA is in conflict with the meaning of a term within the domain of film studies, as the above discussion of the term "Function" suggests. As my discussion of a poetics of cinema

shows, Bordwell's discussion uses the term "function" as a larger category and uses "expressive" to label a subcategory. This is in clear contradiction with the LMA instinct to juxtapose "Function" with "Expression" as opposite poles of a spectrum. A discussion of space is another example. In LMA, Space explores how the body's Kinesphere grows and shrinks and provides a clear taxonomy to describe where the body or parts of the body are moving. In many ways, the language of Space, especially a discussion of the planes and general directions, is easily applicable and understood within the context of a film analysis. But spatial relations in cinema take into account the relationships between bodies and their relationships to the setting visible in the frame (usually discussed as the foreground, mid-ground, and background). In addition, we also must consider the impression of spatial relations created between shots, a construction of space that is unique to the cinematic medium. So while Space in an LMA context is a more quantitative way of understanding movement in the body, space in film can often rely on a more qualitative understanding.

As a result, one of the primary aims of this project is to be as clear as possible where the systems of film and Laban Movement Analysis complement one another—allowing for a more complete analytical toolbox—but also where terminology overlaps, creating conflicts of vocabulary choice and compatibility. One solution to this problem could be to "translate" terms from LMA into language that does not clash with film studies parlance, or vice versa, but this strategy opens more doors for confusion and eliminates the specificity of the LMA vocabulary. So for the purposes of this research, I begin a word with a capital letter—as I have done in the preceding paragraphs—to indicate LMA-specific vocabulary when a term carries greater linguistic significance beyond everyday use. In order to define or explain LMA terminology only when it is necessary, I also include separate notes of explanation outside of my primary text to not break the flow of the argument. For the reader's convenience, Appendix 1 also provides brief

definitions of the common LMA terms I use in my analysis in subsequent chapters.[33] Despite the limitations I describe, LMA offers a rich descriptive toolbox, so long as the analyst is aware of the questions this work can and cannot answer, and contemporary practitioners have begun to explore some of its advantages and limitations, providing perspectives that help me flesh out my own use of the work.

My project does not claim to provide a universal methodology or taxonomy of movement for analyzing dance in film, especially as I am choosing to situate my analysis within the context of narrative cinema and its aesthetic concerns. Additional work outlining the characteristic qualities, shapes, and choreographic patterns of dance forms and their historical shifts would help to supplement the inductive and inclusive analysis that LMA can provide. However, my work provides a thorough and flexible system for analyzing dance and figure movement in a cinematic context and as such can be useful to future scholars. My project isolates the variables that are needed for a precise examination of Demy's films and those that influenced him and in doing so offers a valuable methodology and taxonomy of movement for analyzing dance in film.

A New Taxonomy of Musical Numbers

In addition to a more precise method for describing movement, my research inquiries require a more precise way of comparing genre conventions to understand and analyze Demy's relationship to the films—musicals especially—that influenced him. Here I propose a taxonomy that allows me to both review existing genre theory's various strategies for evaluating a film's musical status and to provide a more nuanced way to talk about Demy's experimentation with the genre, as a whole, and musical numbers, more specifically. Existing research on the film musical provides a useful starting point. Musicals are a film tradition that, at least in Western

cinema, has roots in classical Hollywood. Rick Altman's *The American Film Musical* and Steven Cohan's two anthologies on the musical (*Hollywood Musicals: The Film Reader* and *The Sound of Musicals*) provide historical perspectives on musical films within the Hollywood industrial structure. Scholars differ in their assessment of essential musical genre elements, but Steve Neale points out that the musical is a "mongrel genre. In varying measures and combinations, music, song and dance have been its only essential ingredients" (105). However, standard definitions of the genre as it is discussed in the context of American cinema fall short of describing what distinguishes Demy's corpus from classical iterations of the genre. My analytical work provides additional ways of nuancing traditional conceptions of the film musical—at the level of the musical number, in particular—to accurately situate Demy's films within musical genre history.

Each scholar of the film musical has his or her own conception of what constitutes the essence of the genre, and much of musical genre scholarship is interested in the relationship between the musical numbers and the film that surrounds (or supports) them. For John Mueller ("Fred Astaire") how closely the musical sequences are causally linked to the narrative is important. In his taxonomy of musical narrative integration, he assigns the highest status of musical essence to numbers in which the characters' singing or dancing relates causally to the plot to move the narrative forward. He then proposes ways in which musical numbers can be narratively and expressively connected to the plot in looser or more peripheral ways, but his definition of a core musical foregrounds the narratively integrated numbers. For Rick Altman, narrative integration is less important than the clear shift from the film's diegesis to the musical number, which he discusses as existing in a "supradiegetic" space. Altman prioritizes his concept of the audio dissolve in his discussion of style and a dual-focus emphasis in his discussion of narrative. Altman's argument for the dual-focus structure suggests that the American musical develops "around parallel stars of opposite sex and radically divergent values" (19). However, his

conception of the audio dissolve to the supradiegetic realm of musical numbers relies on a set of assumptions about technical practices (62–74). Martin Rubin, like Altman, prioritizes numbers that move the film away from the narrative's diegetic realities, but his discussion of this shift is based on an evaluation of plausibility; his concept of numbers that contain "impossible" elements given the diegetic context is more helpful in getting at this sense of a shift ("Busby Berkeley" 57). Jane Feuer emphasizes the musical as a set of ideological contradictions and Richard Dyer emphasizes the contrast between the realistic and utopian qualities of narrative and numbers, respectively (Feuer "Self-reflective Musical", Dyer "Entertainment").

One problematic concept in musical genre scholarship is that of the "integrated musical" hinted at above, largely because the same term is used to describe several—often contradictory—ways that musical numbers interact or combine with the rest of the film. Steven Neale echoes this, writing that, "most uses of the term [integration] are rather vague" (107). A demonstration of these contradictions shows that clearer vocabulary and additional categories are needed to encourage consensus and pinpoint different uses of the genre's conventions.

Integration can refer to a musical number that is causally connected to the narrative, in the way that Mueller discusses this relationship in his taxonomy. It can also refer to a number that is conceived within the aesthetic choices of film style, in the way that Jerome Delamater describes. He uses the term to refer to the way a number relates to the narrative but also whether or not the number (and the dancing especially) is designed to be film-style specific, a criteria that is equally problematic. Delamater argues that, "the nature of integration of the film musical lies not simply with the idea that the musical numbers and the dances, in particular, should advance the plot but also suggests an integration of the entire cinematic process" (98). By being performed for a film production, all dancing in Hollywood musicals are by nature already integrated with the cinematic process. Some scholars also refer to "fully integrated numbers," when referring to a

number that emerges "naturally" from the story, one that is not motivated as a stage number or pre-meditated performance (Cohan *Incongruous* 61, Waldron 61–62). There is often a relationship between numbers that are narratively essential to the plot and numbers in which characters spontaneously break into song and dance, but we should not assume that the presence of one quality automatically ensures the other. The "Moses Supposes" number from *Singin' in the Rain* (1952) is not causally tied to the plot, for example, but it does emerge as a mostly spontaneous song-and-dance number.

Scholars also frequently make reference to films as "integrated musicals," putting a whole film into a general category. This broader category is not always helpful, however, since most films have numbers that function differently in relation to the narrative—*The Band Wagon* or *Singin' in the Rain* being just two examples—and scholars who rely on this category do not always explain the criteria for inclusion (Kesler, Cohan).[34] The somewhat arbitrary division of musicals into "integrated" and "non-integrated" films creates scholarly confusion, given the different ways the term is used, and also affects historical studies of the genre in problematic ways. Altman argues that, "the notion of integration has no doubt been abused in the study of the musical (producing such debatable claims as Jerome Delamater's treatment of integration as the genre's Platonic ideal)" (115). Sean Griffin presents a similar claim, writing that, "consequently, historians working under an evolutionary model of genre development (such as Delamater) often regard the integrated musical as the *ne plus ultra* of the genre. Even those not writing under such an explicitly teleological framework have tended to focus primarily (if not exclusively) on integrated musicals as the prime examples for analysis" (23). Both point out that a large corpus of films are ignored when "integrated" musicals become foregrounded. But they both also slightly misrepresent Delamater's perspective on "integrated" numbers, which is based more on stylistic continuity and medium-specificity than it is on narrative causality. The latter is what both Cohan

and Griffin are referring to when discussing "integrated" musicals, which reinforces the argumentative problems that occur when the same term is used to refer to different generic categories. In *Incongruous Entertainment*, Steven Cohan explores the contrast between "aggregated" numbers, that occur "without regard for narrative unity or continuity" and narratively "integrated" (which he sometimes calls fully integrated) numbers (43–45, 60–67). Cohan provides a nuanced account of this difference and points out that most musical films contain a combination of both types of numbers, but he does not discuss in detail the various ways that such combinations occur. With certain exceptions, he suggests, "no single musical purely adheres to one form or the other" (44).

Furthermore, the use of the term integration to describe the relationship between the narrative and a number is somewhat misleading. It implies that the number will function within the same narrative logic as the rest of the film's diegesis. By this logic, so-called integrated numbers would be entirely grounded in the intrinsic norms of the narrative diegesis; they would be realistically motivated. And such numbers do not fit into most scholars' conceptions of a musical number, because they lack the shift that Altman refers to in his discussion of the supradiegetic and that Rubin addresses in his concept of impossibility. Altman addresses the issue with these more peripheral musical numbers, and his discussion on the concept of the narratively integrated musical emphasizes that, unlike for many other scholars, narratively integrated numbers are not what he considers to be an essential aspect of the musical genre precisely because they do not emphasize a supradiegetic shift (70, 71).

Among scholars of the film musical, then, the term "integrated" is used to describe no fewer than three different types of musical numbers: ones that are realistically motivated by the diegesis and therefore do not create a supradiegetic or impossible shift, ones that serve a narrative (denotative) or expressive function, or ones that are cinematically medium-specific.[35] Moreover,

numbers can be more or less overt in their relationships to the larger narrative. In many instances, musical sequences are clearly identifiable as such—Gene Kelly bursting into song in the rain, for example—but other times they are not. In stage-bound (realistically motivated) numbers, especially, it is often difficult to distinguish between numbers that would not appear uncomfortably out-of-the-ordinary in a non-musical film and those that epitomize the genre. These generic distinctions prove that a better organization system is needed to more precisely differentiate between aspects of the genre. My taxonomy teases out how those shifts occur to compare numbers with greater nuance.

My taxonomy offers a framework to subdivide musical numbers (or larger sequences) into categories. As a result, I can indicate clearly the relationship between narrative and number or the existence of a shift that occurs as a result of a musical number. This provides a more refined tool to analyze Demy's musical numbers and compare numbers made in different national contexts or one-off numbers in otherwise non-musical films. It allows me to assess the status of individual numbers but is not intended as a broader conception of the genre or a prescriptive structure arguing for a particular inclusive or exclusive corpus of films. In the long term, this framework would also serve to trace historical trends and shifts in how musical numbers have changed over time, eventually yielding a typology of the most common musical number schemas.

Two ways of presenting music, song, and dance within a film's narrative are most essential in identifying and categorizing musical numbers. Each number serves a particular function (or series of functions) within the larger narrative. And each number can adhere to or deviate from the spatio-temporal and acting performance norms that govern the diegesis. David Bordwell's discussion of narrative and stylistics (*Figures* 33–35) provides guiding frameworks to situate a musical number in relation to its surrounding narrative and that narrative's use of film style. His analytical work teases out different ways to explain what scholars see to be the essential qualities

of the genre and reveals more about historical shifts in musical norms. This allows me to integrate my work with existing theories of the genre that, while circling around similar issues, all emphasize different aspects of the musical.

The first category of my taxonomy examines the various functions the number serves. Here I build upon Bordwell's four broad functions of film style—denotative/narrative, expressive, symbolic, decorative/aesthetic—as they allow for a more precise division of a number's function (*Figures* 33–35). I further sub-divide Bordwell's conception of denotative or narrative functions into two categories: causal and informative. Numbers can communicate these functions through song and music or through dance and staging, or both. It is important to point out, too, that most numbers go through a range of shifts in their relationship to the narrative and to stylistic norms.

Causal narrative function:

These numbers are essential to a comprehension of the film's plot, or suyzhet, the "substance and sequence of narrative events explicitly presented in the film" (Bordwell *Ozu* 51). Hollywood film narratives are redundant to ensure viewer comprehension of the story or fabula, the "total system of story events, explicit as well as implicit" (Bordwell *Ozu* 51), so numbers whose absence from the film would confuse the audience are rarer than numbers which serve an informative narrative function. Causal numbers might consist of Mueller's "integrated" musical numbers ("Fred Astaire" 28–30), in which the characters' singing or dancing relates causally to the plot in a way that moves the narrative forward. According to Mueller's taxonomy, for a number to function denotatively it needs to advance the plot (through a clear causal relationship). The distinction between numbers that are causally essential to a comprehension of the narrative and numbers that contribute non-essential denotative information is important, however, and stresses the importance of thinking about the number's role within the larger film narrative. *West*

Side Story's "One Hand, One Heart" (1961) is an example of a number that functions in a causal manner through song. Tony and Maria commit themselves to one another in a common-law marriage through their sung vows, an aspect of the film's plot that is not communicated elsewhere in the film. Mueller's example of danced content contributing essential information to a film plot is the "Dancing in the Dark" number from *The Band Wagon* (1953), in which Fred Astaire and Cyd Charisse's characters learn to trust and dance with one another (33–35). *West Side Story*'s "Cool" also serves this function. The number serves as a physical release for the Jet gang members through its kinesthetic integration with the film's plot. The teenagers begin the number in a frenzied violent state and have calmed themselves down by the end, allowing themselves to avoid notice from the police.

Informative narrative function:

These numbers communicate plot or character information, but not in a way that would cause confusion if the number were removed from the film. Because of Hollywood's redundant plot structure, these numbers are more common. Therefore, the distinction between numbers that are causally essential to a comprehension of the narrative and numbers that contribute non-essential denotative information is important and stresses the importance of thinking about the number's role within the larger film narrative. Though Mueller champions numbers that advance the plot through content (song or dance), some of his other categories of numbers that advance the plot through their existence, irrespective of content, would fit into this category ("Fred Astaire" 29, 30). His category of numbers that "enrich the plot, but do not advance it" would also fall here, since Bordwell suggests that stylistic contributions to characterization or atmosphere are also denotative functions. *The Music Man*'s (1962) opening number, "Rock Island," is a good example of song communicating information about plot or character. The

number functions to communicate information about Harold Hill's past deceptions, but we learn of this information outside of the musical numbers as well. In the "Barn Dance" number from *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (1955), the escalating danced competition between the Pontipee brothers and their town rivals demonstrates their physical superiority and ends with the six townswomen choosing the former as their preferred partners.

Expressive function:

Musical numbers that function expressively emphasize a character's emotion, more so than an advancement of the plot or a reveal of specific plot or character details. The musical genre is closely associated with these numbers that occur because of an overflow of emotion. Such moments characterize the emotional life of characters or establish a specific mood that relates to the narrative or setting. Mueller's second category, "numbers which contribute to the spirit or theme," would be applicable here as well ("Integrated Musical" 28). Millie's number "Wonderful Day" from *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* demonstrates this in song; her number emerges from an excitement to start a new life. *Singin' in the Rain*'s "Good Morning" number, primarily through dance and movement, serves primarily to cheer up Gene Kelly's character, Don. Expressive numbers can also suggest a more complex blend of emotions if the expressive content of the song and dance contradict one another. We can observe this in "How Lovely to be a Woman" from *Bye Bye Birdie* (1963), where Kim (Ann-Margret) expresses in song her joy to be growing up while changing into an increasingly childish outfit.

Symbolic function:

Numbers can also represent information in more implicit ways through the use of symbolic function. Often this function arises through more abstract sung and danced content. In "Pick-a-

Little, Talk-a-Little" from *The Music Man*, the women's gossip is interspersed with a chorus that, through music and lyrical design, makes them sound like pecking hens, a meaning that is reinforced through their head movements and feathered hats. The danced sequences in musical sequences often referred to as dream ballets are also rife with meaning obliquely expressed through movement. *Oklahoma*'s (1955) well-known dream ballet expresses Laurie's anxieties over Jud and her love for Curly.

Decorative/aesthetic function:

Musical numbers, and the musical genre more generally, are known for their decorative functions, emphasizing style for the sake of style. A sense of spectacle overtaking narrative efficiency is a core trait of the musical genre to certain scholars, Rick Altman and Martin Rubin, especially. Many musical numbers communicate narrative or expressive information through their content while also serving as extended aesthetic play. Certain numbers, however, function primarily for the sake of spectacle. The "Triplets" number from *The Band Wagon* functions as a comic novelty number, the humor arising from the song's lyrics and the characters' costumes, but without adding any denotative information. "From this Moment On" from *Kiss Me Kate* (1953), Bob Fosse's choreographed section towards the end of the number especially, also functions primarily to feature the performance prowess of Fosse and Carol Haney, who are not main characters in the film and do not appear in the frame narrative that takes place off-stage. Any number of Busby Berkeley's musical numbers choreographed for Warner Bros. and MGM would also fit into this category, like his "Shadow Waltz" from *Gold Diggers of 1933* (1933).

The second category of my taxonomy examines how the number plays with the spatio-temporal and acting performance norms that govern the film's diegesis. In addition to analyzing musical numbers' functions, a second important consideration in my analysis is whether the

number includes a shift from the diegesis to the supradiegesis, to use Rick Altman's term. Altman suggests that this shift occurs in musical numbers to emphasize opposition on a number of levels (technical, thematic, narrative). This is accomplished with the help of the audio dissolve, in which the sound track shifts priority from the diegetic dialogue track to the music track, resulting in a "reversal of the image/sound hierarchy" (62–67). Altman's discussion of the audio dissolve is rooted in technology; he is interested in the sound mix's transition from the dialogue track to the music track. But the concept of the supradiegetic can encompass a broader understanding that musical numbers adhere to a different set of stylistic norms that depend less on realistic motivation than the surrounding narrative's norms. Martin Rubin's evaluation of musical numbers based on their "impossibility" addresses a similar perspective. Rubin's determination of a film's status as a musical depends on the inclusion primarily of numbers that are "persistently contradictory in relation to the realistic discourse of the narrative" (*Showstoppers* 37).

What we observe when a musical number "shifts," to the supradiegetic or a sense of impossibility, is the film introducing a new range of stylistic norms that are in contradiction with the norms of the diegesis. Steven Cohan, in his introduction to *The Sound of Musicals* suggests that "one of the film musical's distinctive—and to my mind most thrilling—formal conventions as a genre derives from the ease with which it creates a dual register, thereby breaking with the cinema's dominant codes of realism as a means of securing the unity of time and space for a film's fictive world or 'diegesis.'" He suggests what I consider to be the key aspect of a supradiegetic or impossible shift that occurs in musical numbers: "this convention creates multiple diegeses, and it is not limited to when characters have fantasies or dreams. From its beginnings, the genre has sustained a long tradition of building 'a shifting and volatile dialectic between integrative and nonintegrative elements': that is, of placing story and spectacle together in varying degrees of tension and harmony" (3). His discussion also brings up the status of a film's

diegetic motivations. Many spectators' fundamental objection to (or discomfort with) the musical genre, Cohan suggests, is based on a "commonly held prejudice against the genre that arises, it seems to me, out of a naïve or at least unwarranted sense of fidelity to cinematic realism" (5). In order to further nuance distinctions between films, it is worth re-assessing diegetic norms based on the intrinsic logic of each film's narrative, since, as Thompson suggests in *Breaking the Glass Armor*, "realism, like all viewing norms, is an historically based notion" (35). In his article on diegetic and nondiegetic music in cinema, Jeff Smith also points out the constraints that equating a film's diegesis with the concept of realism places on an analysis of stylistic elements (4). Understanding the diegesis' stylistic norms for each film—and how they differ from the (often varied) stylistic norms of the musical numbers—allows a more subtle discussion of how each film plays with this relationship.

The second half of my taxonomy further subdivides the ways that a number can shift to a new set of stylistic parameters. Such stylistic analysis could be divided ad infinitum, but for the purpose of discussing musical numbers, I propose two large categories: spatio-temporal shifts and performative shifts. Examining cinematic techniques from the perspective of film space and time is not a new idea. Bordwell analyzes the narrative permutations of cinematic spatial-temporal conventions in *Narration in the Fiction Film*. Gilles Deleuze splits his writing on film into two volumes: he begins with an exploration of movement and duration in cinematic space in *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* before continuing in *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, in which "movement," Bordwell suggests, "is only one consequence of temporality" (*Film Style* 116). Lea Jacobs analyzes the adherence to—and violations of—"spatial and temporal continuity of performance" in her research on film rhythm and pacing (*Film Rhythm* 112, 141). This division carries over to some screendance work as well. Kappenberg's historical framework and generic sub-divisions of dance in film in "Does Screendance Need to Look Like Dance?" is problematic and oversimplifies film

history and aesthetics, but her taxonomy to "map screendance practices" is similar to my own. Using Laban's Effort graph—his visualization of Time, Weight, Space, and Flow Effort—she proposes to categorize screendances according to time, space, and the body. Her division of each category into polarities based on "real" versus "cinematic" qualities is problematic, but it bears a congruency to my own explorations of diegetic versus supradiegetic associations while also serving as a reminder that a rigorous context and analytical framework is needed to support my claims.

Spatial shifts can encompass adjustments or expansions to the setting in more or less overt ways, and affect elements of audio and visual style. Changes in sound quality—volume adjustments, the introduction of seemingly nondiegetic orchestral accompaniments, or a perceived shift in "aural fidelity" (Smith 7)—are common and more pervasive than visual spatial shifts. Such shifts occur in almost every musical number. One such example is "You Were Meant for Me" from *Singin' in the Rain*: Don's visual enhancement of the setting he needs to express his love for Cathy is diegetically motivated, but the orchestral accompaniment to his song is not. Visually, elements of the *mise en scène*—cinematography and lighting, especially—special effects, and editing techniques contribute to this category to signal shifts between stylistic conventions. We can observe this in the Alter Ego dance sequence from *Cover Girl* (1944), in which Danny (Gene Kelly) dances a duet with a superimposed, translucent version of himself. Smaller stylistic changes can occur, like a change in lighting, added or subtracted set elements, or a moment of temporal elision through editing to create improbable set, costume, or staging changes. The latter is used on a larger scale in the musical montage "New York, New York" from *On the Town* (1949); the editing technique reinforces the passage of time, but the sheer amount of sightseeing the sailors do is realistically implausible in the story (fabula) time that passes. Numbers can also expand the space of a musical number by cutting to parallel, "impossible" spaces. We can

observe this in the "Broadway Melody" number from *Singin' in the Rain*, which moves through a number of spaces that exist outside of the diegesis, including one that exists within the hoofer's (Gene Kelly's) imagination, which creates an additional supradiegetic shift within the supradiegetic shift. Rubin refers to this impossibility as existing "on the level of effects," moments when "the numbers create configurations that are feasible only with a movie camera, on an editing table, or in a special effects lab, and that would be either impossible or incomprehensible on a theatrical stage" (*Showstoppers* 39). However, because this sense of impossibility can exist elsewhere in the diegesis thanks to cinematic norms of editing and eliding moments of the syuzhet that can be inferred by spectators, it is important to notice how these moments differ in musical numbers from the surrounding narrative.

Temporal shifts primarily affect the shift to a different rhythmic or durational organization of style, and as such are frequently auditory. Auditory and rhythmic shifts are more likely to occur at a higher frequency than spatial shifts over the course of a musical number. A shift of this category is also dependent on the motivations of the other two (spatial and performative); a change to rhythmic speech patterns or singing as part of a performance may be considered motivated by the surrounding plot, in which case no supradiegetic shift would occur. Often during musical numbers the sonic space shifts to include a "non-diegetic" orchestra, but a number can also be grounded in the diegetic space by on-screen (diegetically motivated) singing or instruments. For example, "Make Em Laugh" from *Singin' in the Rain* begins with Cosmo playing the piano, after which the non-diegetic orchestra takes over. This aspect of stylistic shifting in musical numbers is one of the most common—it occurs in all the examples listed above—and is closely related to Altman's discussion of the audio dissolve. The presence or disappearance in the sound track of sound effects is also important, since those auditory cues ground or distance the performers from their surrounding physical environment. Visual changes

in time—like the slowing down or speeding up of the image—are rarer in musical numbers, but we can observe this use of temporal shifts in the dream sequence from *Yolanda and the Thief* (1945), where Lucille Bremer's character moves in reverse to emphasize an unusual movement of the fabric that billows around her as she walks.

The space-time-body division is an accepted and logical way to segment these numbers for analytical purposes. The latter is separated from spatio-temporal examinations because of the genre's emphasis on performance, especially star performance. Many of the shifts in musical numbers take place at the level of individual characters. Cohan stresses the importance of this category in *Incongruous Entertainment*, arguing that "this is why the genre gives pride of place to performing; great stars like Fred Astaire, Judy Garland and Barbra Streisand can hold one's attention on screen while singing or dancing, even if their voices are pre-recorded and the sounds of their tapping feet achieved in post-production" (4). I subdivide this category based on general trends I have observed in musicals, but this subdivision could be taken further once a broader, more comprehensive analysis of musical numbers reveals additional significant groupings or schemata.

Shifts of performance encompasses both singing (or music-based performances more generally) and dancing, as both are tied to a specific character/actor. Films can create hybrid bodies through singing or dance doubles, but the intent is generally to create a unified character, rather than emphasize the blend. Most people are likely not aware that Demy's actors are not singing for themselves, for example, because of the care he and Legrand took to cast voice doubles who matched the timbre of the actors' voices when speaking. When such a shift occurs, it is usually not a question of "impossibility" in the way that Rubin uses the term to describe a musical number's space. The actor is usually performing the movement or song without the help of special effects or other cinematic techniques, so describing it as impossible is misleading.

Rather, I suggest an element of improbability should be considered: whether or not the performance can be motivated within the diegetic context.

Even more so than an evaluation of spatio-temporal shifts, decisions of whether there is a performative shift must be based on narrative cues and compositional motivations. Could the performer(s) in question sing or dance in this way as part of the narrative diegesis? If not, we should consider their performance a shift to the supradiegetic. In the backstage musical, there is a compositional motivation for people to burst into song and dance on stage; it is their profession. When the four actors in *Kiss Me Kate* perform "Tom, Dick or Harry," there is not a supradiegetic shift within the context of the film because we know they have rehearsed and practiced the number. While there is still a change in vocal and physical qualities, such performances remain grounded in the stylistic norms of the diegesis because that is what we expect performers to do. Once such a performance moves into improbable territory, however, a shift to a supradiegetic space can occur. The gangsters' performance of "Brush up your Shakespeare" from *Kiss Me Kate* creates a performative shift as it occurs off-stage and their increasingly polished number is implausible given their profession. Professional performers suddenly singing and dancing to a number they have never heard before or performed long ago—"Wunderbar" from *Kiss Me Kate*, for example—is somewhat motivated by their background, but still provides a slight supradiegetic shift.

I consider where to draw the line between performers and musicians (or "extras" in the space) as well. I propose a permeable, flexible analytic boundary between the distinction of performative and non-performative space, depending on whether or not the musicians's performance is foregrounded in the number. In the former instance, the musicians add to the spatial atmosphere without standing out individually and therefore it makes sense to discuss them as part of the space. In the latter, the musicians stand out or contain shifts separate from the

space that contains them, making it appropriate, in that case, to analyze them as engaging in a collective performative shift.

Four sub-categories help to organize the shifts that can occur in musical numbers. Performance shifts occur at the individual or group level, and can be split according to singing (vocal shifts) and dancing (corporeal shifts). Individual performative shifts frequently occur because a character is alone in a space. But occasionally characters will shift into a supradiegetic performance while observers' actions remain diegetically motivated, to comic effect. In "I Like Myself" from *It's Always Fair Weather*" (1955), Ted sings and dances on roller skates while passers-by watch with amusement. In contrast, by the end of "Ya Got Trouble" from *The Music Man*, Harold Hill has drawn the whole crowd into the number and into a supradiegetic shift. Group performance shifts can similarly occur with or without the supradiegetic shift of the main characters. The former is more common in Hollywood musicals, as the example from *The Music Man* demonstrates. Instances do exist of a collective shift occurring with the exclusion of a character; we can observe this in "You Did It" from *My Fair Lady*, where Elisa's exclusion from the collective group shift emphasizes her distance from Henry Higgins' aristocratic circles.

A performative shift can occur through singing (an auditory shift) or dancing (a corporeal shift), though the two frequently occur with some level of overlap. Recording the voice separately from the filmed performance (as is the norm for most musical genre modes of production) does not affect my categorization of supradiegetic shifts. Dubbing is a technological craft practice that is not normally meant to be noticed in the context of the diegesis (exceptions exist, of course; see *Singin' in the Rain*). Voice dubbing of actors whose voices are not trained to the required level is not usually meant to draw attention to itself; rather it adds to the illusion of perfection and virtuosity that is frequently present in musical numbers. The same idea is applicable to the practice of dance doubles, which is less common. Since part of the appeal of the musical is to

draw attention to the virtuosity of performances the act of dubbing has historically been frowned upon, but one could argue that substituting different voices and bodies in the musical numbers is the ultimate supradiegetic shift. Auditory and corporeal shifts frequently result in a shift from diegetically motivated figure movement and speaking to clearly staged movement, dancing, or singing, but a supradiegetic shift does not occur if that movement is narratively motivated, as was previously discussed. I also find it valuable to distinguish between simple, rhythmically motivated, staged figure movement and more complex, danced choreography. In *Meet Me in St Louis* (1944), the staging of the "Trolley Song"—while still carefully choreographed—is less complex and emphasizes gestures and stationary poses, as opposed to the "Skip to my Lou" number, which creates complex patterns of dancers moving through the space.

Although I distinguish function and supradiegetic shifts as the two large categories of my taxonomy, a musical number's function can affect the supradiegetic status of a number as well. These two categories—the multiple functions of a number and the number's range of supradiegetic shifts—should not be seen simply as independent entities, but rather as mutually influencing one another. Smith sees the "liminal space" between nondiegetic and diegetic music as a point to fruitfully analyze music's role in cinematic storytelling (6). He discusses these moments in relation to Robynn Stilwell's theory of the "fantastical gap," but argues that such moments of sonic ambiguity take on "more saliency in . . . connection with what Gorbman calls *metadiegetic* music—music that is narrated or imagined by a particular character within a film" (22). Similarly, subtle stylistic shifts in musical numbers can lead to inferences about the denotative or expressive function of a number in relation to the surrounding story and its characters.

Numbers can be supradiegetic by circumstance (the setting is unusual for bursting into song or dance, for example) but also can be supradiegetic by content. Numbers can lack a clearly

defined performative or spatio-temporal shift but still evoke a sense of implausibility through the number's content or effect on the plot. Sometimes diegetically-motivated numbers—stage-bound performances, for example—contain content (lyrics, dancing, movement, or interactions) that would otherwise appear unmotivated or implausible. Considering each larger category in relation to the other is especially useful when analyzing the supradiegetic status of stage-bound numbers that do not seem to include any spatio-temporal shifts but whose content strongly parallels the larger concerns of the fabula. When Cathy sings "Singin' in the Rain" on stage after the film premiere, her performance is seemingly diegetically motivated; she/Lina tells the band the name of the number and the key to perform it in. But there is a hint of implausibility here, given that the number was previously performed as a supradiegetic emotional expression of Don's happiness earlier in the film. Identifying moments of supradiegetic shifts that result from plot-related implausibilities in addition to performative or spatio-temporal shifts allows for an additional level of analytical nuance. Furthermore, subdividing the supradiegetic emphasizes that numbers can be more or less motivated by the diegesis, and that it is important to examine the degree to which shifts occur to better study changing norms and audience expectations for realistically motivated performances.

My taxonomy is a useful tool to analyze groups of musicals or musical numbers in order to compare genre norms and track changes over time. The levels of function and supradiegetic shifts change over the course of a musical number, the charting of which adds an additional level of nuance, but these large-scale categories provide a baseline for scaled comparison. These categories are beneficial in determining how Demy's numbers accord with or fall outside of the norms of the classical Hollywood musical numbers he references. These categories are also applicable to an analysis of any stylistic or functional shifts over the course of a film that explores diegetic deviations. They are therefore also useful in determining how any film sequence in my

corpus of films conforms with or deviates from the surrounding film's narrative and stylistic norms, a means of measurement that is especially beneficial in comparing Demy's work to the non-musical films that influenced him.

Conclusion

In a 1971 AFI interview, Demy acknowledges his love for American musicals but suggested that they hold to a "basic form": "In America you have used it, and beautifully, in many films, but it's always the same form. . . . There are a lot of forms still to be found in musicals." His comment is somewhat disingenuous, given his cinéphilic appetite for American musicals ranging from Fred Astaire musicals of the 1930s to Jerome Robbins and Robert Wise's *West Side Story*. It serves as a cautious reminder about taking such primary source discourse at face value. Yet his expressed interest in different musical forms stresses the value of closely analyzing his stylistic and narrative choices to better understand the complexity of these films.

Combining film and movement history and analysis helps us to better understand how Demy—or any filmmaker—incorporates figure movement into films, provides a clearer sense of how this particular filmmaker's work fits with other musicals of the period, and clarifies Demy's work's relationship to the musical genre and other pertinent cinematic traditions. One critic writes, "In [Demy's cinema], each movement is choreographed, including in the non-musical films. People never stop passing one another, missing one another and finding one another in the streets of Nantes, Rochefort, or Marseille: fate for Demy is a choreographer, an orchestra of complex movements on the stage of the world" (Angiboust 68).[36] Descriptions of Demy's work as choreographed are common in writings about his films, and a rigorous analysis of these films reveals the subtleties behind these more generalized critical assertions. The ability for this

interdisciplinary work to shed light on this eclectic filmmaker's work also demonstrates the wide applicability of this approach to studying movement on screen. Clearer categorizations of figure movement and its relationship to style and narrative establishes descriptive baselines for broader comparison and study across cinematic traditions, historical periods, and media forms.

2

A parametric experiment of musical proportions

Les Demoiselles de Rochefort

Les Demoiselles de Rochefort (1967) follows two sisters—the film's titular *demoiselles*—who live and work in the French port city of Rochefort but dream of bigger things. Delphine (Catherine Deneuve) aspires to be a dancer at the Paris Opera and Solange (Françoise Dorléac) seeks to be a professional composer. Both have also yet to meet their *homme idéal*, but the film suggests that their ideal romantic pairing may be with one of the carnival workers who come to town for Rochefort's *kermesse* (a summer festival)—Etienne (George Chakiris) or Bill (Grover Dale)—or the sailor Maxence (Jacques Perrin) and American composer Andy (Gene Kelly). We see the sisters prepare for a departure to Paris, agree to a last-minute performance, and interact with potential suitors over the course of several days. They also visit their mother and café-owner Yvonne (Danielle Darrieux) who does not know that her former lover Simon (Michel Piccoli) has moved back to Rochefort and has not forgotten her. By the end, Simon and Yvonne have re-united, Solange and Andy have found one another, and Delphine and Maxence's paths will finally cross, the last shot implies, very soon.

Frequent viewers of *Les Demoiselles* will agree that the above paragraph provides an accurate plot summary. But they would also likely confirm that a plot description does not convey the film's broader appeal, which comes largely from its colorful visual design, memorable music, and dynamic movement as the main characters and pedestrians dance through the camera frame and Rochefort's bright streets. *Les Demoiselles*' appeal can not be adequately described through a discussion of its narrative, in spite of the gratifying complexities in Demy's scenario regarding character relationships and coincidental encounters[37] (and misses), as well as its connections to

plot lines from other Demy films. Rather, Demy's stylistic experimentation, through the repetition and variation of certain musical genre conventions, consistently exceeds narrative motivations throughout the film.

Demy loved American musicals, and their influence on *Les Demoiselles*' aesthetic is unequivocal. But what makes Demy's musical *à l'américaine* actually a musical *à la française*, or really, *à la* Demy? One critic comments that "Demy's clear tributes to Hollywood musicals—*On the Town*, *An American in Paris*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*—wind up making the movie seem more French than American" (Rosenbaum). Several scholars have discussed in some depth the narrative and generic context of *Demoiselles*, in part as an attempt to answer this question. They evoke several important aspects of the essential elements that build the film's significance: Demy's approach to the narration in relation to the musical genre, his unusual way of incorporating musical numbers into the narrative, and his experimentation with stylistic elements through the coordination of color schemes and cinematic settings, especially (Hill, Henneton, Darren). These authors are fairly thorough in probing the network of citations and homages Demy creates in his film to the American musical genre that so fascinated him. But their analyses of the film still leaves us with questions about the ways in which Demy's narrative and stylistic choices depart from the conventions of the Hollywood musical (or the French New Wave and Tradition of Quality).

Ultimately, *Les Demoiselles* does not create new musical conventions. Instead, it expands and stretches the existing norms through excessive stylistic repetition and variation in what David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson call parametric narration, making the viewer more aware of the generic conventions that Demy mobilizes. Through the repeated, patterned use of songs and the careful staging of dance and figure movement, Demy builds a movement vocabulary that functions narratively and aesthetically, created from both choreographic citations of Hollywood

musicals and intrinsic movement phrases. The result of this extreme aesthetic variation—excessive even in relation to musical genre standards—is a deviation from classical storytelling modes and from the expectations of American critics and studio executives. Moreover, Demy created his first sung-and-danced musical in a French context that did not have an established system for supporting such an ambitious musical production. Understanding the film's production context clarifies the solutions Demy chose to bring his musical to fruition within his financial and industrial constraints and illuminates the state of dance culture in France during this period.

The challenges of a French film musical

Demy's desire to make a film saturated with songs and dances in France during the 1960s was an institutional challenge that ultimately let to a series of aesthetic constraints and compromises. Demy's scenarios and production notes emphasize that he never intended *Les Demoiselles* to fully conform to American musical norms or be an imitation of his previous feature, the all-sung *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* (1964). Documents and correspondence regarding some of the film's foreign investors suggest a disconnect of expectations, however, which would become a common challenge in Demy's career.

The publicity surrounding *Parapluies* and its five Academy Award nominations increased Demy's cinematic credibility,[38] and much of the contemporary chatter in the trade press surrounding *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* compares it to *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* (Moskowitz "Les Demoiselles" 6, Hawkins 78, "'Rochefort'" 20). A *Variety* interview with one of the film's co-producers, Gilbert de Goldschimdt, draws parallels between *Parapluies* and *Les Demoiselles*: "Not a completely-sung film, as was 'Umbrellas,' [Goldschmidt] said, 'Rochefort' would be one-third

song, one-third dance and one-third dialog" (Frederick 5). Initially, pending contracts with English distributors allowed Demy to plan for the bigger-budget musical film he had to renounce in making *Lola* six years earlier (Berthomé 191). This funding fell through, but a subsequent distribution deal with Seven Arts[39] would provide the production enough of a budget to pay for Technicolor,[40] rehearsal time for the musical numbers, and a cast of dancer-actors—all expensive propositions. The final cost of the film was around 5.8 million francs, 2.5 million of which was provided by the agreement with Seven Arts ("Devis," "Devis Estimatif"). The American distributor also agreed to fund the project with the understanding that the film would be releasable to mainstream American audiences. One of the most important qualifications of this deal was that the film could be shown without subtitles. Their conditions were therefore that Demy shoot the film twice—once in French, once in English, so that an English-language version could be released for English-speaking markets—and that he hire a few American actors to increase appeal for US audiences. He agreed to both. The contractual obligation to hire three American actors—Gene Kelly, George Chakiris, and Grover Dale[41]—opened up new choreographic possibilities and options to make explicit citations or homages to American musicals. However, Demy was still working within budgetary and personnel constraints that distances his film from the Hollywood mode of production.

Les Demoiselles' budget of $1.17 million[42] in 1967 is significantly higher than *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*'s paltry $200,000 from three years earlier, as well as being more expensive than the films Demy's French New Wave contemporaries were producing before and during this period.[43] Jean-Pierre Berthomé suggests that a film coproduction in 1966 would cost on average 3.48 million francs, or $700,000. Jean Renoir's 1954 *French Cancan*, also a musical of sorts with songs and a long dance set piece at the end, was one of several "big-budget quality productions" during this period (Williams 281), yet it still was presumably less expensive—accounting for inflation—

than *Les Demoiselles* over a decade later. Crisp suggests that an average French film in 1954 cost 100 million francs, giving it an equivalent purchasing power of $353,000 in 1966 (86, 87). Even if Renoir's film cost three times above average for the period, his film would have still cost less than Demy's.

But in comparison to Hollywood musicals, *Les Demoiselles* was relatively inexpensive. In 1961, *West Side Story*'s $7.54 million budget was considered "immensely expensive at the time" (Mirisch 127). However, two 1967 musical releases, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and *Half a Sixpence*, had $6 million budgets—almost six times that of *Les Demoiselles*—which *Variety* considered to be a modest investment (Farmer 125, "Tunepix" 15). The musicals from the 1940s and 1950s that had a visible influence on Demy's film also all had budgets ranging from $2 million to $4 million dollars: *The Band Wagon* (1953), *Singin' in the Rain* (1952), *An American in Paris* (1951), *On the Town* (1949), and *Meet Me in St. Louis* (1944). Comparing Demy's musical to those made in Hollywood without acknowledging this budget data does not take into account the different production modes between a Hollywood product and the resources available in France during the 1960s, even with financial assistance from Seven Arts. Despite working with an elevated budget compared to contemporary French films, those of the French New Wave especially, Demy was still working under financial limitations relative to the films that scholars frequently align his work with. Such financial limitations placed constraints upon Demy's production, making studio interiors prohibitive, for example.[44] The greater constraint, however, was the lack of a musical theater dance infrastructure in France to provide the caliber of dancers and choreographers needed for such a project.

Most scholars and film critics who discuss the dancing in *Les Demoiselles* are divided in their opinion of the choreography. Some see the choreography as derivative, of Jerome Robbins' work in particular (Rosenbaum, Becker & Williams), while others simply find it uninspiring (Berthomé

197, Carey qtd in Rosenbaum, Johnson, Sarris qtd in Johnson). Yet the novelty of Demy's choreographic choices for *Les Demoiselles* become clearer when we consider that ballet was the more popular dance form with audiences in France (independent of or connected to the operatic theatrical tradition). Unlike in the United States in the middle of the twentieth century, when many dance professionals had careers as vaudeville or musical theater performers which led to the establishment of dance schools and formal training in a range of dance traditions, French dance training at this time was dominated by ballet.

Dance historians Michel and Ginot describe the 1950s and 60s as a period of "neoclassicism" in French ballet, furthered particularly by the work of two important choreographers, Roland Petit and Maurice Béjart. Michel and Ginot assign much agency to Petit and Béjart during this period of French dance history, suggesting that, "Petit can be considered as [Ballets Russes choreographer] Serge Lifar's successor. He is also, along with Maurice Béjart. . . The only French choreographer to rival anglo-saxon neoclassical choreographers" (51).[45] The cultural significance of the Ballets Russes on European dance during this period is also repeatedly stressed (Michel and Ginot 47, Stilwell 124). These new forms embraced modern themes to reflect their historical times, while still maintaining the classical vocabulary long associated with ballet (Michel and Ginot 47). One of the influential minds responsible for propagating the popularity of ballet in France was Jean Cocteau, a major influence on Demy's aesthetic, who lent his hand to the creation of the Ballets des Champs-Élysées in 1945 (Michel and Ginot 49).

Roland Petit, appointed as the official choreographer for the aforementioned new ballet institution, was an important French choreographer working during this time and one of the few who also had some interaction with Hollywood and Broadway. Petit created filmed versions of some of his ballets while in the United States, compiled in the Hollywood-made *Black Tights* (1961) and was Leslie Caron's ballet teacher. After a visit to New York City in the 1950s, Petit's

choreography began to incorporate some aesthetic influences from the Broadway musical, while remaining couched in the choreographic language and narrative conventions of ballet (Michel and Ginot 50, 51).

Maurice Béjart was another prominent French choreographer whose work aligned itself with classical technique and narrative conventions. Béjart's work provided new perspectives in the use of costuming, music, and performance spaces (Noisette 20, 34) but without "questioning the choreographic language inherited from the classical [ballet] tradition" (Michel and Ginot 47).[46] Michel and Ginot also suggest that Béjart was responsible for the increase in audiences' interest in ballet and that his new takes on the form—while remaining grounded in classical vocabulary—propelled ballet back into popularity with the general public in the 1950s and 60s. They write that, "Béjart returned dance to the public, and ballet to our time" (55).[47] His choreography provided a departure from the (itself complex) established ballet tradition of post-war French culture, epitomized by the works of choreographers like Petit. A piece Béjart made in 1967, *Messe pour le temps present*—the same year as *Les Demoiselle*'s release—plays with more modern approaches to choreography, but Michel and Ginot suggest this is an aspect of Béjart's work that he did not continue to pursue. The coinciding of this work with the release of *Les Demoiselles*, however, further confirms the novel choice Demy made to distance his film from exclusively classical choreography.

Archival material suggests that Demy was not completely against working with a classical choreographer; in Demy's 1964 planner he appears to create a list of potential choreographic collaborators from October 2nd to the 5th, including Jacques d'Amboise and Eugene Loring. Alain Franchet, Demy's assistant, suggests that Demy had wanted to work with Jerome Robbins for the film (Marx 31), though a longer list of American choreographers in Demy's 1964 planner suggests that he was studying choreographers and their aesthetics more broadly. In addition to

the classical choreographers mentioned above, Demy also listed Canadian choreographer Bryan Mac Donald, Alvin Ailey, Jerome Robbins, and Bob Fosse. However, existing choreographers and dancers were either otherwise engaged or uninterested in such a production.

French dance culture in the late 1960s ultimately made finding the appropriate personnel in France for the choreography and dancing of *Les Demoiselles* a challenge. *Variety* mentions this difficulty, pointing out that, "dancers in France did not have the essential acting and singing backgrounds that are more prevalent in the U.S. and Britain. Besides, those who had such talent were usually tied up with the Opera here or ballet companies" ("Demy Succeeds" 25). Young French people were interested in dancing; contemporary social dance styles from the United States were prevalent in France during the 1960s, like the twist and swing (called "le rock"). The impulse for social dancing during this time is visible in Louis de Funès' popular 1964 French film *Le Gendarme de St. Tropez*. It was also the preferred form of unwinding after a day of shooting for the cast and crew of *Les Demoiselles*, as photographs from the shoot reveal (figures 1–3). However, such casual dance forms were not enough to provide a population of French professional dancers with the rigorous training needed for such a project.

There were dancers working in the Pigalle-Montmartre nightclubs of the 1950s and 1960s that might have fit the bill. Paris had a vibrant vaudeville dance culture, some of which had died off in the middle of the century,[48] that tourists and Parisians could take in at "leading niteries" like the Lido and Moulin Rouge ("French Producer" 5). A few differences exist between the vaudeville and cabaret scene in the United States around the turn of the century and those professionals working in Paris, offering reasons why Demy's production did not (or could not) draw on that particular population. Despite there being a number of individual acts and some repeated house shows and performers (like the man playing Valentin, Jean-Louis Bert, at the Moulin Rouge), such an impulse did not lead to the development of a more narrative-based,

long-form musical theater structure that occurred in the US. Rather, as Kelley Conway articulates, operettas were more popular with French audiences, and filmic adaptations of theatrical works were common as well, especially from the 1930s to the 1950s ("France" 32). Gene Moskowitz suggests that even in the 1960s, French theater-goers' "tastes still seem to stay in the old operetta syndrome. . . . Attempts to do modern musicals in the Broadway vein have rarely made it" ("French Like Cow and Gang Films" 30). Similarly, French performers did not develop the same professional relationship between stage and screen performances that we see occurring between vaudeville, Broadway, and Hollywood. This does point to an un-tapped dance population in France, however.

Whether or not Demy turned to "nitery" dancers is unclear from existing documentation, but a number of practical barriers also existed that could have complicated potential collaborations. The dancing there was not the aesthetic Demy was looking for; the house styles of nightclubs like the Lido and Moulin Rouge were of a burlesque, strip-tease sort with some modern touches,[49] as well as the cancan. Such performers may not have had the ability or inclination to shift techniques, as most appear to have training in a single style. The quality may have also been lacking; Moskowitz describes the performances of the Lido house dancers, the Bluebell Girls, as having "their usual precision and grace" ("Lido, Paris" 1964, 59), still "stepping lively" ("Lido, Paris" 1961, 54), whereas the Moulin Rouge group, the Doriss Girls, are written up as "fitting in this kind of show," but also "token," with "okay precision" ("Moulin Rouge, Paris" 1967, 101 and 1965, 58). Many of the names listed in nightclub reviews are not French (the Moulin Rouge's James and Cornell, and James and Jardine Williams performing groups, for example), suggesting these were traveling acts ("Moulin Rouge, Paris" 1955 48). The Paris nightclubs were also most popular during the spring and summer because of tourist season (the Moulin Rouge only re-opened as an all-year round venue in 1965), suggesting that potential

cross-over performers would have been unavailable for a summer film shoot away from the Parisian night scene ("Moulin Rouge, Paris" 1963 72 and 1965 58). Many of the French and local dancers and choreographers were veteran performers, having worked at the same spot for at least fifteen years (the Moulin Rouge's "Valentin" performer Jean-Louis Bert and choreographers Doris Haug and Ruggero Angeletti, for example), with undoubtably more loyalty to their venue than to a one-off film production.

The dance style that we see in *Les Demoiselles* was not, and arguably is still not, a preferred form in France. The choreography mixes jazz styles and some ballet inspired by the Broadway and Hollywood musical traditions and is performed by dancers who for the most part had ballet technique and figures. French audiences preferred operettas for their light, musical, dramatic entertainment in France at the turn of the century, the period in which Broadway theater was gaining popularity in America and musical theater as we know it today was emerging as a new form (Grant 215). And operettas remained the popular theatrical form for French audiences into the 1960s in lieu of musical comedy, according to Moskowitz ("French Like Cow and Gang Films" (30). There were forms of non-ballet theatrical dance in France like those performed at the Folies Bergères or the Moulin Rouge that gained popularity. But these shows did not result in the proliferation of schools to train dancers with professional aspirations to the same extent that Broadway musical theater—and film musicals, once sound became the norm in Hollywood filmmaking in the 1930s—encouraged the opening of dance centers in New York City and Hollywood.

By 1920, chorus line dancers in New York—the prevalent form of dancing in Broadway shows of this period—had access to the Ned Wayburn Institute of Dancing, "a studio that was also the chief employment agency for chorus dancers" where aspiring performers were trained in a range of dance styles, including ballet, ballroom, tap, acrobatics, and musical comedy (Grant

230). By the 1940s, performers trained only in tap dancing (hoofers) found it more difficult to find employment given the plethora of dancers trained in a multitude of (high-brow and more popular) styles, supplemented by the availability of Agnès de Mille's "Acting for Dancers" class (Grant 259). In contrast, Moskowitz's descriptions of the popular shows at the Lido and Moulin Rouge in the 1950s and 1960s suggest that the specialization of performers around a particular style of dance or act was still common in France during this period, as well as the separation between the more popular, lower-brow fare available at nightclubs and the more elite performances of ballet at the Opéra.

As a result, the dancing in *Les Demoiselles* stands out against the expectations of theater and film-going French audiences in the late 1960s. Demy decided on an Irish choreographer, Norman Maen, and had to "[compromise] on an all-English ballet," according to *Variety*, in addition to his American stars with dance training ("Demy Succeeds" 25). French dancers with the sort of training Demy, Maen, and Legrand were looking for were either not available or unwilling to participate in such a production. Ultimately, however, Maen was a practical choice for Demy's production. A higher-profile choreographer could have created difficulties for the filmmaker who demanded control over each aspect of his film productions. Had Jerome Robbins agreed to work on the production he would have surely demanded the same level of control over camera set-ups that he did with *West Side Story*, something to which Demy would not have agreed given his working methods. Maen had a background choreographing for television and stage productions before coming to Demy's film. He worked with Hollywood choreographer Jack Cole, created choreography for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation ("Choreography" 18), was a director-choreographer for the Teilifis Eireann broadcast network in Dublin (Stewart 30, 31), and created choreography for a number of stage shows in Dublin, Edinburgh, and the West End ("The Stage: 'Carrie'" 15, Mac. 67, Kauf. 64.). As a result, Maen had experience working

with a range of choreographic registers and had learned to create works quickly and efficiently, given the limited time and money in televised productions. Britain also had highly trained classical and modern dancers during this period. A British style of ballet developed in the 1930s and 1940s (Reynolds and McCormick 183), and by the 1960s dancers auditioning for roles in West End musical productions were expected to be highly trained in both ballet and modern dance ("Boy and Girl Dancers" 15).

Even with *Les Demoiselles'* higher-than-average budget, rehearsal time was limited; Maen and Demy had only several weeks in London to rehearse the dancers and actors before production began on May 30, 1966.[50] The corps of dancers was also scheduled for only the first two months of the twelve-week production schedule. And the contrast between Kelly, Chakiris, and Dale's extensive dance training and the limitations of Deneuve and Dorléac meant that Maen's choreography needed to be flexible enough to positively portray each actor according to his or her own physical limitations.

One critic who disparages *Les Demoiselles*' choreography adds in his review that, "with all that is wrong with The Young Girls of Rochefort, it is amazing how much pleasure it provides" (Sarris qtd in Johnson). A more thorough context of dance in France demonstrates that understanding *Les Demoiselles* exclusively in relation to the Hollywood mode of production and a classical storytelling mode is ineffective at explaining how the film's "simple but deft choreography" (Moskowitz "Les Demoiselles" 6) contributes to a sophisticated and rigorous experimentation with the American musical genre. Regarding figure movement, we can observe Demy experimenting with two overarching intrinsic norms in his stylistic play: an incorporation of citations and homages to iconic musical numbers and a dissection of musical conventions to suggest romantic pairing through sung and danced numbers. Both are rooted in classical Hollywood musical schemas only to ultimately depart from that tradition.

Musical Homages

Demy's film shares clear stylistic traits with the Hollywood musical. The references to specific musicals, musical numbers, and even choreographic phrases have led to critical dissatisfaction with the film's dancing, but it is the recognizability and repetition of these moments in *Les Demoiselles* that makes it possible to critique them in the first place. On one level, the clarity of citations allows the viewer to create narrative parallels between the films in question, linking characters and motivations in the way that Demy builds connections between his own films with recurring narrative situations and characters. On another, the recognition of choreographic citations becomes a game of sorts, especially when we return to the original numbers and can closely compare the detail with which Demy structures the parallelisms. Sometimes the choreographic moments are also identifiable because we recognize Gene Kelly repeating his dances from *An American in Paris*, or George Chakiris and Grover Dale repeating Jerome Robbins' choreography from *West Side Story*. Demy subverts the viewer's expectations in this regard as the film goes on, however, moving the same choreographic movements and phrases to different bodies within the diegesis and encouraging the viewer to notice when these changes occur and the subtle differences between performances.

Of the twenty-four musical numbers in *Demoiselles*, eleven have identifiable dance homages or citations to Hollywood films: "Pont transborder," "Arrivée des camionneurs," "Chanson des jumelles," "Nous voyageons de ville en ville," "Andy amoureux," "Marins, amis, amants ou maris," "De Hamboug à Rochefort," "Les rencontres," "Chanson d'un jour d'été," the reprise of "Concerto," and "Départ des forains."[51] Of these eleven, three numbers are more systematically citations of specific musical numbers (or a combination of musical numbers): "Andy amoureux,"

"Chanson d'un jour d'été," and "Concerto." The rest draw on specific identifiable movement vocabulary or movement qualities within the larger choreography of the number. Demy worked closely, as was his method, with his composer Michel Legrand, production designer, Bernard Evein, and his costume designers, Marie-Claude Fouquet and Jacqueline Moreau, in creating a design and sound for the film that cites period trends in contemporary art and music while avoiding uninventive imitation (Frizon 98–105). Although Hollywood released a number of musicals in 1967—*Doctor Dolittle, Camelot, Thoroughly Modern Millie, How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying, The Happiest Millionaire, Half a Sixpence* and several Elvis pictures, to name a few—Demy's film contains citations to earlier Hollywood films as well as remaining stylistically connected to the music and fashion tastes of the 1960s.

A contextualization of *Demoiselles* in relation to a few key Hollywood musicals[52] is especially useful in understanding the stylistic cues Demy was drawing on and positioning himself against. *West Side Story* (1961, dir. Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins, chor. Robbins), *An American in Paris* (1951, dir. Vincente Minnelli, chor. Gene Kelly), *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1951, dir. Howard Hawks, chor. Jack Cole), and to a lesser extent, *On the Town* (1949, dir./chor. Stanley Donen & Gene Kelly) and *The Band Wagon*[53] (1952, dir. Vincente Minnelli, chor. Michael Kidd) are the American musicals most frequently mentioned in relation to Demy's film. *Singin' in the Rain* (1953, dir./chor. Stanley Donen & Gene Kelly) should also be considered in this list because of its centrality to discussions of Gene Kelly's dance on film aesthetic.

Les Demoiselles de Rochefort's relationship to the Hollywood musical is apparent through a number of clear citations to specific films and choreographic phrases, and as a result these moments are some of the most commonly discussed aspects in scholarly and critical literature in Demy's film. Much of this work focuses on general statements about the film in relation to the American genre, however, and some of the more in-depth claims about Demy's use of musical

conventions are based on misunderstandings of certain qualities of the Hollywood musical or are built on interpretations of Demy's cinematic intentions that misrepresent the actual content of the film.[54] The narrative and stylistic significance that Hill sees in the film is closely related to the narrative and stylistic conventions of the American musical genre, but his dissertation chapter does less to tease out the relationship with the Hollywood genre since his argument is more interested in situating Demy's work in relation to the French New Wave and the "Tradition of Quality" mode of filmmaking that preceded it ("Demy Monde: Jacques Demy" 94). Henneton, in contrast, is primarily interested in studying *Demoiselles* in relation to the Hollywood genre, specifically through two conventions that Rick Altman discusses at length in *The American Film Musical*: the backstage musical sub-genre and the dual-focus nature of the musical's narrative structure. Her article clearly situates *Demoiselles* in relation to the backstage musical tradition despite, as she points out, a lack of causality between the completion of a show and the formation of romantic couples (227, 235). Waldron devotes a chapter of his book to Demy's musical films, including *Les Demoiselles*, but without referencing any scholarly literature on the musical genre or clarifying how he selected the films he chose to discuss (49–81).[55] Others situate Demy more clearly in relation to his French filmmaker contemporaries' experimentation with genre conventions. Neupert points out the importance of a shift in French film narratives during this period, arguing that "the New Wave taught an entire generation to experiment with the rules of storytelling" resulting in "narrative innovations" (xv, xxvi). One of the significant ways that filmmakers of this period would experiment with narrative conventions, he suggests, is through references to American genre films.[56]

However, an understanding of the narrative stakes in *Les Demoiselles* in relation to the backstage musical sub-genre (Henneton 227) overemphasizes the importance of the final "stage" number—"Chanson d'un jour d'été"—in relation to the larger film. The stakes regarding that

performance are ultimately low. The sisters' presence in the festival does not help them move forward towards their goal of meeting (or finding again) their ideal romantic partner. And despite mentioning that they aspire to be professional performers, Solange and Delphine take few actions to pursue those goals. Solange's request of Simon that he recommend her to Andy is the only active step either takes to further their professional aspirations, since it is the carnies that approach them to perform last minute for the *kermesse* (a gig they are initially reluctant to accept) rather than the other way around. The sisters plan to go to Paris regardless of how that performance goes, or whether it goes on at all. Instead of serving a narrative function, the numbers in Demy's film that evoke clear Hollywood musical moments serve expressive and aesthetic functions. At times, those aesthetic flourishes function primarily as expressive homages to the exuberance associated with the classical Hollywood musical.

Two numbers in *Demoiselles* immediately call up homages for Hollywood musical cinéphiles: the "Chanson d'un jour d'été" evokes Marilyn Monroe and Jane Russel's duet "Two Little Girls from Little Rock" from the beginning of *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* and the "Concerto" number evokes Gene Kelly's duet with Leslie Caron in "Our Love is Here To Stay" from *An American in Paris*. The numbers parallel their American precedents through clear choreographic or costuming choices to suggest expressive, as well as aesthetic, parallels. The former makes an immediate connection through costuming and setting similarities (figures 4 and 5). The sisters' long red sequined costumes, with the high slit allowing a full leg to show, is a similar style and color to the dresses worn by Lorelei and Dorothy. Maen's simple choreography for the sisters uses steps from Jack Cole's movement vocabulary as well. Both numbers also begin with the performers entering the stage from the back, and both numbers feature poses that create bent shapes in the body as the women crouch in slight pliées. The shape emphasizes the curves of their bodies that are visible thanks to their tightly fitted dresses, and in this pose they cross their

arms across their bodies, lightly rest an arm on a leg, or extend an arm forward or sideways[57] (figures 4 and 5). Besides these similarities, however, the steps of the dances and, more significantly, the expressive qualities with which the performers execute the dance are strikingly different. Monroe and Russell strike poses but are infrequently still; rather they move with successive phrasing, to create ripples of movement through their bodies. Some Free Flow Effort in the poses and the choreography often has them bouncing in their lower bodies as they hold a pose in their upper bodies, creating a resilient phrasing between Strong and Light Weight and adding a sense of multiple actions occurring in their bodies at once (multi-unit movement). Their relationship to the environment (and their spectators) is also more flexible, creating a sense of Shaping movement in their bodies as they mould the space around them three-dimensionally (Marilyn Monroe, especially).

This movement quality, especially, creates an impression of the women as more likely to move freely between romantic and sexual partners, an impression that is at the center of the film's plot and one that gets Lorelei, especially, into trouble even though she remains faithful to her fiancé, Gus. It is worth pointing that in spite of this consistent impression from the choreography, Lorelei moves into Direct Space Effort when singing directly to Gus, enforcing her fidelity to him. In contrast, Deneuve and Dorléac's movement quality is more Bound in its flow, resulting in more simultaneous movement rather than a sense of a step or gesture progressing through their bodies. Maen's choreography has them holding poses more frequently without additional movements, resulting in sequential movements occasionally as well (a progression of movements in parts of the body that are not connected, as when the sisters pliée, then raise an arm, for example). In addition, their relationship to their environment (Shape) is more two-dimensional with many arc-like directional (curved) pathways. This, combined with the greater activation of Direct Space Effort in the sisters' bodies most visible in the moments of

direct address to the camera, creates a more straightforward relationship to the environment compared to the moulding, all-encompassing quality observable in "Two Little Girls from Little Rock." The result is a simpler, more minimalist approach to the choreography on the part of the sisters in *Les Demoiselles*. Monroe and Russell's more expressive movement qualities are more sexually charged, in spite of the sisters' more revealing costumes and Maen's choreographic decision to have them take wider steps to draw attention to their legs. But the parallels evoke and remind the viewer of the subtle differences between the French and the American actresses' performances. This understanding of their movement quality differences could lead some viewers to suggest a failure of Demy's film to properly pay homage to Howard Hawk's film and Jack Cole's choreography. The variations, however, help to make Demy's number more distinct from the film and musical number he cites. As Berthomé suggests, "it is a question of homage and not imitation, and Demy would not hear of giving up any of his creative liberty to adhere to a form" (196).[58]

Less distant from its original citation is Kelly and Dorléac's duet that references Kelly and Caron's duet in *An American in Paris*.[59] Here we can see some parallels between both the specific steps and the expressive qualities of the movement. In both we can see patterns of the dancers coming together and moving apart, often crossing one another's paths in the space and reaching towards and pulling away from one another, suggesting a hesitation or shyness in the formation of their relationship. The dancers' Effort lives are consistently engaging in Sustained Time and Light Weight, the latter an especially deliberate expressive decision on the part of Gene Kelly, whose Effort baseline is more frequently in Strong Weight. In one particular echo of the number from *An American in Paris*, Kelly and Dorléac run past one another and then suspend a turn to face towards one another with a leg lifted behind them in a ballet *attitude* (the leg bent at the knee) and their arms spread. This phrase returns in Dorléac and Kelly's duet on the square in the "Départ

des Forains" (figures 6–8). The ending of both numbers is also strongly similar: the couple(s) come together slowly and exchange a light kiss before turning and walking slowly away from the camera, Kelly's arm around the woman's shoulders[60] (figures 9–12). The stronger similarities between the numbers is perhaps not surprising, since Kelly choreographed the numbers in which he appears (Berthomé 197) and may have coached Doréac to adopt more of the subtle qualities from the original number. Both numbers also serve the same narrative function in their respective films, to confirm the formation of a romantic relationship.

In both instances of these extended citations, the viewer can draw on prior knowledge of the Hollywood predecessors to color an understanding of characterizations in Demy's film while also fitting the moments into the patterns of repetition and variation that build as *Les Demoiselles* progresses. "Concerto" initially recalls Solange's composition which has played several times already in the film. The "Chanson d'un jour d'été," in particular, cannot exist solely as a reference to *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* because the number has evolved from two earlier performances of similar (sung and danced) content, in "Chanson des jumelles" and "De Hambourg à Rochefort." However, "Concerto" also builds on another stylistic pattern seen throughout the film as it continues the evocation of Kelly's choreography and musical persona through the character of Andy.

In addition to building in homages to specific numbers, casting Gene Kelly allowed Demy to build a character persona that both exists in the universe of the film and parallels Kelly's corpus of musical genre identities. Although a character was already written into the screenplay before the casting deal was made with Kelly, Demy took advantage of Kelly's relationship to the Hollywood musical genre, and the character changed from Vincent Ragovitch to Andrew Miller, an American (in different versions of the "scenario" for *Les Demoiselles*), and the "Andy amoureux" number was added to the scenario. Kelly's number draws on his Hollywood

filmography as does his duet with Doréac, but moves through a number of references. While specific portions of the number create citations to specific numbers from Kelly's filmography, the number also evokes Kelly's Hollywood persona more generally. Gene Kelly's presence in the film made it much easier for Demy to evoke the aesthetic of the sort of musicals the star was known for, and the choreography for the two numbers that feature Kelly's dancing more prominently—"Andy amoureux" and "Concerto"—reference aspects of his various major musical personae. Bethomé suggests that "*Demoiselles*. . . . was enriched by all that Gene Kelly evokes for musical comedy lovers" (394).[61] In particular we can see the presence of sailor iconography, Kelly's affinity for tap dancing and more athletic choreography, and his frequent choice to choreograph numbers involving children.

The "Andy Amoureux" number is divided into discrete units, a division that serves to emphasize different aspects of the Kelly-musical persona. The number begins with Andy singing Solange's concerto, which he has found on the street, and which causes him to bump into a passerby, reinforcing that Andy is in Shape Flow, with an inner focus, because of his romantic encounter. This internal focus and unactivation of Space Effort is also evocative of Kelly numbers like "Singin' in the Rain" or "She Likes Me" from *It's Always Fair Weather*, where the presence and observation of bystanders startles Kelly's character out of his internal state. In the former, Don's Strong, Quick, and Free stomps in rain puddles (activating moments of Passion Drive) prevent him from noticing the police officer behind him until after he has completed several turns. Andy's move to the toy stand evokes the flower stand in *An American in Paris* that Kelly and the children perform in front of. After this portion of the number, filmed as a shot-reverse-shot sequence, Demy signals the various sections of the sequence in part through shots that help to create a sense of separation. The exception is Kelly's first dance section/duel with two boys—which Becker and Williams suggests hearkens back to *The Three Musketeers* (310)—after

which two sailors walk into the shot. But his dancing with two (then four) women is separated from the sailors with a cut, as is the transition to his dancing with the larger group of children. While this could make the number feel a bit disjointed or stilted, since each separate portion of choreography is separated by edits and the choreography with each group is slightly different, this also draws attention to each section as a discrete unit. The light also changes between each section; greater shadows cover the road as the number progresses. However, even though this draws attention to the temporal shifts in the film shoot, the hard lighting from the summer sun creates clearly delineated shapes and lines on the road, which the dancers stay within as they dance. This is particularly noticeable when Kelly dances with the children in a call-response mode that recalls the actor's number with children in *An American in Paris*[62] (but this time achieved through a call-and-response dance instead of a song). Shadows have covered the road behind and to the left of Kelly and the children, but they dance in a rectangle of light that illuminates them and the white convertible that Kelly drives away in. Given the attention Demy gave to the time of day he wanted to film his scenes—some of his space diagrams have the desired time of day and the sun's position indicated[63] —we can also see this as Demy using the position of the sun as a naturally-derived light change between each discrete section.

Throughout the number, Demy draws attention to various aspects of Kelly's Hollywood persona as he dances with different pedestrians. The inclusion of dancing sailors is particularly evocative, and this this association with sailor iconography has received extensive scholarly scrutiny. Clive Hirschhorn points out the relationship to *On the Town* and the importance of the sailor suit costume, "an aesthetic motif which will always be associated with Gene" (245). In *Incongruous Entertainment*, Steven Cohan describes Kelly's film persona at MGM as associated with his "athletic, sexually aggressive dancing style and the virile star image it [reinforces]" (150). Cohan is particularly interested in perceptions of Kelly's masculinity as it relates to his dancing

career as well as the ways in which the star was aware of and carefully moderating such perceptions. Kelly's costumes played an important part in such an equation. His "signature costume," the sailor suit that Kelly wears in *On the Town* and *Anchors Aweigh*, was especially significant, Cohan explains, because "associated closely enough with his dancing to continue serving as a metonymy of it in the 1970s, the sailor suit epitomized the cultural incongruity of Kelly's star image. The suit condensed the effeminate/manly dualism that made his virility legible, but in functioning as a theatrical costume as well, it gave him an erotic significance when he danced on screen that exceeded those binary terms" (158). Rodney Hill also points out the use of sailors and the sailor person in Demy's work: "The omnipresence of American sailors in Lola is the first of many nods from Demy to the musicals of Gene Kelly, a reference made quite explicit in a scene where Frankie briefly slides down a banister outside of Lola's apartment. (The Gene Kelly connection would come to full fruition with Kelly's appearance in *The Young Girls of Rochefort*, where he dances with American sailors in the street)" ("Demy Monde: The New-Wave Films" 387).

The links to aspects of Kelly's dancing persona, given who is dancing with him, do not always line up the way we might expect. Rather than evoke *On the Town* when Kelly tap dances with the sailors, for example, Kelly's routine evokes the style of dancing he does with Donald O'Connor in "Moses Supposes" and with O'Connor and Debbie Reynolds in "Good Morning," both numbers from *Singin' in the Rain.* Kelley's tap choreography for "Andy Amoureux" is similar to that of "Moses Supposes," with an emphasis on alternations between wide stances and crossed legs, and a frequent use of circling arms and suspensions. There are also parallels here to Kelly's dancing in "Tra-la-la" from *An American in Paris*. Throughout the number, however, Kelly's choreography also creates parallels with the "I Got Rhythm" number from *An American in Paris*. Becker and Williams suggest that the brief Charleston phrase Kelly does with the two women

who join him after the sailors is a reference to *Singin' in the Rain* (310),[64] but Kelly's demonstration of the Charleston to the children in "I Got Rhythm" is a closer parallel to the choreography in "Andy amoureux." The pace is more similar, and unlike Reynolds in *Singin' in the Rain*, his arms are held down, at his side. Several times during this number, Kelly also executes a quick turn on a tilted axis as he dances, which he refers to as an "airplane" at the end of "I Got Rhythm," before performing several in quick succession (figures 13 and 14). This particular step returns in the "Tra-la-la" number and is frequent in "Moses Supposes" in *Singin' in the Rain* as well. The references are clear enough to be identifiable, but the less obvious companions for each section of the choreography keeps the viewer engaged in the guessing process.

The references to Kelly's choreography were never intended to be linked exclusively to the actor, however. Earlier versions of Demy's script hint at additional ways that he was already considering incorporating homages to Kelly's aesthetic before the possibility of hiring the actor and choreographer himself. Such moments are noticeable in a draft of Demy's screenplay, which contains a variation on the number that would eventually become "De Delphine à Lancien." Although there is no date on the draft, the cast list dates it as an earlier version as tentative casting still includes Brigitte Bardot, Audrey Hepburn, and Nino Castelnuovo. In his action description, Demy writes that Delphine walks "on a musical rhythm. She jumps from one foot to the other, goes up on the sidewalk, comes down from the sidewalk. One foot on the sidewalk, the other on the road" ("Scénario manuscrit" 6).[65] The last sentence, especially, suggests Kelly's choreographic aesthetic. The best-known instance of this occurs in "Singin' in the Rain," as Kelly skips back and forth between the sidewalk edge to the road. However, Beth Genné points out that this play with setting—dancing on curbs—and changing levels is something that Kelly consistently brings into his musical numbers (Genné "Dancin' in the Street" 136). Even though the extended play with sidewalks did not make it in to the final version of "De Delphine à

Lancien," Demy's earlier drafts suggest that subtle references to Kelly's aesthetic would have existed in the film even without the participation of the star. Also, while American sailor iconography directly evoking Gene Kelly's musical persona is prevalent in *Les Demoiselles*, the film includes French sailor iconography as well, perhaps as an additional nod to the French writings of Jean Genet and Jean Cocteau on the subject.[66] Genet's book, in particular, devotes ample time to the men's physical description, including the way they walk and carry themselves, which holds close parallels to the attention to physicality in musical films.

Although the collective Gene Kelly homages make up a significant number of *Les Demoiselles*' citations, *West Side Story* is the most-referenced film in *Les Demoiselles*. This is not surprising, given the film's masterful blend of music and dance to communicate narrative information and its extended run in French cinemas (Moskowitz "French Like Cow and Gang Films" 30). George Chakiris' participation in the film evokes the American musical, as does Grover Dale's, though the latter's participation in the stage play is less frequently mentioned in literature on Demy's film.[67] Strong similarities also exist in the choreographic aesthetic, especially in the mix of ballet and jazz vocabulary for which Jerome Robbins is known. Becker and Williams reference the "instantly recognizable 'suspended movement' from posters of *West Side Story"* (313). Frequently in Demy's film we see this extended motion, in which the performers reach upward, keeping one leg straight and perpendicular to the ground while the other extends to a horizontal open high (second position) while one or both arms extend upwards. Both the Jets and the Sharks perform this motion in the "prologue," and it occurs in a number of the *Demoiselles* numbers (figures 15–18): the "Pont transborder," "Arrivée des camionneurs," "Nous voyageons de ville en ville," "Andy amoureux," "Marin, amis, amants ou maris," "De Hambourg à Rochefort," and "Les rencontres."

The "suspended movement" is only one of several recognizable shapes from Robbin's choreography. When the carnies approach the sailors during the "Arrivée des camionneurs" number on the square, the two groups freeze in a crouched pose that resembles the stand-offs between the Jets and the Sharks during the prologue (figures 19 and 20). The sailors are also revealed in the frame when the camera's movement, which is motivated by the movement of the carnies, pans to reveal them in the left side of the frame. The use of tighter framings on the characters in order to reveal and hide figures in the off-screen space also resembles the way that Jerome Robbins filmed the characters—and in the instance of George Chakiris, the same actor—in portions of the *West Side Story* "prologue." The same choreographic impulse, of groups coming together and then running apart, continues to repeat over the course of the number. Unlike the narrative parallels that are visible in the more extensive number citations, like those we see with *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* and *An American in Paris*, the intent here is not to match the mood of the *West Side Story*'s choreographic animosity. The bright mise-en-scene, lively music from Legrand, and wide grins of the dancers as they meet and separate make this apparent. Rather, a single moment from the American film becomes one of several repeated phrases that are incorporated into the number.

Although these numbers discussed create more extensive citations of Hollywood musical numbers, about half of the musical numbers in *Les Demoiselles* also contain additional fleeting references to specific dance steps or phrases from *West Side Story* and the Kelly-associated Hollywood films mentioned above. And these iconic, recognizable choreographic structures are not only performed by Gene Kelly, George Chakiris, and Grover Dale. As a further mark of separation between the narrative of *Les Demoiselles* and the films these brief citations come from, rather than giving those choreographic moments exclusively to the actors who also worked in Hollywood, Demy blends these moments into his film in various ways. Although Chakiris and

Dale perform the moment frequently, the horizontal leg extension is performed by townspeople in the background of the "Rencontres" number several times, and is also picked up by Gene Kelly at the beginning of "Andy amoureux." Neither number features either of the *West Side Story* actors. This particular movement also occurs with slight variations. In *West Side Story*, the dancers perform the leg lift without an additional leap on the supporting leg, but half the time this leg gesture occurs in *Demoiselles* it appears with an additional leap to add height (and aid, perhaps, the leg extension). When Solange and Maxence are becoming acquainted in "Les rencontres," a group of dancers in the background walk slowly in a crouched position while snapping their fingers, evoking the *West Side Story* aesthetic. At the end of "Les rencontres," couples perform the suspended *attitude* turns with extended arms evoking the Kelly-Caron duet from *An American in Paris* mentioned in relation to "Concerto," and Andy and Solange repeat this step themselves, several times, when they appear in the final number on the square, "Départ des forains"[68] (figures 6–8, 21).

An additional subtle citation of *West Side Story*'s choreography occurs in the "Arrivée des camionneurs" number. Towards the end of the number, dancing mothers in a row (in colorful unitards) begin to jump and twirl through the frame in the foreground, in front of Bill, Etienne, and their female companions in the mid-ground. They fly into frame from the right and quickly exit on the left side of the frame after several rotations. Several seconds later, a line of sailors performs the same repeated movement in the mid-ground (just behind the carnies, who are beginning to move forward in the frame), moving in the same direction. Soon after that, a line of men in military uniforms begin the same repeated twisting leaps, once again, this time moving through the background of the frame and continuing until they are off-screen. This particular type of turning leap, with an arm that lifts with the jump and curves around as the dancer lands, cites the same sort of leap in *West Side Story*, performed by the Jets as they leave the playground

(figures 22, 23). However, the choreographic impulse to stage the movement in a canon-like fashion and have it ripple from the foreground to the background of the frame references *West Side Story*'s "Cool" as well. Robbins uses this staging technique in "Cool," having three groups of Jets perform the same short phrase first in the foreground, then in the midground, and finally in the background of the frame.

Demy's film indisputably shows the influence of these Hollywood films and functions as a loving tribute to a genre that fascinated him. Some of the citations resonate more favorably with certain critics and scholars than others,[69] but the playful way Demy combines choreographic moments from other films points to more sophisticated control Demy and his choreographer had over their homages than some scholars give them credit for. Having Gene Kelly perform a movement from *West Side Story* or drawing together different moments from the same Hollywood musical into one shot creates an aesthetic recognition game for cinephiles who are familiar with the citations Demy incorporates into his film. Seeing the choreography move from (American) body to (European) body also undeniably emphasizes the differences and allows us to notice the different techniques and movement training that dancers in Hollywood had as compared to the British dancers Demy hired or his French actors. This can lead to evaluative judgments on the viewers' part, if we deem that one dancer performed a movement better than another, or if this leads the viewer to fixate on how the Americans perform a phrase differently from the Europeans. In certain instances, the close comparison of *Les Demoiselles*' choreography to the American films it cites emphasizes that the earlier iterations contain greater physical complexity and performative subtlety, in the comparison to *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, especially. However, the aesthetic simplicity of the movements performed by Demy's actors also allow the viewer to recognize the patterns of movement that ripple across the film, which serves in particular to guide our expectations in the film's formation of romantic couples.

Romantic pairings

Demy creates strong intrinsic movement norms and stylistic parallels across numbers to emphasize the formation of couples. One of the central narrative conceits of *Les Demoiselles* is romantic entanglements, and Demy cues the viewer to make inferences about who is meant to end up with whom in part through parallels of music scoring, staging, and figure movement. This occurs prominently during musical numbers in which characters sing about their romantic hopes and desires. Demy's experimentation with genre conventions plays with the concept of a dual-focus narrative that Altman sees as the core of the American musical genre. In Altman's conception of the genre, the parallels between potential couples, rather than a conventional plot (syuzhet), moves the story forward (21). Having multiple couples in a film musical is not unusual; *On the Town*, in particular, shows us the formation of three couples over the course of the film.[70] Each couple in the Hollywood film has a clear pairing from the moment the couples meet, however (Gabey and Ivy, Chip and Hildy, Ozzie and Claire), whereas what Demy proposes is several relationship alternatives for a few key characters. Nor is there the "personality dissolve" that Altman suggests couples undergo in musical films as each member of the couple takes on differential traits of the other to ultimately form a more compatible pair (80–89).

In *Les Demoiselles*, Demy gives Solange and Delphine a set of romantic options and provides cues that delay a satisfactory pairing until the end of the film. The viewer must do much hypothesis testing and revising regarding the formation of couples in the film, and much of the evaluation of couple formations occur during musical numbers or from parallels between them. The numbers eventually exceed their narrative function, however. The resulting "abnormal repetitiveness" (Bordwell *Narration* 286) creates some playful indecision in the final formation of

the fabula (who will Delphine and Solange "end up" with?) but mostly allows the viewer to appreciate the choreographic patterns that connect various sets of musical numbers.

Demy sets up several possible pairings for his main characters: Delphine could end up with Guillaume (Lancien), Etienne, or Maxence; Solange could be paired with Simon, Bill, or Andy. Viewer expectations of the Hollywood musical genre—generally a genre that ends happily—cue us to expect the sisters will end up with their ideal partner. In contrast, Demy's formation of couples in previous films could cue viewers to be more pessimistic about the likelihood of characters choosing a partner based on love rather than more practical considerations. This remains a valid possibility, given that *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*—where Catherine Deneuve's Geneviève settles for a man who will provide for her financially but whom she does not love—was the film that gave Demy the directorial cachet that, in part, made it possible for him to put *Les Demoiselles* into production. Two ideal pairings could be undermined in one move, the film hints, if Simon Dame ends up in a relationship with Solange instead of her mother, Yvonne. And the repeated numbers with Lancien keep alive the possibility that Delphine could return to him. Demy did initially consider a different ending to his film, in which the carnies leaving Rochefort accidentally hit Maxence with their truck rather than picking him up (Taboulay 66). The film's syuzhet more strongly suggests, however, that Delphine will partner up with Etienne or Maxence and Solange with Bill or Andy. The viewer's inferences surrounding these two possible matches is developed in part though extended stylistic play paralleling the twins and the carnies in musical numbers and creating grouped musical sequences, which I will refer to as "love numbers," that point the viewer towards each woman's ideal romantic pairing.

The Twins and the Carnies

Four numbers explore the parallels between and interactions of the twins, Solange and Delphine, with the two main carnival workers, Bill and Etienne. We can observe a more traditional dual-focus coupling in these potential pairings and the way they play out over the course of the syuzhet. Throughout his film, Demy hints at the dual-focus nature of the pairing between these two groups by emphasizing some similarities between them but also strong differences, and these musical numbers allow the viewer to evaluate their potential romantic union.

The dual-focus nature of this relationship and the hint of a pairing between these couples is particularly visible when comparing the "Chanson des jumelles" number to "Nous Voyageons de Ville en Ville." The music for "Chanson des jumelles" is based on a simple alternation of chorus and verses and the minimalist choreography parallels this. The choreography for each chorus is, like the lyrics, fairly similar each time with slight variations. Throughout most of the song the sisters alternate between a focus on one another and a direct address to the camera. Delphine and Solange pause at the beginning of the chorus, sometimes slightly raising a shoulder, before turning a quarter of a rotation (so that their bodies are perpendicular to the camera) and pliée (bend their knees) slightly with their arms straight and their hand on their thighs. They then walk forward, executing half turns with each step, with their hands either gently clasped behind their backs or alternating swinging forward with each step. The color inserts of their dresses help the skirt portion fly open during these steps, further accentuating the turns. Each time the chorus returns, the sisters change the direction in which they begin the phrase, adding an additional variation. The end of the chorus varies more than the rest of the phrase, but consists of some combination of a pose (either leaning backwards or embodying the quality of the "whimsy galore" lyric, "de la fantaisie à gogo," with repeated balanced poses) and a twirl before they walk to a new portion of the room for the next verse. The movement in the verses emphasizes poses

and staging that often creates a sense of symmetry in the frame, as we can see when the sisters sit on the couch with their arms draped similarly on the edges of the arm and their outer legs wrapped around their inner legs, a pose that they hold as they sing. The choreography also emphasizes stability; the sisters often hold poses for longer periods and their movements are more vertical and what Laban would refer to as one-dimensional, without much movement into planes or diagonals. Throughout the number, much of the phrasing is impulsive,[71] with an accent of Quick Time Effort and Light Weight Effort. During the verses, Demy also frequently repeats an editing pattern of alternation between single shots of each of the sisters and two-shots of them, both in tighter shot scales than the framing used for the chorus. We can observe a sense of determination and decision-making in the song that is supported by their movement choices. The choreography is simple, but the actresses' movements are also clear and direct, the straightforwardness of their dancing paralleling the unambiguous nature of the lyrics as they sing about their plans for the future.

The carnies' number, "Nous voyageons de ville en ville," shares a number of structural similarities to the sisters' song to indicate their romantic compatibility, while variations—in dual-focus narrative fashion—suggest differences between these sets of characters. Like the sisters' song, the carnies' later duet "Nous voyageons de ville en ville" also alternates between a chorus ("nous voyageons…") and verses, with an additional bridge in the middle for an extended dance sequence. The choreographic variations are greater than in the earlier number, and more complex to accommodate the performers' (Chakiris' and Dale's) more refined dance technique. The movement vocabulary of the number consists primarily of turns, locomotion through the space with accented movements in the upper body, leaps (sometimes while turning), and extensions of the arms and legs outward and upward away from the body. Their movement phrases are occasionally phrased with an initial accent, but they also move with more Suspended

Time Effort, resulting in more Impactful phrases that often end with an increase of Strong Weight as the arms or legs extend into verticality. Although the specific iteration of those steps does not usually repeat in the same way, a brief similar phrase ends each verse before the return of the chorus. The two briefly pause and hold their current pose before spreading their arms outward with a Quick Time accent before gathering their arms back towards the midline in order to rotate in a full turn, after which they again begin to extend their arms outward, this time with a more sustained use of Time Effort before beginning the next chorus.

Some of Bill and Etienne's movements create a choreographic continuity from the sisters' number. There is an emphasis on turns and on locomotion towards and away from the camera on the sagittal plane of the mise-en-scène, as well as the holding of poses at the end of a phrase. One of the crouched cross-leg poses the carnies hold creates a similar shape as the sisters' crossed-leg pose they hold while sitting on the couch, for example (figures 24 and 25). Some of the carnies' choreography is also mirrored, like the sisters, but more often their movements are performed in union on the "same side," and the choreography for their number creates a greater expansion of their Kinespheres and is more mobile, with a greater activation of Quick Time and Impactful phrasing. The greater sense of flow in the men's movements, the speed with which they cover the space, their greater change of movement levels as they leap and spin around the space, and their fuller extension of their limbs (often paired with Strong Weight Effort and balled fists or slightly bent wrists) creates strong choreographic contrasts with the sisters' movement qualities and vocabulary. The larger movements of the carnies hints that the world of the carnies is more mobile and dynamic than that of the sisters, and we can see parallels with the similarly expansive movements of outsiders in the film: the other carnies, Andy, and to a certain extent, the sailors stationed in Rochefort.[72] Choreographic similarities create inferences about their romantic compatibility, while differences adhere to the dual focus model.

Demy's similar editing patterns also firmly link the numbers. In both the sisters' song and the carnies' song, he frequently shifts to closer framings during the verses, alternating between two shots and singles of the men who, like the sisters, frequently alternate between glances towards one another and a direct address of the camera. The closer framings of the sisters is more easily justified stylistically, given the simplicity of the choreography. However, the larger movements of the carnies during the rest of the number, which requires more distant shot scales to be fully visible, makes the closer framings feel more obstructive, perhaps, to our continued appreciation of the choreography. Given that Demy does not film the other dance numbers with this sort of patterned repetition between closer singles and two shots of the characters, it is logical to assume that this stylistic choice in "Nous voyageons de ville en ville" is to reinforce a sense of parallelism between the carnies and the sisters' musical numbers. To reinforce the connection between the numbers, the scene that follows "Nous voyageons de ville en ville" returns us to the sisters' apartment where Solange plays the chorus of the sisters' song on a recorder before improvising on the tune. Similarly, after the sisters' number Delphine leaves the apartment, and we see her walking through the square where she almost runs into Etienne and Bill, one of the many close, coincidental encounters that Demy creates in his film through the careful staging and blocking of his actors.

The sisters and carnies also share two numbers later in the film, which continues to posit the possibility of their eventual romantic union. When the two sisters perform their song again for the carnies in "De Hambourg à Rochefort," we see an initial repetition of the earlier choreography. Both stand and pliée again in the beginning of the chorus, but this time they lean against the piano. Instead of walking forward, they twirl in a full circle, Delphine first, then Solange. Delphine then sits on the piano stool and they both move into poses for the "fantasie à gogo" lyric. Delphine's movement is fairly similar to the original number, and she moves into the

pose with a similar Effort quality as she did in the earlier number, with more of a Quick and Bound quality to her movement, whereas Solange extends an arm into verticality while she sinks slightly into a pliée, with more Sustained Time and Free Flow. Delphine then stands to allow Solange to sit on the stool. When Bill and Etienne stand to join them, they also alternate turns as they move through the space towards the sisters. The alternation and depth staging echoes the carnies' earlier number, but the complexity of their initial choreography is simplified to match the technical capacities of the sisters. Later on, however, one of the mens' Sustained and Strong Weight high kicks returns in the number as they turn to face one another after the number has cut to show the various characters in the film. However, most of the choreography for this number consists of simple turns and steps through the space, blending the choreographic impulses of the two earlier numbers. This sense of harmonious blending, as well as the eventual pairing of the couples (Delphine dancing with Etienne and Solange dancing with Bill) points to the possibility of their romantic union.

The final number between the sisters and carnies, "Toujours, jamais," occurs after the men have admitted their carnal desires to the sisters and continues the use of parallelisms and symmetry in the frame from the earlier numbers. As in the earlier two numbers, Demy uses many closer framings that create parallel, balanced compositions as the sisters sing to, and then stand and walk towards, their rejected lovers. The similarity of costumes and color choices help to reinforce the mirroring that occurs as the carnies stand in the middle of the frame, their backs to one another, as they face the women. Soon after, the sisters walk towards one another and the facings switch, creating a simple variation in the symmetrical staging that continues as the men reach out to the women, who turn their upper bodies to exchange glances and accept to be kissed (also at the same time). No dancing occurs in the beginning of the number, but after the sisters have left, the two men run and leap around the now-empty stage and square before exiting the

frame. The latter dancing section, with its fast locomotion and balletic jumps, also parallels the "Marins, amis, amants, ou maris" number where the carnies are similarly rejected by a pair of women. In both instances, the men shrug off the dismissals with a knowing glance and a smile. Women come and go in their lives, but Etienne and Bill's relationship remains a constant. These additional stylistic parallels between the carnie's numbers reinforces that their relationship with one another is more important, and more consistent, than their fleeting pairings with the women they encounter in their travels. The "Toujours, jamais" number seems to create a sense of closure on these potential relationships, but a later exchange between the sisters ("and if they really loved us?" / "et si ils nous amaient vraiment?") suggests that the women may still change their minds. To add to the complexity of potential couple formations presented in these parallel musical numbers, however, Demy also creates a series of numbers between the couples that do finally come together.

The Love Numbers

These seven "love numbers" center around characters revealing information about their hopeful or lost loves. All of these numbers have a strong expressive function but also frequently provide narrative information about the character's ideal relationships. Demy's narrative and stylistic choices bear similarities to the sort of narratively relevant musical numbers in Hollywood in which characters are ruminating about their love interests. Judy Garland's "The Boy Next Door" from *Meet Me In St Louis* (1944) is a canonical example of this, in large part because her song's lyrics are so closely tied to plot. Much of the song is predominantly expressive, a recounting of Esther's romantic desires, but the opening verse, thanks to some particularly film-specific narrative information, reveals her so-far-unsuccessful attempts to get John's attention, even though she "[lives] at 5135 Kensington Avenue, and he lives at 5133." Demy takes this idea

for a musical number further, however, by building an extended network of romantic desires that the viewer must untangle in part thanks to the information provided by these seven songs. Much of the film's exposition about the characters' romantic pasts and futures occurs predominantly in these musical numbers.

Through this particular sub-set of musical numbers, Demy creates parallel love numbers only for the members of the romantic couples that finally coalesce and that most viewers would likely consider to be the appropriate romantic pairing: Delphine and Maxence, Solange and Andy, and Yvonne and Simon.[73] There are strong stylistic and narrative parallelisms between them as a set, and additional sub-parallels between the numbers that link the characters who are an ideal match. These similarities add to the complex formal play of stylistic devices in Demy's film, but they also serve to cue the spectator to infer the correct romantic pairings that will occur over the course of the film.

Each member of the pair (Maxence and Delphine, Simon and Yvonne) sings along to their own musical melody that helps the viewer notice the match. The last two numbers (Solange and Andy's songs), are the only exceptions. The numbers occur in only a few spaces of this diegetic universe, creating an additional sense of parallelism: Maxence and Yvonne's songs occur in the café on the square, Delphine and Solange's songs occur in their apartment, Simon and Andy's songs occur in the music store, and Maxence's reprise occurs in Lancien's gallery and ends in the sister's apartment. Many feature a single sequence shot with fluid camerawork that follows their movement or reframes them in the space. All provide narrative information of sorts through the strongly content-specific dialogue. All feature the characters singing to other characters—recounting their desires or experiences—rather than an isolated expression of emotion (as we see in *Meet Me In St Louis*) or a part of a larger sung conversation (as we see in other musical numbers

in *Demoiselles*).[74] And, importantly, all the numbers share a similar, albeit simple, choreographic structure that emphasizes a similar physical approach to the numbers.

The numbers are not danced, per se, but are staged in deliberate, consistent ways. Strong repetition of figure movement cues suggest that Demy directed his actors to create a sense of repetition in figure movement across these numbers. And certain shared movement characteristics between the numbers that link the "correct" partners also help the viewer to make subtle inferences about their romantic compatibility.

All of the numbers involve the characters walking (locomoting) through the space they are currently occupying. Their meandering, curved pathways add an energy to the otherwise often melancholy nature of their singing. As the characters sing, their movement qualities alternate (in varying degrees) between two primary states of being. Sometimes we can see an internalization of their emotional expression that causes their gaze to be less focused and their attention to turn inward (Shape Flow). This quality often occurs as the characters begin to walk around the space without any clear direction (diegetically speaking) in mind. In contrast, we can see frequent movements of the head that are often an initiation of a deliberate attention (Direct Space Effort) and focus on other characters to whom they are recounting their stories, desires, or romantic memories. We can observe the unique ways that each actor embodies these movement qualities by examining one example of each from these shifts between inner and outer focus.[75]

Maxence fluctuates often between an inner focus with Shape Flow and his attention and focus towards those he is singing to. While in Shape Flow, he often moves his head along the horizontal axis (looking left and right) or sometimes into the vertical plane (tilting his head side to side) in very small motions, which are sometimes initiated with some Quick Time, creating an impulsive quality to the phrasing of his movements. He also crosses his arms, narrowing his

Kinesphere, and sometimes employs small gestures with his hands in his absent-mindedness, playing with the pencil he was sketching with or leaning his head on his hand (figures 26–29).

Delphine is less out of Space Effort than Maxence, but she moves into a more extended period of Shape Flow and inner awareness once she reaches the second window and turns away from it, drawing her arms across herself to narrow her Kinsephere (as Maxence does). Much of the time, however, she is in Direct or Indirect Space with her movements, perhaps the result of Catherine Deneuve's frequent use of Bound Flow in her torso which could result in her acting impulse to make bigger and more spatially clear movements in order for them to register properly. She also turns her head along the horizontal axis, but does so with larger movements, turning her head further, and also reaches her head slightly upward and forward at times, moving into the sagittal plane. Her Shape Flow moves into her shoulders as well, which she raises and lowers as she moves her head (figures 30 and 31).

Simon also moves his head occasionally with small shakes to engage his Shape Flow, but his head movements are more often in Direct or Indirect Space Effort, like Delphine. Often the turns of his head are angled, causing him to tilt his head into diagonal pulls (three-dimensional movement) and his phrasing is more even, without as many Quick Time Effort accents at the beginning of a gesture or movement. His shifts into Shape Flow are more often apparent thanks to his movement of hands and feet. A particularly distinct example of this occurs when he shifts his weight to the right foot and scuffs the ground with his foot, using Light Weight Effort and Bound Flow Effort as he traces a curved pathway on the ground as the foot moves towards and away from his midline. He uses a similar Effort combination a few seconds later when he reaches absent-mindedly for the staircase railing (figures 32 and 33).

Yvonne frequently moves her head as part of her Shape Flow, in addition to turning her head with Direct Space towards Dutroux and Maxence. As she reflects and her movements turn to

inner impulses, she moves her head with frequent Light Weight Effort shakes to the right and left, but she also frequently tilts her head to the side, into the vertical plane, or raises and lowers her head slightly as she shakes it, which briefly moves her head along diagonals. Like Simon, her Shape Flow is often frequently visible from her arm and hand gestures; she interlaces her fingers, brings her hands to her side, and absent-mindedly twists a handkerchief in her fingers (figures 34 and 35).

Solange's use of Shape Flow in her head movements often occur with a movement into back/high space (along the sagittal plane's diameter). Many of her other head movements have her turning her head along the horizontal axis (right and left) and occasionally reaching her head back and up towards sagittal back high, like Yvonne, and she alternates between a suspended quality to her phrasing and an initiation of her movements with Quick Time Effort (impulsive phrasing). Moreover, unlike the characters already mentioned, whose rotations in the space are often initiated by their head movements, Solange tends to initiate her movement from her upper torso instead during this number. Her use of Shape Flow is also visible from her gestures, bringing her hand to her chest and spreading her arms (figures 36 and 37).

Andy, like Delphine, is more often in Indirect and Direct Space than he is purely in Shape Flow, which may be the result of Gene Kelly's acting style, and similarly his gestures are more extensive and frequent. He also tilts his head into the vertical plane and frequently moves his head with smaller quick movements into verticality. Unlike the rest of the characters, who tend to engage in Light Weight Effort, his baseline is in Strong Weight Effort which is often combined with Quick Time to create little gestures with his hands and arms that create the impression that he is repeatedly throwing his hands away from his midline. When he begins to recall Solange, however, as he is sitting at the piano, his Effort life shifts more into Light Weight Effort as he gently places his left foot slightly behind so that he can shift his weight to stand, and in that

moment his focus becomes softer and leads to one of the only moments of pure Shape Flow in his number. His performance is peppered with smaller absent-minded gestures, however, as he plays with the keyboard and slaps the pole of the staircase (figures 38 and 39).

As my analysis shows, these numbers emphasize an alternation between an outer focus—as characters recount their stories to other characters in the space, most clearly visible through the activation of Space Effort—and an inner focus—as the characters allow themselves to reflect on their emotional lives, most clearly visible through the activation of Weight Effort and Shape Flow. Within these broader patterns and individual performance nuances emerge micro-patterns that further link together the pairs of numbers between the intended lovers, even though each actor's unique physicality means that the simple movements and gestures appear with variations in each number's instance. Maxence and Delphine's numbers have the fewest distinguishing features that set them apart from the rest (partially because Andy and Solange's numbers end with a refrain from their musical theme), while Simon and Yvonne's numbers share the most unique characteristics. Solange and Andy's parallel numbers also share some figure movement qualities but Solange's performance is the most divergent of the seven numbers. The melody of her song is unique; no other love number shares it.[76] The tempo of her song is also more lively than the others in this set (though not as fast as Delphine's lyrics in "De Delphine à Lancien") and her movements parallel this; she is more animated, changing levels in a postural shift that takes her from standing to crouching as she recreates the events that lead to her and Andy's meeting. The repetition of narrative information serves to justify the stylistic figure movement differences between Solange's "love number" and the other six, as it introduces additional variation.

A closer look at the parallels Demy creates between Simon and Yvonne's numbers helps to show the compatibility between the characters despite their earlier parting (due to Yvonne's

reluctance to become "Madame Dame"). Her number occurs after his in the syuzhet, and their similar melody and parallels in the phrasing and content of Demy's lyrics make it quickly apparent to the viewer that Yvonne is singing about Simon. Certain gestures and a similar fluid camera movement during the one sequence shot of each number helps to reinforce this. Both smile in their Shape Flow as they are remembering past experiences, unlike Delphine and Maxence, who are more often solemn. Both employ a gestural sort of Shape Flow with a distal initiation (coming from the ends of the limbs) as they recount their memories: Simon scuffs the ground with his foot and reaches for the stair railing, Yvonne twists a handkerchief and raises it to her face as she sits. Unlike Solange and Maxence, who cross their arms across their bodies to narrow their Kinesphere, or Andy and Solange who frequently spread their arms to widen their Kinesphere, Yvonne and Simon move somewhere in between. They both widen somewhat as they reach for the staircase (Simon) or the table (Yvonne), but they also walk with their hands in their pockets, creating a distinct shape than none of the other characters share. In fact, of the three women's dresses, Yvonne's is the only one to include that feature. Yvonne's pockets are used to hide the handkerchief prop she later draws out, and the costume design differences help to reinforce the intentional differences between each set of couples.

Both Simon and Yvonne circle around the space as they sing, and the camera movements alternate between following their figure movement and reframing to position them in closer or more distant shot scales. This general movement pattern is present in each of the love numbers, but the parallels between these two, with their single sequence shot, are especially striking. In the "Chanson de Simon," after an initial pause, Simon walks forward and the camera tracks back to keep him in the same medium shot scale. After an initial turn back to Solange (who is now behind him), he turns to his left and crosses the frame, the camera panning left slightly to reframe. The camera continues to move, tracking right and panning left to slightly change our

perspective on the characters. When Simon continues to walk towards the left side of the frame (turning to look at Solange as he does so) the camera pans left to follow him, and he slowly increases in size to a medium close-up as he approaches the camera. After both pause in the center of the room, the camera tracks back to reframe Simon (and Solange, who re-enters the frame) in a long shot. The camera remains still as he scuffs the ground with his foot and reframes slightly as Simon walks to the left towards the staircase, after which the camera continues to track forward to reframe Simon in a medium close-up, the camera also planning to the right as Simon walks back to Solange.

In the "Chanson d'Yvonne," we begin with a medium close-up of Yvonne, who perches on a table and turns her head as she alternates looks at Maxence and Dutroux who are off-screen to the left and right of the frame, respectively. Soon, however, the camera begins to track back to reframe the space, ending on a long shot of the three at the tables. After a brief pause, Yvonne rises and begins to walk towards the left side of the frame past Maxence, and the camera pans slightly to keep her in the shot, then pans right as Yvonne walks back to the table. She then begins walking a third time, and this time the camera pans to keep her in the frame as she walks to the left, ending up in a medium close-up before she stops and turns to look back at the men. The camera continues to pan left and begins tracking back, however, to slowly circle Yvonne. After a few beats she continues to walk towards the left side of the frame and the camera continues to move with her until she reaches Dutroux and Maxence's table and is framed between them.

By the end of each number the camera has circled around the space in such a way that it ends facing the opposite direction from the one it started in, the characters having changed their orientation in the space as well. The result is a strong sense that the camera is as involved in Demy's choreography of the space as is the figure movement. Maps of the space give an

additional sense of the relationship between camera movement, figure movement, and these two sequences. A map from Demy's archives at Ciné-Tamaris seems to portray the movement of this scene, providing a comparison ("Overheads"). Finally, a map of Yvonne's number in the café helps to show a similar curving camera movement to follow her figure movement (Appendix 3.d: Spatial Maps).

In Simon and Yvonne's numbers, especially, and to a lesser extent Maxence and Andy's numbers, Demy also creates a contrast between the figure movement of the character recounting his or her story and the figure movement of the extras that are visible at times in the background. In several of the numbers (the ones in the café and Simon's music store where we can see onto the street outside) there is also a strong presence of pedestrians in the background of the space, walking or (in the case of the carnies) setting up for the *kermesse* on the square. Their movement patterns contrast with those of the singers, who tend to alternate between their Shape Flow states and their attention to their listeners with Direct Space with phrases that are either even and slowly paced, or with phrases that have little Quick Time Effort accents at the beginning (turning the head, for example). The main characters' wandering quality to their locomotion helps to reinforce their lack of clear spatial awareness as they sing about their lost/ideal partner. This movement exists in contrast to the people in the background, who are either walking with a clear, direct determination and a steady, quicker pace or are straight-forwardly setting up for the fair.

A few examples show that this sense of contrast was deliberate, however, in the same way that Demy creates contrast in the frame of other numbers by having dancers fly through the frame and move in the distant background. Andy moves at one point towards the piano that is framed in the room by windows on either side, allowing the viewer to see what movement occurs in the street. As Andy reaches the piano he turns and pauses, leaning on the instrument, before continuing to move towards the piano bench. In the brief moment he pauses, a sailor walks

rightward into the frame, visible through the window that is in the left background of the frame. The sailor quickly moves out of frame as he passes the window, but Andy's rightward movement and the camera's tracking movement to follow him means that the sailor re-appears in the background through the next window as Andy reaches the piano bench. Once Yvonne has reached the stained glass that appears behind her, the camera pans and tracks to slowly circle around her and follow her movements back to the table where Dutroux and Maxence are sitting. A few seconds before she begins to walk, however, a younger woman in a purple dress appears in the background behind the stained glass, walking left through the frame. Her faster pace takes her through the space more quickly than Yvonne, but the reframing of the camera keeps her in the left third of the frame until Yvonne reaches the table, creating a sense of contrast and paralleling the lyrics as Yvonne sings about her lost youth.

The simplicity of these figure movements carry over into the other musical numbers, the interaction between couples and acquaintances forming the basis for most of the musical numbers in the film, but the specific ways that Demy repeats and shapes these movements creates strong similarities between these characters and their emotional expressions. There is also a resemblance between these numbers and Lola's recounting to Roland her emotional past in Demy's 1961 film. When Lola and Roland meet for dinner about fifty minutes into the film, the latter is mostly silent, adding one brief phrase ("le salaud") to Lola's monologue about her past with Michel as they eat and then wander in the streets. Lola embodies the same movement vocabulary as the performers in this film as she talks, walking towards and away from Roland, sometimes looking at him with a clear focus, other times moving away from him with Shape Flow to reflect on her past as she draws her jacket to her chest, plays with her necklace, and lets her head fall backwards as her eyes become soft and unfocused. These similarities hint at what *Lola* would have resembled had Demy been able to make the film a musical as intended and

point to the consistently patterned nature of Demy's aesthetic choices throughout his cinematic career.

A closer analysis of Maen's choreography and Demy's staging of figure movement helps to reinforce and expand upon other scholars' assertions about the clear connections to and citations of moments from the Hollywood musical genre. However, my analysis has also revealed an intrinsic logic to the choreography of his numbers, irrespective of his stylistic homages. Demy incorporates dance and choreography into his film in ways that carry through even the numbers that are more pervasively musical citations, like "Andy amoreux." Stylistic parallels in camera and figure movement in parallel musical numbers helps to suggest and finally confirm romantic preferences between characters and emphasizes that, while Maen's presence was certainly essential to the more technical dance phases, Demy was also aware of ways to effectively convey information through an organization of bodies in cinematic space. The use of figure movement for more decorative or aesthetic functions pervades *Les Demoiselles'* numbers to keep the viewer guessing and heighten stylistic parallels.

Parametric form in a musical context

Demy's formal choices in *Les Demoiselles* serve strong denotative and expressive functions to communicate information about potential romantic pairings between characters and point to a complex web of citations that suggest parallels between characters in the film and characters in the Hollywood musicals that served as aesthetic influences. Sometimes this formal play exceeds these narrative parallels beyond what is normative, even for the aesthetic excess associated with the musical genre, to exist as formal patterns that function adjacently to the film's narrative goals. Narration of this sort seen in *Les Demoiselles*, "in which the film's stylistic system creates patterns

distinct from the demands of the syuzhet system" is discussed by David Bordwell (*Narration* 275) and Kristin Thompson as parametric.[77] Rodney Hill's analysis of *Les Demoiselles* hints at the parametric qualities of Demy's film without describing them as such when he writes that Demy's film is "structured not so much around a classical series of goal-oriented events moved along by causes and effects, but rather around parallelisms between various characters, who constitute a miniature universe that is more tightly intertwined than any of them realize" ("Demy Monde: Jacques Demy" 96).

Stylistic patterning in parametric cinema maintains a proximal relationship to the film's syuzhet, or plot (Thompson 248). "In parametric narration," Bordwell argues, "style is organized *across the film* according to distinct principles, just as a narrative poem exhibits prosodic patterning or an operatic scene fulfills a musical logic" (*Narration* 281). "In general," Thompson adds, "we may characterize as parametric those films that allow the play of stylistic devices a significant degree of independence from narrative functioning and motivation" (247). Parametric films share several characteristics, all of which help to explain why an exclusively plot-based discussion of *Les Demoiselles* feels ultimately unsatisfying.

First, parametric films often "employ strikingly obvious themes" (Bordwell *Narration* 282) and share a "predilection for quite predictable plot patterns" (Bordwell *Narration* 285) and simple narrative causality (Thompson 260), which can lead to banal interpretations when narrative discussions dominate a critical reading. The struggles inherent in ones' search for romantic companionship is central to *Les Demoiselles* but does not require extensive thematic scrutiny in and of itself, as the film's syuzhet makes it explicit. Similarly, Waldron's reading of *Les Demoiselles* as saturating its narrative with an abundance of enchantment, "euphoric plentitude" (62), and "ephemeral happiness" (71) is an accurate understanding of what *Les Demoiselles*—and the musical genre more generally—accomplishes, but such an interpretation does not explain the film's

narrative and aesthetic complexity. *Les Demoiselles'* plot is not overly simplified, however; Bordwell mentions that the relationship between stylistic and narrative dominance can fluctuate (*Narration* 286). Compared to Jacques Tati's *Play Time* (also released in 1967), whose parametric qualities Thompson discusses in detail (250–257), *Les Demoiselles* contains a more complex syuzhet and more intricate character development. Much of the information presented through the syuzhet is redundant, however, or not structured in a tight causal fashion, existing as a space for stylistic play. "Even when the syuzhet comes forward," Bordwell writes, "it tends to do so on the style's own terms." He suggests these sorts of narrative "deformities" are common in parametric cinema; "causes and effects may be disjoined, major scenes may be omitted, duration may be skipped over" (*Narration* 286).

Secondly, Bordwell and Thompson emphasize that parametric filmmaking requires a different sort of work on the part of the viewer: a recognition of and willingness to go along with the film's stylistic patterning. Unlike the "comfortable set of viewing procedures" found in classical narration, Thompson explains "the strongly parametric film, in departing from the classical system, must create a degree of perceptual uncertainty" but also a sort of perceptual play through stylistic repetition and variation (251). An appreciation of parametric form requires a sensitivity to noticing patterns (Bordwell *Narration* 283) and a shift in viewing practices. In looking at criticisms of *Les Demoiselles*, we can observe a displacement of expectations between what some critics believe the film should be—a normative classical Hollywood musical—rather than an appreciation of what it is—a set of stylistic variations on a few musical genre norms.

Finally, the need for a different set of viewing practices often leads to a modular or "cellular" dissection of the film rather than the more traditional viewing goal of a linear reconstruction of the fabula, or story (Bordwell *Narration* 286). Such unconventional film strategies "challenge [the viewer's] normal processes of perceiving a film narrative" and frequently carries to "an extreme

the tendency towards 'spatialization' . . . in which stylistic repetition encourages the viewer to 'stack' scenes by technique, in opposition to the horizontal unrolling of the action" (Bordwell *Narration* 289). This becomes particularly apparent in the numerous "love numbers," which Demy incorporates into the film to show characters expressing their romantic hopes or disappointments. The repetition of musical scoring and the parallels between these sequences are easily apparent, but the viewer is hard-pressed to remember the order they occur in. In several instances, the ordering of these numbers could even be switched without dramatically affecting the viewer's ability to construct a coherent fabula. Nor are all these numbers essential; while much of the sung content serves a narrative function, due to the lyrics which are often tightly related to the film's content, many are not essential for narrative comprehension. Unlike Delphine and Maxence, whom we never see meet, or Simon and Yvonne, who recount fabula information that is not part of the syuzhet, Solange and Andy's numbers recount information that occurs earlier in the film. Solange, in particular, recounts in vivid detail to Delphine the way she and Andy met in the street, resulting in content that is both narratively specific but also redundant. A classical musical would probably show a meet-cute followed by an expressive number or a number in which characters remember past events that the syuzhet ellides.[78] Demy does both.

The ability for viewers to easily pick up on this repetitive structure, as well as the obviousness of repeated citations to Hollywood musicals, is an aspect of parametric narration that both Bordwell and Thompson articulate. "The most clear-cut cases of parametric narration can definitely be perceived in viewing," Bordwell argues; "because the viewer's schemata for film style are limited, it is unrealistic to expect parametric form to exhibit detailed intricacies. As in serial music, the more convoluted and the less redundant such form is, the more imperceptible it is likely to be. Consequently, parameters cannot all be varied simultaneously" (*Narration* 286).

Thompson adds, "this is partly because most such films isolate only a few parameters for extensive use, and hence the repetition can be quite redundant" (248).

The question of stylistic parameters existing in excess of narrative motivations becomes more complicated in relation to the musical genre, however, given the genre's (partially earned) reputation for alternations between a conventional plot and musical numbers that arrest narrative progression. Like the different uses for "integration" in relation to musical numbers discussed in Chapter 1, the extent to which musical numbers are seen as stylistically excessive to their narratives depends on the scholar and the films they consider to be core examples of the genre. As my musical number taxonomy shows, there are a number of subtle ways that musical numbers' content can relate to or further a film's narrative by conveying the expressivity of a character, communicating beneficial denotative information, or presenting content essential to a clear construction of the fabula. Different scholars champion different musicals as central to the genre based on their prioritization of these concerns. Mueller prioritizes films that emphasize narrative continuity between syuzhet and number ("Fred Astaire"), whereas other scholars see numbers' narrative or stylistic disruptions as more significant and prioritize different films accordingly. For Richard Dyer, this distinction is one of realism versus representation ("Entertainment and Utopia" 23, 26). Steven Cohan sees a dichotomy between "integrated" and "aggregate" musicals, the numbers in the latter functioning more as self-contained "parallel [universes] of pure spectacle" ("Introduction: Musicals" 9). For Martin Rubin, musical films "must work to establish a space (or a series of homologous spaces)," for the purposes of spectacle, "that are, to a certain extent, self-enclosed and independent of the surrounding narrative." This allows for "spectacular expansions and distortions that can be clearly in excess of the narrative without necessarily disrupting it" (*Showstoppers* 36). And for Rick Altman, the shift into a musical number "liberates the picture plane of all diegetic responsibilities," a transfer that "entirely

abandons the representational mode" when taken to the extreme (70, 71). None suggest, however, that this tendency towards stylistic excess and diegetic distancing causes a radical break with the storytelling conventions of classical American cinema.

So where should the line be drawn between conventional iterations of the musical genre—generally understood to exist within the boundaries of classical narration—and what Bordwell and Thompson describe as parametric films? Ultimately this is a question of scale. In Thompson's discussion of classical (non-musical) film's deflections towards excess, she suggests that, "to a limited degree, then, the Hollywood cinema can tolerate this slight departure toward the encouragement of the viewing that notes excess" (260). However, the aim of this chapter is not to definitively draw such a line, but rather to emphasize that *Les Demoiselles* unequivocally crosses it.

Even if we acknowledge that certain Hollywood musicals contain greater stylistic excess than the average classical Hollywood film, a comparison of these American films to *Les Demoiselles* reveals that Demy's commitment to stylistic excess exceeds that of the typical Hollywood musical. On a quantitative level alone, Demy's ability to experiment with his musical numbers is partly a result of volume. *Demoiselles* has twenty-four musical numbers, whereas the American musicals mentioned in relation to Demy's film have between fourteen and seven (Appendix 3.b: Quantitative film data). A higher percentage of the film consists of musical sequences as well; of *Demoiselles*' two-hour screen time, the musical numbers comprise sixty-nine minutes, or fifty-seven percent. In comparison, despite the seventeen-minute dream ballet at the end of *An American in Paris*, the musical numbers in that film comprise only forty-seven minutes—or forty-two percent—of the film's just-under two hour screen time. *On the Town*'s musical numbers comprise thirty-nine minutes, or forty percent, of the film's run time, and *West Side Story*'s forty-nine minutes of musical numbers comprises only thirty-two percent.

Although Demy expands upon several intrinsic norms to experiment with more recognizable conventions from the studio-era musical genre, he also plays with stylistic repetition and variation in a number of smaller ways in his cinematic construction of diegetic space. Compared to the American musicals Demy admired, *Les Demoiselles* has musical numbers that feature longer average shot lengths, a higher repetition of locations, and staging choices in the exterior numbers that saturate the frame with figure movement.

Like the sheer scale of musical numbers in the film, in comparison to other Hollywood musicals, Demy tends to hold his shots longer than his American counter-parts where the musical numbers themselves are concerned. *Les Demoiselles*' musical numbers have an average shot length of 34.5 seconds.[79] In contrast, the American films discussed in this chapter have an average shot length for their musical numbers of 25.2 seconds, which is one second above the average (24.3 seconds) for Hollywood musical numbers more generally.[80] Minnelli's musical films studied here have, as a whole, an average shot length of around twenty seconds—higher than *Les Demoiselles*' average shot length of 16.5. Although Minnelli is known for his complex sequence shots, *Demoiselles*' musical number average of 35.5 is longer than the average of numbers from *Meet Me in St Louis*, *The Band Wagon,* and *An American in Paris*, which combined average at 31 seconds. Demy's intricate camera work is also frequently compared to some of the filmmakers working in France that he admired, notably Jean Renoir and Max Ophüls. The averages of their films made in France are comparable or longer than *Les Demoiselles*, averaging between fifteen and twenty seconds. In contrast, Renoir's *French Cancan* (1954), self-described in the credits as a "musical comedy" "comédie musicale," but which is also his "homage to the Belle Époque music hall" (Conway *Chanteuse* 124) is cut more quickly with an average of nine seconds. While he does include some longer shots with simple panning camera movements to follow characters, *French Cancan* also lacks the intricate use of camera movement to create sequence shots for which Renoir

was known for in the 1930s. Compared to Renoir, Demy maintains a use of lengthier shots and more intricate camerawork—including some more elaborate sequence shots—in his experimentation with musical genre norms. One of these longer traveling shots that occurs as a transition between the end of the opening number on the square and an introduction to the sisters in their apartment also serves to signal that the sisters' apartment is also part of the location shooting and not a set (as is the case for the interiors of Demy's later musical, *Trois places pour le 26*).

In addition, Demy frequently re-uses the locations of his musical numbers. Two numbers occur in the art gallery, three occur in Simon's music store, three occur in the streets of the city, four occur in the sisters' apartment, five occur in the café, and six occur on the central square. The only unique location for a number is the opening scene on the transporter bridge. In contrast, the American musicals mentioned here tend to rarely re-use diegetic locations more than once.[81] Two numbers in *On the Town* occur on the Empire State Building set, several numbers in *An American in Paris* use the café/street set, and several numbers in *West Side Story* take place on the (real) New York City streets and in the tailor's shop, but re-using a location in these films is more an exception than the norm, in contrast to Demy's film. Lower budget Hollywood musicals may re-use sets more often for cost purposes,[82] but many studio-era American musicals flaunt the variety of their set pieces. Cost was a concern for *Demoiselles'* production, and the financial constraints opened up the opportunity for stylistic play in how to create variations of movement through a redundancy of on-location spaces.

In the numbers on the square, in particular, we can see a sense of development from the first to the last number through the different pairings of dancers. The staging shifts from groups of character types (mothers, sailors, carnies) dancing together and somewhat interacting in the "Arrivée des Camionneurs" to a number that consists entirely of couples in "Départ des

Forains," where by the end of the number, all the dancers in the frame have coupled up across types and are dancing a waltz. The shift in couplings and the continuation of dancing in the square after the carnival works have departed suggests a symbolic revitalization of the town, but the plethora of dancing pedestrians and secondary characters throughout the exterior musical numbers also serves as a form of visual overload. Several well-known musicals from the end of the Hollywood studio-era period also have sections and musical numbers filmed on location:[83] *West Side Story*, of course, but also *On the Town* and *Funny Face* (while *An American and Paris* and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* both incorporate second-unit exterior shots of Paris). Demy's use of location shooting is novel, not only because his film may be the first film musical—French or American—to be shot entirely on location, but also because of the ways in which he uses those locations in his construction of cinematic space.

Demy consciously plays with multiple points of focus in the frame, frequently staging main characters or dancing pedestrians in all three planes—foreground, midground, and background. Although Demy's purpose in this spatial saturation is not to set up a multitude of visual and auditory gags, as Thompson suggests Tati does in *Play Time*, the multiple points of interest necessitates a similar "scanning" of the image and multiple viewings to fully process all the content (252). Demy's level of attention to detail in the staging of these sequences, especially regarding the placement of the camera and the time of day (to account for different qualities of sunlight) is visible in the birds-eye view maps of the space that Demy created. The diagrams were sketched on paper from the Grand Bacha hotel, where Demy and most of his cast and crew stayed while in Rochefort ("Plans décor"). All of the existing overheads are for musical numbers, and most are for the danced numbers to organize and plan the space.[84]

One pattern that emerges from a careful processing of the image is the linking of outdoor spaces through the repetition of brief choreographic phrases. One such example is a little catch-

step phrase that first occurs in "Andy amoureux." Behind Andy, after he runs into a woman, we can see the four women and two sailors that he will eventually dance with. They approach the camera with a simple phrase: they pliée and extend one leg to the side, slightly off the ground, before placing it back on the ground in front of them. They then repeat this motion on the other side, starting with the opposite leg. After one more repetition of this they then take three little steps, alternating the feet, and undulate their spine from the waist up as their arms extend slightly to the side with a feeling of Free Flow. The dancers then continue to repeat this whole phrase, which I will call the "catch-step melt," one more time before the shot changes. This phrase returns, with a simpler series of walking steps before the "melting" Free Flow portion, twice in "Les rencontres." Some sailors perform the phrase behind Andy and Maxence and a couple performs the phrase again just before Andy runs into Delphine. Finally, Andy and Solange perform an even more parsed down version of the phrase (without the undulating torso or arms) in the final number on the square (figures 40–43). This simple phrase, one of several variations[85] on walking in the film, provides an efficient way to create repetition and variation in the frame without the time or financial resources Demy and Maen would have needed to choreograph completely new material for each musical number.

Demy activates off-screen space as well through frequent screen entrances and exits. People fly by in the foreground in several numbers, notably at the end of the "Arrivée des camionneurs" and "Les rencontres" numbers. But there is also an activation of the background space with groups of dancers that stands apart from Hollywood films, and this stylistic trait is especially visible in numbers on the street. The "catch-step melt" phrase, for example, most often occurs in the far background of the numbers mentioned. In "Les rencontres" in particular, Demy has dancers performing multiple little choreographed phrases in the frame at the same time, creating many layers of movement at once. Although some of the aesthetic impulse of adding

choreography through the frame comes from *West Side Story*—the use of tightly framed camera movement to reveal and hide characters in the off-screen space, for example—the broader use of choreography in this way is not derivative of the Hollywood musical, the canonical films mentioned here in particular. In both "Andy amoureux" and "Les rencontres," Demy stages the dancers behind and around the main characters who are most often singing instead of dancing in these moments, and the subtle changes of staging allow the dancers in the background to be hidden and revealed at various moments. The four women and two sailors performing the "catch-step melt" in the background of "Andy amoureux," for example, become more visible as they slowly move in the center of the frame, in the lead space between Andy and the woman he has just bumped into.

This incorporation of dancers throughout the frame creates a generic departure from the norms of classical numbers as well. Demy's numbers in *Les Demoiselles* remain grounded in a cinematic space that does not shift to a supradiegetic level. Unlike the Hollywood films he draws on, which frequently feature a dream ballet or other subjective sequence with an "impossible" space, Demy creates a heightened diegesis through coordinating colors[86] but one that remains consistent across the film. The tight relationship between the content of the musical numbers and the narrative results in numbers that often skim the surface of diegetic reality. A spatial diegetic grounding, as a result, is one of the aesthetic constants upon which Demy's other stylistic elements can play. In contrast, the frequent incorporation of dancing pedestrians means that Demy's musical numbers are constantly infused with shifting supradiegetic realities through the additional performances of the narrative city's bystanders. The result is a mix of different supradiegetic levels simultaneously, creating a contrast between pedestrians who are dancing and the characters who are singing, often in the same frame. A communal supradiegetic shift of this sort is also less frequent in the American musicals that influenced Demy, where pedestrians either

do not experience a supradiegetic shift or are absent from the space altogether during musical numbers.[87] Consider, for example, the other customers at the amusement stand when Fred Astaire dances in "A Shine on Your Shoes" from *The Band Wagon*, the other children playing basketball in the "prologue" from *West Side Story*, or the irritated policeman and the man Gene Kelly gives his umbrella to in the titular song from *Singin' in the Rain*. Outside pedestrians walking by during interior musical numbers do not shift into dancing, though Demy stages and blocks them just as carefully. Communal shifts do occur consistently in exterior numbers, however.

The dancers' larger movements—jumps and running steps—become minimized somewhat because these motions frequently occur in the far background of compositions. Nevertheless, they add a sense of dynamism and energy to the frame and encourage the viewer to track the repetition of simple phrases as they re-appear throughout the film. The redundancy suggests a sense of mundanity the relatively small world Rochefort can offer to the film's *demoiselles* and hints at the sort of (vibrant but limited) cycle that the sisters are trying to escape from, contrasted by the freedom and vitality embodied by the carnies. But there is also a perceptual pleasure on the part of the viewer to notice the patterns as they evolve over the course of the film and the emergence of new details that repeated viewings reward. Rosenbaum discusses the staging of the choreography throughout the frame in a way that hints at the larger implications of such a stylistic decision when he writes that "*The Young Girls of Rochefort* often daringly places story and musical numbers on the screen simultaneously, mixing them in various ways and in different proportions. One of the stars may be walking down the street, for example, but the pedestrians around her are suddenly dancing, and she slips momentarily in and out of their choreography. . . . If songs and dances represent fantasy, and everyday activities reality, it can't be said that Demy ever privileges one over the other; he's more concerned with how fantasy and reality interact, or fail to interact." The heightened contrast between these different levels encourages the viewer to

be aware of both the dancing throughout the cinematic space as well as the actions of the film's main characters. The inclusion of a greater quantity of musical numbers gives Demy additional modules to play with patterns of repetition and variation.

Conclusion

Demy and his crew filmed two versions of *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* as planned: one in French and one in English. When the American distributors saw the English-language version, however, they decided it would not play well with American audiences and released the French version, marketed as an art-house film, instead (Sugar "Letter to Gilbert de Goldschmidt"). The English-language version of the film was not released as part of the initial run in the United States[88] and Warners–Seven Arts did not distribute *Les Demoiselles* in American theaters until April of 1968, where it had a "very poor" first two weeks at the box office, earning only $15,000 during that period (Sugar "Letter to de Goldschmidt"). Alan Williams suggests that Demy's film "was widely considered a pale imitation of *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*" as an explanation for its lack of commercial success, though he does not point to the source of these opinions (361). Gene Moskowitz did not share this view; his review for *Variety* of *Les Demoiselles* suggested the film would play well to domestic audiences and predicted "fine b.o. prospects" ("Les Demoiselles" 6). However, Warners-Seven Arts did not market the film aggressively enough, from the point of view of its French producers.[89] Eliot Hyman countered producer Gilbert de Goldschmidt's accusation of Warner Seven Art's lost faith with the reassurance that the distributor "used every effort available to us and the expenditure of substantial sums in advertising to try and make it work, but it just didn't" (de Goldschmidt "Letter to Eliot Hyman," Hyman "Letter to Gilbert de Goldschmidt"). *Les Demoiselles* received 1.5 million theater entries in France during its run (Simsi

162), but was not in the top twenty most-seen films in France during 1967, a year dominated by Louis de Funès comedies and James Bond, among others.[90] *Variety* also reports that *Les Demoiselles* didn't do particularly well in France or abroad (Moskowitz "French Like Cow and Gang Films" 30). The delayed American release and perceived lack of interest in *Les Demoiselles* from its American distributors may have stemmed from the company's state of flux, as Eliot Hyman acquired the assets to Warner Brothers Pictures Inc. on July 15, 1967, creating the newly-merged Warners Bros.–Seven Arts Ltd. (Morrison "News about Seven Arts," Hoyt 190, 191). Hyman's correspondence to de Goldschmidt in April of 1967 suggests as much, referencing the "overall Warner Bros. situation" as one of the reasons why Seven Arts had yet to make arrangements to distribute the film in the US (Hyman "Letter to Gilbert de Goldschmidt"). Seven Arts received the English version print of *Les Demoiselles* by May (de Goldschmidt "Letter to Eliot Hyman"), and while there is no correspondence available about Seven Arts' reaction to the English-language version, the silence speaks volumes. The film's complex formal structure is also at odds with what audiences were likely expecting from a film marketed as a colorful, upbeat musical.

The viewer's ability to recognize patterns of play with musical genre conventions provides much of the perceptual pleasure in the film. But, as Thompson and Bordwell have suggested is the case with films whose aesthetic patterns exist in excess of narrative motivations, an understanding and appreciation of parametric form requires a shift in viewing practices. In addition, knowledge of the film as existing under the generic umbrella of a musical sets up certain expectations that *Les Demoiselles* then playfully undermines. Viewers of this film have to reconcile their expectations of well-known genre norms with the shift of perceptual work required from a parametric narrative structure. As a result, Demy requires the film's viewer to expect the presence of classical musical genre norms while remaining open to deviations through a saturation of certain intrinsic musical traits. The significant difference in *Les Demoiselles* from

classical musicals is not so much that Demy "reinvents" the conventions, as Hill suggests ("Demy Monde: Jacques Demy" 94), as that he stretches them exponentially to create patterns of repetition and variation in narrative and stylistic elements over the course of his film.

Les Demoiselles is Demy's first substantial experimentation with the musical genre,[91] and throughout the film we can observe an acknowledgement of and departure from certain intrinsic norms of the form, especially where figure movement and choreography are concerned. The incorporation of dancing pedestrians to saturate the space of outdoor musical numbers creates an expressive vitality but also forces the viewer to take in different types of content simultaneously and portrays a blend of supradiegetic sung-and-danced content that is not widely visible in the American genre. Some of this repeated choreographed content "[assimilates] Yank musical ideas and [uses] them in original transpositions" (Moskowitz "Les Demoiselles" 6), adding to the film's perceptual overload, creating an identification game through the numerous film citations, and hinting at character parallels between Demy's film and his American precedents. Demy also draws on the musical convention of parallel numbers to suggest romantic pairings, expanding this intrinsic norm of the musical through extensive repetition and variation as well as a rigorous but subtle use of figure movement and staging to suggest romantic compatibility.

Through choreography the film suggests that Rochefort and its inhabitants are infused with energy by the carnies and other temporary travelers. There are parallels to *Les Demoiselles'* impact on the actual town of Rochefort, whose economy was revitalized by the production's presence both by employment of locals and by the increased tourism generated by the presence of stars like Catherine Deneuve ("How 7-Arts" 67, Varda *Les Demoiselles ont eu 25 ans*). But it also serves as a reminder that the film's outsiders and their more vigorous and technical choreography was performed (and created) by foreigners from England and the United States given that France was unable to supply Demy's demand for such talent. Noticing these patterns, in the repetition of

choreography, especially, leads the viewer to notice the greater technical prowess of the American dancers in certain moments,[92] but it should also serve as a reminder that Demy's film, while related to a Hollywood-originated genre form, is not an American production,[93] despite being partially funded by an American distributor. *Les Demoiselles* was not made in the same studio-era mode of production as the films Demy cites, films that had the vast studio support of a vertically integrated industry and the advantage of dancers and choreographers coming from a production context with a thirty-year history of making musical films. This context allows us to better appreciate and understand the necessary choices and compromises that making a film with extensive choreography required within these aesthetic and financial constraints.

Demy took a chance at making a musical film in a country without the infrastructure to support such an endeavor (and arguably without an audience to support it financially), ultimately leading to a transnational collaborative production. The improbability of Dorléac and Deneuve as professional musicians and dancers also fits into the logical, self-contained absurdity of film that we observe throughout in the color coordination between the walls of the city and the costumes as well as the characters' bizarre reactions to stimuli.[94] One critic sees *Les Demoiselles* as imagining how "one would dance through life," adding that "the choreography imagined by Norman Maen does not seek to copy at all costs the spectacle of Hollywood films but powers its inspiration from quotidian gestures" (Maille 10, 11).[95] *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*'s aesthetic and narrative form floats above a realistic or diegetic motivation for its fabula events without quite moving out of reach. *Peau d'âne* pushes this impulse even further.

3

A hybrid form beneath a charming skin

Peau d'ane

French children love Jacques Demy's adaptation of Charles Perrault's fairy tale "Peau d'âne," but the film leaves many adults scratching their heads. It takes a healthy dose of suspended disbelief to accept and engage with a diegetic universe in which a king is determined to marry his daughter and tells her so while sitting on a throne shaped like a giant white cat as the princess kneels before him in an extravagant dress embodying pleasant weather, complete with billowing white clouds that move over the blue fabric. Some audiences are put off by the filmmaker's playful treatment of incest, others by Demy's unabashed narrative and stylistic anachronisms.[96]

In accordance with the Perrault version of the tale, a series of events are launched in the Blue Kingdom when the King (Jean Marais) declares he will marry his daughter (Catherine Deneuve). The princess' fairy godmother (Delphine Seyrig), the Fée des Lilas (Lilac Fairy), helps her escape wearing a cloak made of the king's magical donkey skin, which hides her beauty. While working as a scullion (*souillon*) in the neighboring Red Kingdom she encounters and falls in love with its prince (Jacques Perrin) who falls in love with her as well and conducts a kingdom-wide search to find her. He is able to identify her from the ring she has sent him (hidden in a cake), which fits only her unusually slender ring finger. The film concludes with a royal wedding, and the princess' father arrives (via helicopter) to congratulate his daughter, bringing with him the Fée des Lilas who has persuaded him to marry her instead.

Peau d'âne stands apart generically from *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* (1967) and *Trois places pour le 26* (1988) because of its hybrid form. Demy creates an eclectic aesthetic in *Peau d'âne* (1970) by

drawing on several cinematic traditions from a number of different historical periods to create the tone of his film, which not only appeals to children, through its playful songs and visual embellishments, but also resonates with film sophisticates who recognize the stylistic references. He draws on generic traditions of both the musical and the fairy-tale genre and uses figure movement, in particular, to signal the different functions of both traditions in the formal progression of his storytelling.

Peau d'âne equally provides a methodological opportunity to explore the fine line between the choreography of dance and the choreography of figure movement. Cinematic analytical approaches traditionally separate the two,[97] using acting techniques and theory to study performance more generally and a knowledge of specific dance forms to study dancers,[98] and only one uses Laban Movement Analysis—in a limited way—as an tool for analyzing acting performance.[99] An application of LMA's techniques creates a bridge across disciplines, and the ability to analyze across performance styles is particularly necessary to understanding the complexity of *Peau d'âne* aesthetic. While Demy incorporates aesthetic references in *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, these moments are less central to the narrative than the extensive parallels he builds between musical numbers in the film to hint at potential romantic relationships. In contrast, *Peau d'âne* contains fewer parallel sequences within the film; Demy builds many of his parallels outward instead to cinematic sequences from other films and aesthetic traditions that influenced him. The qualities of his actors' movement serves to imbue his female protagonist with greater agency while also building and adding nuance to the esoteric diegesis of the film.

My analysis of the way Demy weaves various aesthetic influences into his adaptation of Perrault's tale also reveals the manual labor and class conflict underlying the glamour and polish. Superficially, Demy's film may appear off-set from contemporary French norms because of its fantasy premise, something that earned the filmmaker distain from certain cinematic

contemporaries (Simsolo 76). A deeper understanding of *Peau d'âne*'s formal patterns reveals that—even more so than in *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*—Demy's narrative and stylistic choices reflect and critique social realities of the period. They also function as a rigorous aesthetic embellishment of the cinematic universe for which Demy is better remembered, now in a hybrid genre format that parallels in many ways his musical aesthetic but links the film to American and French art cinema.

A hybrid mode of production

Demy's choreographed stylistic choices create distinctions between the two generic traditions blended in the film: the fairy tale and the musical. Not all of the stylized movement occurs in portions of the film that are easily distinguished as musical numbers. Instead, some of the moments of heightened movement seem to correspond with expectations of the fairy tale more so than with expectations of the musical genre, opening up opportunities for a discussion of the hybridization of those two genres.

The importance of the fairy tale aspect of *Peau d'âne* dominates both popular and scholarly writings about the film, as scholars and critics have yet to discuss *Peau d'âne* in a musical genre context.[100] Jean-Pierre Berthomé and Anne E. Duggan are interested in the draw from different historical periods for the costumes, the film's relationship to Cocteau's cinematic aesthetic, and the psychoanalytical implications of certain themes and motifs in the film, incest and the importance of mirrors especially. Duggan is particularly invested in studying the film's relationship to Perrault's tale, since a focus on fairy tale traditions through the lens of queer theory is at the core of her book.[101] A discussion of tensions between the musical genre and fairy tale aesthetics is therefore not part of her argument. Waldron focuses on the sense of

disillusionment present in Demy's fairy tales and how that tonal shift fits into the filmmaker's larger cinematic universe (82–115). Rodney Hill's analysis of the film makes only passing reference to the tradition of "musical films" that he acknowledges *Peau d'âne* belongs to, when he points out that in Legrand's music "diegetic and nondiegetic distinctions are often blurred" ("Donkey Skin" 41). The trade press is no different; *Variety*'s review of the film describes it as a fairy tale and includes no discussion of it as a musical (Moskowitz "Peau d'âne" 16). Despite this gap in research on *Peau d'âne*, analyzing the ways in which Demy uses musical genre conventions in the film is essential for a thorough understanding of the film's narrative operations and reveals a greater level of generic sophistication in his specific blend of fairy tale and musical conventions. Even as a fairy-tale adaptation of Perrault's "Peau d'âne," however, the film remains unusual.

Demy's take on "Peau d'âne" remains one of the few film adaptations of Perrault's fairy tale, although since Demy's 1970 version a French feature-length animated adaptation was made in 2009. Pathé Frères produced two short, silent versions of the tale, one sold in America under the name "A Princess in Disguise," in 1904, and the other as "Donkey Skin," in 1908.[102] Fairy tale scholar Jack Zipes discusses two other filmic versions, a Soviet adaptation, *Donkey Skin,* from 1982 (directed by Nadezhda Kosheverova) and an 1988 version by Steven Barron called *Sapsorrow* that ran as part of Jim Henson's TV series *The Storyteller* (220). Zipes suggests that the lack of extensive film adaptations results from the theme of incest at the core of *Peau d'âne*'s narrative "not [making] for a good subject for children, not to mention adults, and very few writers and filmmakers have dared to touch the topic" (219). He also suggests that the lack of attention may stem from the fact that *Peau d'âne* is less well known, but this was certainly not the case in French culture, where the tale was much loved by both adults and children, before the release of Demy's film and even more so afterwards.[103] Duggan also refutes Zipes' claim, noting that the tale was very popular in France (45).

Demy's film also stands out during this period because of his choice to present a live-action fairy tale, in France, especially. The voice-over for the "Pour le Cinéma" television program on *Peau d'âne* comments dryly that "French filmmaking does not like magic."[104] There are a few precedents for live-action films of this sort, however. Most notable is Jean Cocteau's *La Belle et la Bête* (1946), which had a significant influence on Demy's film. There have also been many iterations of Roger and Hammerstein's musical adaptation of *Cinderella*, which was originally broadcast as a live CBS musical television event in 1957; and the 1961 musical *Babes in Toyland* features Mother Goose characters. The Soviet Union had an extensive tradition of live-action fairy tales during this period (some of which were also musicals), like Nadezhda Kosheverova and Mikhail Shapiro's 1947 *Zolushka / Cinderella* and Gennadiy Kazanskiy's 1967 *Snezhnaya koroleva / The Snow Queen*. These Soviet films share aesthetic similarities with Demy's *Peau d'âne*, through their use of color photography, optical and trick effects to convey a sense of magic, and the bending of musical and fairy-tale conventions, but whether or not Demy was able to see these films in France before making *Peau d'âne* remains unlikely. Several other films also evoke fairy tales and incorporate certain aspects of them into their plots, without fully conforming to the fantastical qualities of the original tale: Powell and Pressburger's *The Red Shoes* (1948), Fritz Lang's adaptation of the "Bluebeard" story, *Secret Beyond the Door…* (1947), and a Czechoslovakian film by Jaromil Jires that blends the stories of "Alice in Wonderland" and "Little Red Riding Hood," *Valerie and her Week of Wonders* (1970). This is a rather condensed list, especially when compared to the animated fairy tale features—not to mention shorts—that Walt Disney's film company alone produced before 1970: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), *Pinocchio* (1940), *Fun and Fancy Free* (1947), *Cinderella* (1950), and *Sleeping Beauty* (1959). To this we can add RKO's *Hansel and Gretel: An Opera Fantasy* (1954, Michael Myerberg and John Paul), the German *Adventures of Prince Achmed* (1926, Lotte Reiniger, Carl Koch), the Russian *The Scarlet Flower* (1952, Lev Atamanov, an

adaptation of *Beauty and the Beast*) and *The Snow Queen* (1957, Lev Atamanov and Nikolay Petrovich Fyodorov), and Paul Grimault's *Le Roi et L'Oiseau* (1952) in France, to name a few.

If we take "fairy tales" in the most exclusive sense—considering only ones in which fairies or magic actually appear as part of the original tales—adaptations of fairy tales in Hollywood before 1970, for the most part, existed primarily in the animated medium and were most associated with Walt Disney's production company. One additional exception is the 1955 musical *The Glass Slipper*, which provides an effective comparison to Demy's film. This MGM-produced film is a "Cinderella" fairy-tale musical staring Leslie Caron (as Ella) and Michael Wilding (as the prince), with balletic choreography by Roland Petit and dancing by the Ballet de Paris company. The film eliminates most magical motivation for actions, however, grounding the fairy godmother's actions in diegetically plausible actions rather than magic until she disappears on-screen at the end, and saves the diegetic shifts for the musical numbers, in conventional musical genre fashion.

Today this dominance of animation in fairy tale cinema is no longer the case, thanks to the emergence of a Hollywood cycle of live-action (and CGI) fairy tale adaptions in film and television—such as *The Brothers Grimm (2005), Snow White and the Huntsman* (2012) and its sequel *The Huntsman: Winter's War* (2016), *Hansel & Gretel: Witch Hunters* (2013), *Maleficent* (2014), *Into the Woods* (2014), *Cinderella* (2015), *Beauty and the Beast* (2017), *Once Upon a Time* (2011-present), and *Grimm* (2011-present)—that explore alternative perspectives on the well-known narratives by presenting information from differing points of view (especially from the standpoint of the stories' villains), occasionally situating the characters in modern settings, and giving greater agency to the tales' female characters. In 1970, however, Demy's choice was still rather unusual, as was Cocteau's in 1946.

Demy's fairy-tale adaptation includes the relevant fairy tale tropes that viewers would associate with the storytelling tradition, generally, and Perrault's tale, in particular. *Peau d'âne*'s

primary fairy-tale aspects are the Blue King's magical donkey, whose skin will later serve as a disguise for his daughter; the threat of incest when the same king falls in love with the princess and attempts to marry her; the (magical) help the princess receives from her fairy godmother, the Fée des Lilas, including instructions to request complicated and costly dresses from her father as proof of his love; and the ring the princess slips inside the cake she bakes for the prince she loves—who spies her as she hides in the forest—and which will allow him to summon her to court. Jack Zipes explores the influence of literary fairy tales on filmmaking in *The Enchanted Screen: The Unknown History of Fairy Tale Films*. He suggests there are multiple ways of categorizing films that draw on fairy tales but defines this particular type of cinema broadly as "any kind of cinematic representation recorded on film, on videotape, or in digital form that employs motifs, characters, and plots generally found in the oral and literary genre of the fairy tale, to re-create a known tale or to create and realize cinematically an original screenplay with recognizable features of a fairy tale" (9). He points out that the availability of different technologies will affect a filmmaker's ability to portray certain aspects of the motifs and themes that exist in fairy tales. He also argues that most fairy tale films do rely on a single version (which he refers to as a "hypotext") of any particular tale, resulting the fairy tale as a "flexible or fluid text" (8). Zipes discusses two of Demy's films—*Peau d'âne* and *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* (1972)—and considers both failures. Presumably this is because of his stance on the adaptation (or as he puts it, translation) of fairy tales to the cinematic medium:

> Every filmic adaptation of a fairy tale is a re-creation to be judged on its own merits and, of course, within the context of a critical standards and position-taking by artists, critics, and audiences in a given culture and period. *However* [emphasis mine], translation also brings with it a certain ethical responsibility to the source, hypotext, and audience. If a filmmaker claims or owns up to the fact that he or she is adapting a story that does *not* belong to him or her, he

> or she is obliged, in my opinion, to treat the tale as he or she would like to be treated, that is, interpreted and understood on some level (11).

Zipes' objection to Demy's interpretation of *Peau d'âne*, which he calls a "curious and tantalizing failure," lies with the theme of incest: "it is unclear at the end of the film whether or not Demy winks at the serious nature of incest" (219). He misunderstands Demy's aesthetic goals, however, and misses an important aspect of Demy's appropriation of the tale when he suggests in his synopsis that the prince "discovers her [Peau d'âne] by chance" (220) in the forest.

Evaluative judgments of Demy's work carry less weight without a more thorough contextualization within Demy's corpus and the understanding that his formal impulse is to blend contradictory aesthetics, often in ways that may not appeal to wide swaths of audiences. Zipes, while he does point out that Demy tells his story with the help of dance and songs, also does not discuss the film in the context of the musical genre, despite an earlier mention that fairy tales can be "transformed" into musicals, as was done to many of Disney's fairy tale adaptations or James Lapine and Steven Sondheim's Broadway musical *Into the Woods* (1991) (9). Because Demy deliberately structures his film as both a musical and a fairy tale, traditions that equally rely on a sense of fantasy and heightened stylization, an examination of how Demy isolates and blends his stylistic interpretation of both genres gives us a better understanding of the intrinsic norms of the film.

Calling *Peau d'âne* a fairy-tale musical evokes Rick Altman's musical genre sub-category from *The American Film Musical*, even though Altman's chapter on this sub-genre avoids discussion of the literary tradition from which his category borrows its name. His fairy-tale musical is instead characterized by narrative structures of reuniting or bringing order to a divided kingdom (149), the importance of the American and European operetta tradition (131), and a playful use of sexual innuendo (140). The latter two characteristics are not the primary driving forces in *Peau*

d'âne's narrative. The film lacks the "regimental chorus," waltzes, and the musical influences from the operetta tradition that Altman outlines as integral to this sub-genre (133–136). It also lacks a pervasive and sophisticated use of sexual innuendo in its dialogue, and an explicit sexuality is absent from the movement qualities of the characters. Sex is implied at times and there is an attention to physicality that draws attention to the body, but the emphasis in the choreographed movement is not on sexual desire. There is, however, a sense of a kingdom in "disarray" in which "the rulers' love life is deficient—a situation lamented by the entire kingdom"—or in this instance, kingdoms—which must be narratively resolved and is, Altman argues, at the root of the fairy tale sub-genre (149). *Peau d'âne* therefore bears similarities to Altman's model, but to think of it only as such would be overly simplistic.

Demy's approach to these two traditions of the fairy tale and the musical genre plays instead with the relationships between the two in order to create additional supradiegetic shifts in subtle ways that illustrate the ways in which Demy shifts agency in the story to the princess. The generic blending visible in *Peau d'âne* is coupled with a broader aesthetic palette than is seen (or heard) in *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*. These stem in part from Demy's time in Los Angeles, which exposed the filmmaker to new formal strategies which he subsequently incorporated into his musical fairy tale.

After finishing *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, Demy spent two years in Los Angeles with his wife and fellow filmmaker Agnès Varda. These years introduced Demy to a "new artistic and cinematographic scene" (Orléan "Los Angeles Trip" 114).[105] While in California, he made *Model Shop* (1969) for Columbia Pictures, a film with a strong anti-Vietnam war sentiment that incorporates Demy's fascination with the city of Los Angeles and his immersion in the American countercultural aesthetic of the late 1960s. The Los Angeles-based band Spirit provided the soundtrack, and Varda and Demy befriended Jim Morrison of *The Doors* during their time in

California (he would later come visit Demy on the set of *Peau d'âne*). The couple attended love-ins and befriended countercultural icons like Andy Warhol superstar Viva and *Hair*'s Gerome Ragni and James Rado; all three would also star in Agnès Varda's *Lions Love (… and* Lies) (1969). Demy also expressed great admiration for Warhol's *Bike Boy* (1967-68) and *Blue Movie* (1968), which he saw while in Los Angeles and considered some of the most interesting work emerging from American cinema at the time (Simsolo 78).

Despite his desire to continue working in Hollywood, Demy was unsuccessful in getting another American film project off the ground. Columbia's producers were expecting a big, colorful musical *à la Demy*, not the brooding, slow reflection on Los Angeles culture that was *Model Shop*. The film's financial failure (Ramaeker 44, 45) made Demy a risky investment, and his project pitches—including a musical about Californian counterculture based on the "Tristan and Isolde" myth[106]—were turned down. With Catherine Deneuve on board to star in a musical fairy tale, he returned instead to France in 1970 to make *Peau d'âne*.

Fully executing Demy's vision for a colorful fantasy-and-musical adaptation of Perrault's fairy tale was not cheap. As with *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, financing the film was a struggle. Demy initially considered making the film in Hollywood, and wrote to Columbia Pictures Division president Stanley Schneider to ask for his help on the film, without success (Demy "Letter to Stanley Schneider"). Finding funding from within France was equally difficult, in all likelihood because Demy's aesthetic was once more out of sync with French production trends. Alison White's *French Cinema in the 1970s* discusses a trend called "le nouveau naturel" ("the new natural") that French magazines suggest emerged during this period. These films focused on young workers and featured stories about problems in their social or socio-economic lives, paired with an equally sparse film style (74). Demy mentions in an interview that he was aware his contemporaries would likely criticize his film for lacking an explicitly political message during a

time when many French films were politically engaged (Simsolo 76). The film's relative chastity was also at odds with the developing trend for sexually explicit content in French cinema. Alan Williams suggests that fiction films made in France began to include more sexual content after the release of Louis Malle's *Les Amants* (1958), the impulse culminating in 1974 with President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's loosening of censorship regulations (393, 394). The presence of Catherine Deneuve and Jean Marais in the cast lent Demy's film a certain level of prestige, however, and eventually producer Mag Bodard secured a coproduction deal between her production company, Parc Film, and Marianne Productions, the French affiliate of Paramount Pictures (Berthomé 239).

The final budget ran close to five million francs, a "whopping," "very big" budget for France, as *Variety* confirms[107] (Moskowitz "Gal Producers" 37). Even after Demy and Deneuve put their salaries into rotation (Berthomé 239) to further plump the investment, this figure was still low when taking into account the elaborate set designs, costumes, and in-camera trick effects that Demy was counting on to implement his ideas. Demy recounts with bitterness the aesthetic sacrifices he had to make: "I had to cut one out of two set pieces, one out of two extras, one out of two costumes, to be able to make the film. That meant truly impoverishing it when it's a film that demanded money because it's a film about magic and magic comes at a cost" (Berthomé 240).[108] The financial difficulties also lost Demy his long-time set designer, Bernard Evein, who dropped out of the production, Berthomé suggests, when the extra funds needed to create the original vision for the sets didn't come through (Berthomé 239, 240). In regards to this film as well as Demy's 1985 film *Parking*, which underwent even more dramatic financial setbacks, Evein stated that he preferred abandoning the production at the risk of damaging their friendship rather than "give [Demy] a set design that I would be ashamed of afterwards" (quoted in

Berthomé 361).[109] The film continued with sketches and set designs by American psychedelic artist Jim Leon instead (Varda-Demy 64), furthering the international aesthetic influence.

Demy's fascination with contemporary American trends in music and art influenced his aesthetic in *Peau d'âne*, which is especially visible in the film's color design. The blue characters and statues in Peau d'âne's castle are an explicit reference to Klein's signature blue shade (Pace 151), and Leon's psychedelic aesthetic is noticeable particularly in the colorful and patterned designs for Peau d'âne's bedroom (figure 3). However, Demy's process of designing and rehearsing the script also varied from *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*'s pre-production. Before production began on the film, Demy assembled the whole cast for a full table read of the script, a process he had experienced while working in Los Angeles but which was a rare occurrence in France at the time. As Demy describes it, "I did something that is never done in France: before the shoot, I gathered the whole cast at home. We spent several afternoons working on the script, discussing roles and characters. As a result, everyone knew each other before coming on set. Their adherence to the film was perfect" (Simsolo 72).[110] Demy's incorporation of musical elements into his *Peau d'âne* script also progressed quite differently than they did for *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*. Whereas the lyrics and musical number sections were an integral part of early drafts for the latter, the writing of song lyrics and incorporation of musical numbers appear only in later drafts of *Peau d'âne*. The first script of *Peau d'âne* lacks any incorporation of musical content, though notes on the side of his handwritten script include phrases such as "song here?" ("ici chanson?") and "sung?" ("chantant?") written next to the princess' conversation with her fairy godmother and the prince's dialogue after seeing the princess in the forest, respectively. The first comment is underlined with a different colored pen, suggesting that such content was confirmed in Demy's re-reading of the script. In contrast, the use of slow-motion ("ralenti") is a clear part of the outline in the scene showing Peau d'âne arriving at the farm ("Scènario manuscrit (1ère

version)"). The written description of the "Rêves Secrets d'un Prince et d'une Princesse" does not yet structure it as a musical number either, though it became an important part of Demy's experimentation with a certain Hollywood musical schema. Demy's mode of production for the film emphasizes that he continued to develop and vary his craft with each new project just as he was experimenting with new aesthetic methods. This stylistic experimentation is especially visible in *Peau d'âne*'s generic departure from classical Hollywood musical norms, which distances the film from conventional American musical practices as well as from the techniques Demy employs in *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*.

Rather than creating a duality of stylistic norms between the diegesis of the narrative and the supradiegesis of the musical numbers—as is expected of musical films—Demy creates multiple sets of stylistic norms. One exists for the musical numbers, one for moments that become infused with magic, and one for a representation of the film's baseline diegesis. The latter, it must be pointed out, Demy had already embellished through elaborate costumes, rhyming couplets in his dialogue, a playful use of puns, and other stylistic strategies. Berthomé suggests that Demy divides his film into three "fundamentally different" worlds: that of the kingdom of the red castle, the kingdom of the blue castle, and the forest where Peau d'âne's hut is located (251).[111] However, I argue that we can understand Demy's film as moving through these three registers of stylistic departures based on the presence of certain characters (the Fée des Lilas and the princess, especially) that cause stylistic shifts regardless of their location. And their different, carefully constructed, movement vocabularies separate the moments that evoke the musical genre and those that evoke the magical qualities of the fairy tale.

In *Peau d'âne*, Demy creates his signature eclectic aesthetic by drawing on various cinematic traditions to create the unique tone of his film—one that appeals to children in its simplicity and aesthetic qualities but also resonates with oddities. A cursory glance at *Peau d'âne* might not

suggest that the figure movement is deliberately choreographed to a narrative or expressive end. Demy's staging of the musical numbers in this film does not look like dance in a traditional sense, especially when compared to the dancing seen in *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, *Trois places pour le 26*, or the classical Hollywood musical. As a close study of Demy's organization of figure movement—danced and staged—reveals, however, even the most casual-looking aspects of Demy's aesthetic are meticulously planned and multifunctional. *Peau d'âne*'s movement aesthetic situates the film within an eclectic constellation of films that exist outside of the musical genre but still emphasize a stylized use of narratively significant figure movement: 1940s French cinema, American character animation, and the countercultural movement in America in which the rise of post-modern dance was prominent. An important aspect of *Peau d'âne*'s form is its references to a wide range of cinematic and artistic traditions, and Rosalie Varda-Demy and Emmanuel Pierrat assert that, "*Peau d'âne*'s brilliant originality holds up precisely because of the richness of influences that Jacques Demy adapted for his own purposes" (14).[112] Demy further expands the eclectic historical blend of performance styles in the film by including several scenes with medieval period dance. Instead of using such court and folk dances as they were originally intended, however—as a way for courtship to occur between couples in a society where private meetings were taboo—Demy uses these dances for their decorative functions, instead. And while he largely deviates from classical musical genre norms in *Peau d'âne,* Demy also puts his own idiosyncratic spin on a well-established musical number schema with the "Rêves Secrets d'un Prince et d'une Princesse" sequence while also deliberately blending the conventions of fairy tales and musicals. As with *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, the figure movement and dancing in *Peau d'âne* shapes the expressiveness of the actors to reinforce the musical and fairy-tale components of the narrative through stylistically distinguishable movement choices. Through a closer analysis of his figure movement choreography, we can observe how Demy skillfully creates a hybrid film that is

even more fantastical and also more grounded in contemporary French social issues than scholars give him credit for.

Decorative Court Dancing

Two identifiable moments of dance in *Peau d'âne* are the historical dances performed by secondary characters. The first occurs as the prince is visiting his kingdom; the villagers perform a lively dance for him as he sits with his courtiers. The second occurs as part of the *Bal des chats et des oiseaux*—the Ball of the Cats and Birds—that the King and Queen organize for the prince upon his return (figures 1 and 2). One aspect of these dances that remains unclear is who choreographed, or set, them. Presumably a professional choreographer staged the medieval dances for the prince's village visit and the ball. A choreographer, Nicole Dehayes, is listed in the film's credits, but no mention of her appears in Demy's archives. Little information is available to confirm whether Dehayes set just the medieval dances, or the musical numbers as well. However, a closer study of the figure movement throughout *Peau d'âne*—not just that found in the musical numbers—strongly suggests that Demy was himself structuring the rigorous movement patterns of his actors. These medieval dances draw from the French court dances and English country dances of the 16th and 17th century and as such help Demy situate his film within several—conflicting—historical periods. However, their historical ties also provide a reminder of the function of those dances historically—socialization among men and women—allowing for a closer analysis of how Demy and the filmmakers who influenced him used such dance in their films.

The two dances come from different historical periods, furthering the impression of eclectic blending that Demy frequently utilizes in his film aesthetic, which is reinforced in these scenes by

his choices in costume style. Berthomé discusses the various historical periods of the costumes, suggesting that the princess has dresses evoking the court of Louis XV, while the prince's clothes evoke Henri II's court, and the valets' costumes evoke the Middle Ages (245).[113] And, as multiple scholars have noted,[114] the Fée des Lilas' aesthetic is atemporal—like much of Demy's cinema—blending different historical periods, not only in her dress but also in her taste in vocabulary (she makes reference to batteries in discussion), poetry (the books she gives to the king of the blue castle are by Guillaume Apollinaire and Jean Cocteau), and mode of transportation (she arrives at the princess' wedding in a helicopter). But the Fée des Lilas is not the only one to have costumes that exist outside of historical conformity; the princess' sky dress in particular, with its projected images of rolling clouds onto a dress made with fabric from a projection screen, stands out as a historical deviation. These anachronisms in costuming are paralleled by strong stylistic combinations in the set design, most visible in the contrast between the medieval castle interiors and their set dressings in set designer Jim Leon's psychedelic style (figure 3).

While identifying many of the historical origins of the film's costumes is straightforward, pinpointing the precise origins of each dance is difficult. Dance manuals from the time, like Thoinot Arbeau's *Orchesography: 16th-Century French Dance from Court to Countryside* (originally published in 1589) and Pierre Rameau's *The Dancing Master* (originally published in 1725), are sometimes vague about the facings of the dancers relative to one another and are able to document only a limited number of variations on a relatively small number of dances performed at balls and masquerades. Nonetheless, certain similarities between the steps described in these dance manuals and the steps executed in *Peau d'âne* are apparent.

The villagers performing for the prince execute steps resembling those of the galliard dance, which Arbeau describes as similar to the tordion (another dance of the period) except with steps that are "performed higher and more vigorously" (100). The villagers in *Peau d'âne* repeat only

two steps in their simple dance. Pairs of men and women shift their weight onto one foot and hop, raising the other leg and bending the knee so the foot hovers several feet off the ground (figure 1). They then repeat the motion with the other leg, keeping their elbows bent, with hands on hips, the whole time. This step resembles the *entretaille*, a step used in the galliard and tordion, "when the dancer transfers his weight from one foot to another while the foot previously on the ground is raised in the air in front of him" (Arbeau 87). In this simple dance, the pairs of villagers face one another, and while Arbeau does not describe the facings that are generally used in these dances, he does mention that a good dancer, when faced with lack of space, "will dance more gracefully by inclining first your right side then your left side towards the damsel as though you were fencing" (104) which the dancers also do in *Peau d'âne*. The proper form of the galliard comprises different steps, however, and Michel Legrand has given the name of the music for this dance "Rigodon à la ferme." A similar, hop-like step characterizes the rigodon (also called rigaudon or rigadoon), a dance also with French origins that served as both a folk dance (associated the south of France) and a court dance that rose to prominence during Louis XIV's reign. The duple meter dance is also characterized primarily by its pattern of alternating hop steps like those performed by the villagers (Little). Even though Meredith Ellis Little describes the rigodon as a relatively simple dance, it presumably comprises more than the two steps we see performed for the prince in the village, emphasizing that historical accuracy is not the most important factor in Demy's aesthetic choices.

The dance seen in the *bal des chats et des oiseaux* is more complex and seems to blend several of the 16th century dances Arbeau describes: the gracefulness and dignified nature of the basse dance and pavan with some weight-shifting steps from the galliard or tordion. The female dancers are dressed as birds, the men as cats, and we see most of the dance from a high angle camera position, approaching the top shot that Busby Berkeley was fond of using when filming

his dance sequences (figure 2). The dance begins with the birds circling behind the cats towards the left. Their four steps bring them in line with the cats and they take the hands of the partner on either side of them, creating a large closed circle. Without much of a pause, the birds then continue walking into the circle with another four steps, by the end of which they have turned to face their cat partner. Each of these sets of four steps resemble Arbeau's description of the *double* step: "in the first bar one must advance a step with the left foot, in the second bar a step with the right foot, while in the third one must advance with the left foot again. And in the fourth bar, the right foot must be placed beside the left with the heels together" (56). Arbeau emphasizes this step's importance to the basse and pavan dances. The pavan, which shares the greatest similarities to the dance performed in this scene is described by Arbeau's student as "charming and dignified, and well suited to honourable persons" (59). The next step, however, corresponds more closely to the gailliard or tordion. Facing their partners, the cats shift their weight to the left foot and lift their right foot, crossing it over the left ankle—what Arbeau calls a *pied croisé droit*—and then repeat the motion on the other side, uncrossing the right foot, shifting their weight to it, and lifting and crossing the left foot—a *pied croisé gauche*. They then uncross the left foot and place it behind them for a bow as their partners curtsey, a *révérence* according to Arbeau, which is frequently used in the pavan and basse dance. The birds then take four more steps—another *double*—to again create a closed circle with the birds facing outwards this time. A cut changes our spatial relationship to the dancers, but the birds continue to walk, circling once again to the left (which now moves them screen right with the change of camera position) to presumably repeat the same pattern with a new partner.

The dance performed at the ball contains links to several 16th century court dances without neatly fitting into any one category. The choreographic choices in which the female partner circles the man instead of vice versa seems contrary to the conventions of the period, for though

Arbeau is vague about the relationships between partners (when they are holding hands; when they should face one another or face ahead; and so on) and the relationships between partners and the larger group of dancers, he frequently mentions that one of the male partner's roles is to guide and adhere to the dainty steps of his partner. An editor's note also suggests that pavans were used more as processional dances, for entrances and the like, because they apparently did not have a fixed choreography to memorize (216). Arbeau emphasizes that the pavan is appropriately paired with dancers wearing cloaks or long gowns, "walking with decorum and measured gravity." He adds that the pavan is often used in masquerades, like the one we see in *Peau d'âne*, to "herald the entrance of the gods and goddesses in their triumphal chariots or emperors and kings in full majesty" (59). However, the dance here is not used for an entrance as the dancers are already in place when the number begins.

Both of the medieval numbers in *Peau d'âne* bear resemblance, without fully conforming, to court dances, which adheres to Demy's aesthetic impulse to blend and rework references to multiple historical periods. Moreover, the two dances come from different periods of court dancing. The villagers' dance, which most closely resembles the rigodon, evokes the 17th century, whereas the pavan-like dance performed at the ball is a 16th century dance. Arbeau mentions that the pavan is also somewhat "out of fashion" when describing it (57), and the editor's note situates its origins in 1508, suggesting it is an older dance than some of the others Arbeau discusses (216). The result is that Demy's film spans at least a century of court and folk dancing and even slides in a jab at the nobility by having the village peasants dance a more modern dance than the ball's aristocratic attendees.

Peau d'âne, however, is not Demy's only film that uses social dancing instead of dance styles like the ballet-jazz fusion from *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* or the more modern-jazz dancing in *Trois places pour le 26*. Notably, Genvieve and Guy go dancing early in *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*; in

addition to the jazz and ballet dance styles seen in *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, the couples Solange/Andy and Yvonne/Simon waltz on the square at the end of the film; Yves Montand and his former lover Marie-Hélène dance to one of Montand's songs in *Trois places pour le 26*; and Oscar invites a woman to dance as a way of irritating her betrothed at her engagement party in *Lady Oscar*. Several of the French filmmakers that Demy admired and evoked in *Peau d'âne* also included scenes of social dancing in their films. An extended ball sequence occurs near the beginning of Marcel Carné's *Les Visiteurs du Soir* and a montage of balls show the female lead and her future lover growing closer in Max Ophüls' *Madame de*…. Cocteau's *La Belle et la Bête* contains no balls or social dance scenes per se, but when Belle and La Bête go for a walk on the latter's grounds, he supports his hand with hers in a way that resembles a couple in a court dance (figure 4).

More importantly, many of these instances incorporate their social dancing in such a way as to evoke its original societal function, as discussed by Arbeau and Rameau. Dancing was historically the only situation in which it was socially acceptable for unmarried men and women to be (relatively) alone, making it the primary way that a couple could get to know one another, as Perrault illustrates in his fairy tale "Cinderella." Arbeau suggests that "most of the authorities hold that dancing is a kind of mute rhetoric by which the orator, without uttering a word, can make himself understood by his movements and persuade the spectators that he is gallant and worthy to be acclaimed, admired and loved." According to Arbeau, however, the act of dancing itself was also a way of evaluating a potential wife or husband (though his discussions focus more on the polishing of the latter). He argues that dance is a "useful device for ascertaining whether a person be deformed by the gout or otherwise defective of limb. Also whether they be comely and modest. We read that Clisthenes, having seen Hippoclides dancing and swaggering in an impudent manner, refused him his daughter in marriage, saying that he had danced his wedding

away" (16–18). In the author's preface to Rameau's book, a similar sentiment is expressed: "Dancing gives a Grace to the Advantages we receive from Nature, by regulating all the Motions of the Body, and strengthens it in its just Positions; and if it doth not quite efface the Defects we are born with, it softens or conceals them" (xx). It seems unsurprising, then, that many of the styles of court dance that Arbeau describes consist of simple steps and repeating patterns, allowing the dancers ample time and cognitive power for conversation, though many other court and folk dances were more complex.

This idea is conveyed clearly in Demy's *Lady Oscar* (1978), a British-Japanese co-production about Oscar, an aristocratic woman raised as a man who becomes Marie Antoinette's personal guard as the French Revolution lingers on the horizon. In one scene, Oscar attends a ball to impress Count Fersen (the queen's lover who has recently returned to court), and she exchanges her typical men's clothes for an elaborate white dress. As Oscar arrives, Fersen and Marie Antoinette are dancing. Once the dance ends, Fersen observes the rules of etiquette described by Arbeau: he takes a *révérence* with the queen at the end of the number, escorts her back to her seat, and bows again. He then invites Oscar to dance, seemingly without realizing who she is. They proceed to dance a minuet[115] and the dance contains few repetitions, suggesting a certain level of complexity. Despite this, however, Fersen and Oscar are able to perform the movements smoothly, elegantly, and without hesitation, while also carrying on a rather intimate conversation. They match each other's lightness of touch and suspension of movement at the end of each step (Light Weight and Sustained Time Efforts) creating a simultaneity between their approach to the movement, and their quicker speech does not interfere with the smoothness of their dance steps. Early on in their dance, the camera cuts to a shot of the king and queen observing the dancers, in which Marie Antoinette, who had previously worn an expression of focused adoration when dancing with Fersen, now looks disconcerted. Given that the dancing

couple's conversation cannot be heard, we can imply that it is their dancing compatibility that has her worried. In the middle of the dance, as Fersen is about to confess something, Oscar moves away from him to circle other partners as all the dancers promenade around the room. Here Demy introduces a significant moment of foreshadowing, having the partner Oscar must circle be the man to whom her father will later give in marriage. Upon returning to Fersen, however, Oscar smoothly continues the dance with her preferred partner and re-engages him in conversation just as easily, asking, "you were saying?" The scene provides a clear example of the way in which court dances provided couples with the opportunity to become better acquainted and evaluate a potential future spouse on the basis of their dancing ability and etiquette (figure 5).

We can also see this idea embodied in Marcel Carné's *Les Visiteurs du Soir*, when Anne and Renaud—the couple that the Devil's servants have been sent to corrupt—lead the set and discuss their marriage, before Gilles and Dominque (the titular visitors) interrupt the dance to seduce the couple. In the scene, the dancers perform a court dance that resembles a basse danse, according to Arbeau's list of steps, but with the duple (2/4) time and processional qualities of the pavan (216). The dance is a way for the newly betrothed couple to have a private conversation, though Anne's enthusiasm is limited (figure 6), and Renaud catches her looking at Gilles—with whom she will soon after fall in love—during the dance. In contrast to the dances in *Lady Oscar*, the dancers frequently pause between steps as they talk, holding poses in their bodies to create a more painterly tableau effect. The pauses also create a sense of repetition between movement and stillness, one that is then taken to the extreme when the film speed (and sound) is slowed down to a halt as part of Dominique and Gilles' scheme to seduce Renaud and Anne.

An even stronger example of a couple's ability for intimacy through dance occurs in Max Ophüls' *Madame de…*, in which we witness the growing affection between the title character and her husband's diplomat friend, the Baron Fabrizio Donati. After several chance encounters, the

two meet at a ball during which Louise's husband warns Donati about her flirtatiousness. Donati invites her to dance and they waltz and talk. The scene develops into a montage of four more evenings of waltzing, and each time their intimacy grows. The second waltz begins as Donati remarks that it has been four days since seeing her. They discuss politics, and after a long pause where Donati spins her around and they avoid eye contact, he slowly inquires about news of her husband, who is away on a trip. She answers vaguely, "excellente, merci" ("excellent, thank you"), as the scene begins to dissolve and their cheeks come closer together. They dance into frame at the third ball, initially in silence, before Donati mentions the two days that have passed since seeing her, and another dancing couple gossips about them. The woman says, "they're seen everywhere" and her partner retorts "they can meet nowhere else," emphasizing that balls are the only situation in which the two can spend so much time together while maintaining their respectability in spite of the gossip. Donati again inquires about her husband and she gives him the same empty response ("ah, oui. Merci, excellente."). At the fourth ball, only 24 hours have passed since their last meeting, and a man must say hello to Louise twice before she notices him. The stretches of waltzing without conversation grow longer, and this time Louise volunteers information about her husband, once again using the same response. The last scene reveals that they are the last couple at the ball. The musicians are fed up and start to leave, but the pair (already in their coats) doesn't seem to notice. They barely speak in this scene and gaze at one another instead, their faces much closer to the other than they were at the first ball. When Louise mentions that her husband is returning the next day, they press their cheeks together and continue to dance, eyes closed. Although some cues of their growing affection come from dialogue, Ophüls conveys this information through the series of balls. The couple's growing intimacy through dance is both narratively efficient and historically motivated (figures 7 and 8).

Although different social dancing styles are used in these three examples, they all function similarly to allow the dancing couples a certain level of intimacy and privacy that would have otherwise been condemned by social mores, given the historical periods in which these films were set. Contrary to the examples just discussed, however, *Peau d'âne* does not use its instances of court dancing as a way of advancing a couple's relationship, and the different ways that the dances are portrayed in these films also differs accordingly.

The films tend to show at least one long shot of the room of dancers, but *Peau d'âne* maintains this perspective longer than the others. *Lady Oscar*, *Madame de…,* and *Les Visiteurs du soir* all move to medium shots, directing the audience's attention towards the primary couple and eliminating our visual access to their footwork, emphasizing the importance of their conversation instead. In contrast, during the ball, Demy uses a distant, high-angle shot to emphasize the patterns created by the dancers. Because neither of the court dances in *Peau d'âne* contain primary characters, there is less incentive to focus on individual couples, none of whom make conversation during the dances. The more distant framings draw attention to the patterns of circles and curved lines created by the choreography rather than the relationships between individual couples. The presence of masks also focuses our attention on the sense of spectacle. So despite their different historical origins, the numbers function in a similar fashion, as entertainment for the nobility (who are often not actually engaged by their performance) rather than as a way of creating intimacy between those dancing. Both times the scenes of dancing couples are also followed with discussion and visual proof of the prince's dissatisfaction and aloneness, emphasizing a contrast between the couples created by the court dances and Peau d'âne's absence.

Demy creates a functional reversal in his use of court and social dancing in *Peau d'âne*, despite its more conventional use in some of the films that influenced his adaptation of the Perrault tale. These numbers serve an aesthetic function—in both instances, a source of entertainment for the

monarchy that fails to delight their diegetic audiences—rather than communicating expressive information about the primary characters or serving a narrative function. Equally significant is Demy's choice to not develop the musical numbers of his protagonists with an incorporation of period or social dancing. This would have been a more conventional approach; in the films discussed that influenced Demy—and his own later film, *Lady Oscar*—the romantic pairs frequently meet and fall in love on the dance floor. This is a convention of the fairy tale film as well, seen particularly in *Cinderella* (both Disney's 1950 film and Roger and Hammerstein's 1957 televised version). The decision to use less formalized dancing in *Peau d'âne* was likely an economic one, given the restricted budget and the elevated cost involved with the inclusion of more dancing. But it was also a deliberate choice to take the film in a different stylistic direction, one that distinguishes Demy's film from both the musical and the fairy tale genre. Because Demy structures his film as a blend of the musical and fairy tale—traditions that both rely on a sense of fantasy and heightened stylization—an examination of how Demy isolates and mixes his stylistic interpretation of both types gives us a better understanding of the intrinsic norms of the film.

Task-Based Musical Numbers

Noticing how Demy uses musical genre conventions in *Peau d'âne* is essential to analyzing the film's narrative threads and to recognizing a greater level of generic sophistication in the subtle but powerful blend of fairy-tale and musical conventions through figure movement. An analysis of the movement patterns that the princess (Deneuve), the prince (Perrin), and the Fée de Lilas (Seyrig) engage in reveals that the musical numbers use functional, unembellished gestures as a primary movement vocabulary. This figure movement choice distances the numbers from the Hollywood musical tradition and Demy's choreographic choices in *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*

while evoking Disney character animation and an American avant-garde dance aesthetic, the latter of which can be seen in a filmic context in the movement qualities and structural choices of certain experimental films from the period. The shift to more functional figure movement engages with the conventions of the musical genre and supradiegetic shifts while putting greater emphasis on the labor of everyday tasks, those performed by women, especially.

The emphasis on everyday tasks is indicated in Demy's archived scenario, and the physicality that accompanies those gestures occurs most frequently in musical numbers in which Peau d'âne is present. These numbers are more clearly defined as musical numbers thanks to the presence of singing in addition to the choreographed movement, both of which create supradiegetic performative shifts, and they also frequently occur in a context in which magic is absent. They contain less movement through space and emphasize isolated movements of the body instead, especially the hands and face. In "Amour, Amour," the princess plays the organ and sings. In "Les Insultes" she is working in the village and feeds the pigs as children play and women wash and wring out clothing. As Peau d'âne draws water from the well a pair of villagers discusses the prince and insult her. She carries her heavy water pails away with resignation, and she is soon after threatened by two sets of men with a pitchfork and other farming equipment, after which she runs away (out of frame) and one man trips backwards and falls into the pig pen (a wink, perhaps, to the beginning of *The Wizard of Oz*). When the princess resumes her refrain of "Amour, Amour" for the prince who spies her through the window, she combs her hair and checks her reflection (and that of the prince) in her mirror. In "Recette Pour un Cake d'Amour" the princess and her Peau d'âne double make a cake for the prince and tidy up their hovel. In "Rêves Secrets d'un Prince et d'une Princesse," the prince and princess stuff pastries and cakes in each others' mouths and drink long draughts drawn from a vat, throwing away the tankards when they've finished. Finally, in "Le Massage des Doigts," in which Peau d'âne is significantly

absent, the women of the kingdom resort to various attempts to make their ring fingers as slender as possible to win the prince in marriage, tactics that ultimately lead to disfigurement and mutilation. A charlatan advertises a special tonic on the square and we see two women rubbing it into their fingers at home; one girl asks a small boy to tighten a vice on her finger, screaming and fainting when it finally closes; two other women submerge their ring fingers in boiling water and pull off layers of skin in horror as a matronly woman chastises them; we then see the results of the charlatan's potion, which has severely deformed and enlarged the women's fingers (the second's is worse and her hand is hidden by her arm until she raises her hand and rotates her wrist to fully display the mutilated finger); finally we see two women attempting to squeeze and pinch their fingers into a smaller shape as a young man observes, and when a third woman runs in to show her own injured finger that she has cut into, the man remarks "one must suffer to be beautiful" ("il faut souffrir pour être belle") and laughs, prompting the three to pelt him with vegetables. It takes a stubborn mind to think Demy's films exist exclusively in a fantastical diegetic world devoid of ugly truths after viewing this number. The movement vocabulary from this sequence and the emphasis on fingers is continued in the next scene, where the procession of single women from the kingdom approach the prince and offer him their hand so he can see if the ring from the "cake d'amour" fits.[116]

These sequences are a continuation of Demy's impulse—seen three years earlier in *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*—to causally and expressively integrate musical numbers with the narrative. Instead of serving primarily as aesthetic spectacle, the numbers function as expressive preoccupations of the film and its characters. In addition to lyrics that extend spoken conversations, Demy incorporates gestures and actions here to reinforce—and sometimes emphasize the ludicrousness of—the musical numbers' content. Sometimes these gestures are timed to the rhythm of the music, but more often they are not, and the simplicity and

functionality of the movements—often without stylistic embellishments—are very different from numbers in canonical Hollywood musicals. Rather, this choice of staging and movement parallels the stylistic choices in Disney's animated fairy-tale features and the choreographic and aesthetic impulses of 1960s American avant-garde dance. The ability to articulate these differences, overlooked by other scholars, is possible through the granular analytics of my methodological intervention.

Demy's choices in staging task-based content in *Peau d'âne*'s musical numbers differ from the approaches of filmmakers working within the Hollywood studio system. Given the parametric excess visible in *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*'s dancing, the figure movement in these numbers is restrained and minimalist in comparison. Similar content presented in Hollywood musical numbers tends to be more stylized and abstracted, resulting in sequences that emphasize the dancing more than the mundane nature of the content. An extreme contrast is apparent when comparing two musical numbers that both involve the act of creating a cake: Demy's "Recette Pour Un Cake d'Amour" to one of the two ballet sequences from *The Glass Slipper*.

In the latter, Ella falls asleep and dreams about the prince, who has told her he is a chef. The number begins with a tracking shot over an elaborate table laden with a bubbling pot, various cooking implements, and a rack of roasting meats. Facing another table, we see a row of five women who, instead of using the table for its original function, hold the edge like they would a ballet barre and perform simple movements as though warming up for the impending performance: shaking their hips as they bend their knees (in a *pliée*), raising their heels so that their weight balances on their pointe shoes (*relevé sur les pointes*), and sending their raised feet away from the table with little scurrying motions (*bourrées*). They then perch on the table and scour plates with cloths, but this task is also stylized, the quick lightness of their gestures seeming impractical for such a task, especially since they are peppered with quick shifts of attention

(Indirect Space) as they raise their hands away from the plates and shift their focus to the camera. As the dancers leave the table, the plates experience a shift in function, acting as fans that the dancers wave in front of them as they continue to dance. This similar alternation between and play with stylized cooking tasks and extended ballet phrases continues as male dancers, the prince, and Ella appear and join in. There is little realistic motivation to the content we see performed. The gestures of the dancers communicate narrative information through an integration of pantomime, ballet vocabulary, and dramatic content that Petit was known for,[117] but the culinary tasks we see exist primarily as a choreographic frame on which to construct the more virtuosic ballet steps and gestures.

In the "Recette Pour Un Cake d'Amour" number, the princess and her Peau d'âne double make a cake for the prince and tidy up their hovel. Perrault's tale references certain details of the cake-making—in particular that Peau d'âne "had [her flour] bolted expressly / to make her dough more delicate" (89)—but Demy's version shows a greater attention to the labor involved in the process. The princess's Peau d'âne double reads her the instructions as the princess—wearing her Sun Dress—measures out flour, eggs, milk, sugar, butter, leavening, honey, and salt. While the princess is mixing the ingredients and slips her ring into the dough, Peau d'âne begins tiding the hovel by sweeping, making the bed, and scouring bowls. As the cake is baking, the princess cleans up the kitchen workspace. There is a deliberate rigor to the movement choices in the number, especially the repeated glances between the princess and Peau d'âne, something that Demy had already planned for in the hand-written version of his shooting script, down to each individual time a look occurs (Demy "Recette"). But a certain functionality is necessary to complete the tasks; without a certain amount of clear focus and force (Direct Space and Strong Weight), Deneuve would not be able to crack the egg open, regardless of where she is looking while she does it. In contrast, in *The Glass Slipper*, when Ella pours a pitcher of liquid into the pot

of cake batter there is no actual liquid pouring from the spout, and the choreographic emphasis is on her leg extension (*arabesque*), to which her graceful pouring motion is an extension (figures 9 and 10).

The settings are also in stark contrast from one another. In *Peau d'âne*, we see a walled-in kitchen with a real fire, fueled with straw. As one would expect from Hollywood ballets of this period the "kitchen" in *The Glass Slipper* exists in a minimalist set and the part of the set in which Ella appears is the most abstract portion of the landscape, where oversized kitchen instruments are suspended from invisible threads. The ensemble of dancers eventually makes a cake, but it becomes a massive three-tiered spectacle upon which Ella appears and dances, spinning (*pirouetting*) around the circles of each layer before leaping down to repeat the movement, eventually ending up in the prince's arms.[118]

We can observe an emphasis on domestic tasks in Disney fairy tale musical numbers as well. Disney's animated features impacted Demy, who frequently points to the significance of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937)—the first film feature he saw—on his filmmaking aesthetic. In a 1971 interview for the American Film Institute he describes *Snow White* as "a jewel, perfection," the queen's glass coffin as a reference to Snow White's, and the "Cake d'amour" song as directly inspired by the image of Snow White "making a pie with the help of birds" (qtd. in Berthomé 242).[119] *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* had such a powerful impact that seeing it made the young Demy want to make animated films (Varda-Demy and Pierrat 19), which he succeeded in as a teenager but was unable to pursue professionally, given the dearth of financial opportunities in France for such endeavors.[120] He did succeed in acquiring 16mm prints of several Disney features—*Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Cinderella* (1950), and *Sleeping Beauty* (1959)—around the time he was making *Peau d'âne*, suggesting that he was watching and studying the films that delighted him while planning for his own.[121] In his AFI interview, Demy suggests he had seen

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs thirty times. Through the help of Grover Dale, with whom a friendship had blossomed after making *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, Demy was able to acquire prints of his favorite Hollywood films, though a letter from Dale in 1970 suggests that he was unsuccessful in acquiring *Sleeping Beauty* before making *Peau d'âne*.[122]

Both *Snow White* and *Cinderella* adopt a similar impulse as *Peau d'âne* to include the performance of domestic tasks in musical numbers. Moreover, in contrast to live-action musical numbers from the same period, the tasks performed by Demy's actors or the Disney human characters are not embellished for aesthetic purposes to more closely resemble a dance. The animators also did not design Snow White or Cinderella to move in ways that expressively distort their bodies, as their dwarf and animal companions do. As Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnson explain, the technique of Squashing and Stretching allows animators to emphasize the movement in a shape or body that occurs during motion (47–49). When exaggerated, this technique allows a character to appear overly flattened (squashed) or elongated (stretched), to comic effect. When scolded by Snow White in "Whistle While you Work" for sweeping dust under the carpet, for example, two squirrels elongate and freeze in a hold before returning to their regular shapes. And as part of a creative strategy for cleaning cobwebs, a chipmunk winds spider thread into a ball before the web's owner surprises him. The animals' executions of mundane tasks become creatively comical, given the tiny size of the participants; in "A Dream is a Wish Your Heart Makes," animals help Cinderella get ready for her day and two mice must use their whole bodies, swaying side to side, to fold the ribbon Cinderella will use to tie up her hair (figures 11–13).

In contrast, the women's movement in these films adheres to functional portrayals of tasks, as Peau d'âne's does. When Snow White bakes pies for the dwarves she uses real (relatively speaking) ingredients and cuts the extra crust off a pie by running her knife around the edge of the pie tin. Peau d'âne works with real ingredients in the "Cake d'amour" song, too, dragging her

beautiful sleeve through the flour mixture. When Cinderella wakes up and sings "A Dream is a Wish Your Heart Makes," she brushes her hair with precise, quick strokes, as Peau d'âne does while singing "Amour, Amour" in the forest (figures 14 and 15). The animation for the animal and human characters in these Disney films also developed differently. The creation of animal movement was primarily the result of creative impulses on the part of the artists, whereas actors or dancers were hired as additional live-action references for the latter, given the difficulty of animating human characters in an expressive, but still believable, way. The extent to which this information was used varied; both of the princes, much of Cinderella's movement, and portions of Snow White's were based on rotoscoping, the tracing of live actor's movements with some subsequent modifications (Barrier 228, 229, 398–401, Maltin 56, 57). For much of Snow White's physicality, however, the animation of her character (primarily the work of Grim Natwick) was a blend of artistic choices based on live-action guides provided by Marjorie Belcher, a dancer whose father ran a dance studio in Hollywood (Barrier 194–196).

But neither does *Peau d'âne*'s figure movement aesthetic sit comfortably within the norms of Disney animation for human characters. A strong contrast between the performance of tasks by Snow White, Cinderella, and their animal friends in the Disney films and by Deneuve in *Peau d'âne* exists in the rhythmic execution of their movements. The crisp execution of the gestures and quick rhythm changes in *Snow White* and *Cinderella* closely synchronizes each motion to the tempo of the music through the technique known as Mickey Mousing (Jacobs 58). Disney film animation frequently evokes this rhythmic impulse, which in these examples serves to create a precise, stylized look to the execution of menial tasks. There is often a rough correspondence between the tempo of the music and the performer's tasks in *Peau d'âne*, but the precise connection between the two is not so emphatic. The performance of seemingly mundane tasks permeates the musical numbers in *Peau d'âne* to a greater degree than such content does in either

animated or live-action Hollywood musicals. Significantly, this aesthetic choice also distinguishes movement in *Peau d'âne* from the ballet-jazz choreography created by Norman Maen and Gene Kelly for *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*. In the three years between these two films, Demy's aesthetic palette expanded, and we can observe closer stylistic similarities between *Peau d'âne*'s choreography and the characteristics of post-modern American dance than those of Demy's earlier musical.

The 1960s saw the emergence of a new, democratized dance form in America, and like Demy's choreography of figure movement in *Peau d'âne*, much of the early movement vocabulary from this form consisted of choreography that turned to mundane tasks and functional motions as the core of its movement vocabulary. Whether or not Demy was consciously evoking the aesthetic of post-modern dance in his film remains unclear, but his interest in contemporary trends in art suggests that he was also aware of trends in dance.[123] His time living in Los Angeles in the late 1960s introduced him to filmmakers and artists working directly or in tandem with postmodern dancers and minimalist aesthetic tendencies. And we can observe strong parallels between the choreographic choices made in *Peau d'âne* and the aesthetic goals of post-modern dance.

Dance historian Sally Banes suggests that post-modern dance should be considered primarily an American form (*Terpsichore* xxxvi) and as such is largely acknowledged to have emerged from the performances of the Judson Dance Theater in New York City in the early 1960s (Banes *Democracy's Body*). Choreographers strove to reject the imperatives of modern as well as classical American (ballet) dance forms. Banes argues that modern dance in America emerged as a "recognizable dance genre" by the 1950s, rejecting the conventions of ballet[124] and those of popular entertainment: Broadway and Hollywood. Modern choreographers used "stylized movements and energy levels in legible structures (theme and variations, ABA, and so on) to

convey feeling tones and social messages" (Banes *Terpsichore* xiii). Emotional expression and the conveyance of a specific expressive or thematic message were strong currents of the form. In contrast, in the 1960s, "[Yvonne] Rainer, Simone Forti, Steven Paxton and other post-modern choreographers of the sixties were not united in terms of their aesthetic. Rather, they were united by their radical approach to choreography, their urge to reconceive the medium of dance" to emphasize medium-specificity and function (movement for the sake of movement) over the emotional expression central to modern dance choreographers (*Terpsichore* xiv–xvi). This choice was a conscious move to make dance more broadly accessible, in part as a formal and stylistic departure from modern and classical (ballet) dance forms (Banes *Terpsichore* xix).

The tasks performed in Demy's numbers are to varying degrees diegetically motivated and therefore less absurd in the context of a performance. Despite this, there exist strong parallels between the content of Demy's musical numbers and the movement vocabulary of early American post-modern dance. The attention to simple tasks in *Peau d'âne* is similar to the choreography of one prominent post-modern choreographer, Lucida Childs, who was especially interested in exploring this ability to transform the world around her into dance by re-defining the nature of movement. Childs, one of the original choreographers for the Judson Dance Theater, created works in the 1960s that frequently focused on the stylized execution of simple tasks. As Ramsay Burt writes, "Cage famously said that everything was music; Childs was demonstrating that anything could become dance" (106). She was interested in using objects and human interaction with objects as the basis for much of her choreography. Banes adds that "in borrowing from actions not usually thought of as dance material, Childs has noted, 'the movements do not in and of themselves evoke that [everyday] experience, but rather match that experience in the degree of exertion involved in doing them'" (*Terpsichore* 134). She describes

Child's aesthetic of "evolving movement material by manipulating objects" and quotes part of *Village Voice* dance critic Jill Johnston's review of the piece *Carnation* (1964):

> She puts the curlers between the sponges, places a salad colander on her head, pulls out each curler with a neat swift pull, and places them around her head on the prongs of the colander. That done, she sticks the sponges in her mouth, removes the curlers, the colander, gets up and dumps them with unceremonious relief into a blue plastic bag, into which she injects her foot. The next section involves a head stand, a sheet, and two socks (attached to the sheet) with some difficult maneuvering (*Terpsichore* 134).

Childs was also interested in the way that she could bring attention to movement through minimalism and repetition, which is visible cinematically in *Shoulder* (1963), her screen test for Andy Warhol. In this four-minute film, Childs explores movement minimalism through the most fundamental of movement patterns: breath. Instead of filming her face, Warhol fixes his camera on Child's shoulder, and she stays perfectly still the whole time, the only movement the result of her lungs expanding and contracting.

Another of Warhol's films, *Haircut No° 1* (1963), also uses a dancer /choreographer from the Judson Dance Theater, Freddy Herko, the choreographer James Waring (whom Herko danced for as part of Waring's company), and Billy (Linich) Name, who had associations with both Warhol's Factory and the dance community. *Haircut No°1* contains a variety of movement patterns. The ostensible subject of the film is Billy Linich giving John Daley a haircut, but Herko's choreographed hamming for the camera creates a distracting presence that creates a split of attention. The layers of significance in *Haircut No° 1* are indicative of Warhol's filmmaking style (Murphy 15–17), but they are also indicative of ways in which Judson dancers explored movement; Warhol's impulse to film a mundane activity such as a haircut and is also similar to the kinds of movement studies that choreographers like Herko, Childs, and others would explore.

In the same way that Robert Dunn[125] would give his students a prompt, Warhol gave these men a task and it was up to them to interpret it as they chose.

We can see a similar cinematic and choreographic interest in simple—but still clearly stylized—movement tasks in Agnès Varda's *Lion's Love (…and Lies)*, which she filmed while she and Demy were living in Los Angeles. One of the film's actors, Viva, was a frequent star in Warhol's films and Varda, like Demy, was inspired by Warhol's experimental films (Conway *Agnès Varda* 121). Though the film does not fit into the musical genre, Varda has Viva and her two companions, Gerome Ragni and James Rado (who had just finished writing *Hair*), play with movement exploration in the film as she moves her project though a number of filmic fiction and non-fiction registers, as her films are wont to do (Conway *Agnès Varda* 3, 4). The movement patterns focus more on sensual qualities between bodies and an exploration of touch, but nevertheless evoke the same general style of movement exploration. And a focus on tasks is especially apparent in a scene when the three are playing in bed. They slowly wake up and begin making phone calls. Soon after a second phone appears, creating overlapping conversations. Initially their movements seem more reluctant as they can barely keep their heads off the pillows, but soon they shift their position to a different part of the bed so they are propped up against the window. As they talk they keep adjusting their positions, moving their legs, nuzzling each other, reaching for the phones, or (in Viva's case especially) pulling up the blanket that keeps falling down to reveal their undressed bodies. The phone conversations continue, with different people grabbing different phones, Viva having the two phones talk to one another, and sometimes two people talking into two halves of the phone at once so that the cords are eventually tangled as all three talk at once (figure 16). The whole scene occurs in one long sequence shot, but from time to time Varda increases the speed of motion, making their gestures and weight shifts appear more prominent and condensed. And all the while during this simple but intricate play with phones

and overlapping conversations the three are avoiding the task that all want accomplished but don't want to do themselves: getting out of bed to make the coffee.

The similarities between the aesthetic interests of post-modern American dancers and Demy's choices for staging movement in *Peau d'âne* become apparent when we compare Demy's approach to task-based content to the movement vocabulary in *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*. Even the simple choreography that Maen created for Deneuve and Dorléac's characters emphasizes repeated gestures and the creation of symmetries in the frame instead of tasks or functional movements. Deneuve and Dorléac's first number, "Chanson des Jumelles," illustrates these differences. Michel Legrand's music is based on a simple alternation of chorus and verses and the choreography parallels this structure, repeating simple movements with subtle variations that emphasize symmetry in the frame and between the two actresses' bodies. The movements are simple but not functional or task-based, like those that Deneuve performs in *Peau d'âne*, and similarly to the character movement in *Snow White* and *Cinderella*, the choreography in *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* is closely synchronized with the rhythm of the number's music. As a result, we can observe a marked difference in Demy's stylistic decisions regarding the staging of musical numbers and his experimentation with the Hollywood genre, one that instead shows parallels to contemporary American dance[126] and is influenced by Demy's fascination with Disney animation. Even more than American post-modern dance, however, the musical numbers in Demy's films focus specifically on ordinary tasks that draw attention to domestic and working class labor, the work of women, especially. These numbers also primarily occur in a context in which magic is absent, creating an added distinction between *Peau d'âne*'s musical and magical moments.

Magic-Infused Supradiegetic Spaces

The emphasis on functional—but deliberately staged—tasks and labor in *Peau d'âne* tends to occur in musical numbers. In other moments the diegesis shifts stylistically in ways that are not always explicitly linked to musical numbers to instead suggest the presence of magical meddling. Here we can observe a new pattern of supradiegetic shifts at the level of figure movement, but without singing (though these sequences are often accompanied by Michel Legrand's score). When a fully developed number does not occur, the characters' figure movement often shows the characters traveling with an emphasis on the environment they are traversing and the more expressive (and less functional) way that they move. Demy's stylistic choices in these sequences have their own internal logic but also evoke trends from 1940s French cinema. In particular, his choreographic impulses provide a clear homage to French art cinema[127] through extensive references to Jean Cocteau's *La Belle et la Bête* (1946).[128] Scholars often overlook the figure movement parallels in discussions of the links between the two films, and these moments emphasize that Demy adaptation of "Peau d'âne" strengthens the princess' agency through his mobilization of fairy-tale tropes.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of *La Belle et la Bête* on *Peau d'âne*'s aesthetic, and scholars have studied many of the parallels between the two films.[129] What has yet to be discussed, however, are the similarities of staging and qualities of figure movement that Demy adopts from Cocteau (as well as Marcel Carné) to show characters traveling across spaces and the use of in-camera effects to emphasize magical or divine intervention. Cocteau and his film also had strong ties to French dance culture, which is lacking in most discussions of his cinematic work. Josette Day, who plays Belle in Cocteau's film, was a *pétit rat* at the Opéra de Paris and trained to be a professional ballet dancer during her adolescence before an accident prevented

her from continuing (Hayward 45). Even less-well remembered is the role Cocteau played in the reemergence of dance as a highly regarded art form in 20th century Paris.

Frank Ries' *The Dance Theatre of Jean Cocteau* (1986) provides an in-depth discussion of Cocteau's involvement with the Parisian dance world through newspaper reviews and the memoirs of various artists, including Cocteau's. The artist was involved, to varying degrees, in the creation of a number of ballets from 1912 until his death, after which his work continued to be a source of inspiration for ballet productions. This passion began in Paris in 1909 with the arrival of and Cocteau's introduction to Serge Diaghilev and the *Ballets Russes*, an experience Cocteau also writes about in his memoir *La Difficulté d'être* (38). "Today," Ries writes, "when so many changes occur so rapidly and society is accustomed to cultural stimuli that are quickly assimilated and just as quickly rejected, it is difficult to imagine the influential and lasting impact the Ballets Russes had on Western culture" (11). Before the arrival of the Russian ballet company, Ries suggests that French ballets had lost the prestige that grew out of the court of Louis XIV, resulting in "the intelligentsia . . . deriding ballet as a middle-class entertainment" in which "involvement was allowed only in the most surreptitious manner" (4, 5).

Jean Cocteau was one of the major figures, Ries argues, who fostered communication and collaboration between the Russian choreographers and the writers, painters, and musicians who comprised the Parisian intelligentsia. He saw the movement-based art form as an exciting and fertile site for artistic collaboration (34). One of Cocteau's earliest such collaborations was *Parade* (1917), a ballet for which Cocteau wrote the scenario and then recruited Erik Satie to write the score and Pablo Picasso to design sets and costumes, a team to which Diaghilev added the Russian choreographer Leonide Massine (35–38).

Over the next few decades Cocteau wrote scenarios for multiple ballets with varying levels of collaborative control and critical success. In the 1940s Cocteau also collaborated on projects with

the young choreographer Roland Petit, who would become an important part of the new French ballet culture in addition to creating ballet sequences for Hollywood musicals (including *The Glass Slipper*). Ries is also clear to point out that Cocteau lacked the dance training needed to create such ballets without the help of a choreographer to shape the final movements of the dancers, something that frustrated him at many points in his career. Cocteau had "many ideas about how to present dance on stage," Ries suggests, "but lacked the vocabulary that is the lexicon of technique so important for a choreographer" (105). Instead, Ries argues, cinema was the medium in which Cocteau had the most control over figure movement, in which he "makes his camera turn his decors and actors into balletic presentations" and became "the choreographer he could not be for stage dance" (176). Demy similarly did not have formal dance training but was aware of the possibility of narrative nuance available from carefully staging his actors. As Ries acknowledges, it is outside the scope of his project to further probe these assertions, but a comparison of *La Belle et la Bête* to *Peau d'âne* shows a similar level of rigor in the choreography of figure movements in relation to cinematic space.

Scholars have not discussed the congruency of figure movement between Cocteau and Demy's films; much of the discussions of stylistic parallels focus instead on the similar use of slow motion (Hill "Demy Monde: Jacques Demy" 44, Berthomé 246, Taboulay 100). The attention to figure movement details is particularly apparent in the similar use of locomotion in both films. We can observe strong parallels between Demy's sequence of the princess's first visit to the Fée des Lilas for the first time and Cocteau's staging of Belle leaving her fathers' house to take his place in la Bête's castle. When the princess and Belle are sneaking out of their respective houses, they peer around a corner before moving quickly to their destination. For the most part both Cocteau and Demy maintain long shots during the traveling, but in this moment we see both women in tighter framings to emphasize their concentration and awareness of their surroundings

(figures 17 and 18). The architecture of both settings is also remarkably similar. Day's dance background adds a more subtle quality to her movements in the film, however. As Belle closes the door behind her, she adds an additional flourish, extending her left arm in an arcing motion to side-high and her torso and head spirals to continue to motion. She briefly holds the pose as she looks up to make sure no one sees her (figure 19), and the pause helps to emphasize the diagonal line of her body, a three-dimensional spatial pull that Laban associated with mobility and change (*Choreutics* 90).

Similarly, both the princess and Belle's father enter their magically-influenced respective realms in a comparable manner. They both approach a wall of foliage and pause upon its opening (the princess springs back). Both shots are staged similarly as well to reveal important objects in the background, through the frame of the foliage. For Belle's father, it is La Bête's castle, for the princess, the Fée des Lilas sitting in front of her mirror. The latter two are less noticeable, but the bright yellow of the dress and blue of the mirror help to draw attention to this subtle detail (figures 20 and 21). After passing through the gate, both also pause and turn to look behind them as the leaves spring back into place. The princess, however, moves more nimbly with Indirect Space (given the expansiveness of the way she takes in her entire surroundings) and Quick Time (to communicate her urgency). Despite her bulky and heavy dress, which she holds up with both hands, she turns her body as she walks and ducks under branches with a flexible, moulding (Shaping) relationship to her environment.

The emphasis on showing the women expressively traveling through space (locomotion) also creates parallels between Peau d'âne's fleeing her father's castle and Belle's arrival to La Bête's castle. The change in camera speed slows down both women's movements. They are running as they experience the new environments: the hallway to La Bête's castle or the forest and village where Peau d'âne will hide. Deneuve takes long, wide leaps as she runs, imitating the pacing and

speed of Day's running pattern in *La Belle et la Bête*. She frequently extends one or both arms out along the horizontal axis, imitating the shape Day creates in her arms as the enters the castle, which in both instances also helps to create a greater sense of horizontality and flowing motions in the women's costumes, which ripple in response to their movement (figures 23 and 24). Both also add turning, rotational movements to their running to fully take in their new environments. As Belle approaches a set of doors after running up the castle stairs, she swings her body to the right before continuing her journey through the doorway, shaping herself to the wall and observing the space. Similarly, as Peau d'âne leaves her father's castle she makes a full rotation, or turn, before continuing on to the carriage. She then runs through the village full of frozen townspeople, who resemble the ball attendees in *Les Visiteurs du Soir* after the Devil's envoys—Dominique and Gilles—cast their spell. Following her meeting with La Vieille, Peau d'âne runs to her hut in the forest and makes another turn before continuing on.

The two women's movements are not entirely similar, however. Deneuve's movement is more single unit (simultaneous and without additional, isolated movements) and more frequently in Bound Flow than Day's, the latter often rotating her head to look at the space. Deneuve did not have Day's dance training, but the heaviness of the donkey's head on her head also likely required a greater constricted Bound Flow in the upper torso and head to keep the costume in place. This necessity is especially apparent in "Les Insultes," as Peau d'âne turns to look at another of the men who is taunting her. Rather than lead with her head, as she does to turn and look at characters while wearing dresses rather than the donkey skin, Deneuve must initiate the rotation from her torso in order to manage the weight from her costume. The movement choices of both Belle and the princess help to emphasize the incongruity of taking a stroll in the forest (or crossing a river in a boat, as the princess also does) while wearing such elaborate outfits.

The extravagant, heavy costumes the characters wear in *Peau d'âne* serve to partially motivate the more elaborate, stylized figure movements. We can observe this sense of locomotion and movement created by the costumes within the context of a musical number in the Fée des Lilas's song, "Conseils de la Fée des Lilas." As she reprimands the princess for wanting to marry her father, she takes steps in time with the music, and the high collar of her dress rebounds with each step, creating ripples of movement up her body that are slightly off-set with the rhythm of her song. The collar ripples sagittally, creating movement behind the Fée des Lilas's head, but the metallic stems that extend further above the collar are even more flexible, waving erratically from side to side when she walks or moves her head. The result is constant motion reacting to all of the subtle shifts in her posture, motion that is embellished by the deliberately complex costume design and which contrasts strongly from the functional tasks performed in other musical numbers. Demy keeps her primarily in tighter framings, which draws emphasis to the movement in her dress, the camera following her as she walks through space in the single sequence shot used to film the number. This also contrasts from Demy's impulse to film Peau d'âne in long or extreme long shots to further contextualize her in the environment. Although the Fée des Lilas's costume is more modern than Peau d'âne's elaborate dresses, the high collar has stylistic parallels to La Bête's costume in *La Belle et la bête*. The level of detailed parallelisms between Demy and Cocteau's film is not surprising given that Agostino Pace, Demy's costume designer, remembers watching *La Belle et la Bête* "on a loop" ("en boucle") during his initial planning sessions with Demy at the latter's home on the island of Noirmoutier (Pace 151). Demy was impressed not only by the movement quality of the performers in ornate costumes, however, but also by the use of simple, often in-camera, effects.

Both Demy and Cocteau use in-camera effects to change the expressivity of their actresses' physicality. The similar stylized quality of the actresses' movement as they run creates a play of

quickness (from the running which is initiated with Quick Time Effort every time the actresses take a leap forward) and sustainment (created by the higher frame rate of the camerawork) to draw further attention to the links between Demy and Cocteau. Demy specifically requested in-camera effects work,[130] and the film's budgetary constraints meant that such visual enhancements needed to occur as inexpensively as possible (Berthomé 239, 240). He attributes his choices of these in-camera effects as inspired by Cocteau, not only by his film but also by his broader aesthetic impulses:

> Jean Cocteau once told me that one should never distance oneself from reality, that poetry was something elusive, that we didn't know what it was, that he himself didn't know, but that it was everywhere, it was part of life. . . . I approached the film like a film réaliste, with simple camera effects: slow motion, fast motion, reverse motion, things that are obvious and always very beautiful (qtd. in Varda-Demy and Pierrat 25).[131]

Cocteau's impulse to create slowed-down movements in film through in-camera effects, strangely enough, may have come from his work with classical dance. In his work on a ballet called *Le Boeuf sur le toit* (1920), he instructed the dancers to perform the choreography slowly, because "the dance was adapted too strictly to the music. This creates a kind of redundancy between the eye and the ear, which prevents the audience from either hearing or seeing clearly at the same time. Here [in *Le Boeuf*] I forced myself to move *against the tide*, to put slow gestures with rapid music" (quoted in Ries 62). He also incorporated a similar use of "almost movie-like slow motion," inspired by viewings of silent films, in his 1924 ballet *Le Train bleu* (Ries 93).

Other filmmakers using similar movement vocabulary impulses also used in-camera effects to change the expressivity of their actors' bodies. Both Andy Warhol and Agnès Varda use adjustments in the speed of motion to change the quality of their actors' movements. The smallest figure movements in Warhol's silent films become more noticeable and their Effort

quality takes on a sense of greater Light Weight and absent Time Effort thanks to Warhol's choice to project them at a slower film speed of sixteen frames per second (Murphy 16). Varda's choice to speed up the movement of her three characters in *Lion's Love* as they sit in bed makes their movements seem less deliberate (lacking in Space Effort) in addition to the greater sense of Quick Time, quickly condensing the various actions the three undergo to avoid having to leave the bed.

Demy's choice to use optical effects in *Peau d'âne* serves an additional narrative function; the use of simple camera effects to modify the whole-body movements of actors, like locomotion, creates a contrast from the gesture-based musical numbers to instead signal Demy's mobilization of the fairy-tale genre. A sense of magic and spells is triggered in these moments and is characterized by the use of such cinematographic modifications to cue the audience to the presence of magic. These effects—slow motion, reverse motion, superimpositions, dissolves—are narratively aligned with the tropes of the fairy tale and the effects that magic and spells have on the narrative. We see, for example, a moment of stop motion when the Fée des Lilas changes the color of her dress before talking to the princess, and her appearances in the blue castle are magically motivated. She bursts through the roof and descends in slow motion, and the shot is reversed to show her later exit, similar to the reversal of movement when la Bête transforms into the prince in Cocteau's film. She appears as a translucent superimposition when she reminds the princess to ask her father for the skin of his donkey, and dissolves out of the frame when she leaves, just before the princess (now transformed into Peau d'âne) leaves the castle. Peau d'âne's slow-motion locomotion as she runs away from her father's castle, and the frozen poses of the villagers she passes, suggests an extension of her fairy godmother's spells to get her safely away from her father. Parallels to the stylized locomotion in *La Belle et la Bête* as well as in *Les Visiteurs du Soir* heighten this impression. Carné's use of an increased frame rate (and likely some

postproduction adjustments) to affect the expressivity of dancers in his film similarly functions to signal the presence of spells. Similarly, we see the court dancers' movements (and hear the film's sound) slow to a complete halt as part of Dominique and Gilles' plan to seduce the betrothed couple who lead the lines of dancers.

Looking at the moments when this dichotomy begins to break down and understanding the consistent function of in-camera effects to signal magical dealings also emphasizes that Demy makes his version of Peau d'âne an active agent in the narrative. Duggan reads Demy's film as a feminist critique of the Perrault story in her book *Queer Enchantments*, but she sees the princess' control of magic in this scene as more ambiguous. She writes "it is as if the princess set up the spectacle of herself to make the prince fall in love with her and to gaze upon him, which leads the viewer to wonder if she has a few fairy powers of her own" (65). In contrast, the princess' active engagement is even more explicit once we understand the role that figure movement and optical effects play in *Peau d'âne*'s narrative.

Demy's princess vows to seek out a prince herself after she is taunted by villagers in the "Les Insultes" number, which creates a marked contrast between Perrault's version of the tale and Demy's in her first encounter with the prince. In Perrault's depiction,

> as the prince was wandering at random
> from one farmyard to another,
> he entered a dark lane
> in which Donkey-Skin's humble dwelling was situated.
> By some chance he put his eye to the keyhole (87).

The prince's discovery occurs neither "by some chance" nor "at random" in the film. While visiting the village, the prince leaves his courtiers to wander the forest. His appearance in the background of the frame, with a hint of his red costume peeking through the green of the woods,

is a stylistic parallel to the first glimpse we have of the Fée des Lilas in the background as the forest doors open for the princess. His singing ("Amour, Amour") as he walks also parallels her "Conseils de la Fée des Lilas" number. He then sees and speaks to a rose who points him in the direction of Peau d'âne's hovel. The rose acquires a mouth and eye as a superimposed camera effect (also an homage to Cocteau's *Le sang d'un poète*). When the prince reaches the hut, it is protected by an invisible, magically protected wall that sparkles with flares of light, which were probably added in post-production. The wall does not create a perfect circumference, however; it prevents him from accessing the door but not the window, which affords him a perfect view of the princess as she brushes her hair and sings. The flashes of light off of her mirror as she observes him also evoke the play with light from the exterior of the hut and emphasize that she has deliberately staged the encounter. And after the prince returns to the village, he sings to his companions and paces back and forth in another parallel to the locomotion associated with other magically-infused musical numbers. When he finishes, one man observes, "someone put a spell on him," to which the prince replies, "Yes, I'm spellbound. How wonderful."

The "Recette pour un cake d'amour" also somewhat combines these two impulses because of the Peau d'âne/princess doubling. The princess has the Fée des Lilas' magic wand, and proves herself capable of using it when she makes furniture appear in her hut and uses the mirror to observe her father as he searches for her. It is clear, therefore, that she—and not the Fée des Lilas—is the one casting these spells. By an extension of that logic, it is her magic that makes her appear in the prince's castle for the "Rêves Secrets d'un Prince et d'une Princesse" number as well.

Demy Tiptoes into Dream-land

Demy's choices in staging figure movement create stylistic distinctions between musical numbers and magical sequences to emphasize two distinct genre traditions. Once the princess escapes her father's castle, however, this duality progressively dissolves, blending together the alternative realities created by the fairy's magic and the supradiegetic space of the musical numbers as the prince and princess learn of one another's presence and fall in love. The "Rêves Secrets d'un Prince et d'une Princesse" number from *Peau d'âne* exists within the context of a particular schema for musical numbers, and is the only number in all of Demy's musical film corpus to do so. Definitions of this musical tradition and its unique stylistic characteristics remain vague in scholarly literature, but my musical number taxonomy serves to better understand these numbers' norms and situate Demy's "Rêves Secrets" within that context.

During the classical period, it was common[132] for Hollywood musicals to include what scholars commonly refer to as dream ballets, or dream sequences, at some point in the film, usually towards the end. *Variety* begins to mention "dream sequences" in musicals more frequently during the 1940s (and into the 1950s), with cartoon dream sequences appearing more often towards the end of the decade.[133] A search for "dream sequence" and "dream ballet" in Arclight shows a cluster of trade press interest in the mid-to-late 1940s as well (figure 24). These numbers frequently eschew singing in favor of more complex dance sequences (often ballet) and elaborate set pieces, hence their relevance to this research. But scholars disagree about the origins of this generic norm.

Jane Feuer argues that these sequences had their roots in 1930s Broadway musical comedies (*The Hollywood Musical* 73, 74). Adrienne McLean suggests that George Balanchine's "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue" number from the Broadway musical *On Your Toes* (1936) was also influential in this regard (134). However, Laurie's dream number from Roger and Hammerstein's 1943 stage play *Oklahoma!* (which also appears in the 1955 film adaptation), choreographed by Agnes de

Mille, is widely considered an important turning point for such sequences in musicals (on stage and screen). De Mille's choreography popularized a style, Rick Altman argues, pioneered by the modern dance choreographer Martha Graham and ballet choreographers Léonide Massine and Eugene Loring (who worked for Hollywood in the 1940s). Altman quotes from de Mille's autobiography, emphasizing two aspects of this new dance style. First he points out the incorporation of "gestures and rhythms," sometimes from folk dance traditions, that deviated from classical ballet technique for a purpose other than caricature, as was the earlier norm when deviating from ballet conventions. Secondly, he emphasizes the creation of choreography based on the characters' emotions and circumstances (283). For Altman, then, *Oklahoma!*'s choreography—and its "dream ballet" in particular—marks the beginning of a choreographic impulse to narratively integrate dancing with plot through gestures and tone. "And for this reason," de Mille writes in her autobiography, "the line between dancing and acting is no longer clearly marked" (as quoted in Altman, 284). Rick Altman suggests that, as a result of the Broadway play, "the dream ballet became an almost required interlude within the folk musical [sub-genre] tradition" in the 1940s (284). "It is hard to overstate the importance critics and historians have given *Oklahoma!*'s debut," Sean Griffin adds. While he also repeats the common assumption that the play's success encouraged a greater move towards narratively integrated plays and films (through singing *and* dancing), his cautious tone in assigning causality reinforces the importance of accepting this historical claim with a grain of salt (24).

Examples of numbers with choreography that contributes to film narrative's advancement do exist before 1943. For example, Fred Astaire's character performs a soft-shoe, "sandman" dance to help Ginger Rogers' character fall asleep in *Top Hat* (1935), and Astaire deliberately hides, then reveals, his dancing talent in *Swing Time* (1936). The frequent reference to *Oklahoma!*'s importance to the dream ballet tradition also suggests there were no such numbers in Hollywood

films before 1943, which is also incorrect, as the *Variety* film reviews referenced earlier indicate.[134] The increased frequency with which *Variety* mentions the presence of dream sequences in its reviews from the mid- and late-1940s may be due to *Oklahoma!*'s success, though it remains to be determined how quickly Broadway's influence traveled to Hollywood.

Moreover, scholarly literature remains vague about the precise qualities needed to characterize a musical number as a "dream ballet." Applying the term to *Oklahoma!* is literal; the sequence is the result of Laurie dreaming, and the choreography blends ballet and modern dance styles, which, until more recent stage adaptations, included casting dance doubles for Laurie and Curly's characters because of the more demanding choreography. Delamater uses the term as an adjective for specific numbers he discusses without any elaboration on this type of number's unique characteristics (112, 119). Altman provides more elaboration, but discusses the term from a thematic standpoint, without much elaboration on the stylistic qualities that set "dream sequences," as he calls them, apart (61, 62). Feuer discusses this sort of number in more depth, suggesting that dream worlds in the musical exist as visions—usually surreal ones—of characters (70) and traces out some of the ways that "dream ballets" allow characters to work out or reflect upon pertinent conflicts within the frame narrative (74). Her discussion explores the idea of a dream world in musical films beyond the numbers themselves, however, and focuses on the narrative (symbolic) functions of such sequences. My taxonomy, however, can shed additional light on the unique stylistic and narrative aspects of these numbers to better contextualize how Demy was experimenting with this convention.

What we can observe when such a number occurs, from a stylistic perspective, is a shift to a different supradiegetic space, along with shifts in performance. This is usually accompanied by a performative shift of characters in the surrounding narrative, but sometimes they are joined by additional minor characters (Cyd Charisse in the "Broadway Melody" number from *Singin' in the*

Rain (1952), for example) and often by a large corps of dancers. These sequences are dance-centered, but occasionally employ singing or a voice-over of explanation. We see this in the numbers introducing the female leads from *An American in Paris* (1951) and *On the Town* (1949), and in *Yolanda and the Thief*'s (1945) dream sequence when Yolanda (Lucille Bremer) sings about marriage to Johnny (Fred Astaire). They are usually designed to showcase expansive sets and stylistic excess that employ some level of abstraction in their design. And, in addition to their frequent narrative or expressive links to the surrounding plot, these numbers are also frequently self-contained, with internal narratives, conflict, and resolution.

Narratively speaking, the umbrella terms most often used for these numbers, dream ballet and dream sequence, do not fully account for the characteristics and motivations of this category of number. First, the use of "ballet" to describe a number containing a "narrative style of dance," as Feuer does (*Hollywood Musical* 73), is a common but imprecise practice in scholarship and criticism. While the term "a ballet" is often used to describe any sort of self-contained dance number (this is still common practice in France, especially), this often incorrectly makes assumptions about the dance style contained in such a sequence. In addition, only a relatively small quantity of these numbers are motivated by a character falling asleep and dreaming. Rather, the dream ballet-proper is one sub-category in the schema of highly supradiegetic, and usually subjective, sequences.

A better blanket term for this musical number schema is a subjective sequence, as most of these numbers are motivated as subjective visions, that is, narratively cued by a character's thoughts on a particular subject, and exist—with the transitions away from and back into the diegetic narrative—as discrete units within the larger film. We see this effect in both of the spatially supradiegetic sequences from *An American in Paris* and *On the Town*. In each film there is a number introducing Gene Kelly's character's romantic partner—Leslie Caron and Vera Ellen,

respectively—in which the woman dances with a balletic pantomime style to illustrate her qualities, overheard in a voice-over. Towards the end of each film we also have an extended ballet-and-jazz sequence motivated as Kelly's characters' reflection (while awake) on the plot thus far that provides a choreographic summary of the narrative, in addition to the (generically) obligatory stylistic excesses.

Within this subjective category, some musical numbers are motivated by characters falling asleep and dreaming about the expressive or symbolic concerns of the narrative. These numbers are usually clearly motivated as such by shots of the character falling asleep and later waking up that frame the supradiegetic spatial shift, and these sequences tend to be symbolically or aesthetically driven more so than the lucidly subjective numbers. Beyond *Oklahoma!*'s canonical example, we also see this effect when Fred Astaire's crooked character—Johnny Riggs—falls asleep in *Yolanda and the Thief* and moves through an extended dream sequence. The situations Riggs finds himself in become more and more abstract until he dances through a minimalist dreamscape with Yolanda (Lucille Bremer), her attendants, and dancers representing the allure of the racetrack. The number acts as a symbolic warning to Riggs, suggesting that he cannot succeed in stealing Yolanda's money and flee without consequences (as he intends to do in the frame narrative). Riggs awakens from his nightmare and laughs it off, but the threat remains as a dangling premise in the narrative. In contrast, Cinderella's dream in *The Glass Slipper* has few ties to the plot beyond the general subject matter. The dream ballet (for it has both qualities) presents an abstracted dance in which Cinderella's prince, whom she believes is a cook, marshals an army of balletic kitchen staff and which ends in a new, even more abstract location with Cinderella pirouetting around the various layers of an enormous cake.

Certain numbers in this category flirt with the idea of subjective motivation. *Singin' in the Rain*'s "Broadway Melody" fits within many of the characteristics above—it foregrounds dancing,

showcases enormous sets, is self-contained, and has a character carryover in Gene Kelly—but is not clearly motivated as one character's subjective experience. It certainly isn't a visualization of the number from the producer's perspective, given his later quip that he couldn't "quite visualize it," but we can interpret the sequence as Don Lockwood's vision for the number, given that he is the one explaining the narrative situation before the number begins and provides the character carryover into the number. The greater ambiguity over the number's subjective motivation—and the inclusion of a subjective sequence within the larger sequence (Kelly and Charisse's second duet)—makes "Broadway Melody" a more complex variation on the schema of subjective sequences.

On the periphery of this type of musical number we have instances of a complete supradiegetic shift that is motivated by a stage performance rather than a character's thoughts. The "Girl Hunt" from *The Band Wagon* fits this description; although motivated as a stage number for Astaire and Charisse's characters, the *film noir*-esque story moves the characters through a number of locations, creating a supradiegetic space within the motivation of the stage-bound number. "Girl Hunt" has strong similarities to the diegetically impossible numbers Busby Berkeley staged for Warner Bros. in the 1930s, but "Girl Hunt" has more of a self-contained narrative than Berkeley's do. These (supposedly) stage-bound numbers share the stylistic traits as the subjectively motivated numbers—shifts to a completely supradiegetic space, the emphasis on dance over singing, elaborate set pieces and visual excess—without sharing the same motivation. In *Fashions of 1934* (1934), however, Berkeley choreographs a stage-motivated number, "Web of Dreams," that is presented as the dream of a seamstress in the stage number, so Berkeley may actually deserve credit for the very first cinematic "dream ballet."

Many of the Hollywood musicals that Demy cites as influences on him contain at least one of these subjective musical sequences—*Singin' in the Rain, An American in Paris, Let's Make Love* (1960),

On the Town, *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever* (1970),[135] *Brigadoon* (1954)—so it is not surprising that Demy would want to try his hand at this particular style of number. However, the "Rêves Secrets d'un Prince et d'une Princesse" number from *Peau d'âne* is the only time in his entire filmmaking career that Demy includes a fully subjective musical number that shifts to an entirely supradiegetic space—and the fully supradiegetic nature of the space is contestable. Even the large dance setpiece in Demy's unrealized script *Anouchka*, the "Ballet de Leningrad," takes place in diegetically motivated locations around the city (Demy "Anouchka").

Demy's aesthetic tendency is to create cinematic worlds that toe the line between realism and fantasy, so the possibility exists that the absence of subjective sequences stemmed from a lack of interest in this aspect of the genre. His numbers usually blend supradiegetic impulses with musical content that stems from diegetic motivations rather than emphasizing numbers that serve primarily as stylistic embellishments. In addition, there are several practical factors that could explain his avoidance of this particular musical schema. Creating such numbers is cost prohibitive, given the expense of large spaces to film in, the light needed to expose them properly, and the quantities of dancers and set dressings required. Secondly, the frequent use of a corps of dancers in these numbers, combined with the difficulty Demy had in finding dancers and the time to rehearse them may have contributed to the rare appearances of such numbers in his work. These may also be pertinent reasons for the lack of subjective dance sequences in some of the later Hollywood films that Demy admired: *West Side Story* (1961), *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953), and *Silk Stockings* (1957). McLean points out that musicals in the late 1940s with long balletic sequences—*Yolanda and the Thief* and *The Pirate* (1948)—lost MGM money, justifying the subsequent elimination of extended dance numbers (134). Industrial changes in the studio system and the rising costs of maintaining large sound stages and below-the-line personnel were surely equally compelling reasons to avoid such numbers. In the case of *West Side Story*, an industry

perception that audiences were dissatisfied with musicals that deviated too far from a sense of cinematic realism also determined the absence of a dream ballet in the film version.[136]

Demy's number fits within the general schema of a subjective musical sequence but is equally a departure from Hollywood norms through its incorporation into *Peau d'âne*'s unique blend of fairy tale and musical narrative logic. The "Rêves Secrets" sequence adheres to each of the four general characteristics of Hollywood subjective sequences. There is a self-contained logic to the sequence; it is framed with cross-dissolves of the characters appearing and disappearing, and over the course of the number we see the two express and fulfill their (secret) desires. There is a supradiegetic shift to a new, non-diegetic space (three in fact): a forest; a flower-strewn hillside with a banquet, roaming sheep, and flowering trees; and a flower-embellished barge slowly drifting down a river. The number is motivated by the characters' subjectivity and is performed by the same characters who envision it: the princess and the prince. And it emphasizes choreographed figure movement through a careful organization of the prince and princess as they move through the various spaces. Demy's sequence also breaks from Hollywood tradition within these categories, however, and ultimately does so in a way that blends together the fairy tale and musical impulses that Demy develops throughout the film.

Unlike a conventional Hollywood subjective sequence, there is a full song in addition to the choreographed movements of the performers. This is not without precedent: the hoofer and others sing the "gotta dance!" refrain in the "Broadway Melody" sequence from *Singin' in the Rain*, and Yolanda sings to Riggs about marriage in the dream sequence from *Yolanda and the Thief*. The song portion of "Rêves Secrets" is more pervasive, however, and functions as the first expression of the prince and princess' love for one another. Demy has effectively combined the expressive love duet into a subjective sequence, since this is the only number that the couple shares in the film. The spatial shift to a supradiegetic location is also unusual, given Demy's use

of location shooting instead of an abstracted, minimalist set on a large sound stage. The contrast of location and costumes, especially, still serve to distinguish between the world(s) outside and inside the subjective sequence. The woods the prince and princess initially wander through is a domesticated sort of forest that remains common in France, where trees are artificially cultivated and are maintained in straight, grid-like rows (the largest of such forests being the forêt de Landes in Gascogne). The result is a patterned environment for the lovers to wander through, where rows of trees create seemingly endless lines into the background. Demy's shooting and location schedule suggests that all of the forest scenes (including the fairy's "cave," those around the village, and Peau d'âne's hut) were shot in Gambais, a commune west of Paris ("Plan de travail"). There is a clear contrast, however, between the organized patterns of trees in the "Rêves secrets" number and the overgrown wilderness of the other forest scenes, which reinforces an interpretation of the locations from this sequence as existing outside of the narrative's diegesis (figure 25) even though they are also shot on location. Similarly, the hillside that the lovers visit next is dissimilar to the rest of the film's locations, though flowers are incorporated into the grass in a way that stylistically parallels the flowers that adorn the red king's beard.

The princess' costume, especially, differs from her dresses in the rest of the film, and this change brings with it a new movement quality to Deneuve's performance as well to emphasize a new supradiegetic, performative shift. Throughout the sequence the princess wears a sparkling, white, loose-fitting gown that resembles the nightgown she wears under her Peau d'âne disguise. The prince is also dressed in a matching white outfit, but the style is similar to the clothes and boots he wears throughout the film. The contrast from the princess' spectacular dresses is immediately apparent, and the absence of the excessive weight and resulting restriction of the dresses and animal skin means that Deneuve's performance and Effort quality shifts in a significant way, paralleling the shift to a supradiegetic space. In the middle portion on the flowery

hill, especially, we can see a freeing of Flow in Deneuve's performance that is unmatched in any other portion of *Peau d'âne* (or *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*). Whereas elsewhere in the film the prince and princess must maintain a sense of decorum befitting their class status and often move with more careful, precise motions (Bound Flow and Space Effort), there is a visible disregard for precision and control as they grab for food and drink and pull one another as they walk. In contrast to the controlled, almost gliding movements of the princess as she runs while wearing the donkey skin, here she moves with stumbling steps and allows her spine to undulate more freely, the result of unchecked momentum and a greater use of Quick Time. While walking behind the flowering trees, the prince pulls the princess around to his right side. Her greater use of Free Flow causes her to shift her weight unevenly and she laughs, her head falling forward as they continue to pull one another off-balance, eventually running into the background with their arms wrapped around the other in an awkward but pleasantly uninhibited gait. The couple's lower energy and more relaxed postures in the final shot on the boat suggests that they had have their fill of the expressivity prohibited to their diegetic personae (made explicit by the lyrics "We'll do what is forbidden" / "Nous ferons ce qui est interdit") and leaves open to interpretation the possibility that they have consummated their relationship in the fantasy space (figures 26 and 27).

Through its emphasis on choreographed figure movement, this subjective sequence also brings together the two choreographic impulses used in the film—mundane actions and stylized locomotion—to unite its two generic qualities. While the other supradiegetic sequences in the film emphasize either pedestrian actions (in musical numbers) or stylized movements through the frame coupled with in-camera effects (in the magical segments), the "Rêves Secrets" number emphasizes both. The princess appears in the Red Castle as a translucent superimposition, the in-camera effect pointing to the presence of magic, and a transparent double of the prince leaves his bed and joins her. Once in the forest and in the rolling hills, we see them walking, running,

and pulling one another through the supradiegetic spaces, their movement impulses paralleling those from the magically motivated sequences elsewhere in the film. Through in-camera effects they tumble up the hill to the banquet in reverse motion and, once their boat has glided into the background, it disappears with a dissolve. But there is also an emphasis on task-based movement and labor that characterizes the musical numbers of the film. The prince picks up the princess to carry her to the forest, once at the banquet they eat and drink with abandon, and in the boat the princess smokes a pipe, coughing. Here, however, the emphasis is on enjoying the result of someone else's labor.

There is also a deliberate choreography to the prince and princess' duet in the way one would expect of an extended Hollywood dance sequence. As they sing in the prince's bedroom they draw together in an embrace for the chorus ("Mais qu'allons-nous faire…") and press their cheeks together. They repeat this gesture and the chorus while in the forest, before walking into the background with their arms intertwined. This shared posture, which draws their Kinespheres close together, returns as they walk behind the flowering trees on the hill, and becomes a larger postural movement as they run together on the hill, once again into the background. Their locomotion through the forest and behind the trees on the hill creates a repeated phrase as well; in both they move frame right as the camera tracks on their movement. In the forest the prince and princess walk facing one another as they sing in profile to the camera and clasp hands. After each line, they rotate to switch positions in the frame, performing this movement four times. They change their positions relative to one another on each line while walking on the hill as well. First the princess pulls the prince with one hand as she walks ahead of him; he then catches up with her, pulls her close, and leans on her; he shifts her over to his other side, closer to the camera; finally she pulls ahead of him and turns to face him. Their second hands touch briefly to parallel the pose from the forest before they run into the background (figures 28–30).

Their staging evokes the qualities of court dancing seen in the film as well. While still in the castle they move towards and away from one another, crossing one another's paths and moving towards and away from one another in a way that evokes the general pattern of the minuet. In the forest they take steps in unison, as if promenading, and later they hold hands and take steps as they rotate their bodies around one another four times to change positions in the frame, a movement that resembles the *conversion* that Arbeau describes (58). They repeat these patterns of coming together and apart and changing places in the frame when walking through the blooming trees before grabbing one another and running into the background. Their ability to spend time alone together before their marriage without violating aristocratic norms of behavior also parallels the social function of court dancing. As a result, the only duet between the prince and the princess formally resolves the various stylistic and generic impulses Demy mobilizes in his film.

More significantly, Demy's movement and cinematographic choices point to the narrative agency behind the number as well. The lovers' rolling up the hill (sagittal rotations, or somersaults, for the prince, horizontal rotations for the princess) in reverse and the use of superimpositions and dissolves parallels the use of optical effects to indicate magical influence elsewhere in the film. This suggests that the number is the result of a spell, most likely from the princess' cake, which adds further agency to the princess in shaping her own future, and later to the prince, in his insistence that Peau d'âne be brought to the castle to try the ring he already knows belongs to the woman he is in love with. This also endows the sequence with a quality of subjectivity that differs from the sort that Hollywood is known for. Most Hollywood subjective sequences are motivated as character visions, without any direct impact on the characters' diegetic realities, but Demy's number suggests the creation of a magical space where the lovers can—through a shared subjectivity—explore uninhibited pleasure without negative

consequences, something the Hays office during the classical Hollywood period likely would have disapproved of.

Peau d'âne's subjective sequence is Demy's singular exploration of this particular musical schema, and he cannot resist undermining its foundations while also paying homage to this musical genre tradition. Through subtle stylistic play, Demy uses the number to blend the qualities he has established for fairy tale and musical genre norms to create a number that brings together the various pieces of *Peau d'âne*'s carefully constructed aesthetic. The only duet between the prince and the princess combines the film's stylistic and generic impulses to unite the couple and free them from diegetic constraints.

Conclusion

Much of Jacques Demy's aesthetic originality, especially regarding figure movement, comes from the choices he made while working with actors who were not professionally trained dancers and within the constraints of limited budgets, despite the foundation of movement training and the higher costs associated with the musical genre. Demy's ability to nonetheless create complex formal play in his films is particularly visible in *Peau d'âne*. Demy creates deliberate patterns of figure movement in his progressive adaptation of Perrault's tale, and it is through an analysis of the choreographic choices and an understanding of their narrative significance to the story that we can better recognize the political underpinnings of Demy's work.

A brief moment from a television program on *Peau d'âne* from "Pour le Cinéma," fully illustrates Demy's exactness in staging his actors. The excerpt includes footage from Demy's shoot in the throne room with Jean Marais and Catherine Deneuve, and it shows the filmmaker moving the actors around the space as he blocks the scene. Demy does not just tell the actors

where to stand. He also talks Deneuve through the way he wants her to move, telling her to tilt her head down and away from Marais on the line "je connais mal la poesie mon père," and to turn her head back towards him on the line "mais je l'apprecie," "with a little smile" ("avec un petit sourire"). The interviewer on the set picks up on this level of precision as well, saying in a voice-over that there is something you can sense when seeing Demy work, "the sense of space that he demonstrates, but somewhat as if he were creating a ballet" ("Pour le Cinéma).[137] Demy, like Jean Cocteau, may have lacked the dance technique background to stage traditional dance sequences himself, but he was aware of the effect that small movements, like the turn of a head, could have on an actor's performance and the expressivity of a scene. Despite the film's financial constraints, Jacques Perrin remembers Demy's work on *Peau d'âne* as creating "the impression of an aesthetic whole, without gratuitous or superfluous beauty. . . . It's incredible what Jacques was able to create with so little means. Particularly for *Peau d'âne*, he managed to deploy a delicate dreamscape, in spite of financial constraints" (Orléan "Il s'agissait" 106).[138]

The fairy-tale musical hybrid rendering of *Peau d'âne* reveals Demy's ability to blend stylistic and narrative modes with a new level of sophistication. Unlike in *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, where others choreographed the figure movement of the musical numbers, the majority of figure movement in *Peau d'âne* was staged by Demy himself. He organizes the movement of his actors—Catherine Deneuve, especially—in several important ways. Several of the musical numbers use everyday, seemingly mundane gestures as their primary movement vocabulary. Unlike his earlier musical *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, which has strong stylistic parallels to the classical Hollywood musical, Demy distances *Peau d'âne* from that tradition to instead explore the choreographic possibilities of Disney animation and the subtle expressivity of functional, task-based labor that parallels the developments in American post-modern dance. We can also observe a use of prolonged, deliberate traveling of characters and camerawork as the systematic use of in-camera

effects draws attention to additional subtleties in the performer's movements. These moments reinforce Demy's stylistic homage to Cocteau's *La Belle et la Bête* and allows for a deeper investigation into the latter filmmaker's associations with French dance culture. *Peau d'âne* owes much of its figure movement aesthetic to the experimental impulses of Cocteau and Marcel Carné, whose use of in-camera effects to enhance the expressivity of figure movement Demy references to show the effects of magic on his fairy tale narrative. In addition, a closer study of Demy's choice to include medieval court and folk dances reveals his continued interest in creating an eclectic diegesis for his films and his predilection for weaving commentary on class distinctions into his work. Demy uses these dances in a way that undermines their historical social function, as is apparent when that function is compared to the use of such social dances in other cinematic examples, including Demy's *Lady Oscar*. Rather than present court and folk dances as they were historically intended—as moments of private reflection between courting couples—Demy instead uses them for their stylistic embellishments and visual delight. But his film also points to the ways that these numbers function as entertainment for the ruling classes by distinguishing the dance forms in those portions from the rest of the film's movement aesthetic. Movements that are more akin to the aesthetic of post-modern American dance become imbued with an expressive and narrative function to reveal the growing relationship between the prince and princess as the narrative function of figure movement is reserved for the movement patterns developed by Demy's subtle staging of actors throughout the film.

Demy equally uses this choreographic rigor to signal the different diegetic levels that *Peau d'âne* creates between the competing generic traditions of the fairy tale and film musical. He establishes a multiplicity of diegetic levels to differentiate between the qualities of the musical and fairy-tale genres, threads that culminate in Demy's only fully subjective musical number, "Rêves Secrets d'un Prince et d'une Princesse." The emphasis on pedestrian tasks and medieval dancing

more often characterizes the musical numbers, while the emphasis on locomotion, or traveling, and in-camera special effects are the result of magic or spells. In addition, Demy ultimately gives his princess greater explicit agency in his version of the fairy tale by making her a sorceress capable of casting her own spells and shaping her own outcome. "Choosing is always better," Demy said in an interview about the film, adding: "initially a victim, Peau d'âne ends up liberating herself" (Simsolo 74).[139]

This undermines the assumption that Demy's filmmaking is disengaged from reality or social issues. Despite setting his film in a magical, somewhat anachronistically absurd diegesis, Demy chooses to keep his musical numbers grounded in task-based movements that draw attention to the labor involved in domestic tasks. His stylistic choices in the incorporation of magical interference through camera effects also adds greater agency to the original Perrault female protagonist. Demy's interpretation of Perrault's tale makes the princess a strong, active participant in her fate, during the same period when the women's liberation movement was developing in France and Agnès Varda and Chantal Akerman were making explicitly feminist films like *One Sings the Other Doesn't* (1977) or *Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles* (1975). As Kelley Conway illustrates, film scholars like Sandy Flitterman-Lewis, Alison Smith, and Rebecca DeRoo have written feminist accounts of Varda's films and investigated her representations of femininity (*Agnes Varda* 5), but this domain remains under-explored in Demy's work. His filmmaking may not be as explicitly political as his French New Wave contemporaries, but a formal analysis of Demy's work reveals a subtle articulation of his sophisticated understanding of contemporary social realities and class conflict, which he would explore explicitly in *Une Chambre en Ville* (1982).

Michel Legrand said of *Peau d'âne*, "it was at the same time his most beautiful commercial hit and his farewell to success" (Lerouge 82).[140] *Variety* touted the film as one of 1970's top

grossing films in France, having earned around $1.5 million in profits, but the film's elevated budget meant that the project barely earned a return on its investment ("French Pix" 29, "PEAU D'ANE (Ad)" 98). Ultimately, however, *Peau d'âne* is a testament to Demy's commitment to stylistic and generic experimentation. Rather than creating a duality of stylistic norms between the diegesis of the narrative and the supradiegesis of the musical numbers—as is the convention in musical films—Demy creates layers of stylized figure movement that he isolates and blends to put an empowering spin on a classic fairy tale. He takes his commitment to building fantastical musical worlds upon a solid foundation of diegetic reality to a new extreme in his final musical film, *Trois places pour le 26*.

4

Musical malaise

Trois places pour le 26

Half-way through *Trois places pour le 26* (1988), popular actor and singer Yves Montand is in rehearsal with a corps of dancers. Dressed in a black vest, slacks, and a pressed white shirt, he sings about his days in the Marseille shipyard. Montand's iconic voice mixes with his subtle movements as he walks among lines of dancers. In contrast, the men who dance around him are dressed in stained, torn, workmen's clothes, and their choreography is angular and quick, emphasizing their young, athletic bodies. Michel Legrand's electronic music that links these sung and danced phrases is a departure from both Montand and Demy's known aesthetics. In its review of *Trois places, Le Monde* described Demy's last feature film as "the most schizophrenic musical comedy in the history of the seventh art" (Heymann 13).[141] Although the description does convey a sense of fragmented form, equating the film with a mental illness implies a lack of control for a production that Demy designed to emphasize intrinsic formal contrast. Demy's film stands out against its contemporaries in tone and its sincere rendering of the musical genre even more so than in its choice to move through a number of musical and choreographic registers. The film deviates significantly from Demy's other musicals as well as musicals of the 1980s in a number of its aesthetic and narrative choices. But it is also a culmination of Demy's formal experimentations with the musical genre and his use of figure movement and dance to communicate narrative information.

Trois places fits—uncomfortably—into the backstage musical sub-genre and draws significantly on biographical details about Yves Montand's rise to fame. The film opens with Montand, in character as himself, arriving in his hometown of Marseille to premiere a new stage

show, *Montand Remembers*. The narrative we see unfold on the stage is largely autobiographical and traces Montand's rise to fame, complete with references to his relationships with Simone Signoret, Edith Piaf, and Marilyn Monroe. But the plot that takes place off-stage is of Demy's fabrication. In this frame story, Marie-Hélène or Mylène (Françoise Fabian)—once Montand's lover, now the wife of a corrupt aristocrat—disapproves of her daughter Marion's (Mathilda May) desire to become a performer and her idolatry of Montand. The unusual twist of fiction off-stage and reality on-stage is somewhat destabilizing, as Demy's films tend to be, and the lines between these worlds get blurrier as the film progresses, especially once Marion joins the show when the original actress abandons the touring company. We gradually learn that Montand's romantic lead Maria, now played by Marion, is based on Marie-Hélène. After the show's successful opening night, Montand and Marion sleep together, but—unlike the audience—they do not realize they are father and daughter until the next day. Rather than condemning the unintentional incest with a tragic ending, Demy ends his film with a happy reunion between Montand and Marie-Hélène—who still love one another—as the theater troupe leaves Marseille to go on tour.

Trois places' production history points out several significant disparities from previous modes of production. First, the production benefitted from greater financial comfort. The stipulations surrounding the film's funding affected Demy's usual collaborative process, however, leading to a certain artistic friction between the filmmaker and his lead actor, Yves Montand. Changes in French dance culture also affected Demy's aesthetic options. Twenty-one years separate *Trois places pour le 26* from *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*; in that time France's interest in developing more national choreographic centers boosted the availability of dance styles besides ballet.

Despite these important historical circumstances and the ways in which Demy's last film points to continuities and disparities from his earlier working methods, scholarly discussions often

overlook or undervalue *Trois places pour le 26*. By emphasizing that there is still much to be said about his later work, a thorough look at *Trois places* provides a revision to the Standard Version of Demy's career, in addition to shedding light on Demy's evolving aesthetic in regards to dance and figure movement. The film reveals much about Demy's aesthetic choices and work methods; to overlook Demy's last film is to miss his nuanced development of character through figure movement, the unique place his film holds in relation to 1980s musicals, and the ways this filmmaker continued to revisit and probe the musical genre's classical norms.

Trois places pour le 26 is a perturbing film; it is at once meticulously designed and uplifting while also leaving the viewer uneasy and having to make a moral judgment about Montand and his daughter. A symptomatic reading of Demy's final film could suggest that the tonal malaise reflects a terminally-ill filmmaker's frustration with a film culture that prevented him from bringing a decade of cinematic visions to fruition. Formal analysis, in contrast, reveals the myriad ways that Demy deviates from French film acting conventions, contemporary dance styles, and genre expectations, to deliberately construct an unsettling aesthetic. More so than *Peau d'âne* or *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, *Trois places* confronts its viewers' expectations and challenges their assumptions about musical genre form. The fine-meshed sieve of my interdisciplinary methodology catches the defining details of *Trois places*' complex construction that other approaches cannot.

Career transitions

Demy's career moved through a number of shifts in the eighteen years between *Peau d'âne* (1970) and *Trois places pour le 26* (1988) which affected the shape of his final feature. His aesthetic activities varied widely during this time, but overall it was a professionally dry period. In the

years after *Peau d'âne*, Demy struggled to get script projects off the ground. The films he was able to make often didn't earn enough money to make him a safe bet for producers, creating difficulties in getting other projects financed and shifting his professional interests to other forms of media. During this period, French dance culture was also changing. These conditions introduced new aesthetic variables into the mode of production for Demy's final feature film.

Demy wrote four scenarios in the 1970s that were all refused (Haustrade 77). In 1976 and 1977, Demy was set to direct a Russian-French musical co-production entitled *Anouchka*.[142] The musical drama told the story of a French film crew making a musical film adaptation of Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* in Russia. In an elegant blend of cinematic reality and fiction, Demy and Legrand were to play the director-composer team at the helm of an international co-production, with dancers for a large ballet about the daily routine of merchants in Leningrad provided by the Bolchoï Ballet. A sung-and-danced press conference number planned for the opening Parisian scenes of the film would pay subtle homage to a similar number at the beginning of Rouben Mamoulian's *Silk Stockings* (1957), a favorite of Demy and his adopted daughter, Rosalie Varda-Demy (Demy "Anouchka").[143] Russia's Mosfilm was prepared to cover most of the cost, but the refusal on the part of French distributors to guarantee a French exhibition contract resulted in the project's dissolution (Tremois 15). Investing even a fraction of the production costs for a Demy film was seen as a risky investment in the 1970s and the filmmaker was unable to find an investor for the three million French francs required (Haustrade 78).

Several of Demy's additional script ideas were written with Yves Montand in mind for the lead role. The impetus for *Trois places* began when Demy and Montand were both in Los Angeles; Demy was making *Model Shop* (1969) for Columbia and Montand was filming *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever* (1970) with Vincente Minnelli. Demy envisioned a musical vehicle for Montand that emerged from conversations the men had in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Demy

continued pondering the idea until in "1972 I came up with a screenplay based on the rehearsals of a musical comedy. Montand was on board, we had contacted [the actress] Isabelle Adjani who was also up for it, Michel Legrand was of course in the know, and . . . we never found a producer. We ended up abandoning the idea" (*Trois places pour le 26* press book).[144] The men were unable to convince a producer to commit to the expensive venture. A look at Demy's day planners from 1977 gives a sense of his struggles to find investors; within the twelve-month period there are notes about compiling a shot breakdown for the comedy "Kobi" (in March), a trip to St. Petersburg related to "Anouchka" (in June and July), and notes to write an outline for the musical comedy "Dancing" (in November), the latter of which would serve as a reference for *Trois places pour le 26* (Clech et al 10).

Several of the films Demy did make during this period received limited distribution in France or did not recoup their costs. *The Pied Piper* (1972) played only briefly in French theaters four years after its initial distribution and *L'événement le plus important depuis que l'homme a marché sur la lune* (1973), although made on a modest budget, was a commercial failure (Amiel 103, 104). The Japanese producers for *Lady Oscar* (1979) gave Demy access to a budget of two million French francs that earned back its investment after eight weeks in Japanese theaters. French distributors remained uninterested in screening the film or investing in subtitles for the English-language production; despite being one of Demy's biggest commercial successes and a testament to his keen ability to shape the physicality of his actors' performances,[145] it had no effect on his ability to convince French investors of his financial viability (Haustrade 78). Several years later, creative differences led Michel Legrand to refuse to write the orchestral score for *Une Chambre en Ville* (1982). Audiences largely avoided the film, leading to what *Variety* describes as a "critical Waterloo of sorts" upon its release in 1982. Critics writing for *Cahiers du Cinema* denounced the Belmondo vehicle *L'As des as* (1982) that was released concurrently, declaring that the film had

stolen away *Une Chambre en Ville*'s audiences ("Gaul pic" 211). A few years later, Demy was so disappointed with the final result of *Parking* (1985) that he renounced the film (Halberstadt 79), and the illness that would end his life prevented him from finishing the projects he continued to work on in his last years.

These details are frequently discussed in writings about Demy's later career. Not discussed is what Demy did in the years when he was unable to put any of his films into production. During the 1970s, Demy worked as a director and staged performances for several French theatrical productions. He also made frequent trips between the US and France, especially in 1976 and 1977, when he seemingly served as a consultant or creative collaborator for the stage production of *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* that played at the Public Theater in New York during 1979.[146] In addition to any professional meetings, Demy also attended a number of Broadway shows in October and November of 1976, seeing *Guys and Dolls*, *Pippin*, *The Wiz*, *Shenandoah*, *My Fair Lady*, *Grease*, and *Porgy and Bess*, as well as a magic show (Demy 1976 agenda).

The interest in theater was not simply leisurely; Demy was also involved with several opera productions during this period, for which he provided the mise-en-scène. In 1972 Demy staged a production of Igor Stravinsky's *Le Rossignol* for La Maison de la culture d'Amiens (opening at Venise and then playing at the Théâtre de la Ville in Amiens, France) (Amiel 106). The voice-over for the publicity clip describes Demy's mise-en-scène as "lyrical" (Office national de radiodiffusion). Only a brief excerpt of the performance is available online, but it shows a corps of dancers in clear lines moving with a quick and powerful quality (Quick and Strong Effort) that creates repeated, angular movements into sagittal forward and horizontal space. The characters are clearly meant to be soldiers, and the choreography of the figure movement reflects this narrative intention.

Demy told *Cinéma 76* he was offered the chance to do the mise-en-scène for the 1977 revival adaptation of Jean-Philippe Rameau's opera, *Platée*, a few years later, a position that he seems to have declined, as no evidence exists of his collaboration on that project (Amiel 106). Demy's day planners also hint that he may have filmed a car commercial during this period for a major French car manufacturer,[147] work that Demy told *Cinéma 76* he would not refuse if the subject matter were interesting to him (Amiel 106). In addition, Demy staged the performances for the first ever French César awards ceremony on April 3rd, 1976 ("France's Oscar" 7). Thirty-five hundred people attended the Césars, which was also broadcast on the television station Antenne 2. Jean Gabin presided over the ceremony, Jean-Pierre Spiero directed the program, Michel Legrand provided musical accompaniment, and Demy staged the performers, among them the Blue Bell Girls delivering a tap routine ("Radio-Télévision" 12; La Bardonnie 26), the same corps—though not necessarily the same performers—that could be seen dancing at the Lido in Paris during the 1960s.

Le Monde's reviewer found the experience a "little sad" overall and was not impressed by the tap dancing (La Bardonnie 26).[148] Whether the disappointing result was due to the lack of talent of the dancers or because of Demy's direction, she does not say; the *Variety* reviewer thought that Demy "staged as well as he could" ("France's Oscar" 7). There may have been financial incentives for this work, as Demy was struggling to find investors for his film projects. However, his choice to stage theatrical productions and hone his knowledge of physical performance points to the value assigned to carefully choreographed figure movement in his broader aesthetic. The performance choices are revealing in several additional ways. Whereas the Blue Bell girls were performing burlesque dances in the 1960s, they were tapping away sixteen years later, suggesting an evolution and expansion of the dance technique requirements for a performer of this ilk. Unlike the 1976 Academy Awards, which featured performances by established stars like Ray

Bolger, Diana Ross, and Bernadette Peters, France's film industry chose not to draw on their musical talent for entertainment (Verrill 5). Jean Gabin's hosting of the awards speaks to his importance as a prominent French actor, and the choice to have Demy stage the festivities speaks to his association with French musical culture, theatricality, and spectacle. The range of Demy's theatrical exposure during this period emphasizes that he had more experience working with choreography and dancers than his filmography alone conveys.

In the period between *Peau d'âne* and *Trois places pour le 26*, French dance culture was also evolving. Government subsidies helped to create regional choreographic centers that fostered the development of a more post-modern approach to dance in France, called *danse contemporaine*, adopted around the 1970s. The form has parallels to the modern and post-modern dance traditions that developed in the United States in the twentieth century that Demy likely experienced while living in Los Angeles in the late 1960s.[149] Unlike post-modern dance in the United States, which was largely a reaction to the modern dance movement, *danse contemporaine* in 1970s France was a departure from the ballet works of Maurice Béjart. His choreography, in turn, provided a departure from the (itself complex) established ballet tradition of post-war French culture, epitomized by the works of choreographers like Roland Petit. Marcelle Michel and Isabelle Ginot argue that danse contemporaine has roots in earlier dance traditions that made their way to France in the 1930s and 1940s—the work of Rudolf Laban, François Delsartre, Mary Wigman, and Kurt Jooss—but that the impulse for new dance forms remained marginalized in France until the events of May 1968 propelled the impetus for change (175). By the 1980s, *danse contemporaine* was an established part of French dance culture, spurred in large part by government subsidies and the creation of a number of regional choreographic centers. Michel and Ginot suggest that by the 1980s the period of "high masters" in France was over, with no more "elaboration of new [choreographic] languages, major ruptures, and significant

aesthetic redefinitions."[150] Rather, there emerged a proliferation of young choreographers, each exploring different strands of the new form (Michel and Ginot 186).

In the early 1980s, dancers in Paris could also experience forms of hip hop dance, though Felicia McCarren points out that French hip hop had different origins than its American counterpart, which began in African American communities of the South Bronx. The term refers more to a specific dance form rather than a broader, multi-media artistic movement, as it does in the United States. French hip hop dance forms were "taken up first in [French] suburban and immigrant communities, becoming a forum for debate on assimilation and multiculturalism" (McCarren xii). Regional, state-funded centers for dance assisted its development and the form built off of both pan-African and American jazz dance vocabularies and traditions, according to McCarren (xvi, xviii). However, French hip hop became more pervasive in the late 1980s and early 1990s (McCarren 53), so while it may have been available to dancers as they auditioned for Demy's film, it would not yet have been an engrained part of a professional movement training. And while professional French dancers during this period were still primarily classically trained, they also had greater access to American choreographic training during this period. Broadway-style dancing was less prevalent than modern jazz, but teachers would come from the US to give workshops, sponsored by regional dance centers. Several American dancer-choreographers—Matt Maddox, Molly Molloy, and Rick Odums—also emigrated to France and established modern jazz dance companies there during the 1970s and 1980s.[151]

Meanwhile, in the United States, music videos and a hip hop-based street dance aesthetic were gaining in popularity and critical respect. Although breakdancing began in the 1970s, widespread exposure to (and a greater commercialization of) this new dance form occurred in part thanks to the popularity and aesthetic choices made by the creative teams, including *Trois places* choreographer Michael Peters, involved in Michael Jackson's music videos for *Beat It* and

Thriller, both released in 1983 (Shore 285). Both videos were significant catalysts in the music video industry and are held responsible for the increase of music record sales in 1983, including eight million copies of Michael Jackson's album *Thriller* (Shore 14, 15). The cinematic interest in hip hop grew more significantly in 1984 when Hollywood studios, afraid that it would be a short-lived phenomenon, attempted to capitalize upon the movement that was gaining awareness and popularity. Two studios released competing break dance-centered films that year: Orion's *Beat Street* and Cannon Films' *Breakin'* ("Break Dancing" 287).

Yves Montand's cinematic presence was also on the rise. In 1986, Claude Berri produced, wrote, and directed the two-part film *Jean de Florette* and *Manon des sources* about a pair of provincial farmers (Montand and Daniel Auteuil) who control the flow of water to a property recently inherited by a stranger to the community (Gérard Depardieu), in the hopes that they can purchase the land themselves. The film was wildly successful; it had more French entries in 1986 (over seven million) than any other film—French or American—released that year (Simsi 380). Soon afterwards, Montand mentioned to Berri the earlier film project with Demy that never made it into production. The film producer enthusiastically offered to fund and produce it himself (*Trois places pour le 26* press book). Berri reinitiated the project Montand and Demy had begun almost twenty years earlier because, according to him, he had always wanted to work with Demy. He also knew Demy was having "difficulties to make films with the sort of means that his kind of cinema necessitated" ("Jacques Demy, ou l'arbre gémeau"). Berri invited Demy to New York and told him, "make this movie for me; I'll give you all the money you need" ("Jacques Demy, ou l'arbre gémeau"). Agnès Varda describes Berri as a fairy with a magic wand, providing Demy with "all the gold he needed to make the movie." But the production history of *Trois places pour le 26* demonstrates that, even in fairy tales, money comes with strings attached.

For the first and only time in his filmmaking career, Demy had the resources to make a musical—in color, with songs, dances, large set-pieces, and long rehearsal periods—without prohibitive monetary limitations. Several accounts of *Three Seats* suggest that the film's creation was a paradigm shift in Demy's career as a result. Jean-Pierre Berthomé suggests that the film "was put in place with conditions of financial and intellectual support that Demy had yet to experience" (380).[152] Rosalie Varda-Demy—Demy's adopted daughter and the costume designer for *Three Seats*—suggests in a recent interview that the film's shoot was "a much more complicated production, compared to Jacques' other films. [With] a large crew, and Bernard Evein's substantial set design" ("Dans les coulisses").[153] Given that the musical genre often requires more significant rehearsal periods (before and during production) and greater financial investments, a better understanding of Demy's relationship to money and funding is especially pertinent.[154]

Looking at resources spent—time and money—gives a sense of how *Trois places* compares to earlier projects. And a comparison of Demy's pre-production process—especially how he worked with others in the creation of his films—is particularly relevant, given the involvement of Yves Montand in addition to Demy's usual collaboration with his composer, Michel Legrand, and his production designer, Bernard Evein. These various pieces allow us to better understand how Demy created—and at times struggled to create—the idiosyncratic cinematic universe for which he is known.

In an interview with *Cahiers du cinema*, Demy remembers *Trois places* costing between 52 and 53 million francs (Magny 61), but a cost estimate from April of 1988 puts the total cost at just under 56 million ("Devis Récapitulatif"). Budget comparisons from the perspective of equivalent purchasing power in 1988 show that *Trois places pour le 26* cost approximately twice as much as *Demoiselles*' 29.6 million, and two and a half times as much as *Peau d'âne*'s 23.2 million.[155]

The budget disparities become more interesting when comparing itemized costs for production design, which reinforces the importance of a carefully crafted visual look to Demy's films. If we compare the costs of set design (with labor included), we can better see how Demy was able to devote additional resources to creating his desired visual look. Taking inflation into account, the set design for *Young Girls* was budgeted at 2.5 million francs, the final budget for set design on *Donkey Skin* was 2 million, and the estimated budget for *Three Seats'* set design was 10 million. It is worth remembering, however, that the set design budget for *Peau d'âne* was able to be so high only because Demy and Deneuve fed their salaries back into the production. In addition, Berri's funding for *Trois places* meant Demy could shoot all of his interior scenes on studio lots, allowing him a greater level of control over his mise-en-scène. The set design costs increase to 15 million francs if we factor in the cost of the studio rental. *Demoiselles*' and *Peau d'âne*'s set design budgets were 8.5% and 8.6% of their total budgets, respectively; *Trois places'* set design costs (with studio rentals included) accounted for a quarter of the film's total cost.[156]

Labor and personnel is expensive, and the larger number of dancers required for *Trois places*' musical numbers—as well as the time needed to rehearse those numbers—certainly drove up the cost. *Variety* specifically references "prohibitive dance rehearsals" as one of the many high costs of any film musical's production ("Demy Succeeds With Filmmusicals" 25). Demy echoes this in *Cahiers du cinéma*: "that's what is so horribly expensive: renting a rehearsal space, with fifty dancers present at each session" (Clech et al 58).[157] The number of dancers without speaking roles employed for *Trois places* conveys a bigger sense of scale when compared to those hired for *Demoiselles*, Demy's only other film to consistently feature large numbers of dancers. Twenty-five dancers were hired for *Demoiselles*, plus the three Americans (George Chakiris, Grover Dale, and Gene Kelly). *Demoiselles*' shooting schedule suggests a production period of about twelve weeks, with two weeks of rehearsal beforehand for the dancers in England. *Trois places* had a similar

production period of just under twelve weeks, but this time with a group of thirty-seven dancers and three months of rehearsals with the full corps of dancers. Michael Peters arrived beforehand with his assistants and four American dancers;[158] Demy suggests that "the physical work began at the beginning of the year, I called Michael Peters in Los Angeles in January, he arrived in February, and until May we were preparing" (Clech et al 58).[159] In order to understand where there were greater shifts in Demy's working methods, we can look at the pre-production planning that went into the creation of *Trois places pour le 26.* Although Berri's offer provided Demy with unlimited financial resources to make his film, Demy—to his chagrin, at times—had to make adjustments to his pre-production process.

In addition to the financial freedom that Berri provided for *Trois places*, Demy ended up compromising with Yves Montand—and to a lesser extent, Michel Legrand—on certain narrative and stylistic decisions. Demy would normally write his screenplays alone, according to various documents in Demy's archives, as well as testimonials from Demy and the people with whom he frequently worked on his films. He would set the plot lines, character development, and corresponding aesthetic choices. In parallel, he would meet early and often with his composer (usually Michel Legrand) and his set designer (usually Bernard Evein) so that Demy's collaborators could get a sense of the aesthetic he wanted.[160] Demy recounts this process to *Cahiers du cinéma*, explaining, "Initially I work alone, then composing with Legrand is what takes the longest: to create six or eight songs it takes a year, we write, we re-listen fifteen days later and we sometimes determine that it doesn't work and the time passes. Afterwards I contact Evein [for the set design], and Rosalie Varda for the costumes: the choice of colors, a tone for each character; each has a theme, a color, a behavior, a drive" (Clech et al 58).[161] Part of this process occurred for the visual design of *Trois places* as well. Demy would frequently have a specific painter in mind to guide the aesthetic of a particular film project, the color scheme especially.

The look Demy had in mind for *Trois places* was drawn from the work of the painter Raoul Dufy, and there is a strong similarity of blues, greens, and wispy watercolor brushstrokes between the Dufy painting *La Tour Eiffel*, a preparatory sketch that Evein created for the film, and the final backdrop that appears as part of Montand's show, complete with the sailor iconography that Demy loved so much (figures 1 and 2).

A number of factors were different for *Trois places*. Rather than starting from a new story idea or significantly revising an older project, Demy worked largely from two versions of a story he had developed for Montand almost twenty years beforehand, "Les Folies Passagères" and "Dancing." Because Montand and Berri were the primary impetus for initiating the production, Montand entered the collaborative process much earlier than was normal for Demy. Such an arrangement was unusual; while he often had actors in mind for a role (Deneuve for the princess in *Peau d'âne,* for example), casting for the films usually occurred later and the actors were not part of Demy's writing process. In interviews and publicity materials for the final film, Montand's involvement in this process seems minor. In the film's press book Demy explains that Montand's primary contribution was in changing the main character of the earlier script, an entertainer originally called Michel Cartier: "He insisted on playing himself in the film. I chose the parts of his life that we see in the film, they constitute the legend of Montand in the eyes of the groupie that I am, that I already was when I would go to hear him sing at the Théâtre de l'Etoile in the 50s" (*Trois places pour le 26* press book).[162] Demy's planners confirm this sense of organization, as a note on August 30, 1987—nine months before principal photography would begin—suggests that a first draft of the screenplay was finished. Two weeks later, Demy was in Autheuil with Montand working on the script. Montand suggests in the same press book that the character change was the only one he required in the script because "I didn't want to fracture Jacques Demy's universe, the tone, the colors" (*Trois places pour le 26* press book).[163]

In reality, Montand was more involved in the minute details of preparation than the film's publicity suggests, leading Demy to a nervous breakdown just before the film's principal photography. The tension came to a head on May 1, 1988—nine days before filming was to start—as Demy has a note in his planner about an argument with Montand, one that seems to have emerged after a long day of pre-recording songs for the film. In a recent making-of documentary about the film, this subject is mentioned by multiple people involved in the project: the actress Mathilda May (who plays Marion), the executive producer Pierre Grustein, and Rosalie Varda-Demy. The latter sums up the situation by suggesting that Montand was someone very possessive of his projects, even more so because it was his own life, his own name. He wanted to talk about the project, reinvent everything, whereas Demy "had a very different way of working. He was someone who worked very much in advance: everything was written, everything was prepared. . . . In contrast, Montand had a way of saying, 'let's do this differently, let's change this, let's add that,' and so on" ("Dans les coulisses").[164] Françoise Fabian (Marie-Hélène in *Trois places*) presents a similar attitude in an interview: "Montand was a legend, and therefore like all legends: very egocentric during shooting! He thought only of his own proper profile, and intervened in Demy's staging." (Barnett 74).[165] On May 4, 1988, two days after the argument with Montand, Demy was in the hospital (1988 agenda).[166] Grustein, the executive producer, suggests that everyone involved with the production became aware of Demy's exhaustion and spoke to Montand, who, in Grustein's words, "calmed down a bit," allowing the period of principal photography to occur with fewer hiccups ("Dans les coulisses").[167] Montand's effect on the script appears to be the main source of collaborative tension with Demy, but the actor was also closely involved in the hiring of the film's choreographer, Michael Peters.

Demy initially had several French choreographers in mind for his film. Planning notes have the French ballet choreographer Roland Petit's name scribbled on the side ("*Trois places pour le 26*

production notes"), and Demy's planner suggests he tried to get in touch with Petit on or around August 24, 1987. Demy also entertained the idea of a more avant-garde look to the dancing. He thought there to be a number of "magnificent choreographers, like Pina Bauch"[168] in Europe at the time ("Jacques Demy, ou l'arbre gémeau") and he tells *24 Images* that he considered her before deciding that her work was "too anguished, too tortured" (Grugeau 60).[169] In an interview from 1988 ("Jacques Demy, ou l'arbre gémeau"), he mentions the name of French choreographer Maguy Marin, a significant figure in the contemporary dance world. Her works are known for their destabilizing and grotesque qualities, while also remaining grounded in the ballet tradition she acquired as a dancer for the French choreographer Maurice Béjart. A note in his planner from November 21, 1987, suggests that Demy was interested in American post-modern choreographers as well, and attended at least one of Trisha Brown's shows. Yves Montand was very much present for these aspects of preparation, however, and rejected the idea of a French choreographer (Clech et al 10). Instead, Montand suggested Michael Peters, a choice that Michel Legrand also supported.

Michael Peters was a prolific choreographer in the 1980s. He is best known as Michael Jackson's choreographer on some of his early music videos, "Beat It" (1983) and "Thriller" (1983). He also choreographed Pat Benatar's "Love is a Battlefield" music video (1983) and was a co-choreographer (with Michael Bennett) for the original 1981 Tony-winning Broadway production of *Dreamgirls*. Demy points out that the choice of Peters brought the film closer to Broadway, and he adds in an interview, "why not, it was a very good idea, and Michael Peters is very talented, he properly understood the spirit" of the film ("Jacques Demy, ou l'arbre gémeau"). Demy's discussions of the film's choreography suggests that he was not dissatisfied with the choice of someone more Broadway-oriented, but it also emphasizes that his initial impulse was to take the choreography in a different direction and take advantage of the

choreographic talent blossoming in France. In the interview ("Jacques Demy, ou l'arbre gémeau"), Demy points out that such an avant-garde choreographic aesthetic was not compatible with Montand's universe, which can explain why he did not fight—and seems to have happily agreed to—the choice to go with a more Broadway and popular American dance style. However, the impulse to blend Montand's music-hall aesthetic with that of an avant-garde European choreographer fits perfectly with Demy's instinct in earlier film projects of blending seemingly disparate and incompatible artistic influences, an impulse that the filmmaker nonetheless incorporated into his film in other ways.

Legrand was equally invested in creating a sound for the film's score that drew on contemporary popular styles. Legrand's score follows the same impulse for modern electronic orchestration that he used in *Parking*; we are far from the jazzy arrangements of the early Demy/Legrand collaborations. In describing the music to *Cahiers*, Demy explains that "Michel worked differently, insofar as he heavily used synthesizers to find new sounds, a different color. Montand strongly insisted on having more contemporary rhythms" (Clech et al 10).[170] Much of the music evokes the pop/rock styles popular in the 1980s, though as we shall see, there is quite the stylistic variety of music (and choreography) in the final film.

As a result of these decisions, for what appears to be the first time in his career Demy let himself be persuaded by Montand and Legrand's ideas that were contrary to his initial impulses. Even though his collaborations with Legrand and Evein on the sound and look of his earlier films led to compromises, Demy normally did not include his actors in discussions of the film's content or even their characters. The situation with Montand was different, however, largely because the actor was central to the project's re-initiation. The film's relatively high cost for 1988 also provided additional impetus. Montand and Legrand's logic behind these aesthetic suggestions was that the film, with its big budget, needed to appeal to a broader—and especially a younger—

audience. One of the appeals of Peter's aesthetic is the range that he could provide. According to Jean-Michel Frodon, cinema attendances were very low during this period, having dropped 40% between 1985 and 1988 (696). Frodon also reminds us that younger audiences were being coaxed out of their homes primarily by American films during this period, which helps explain Legrand's insistence on a more modern sound and the interest in an American choreographer, especially one who had ties to the popularity of Michael Jackson.

Looking more closely at Demy's finances on his last film shows that—despite some similarity of costs with earlier films—his financial freedom created a set of aesthetic constraints in the form of collaborative compromises with Montand. Throughout the publicity and interview process, Demy was diplomatic and expressed gratitude for the resources available to him in creating *Trois places*. He tells *Cahiers du cinema*,

> I never experienced such work freedom as that which I had with Berri on this film. Usually I'm deformed by economics: always going too quickly, or being told that since we wouldn't have the means to do something, to do it with fewer resources. With him, not at all, he wanted a beautiful film and would tell me: 'now is not the time for a TV film, the spectacle must be real spectacle.' And he was right, about musicals specifically, I'm not talking about cinema generally. And he never intervened on anything, he was admirable (Clech et al 11).[171]

Here Demy expresses a clear recognition of Berri's (financial and moral) support, without acknowledging the tensions that occurred just before production. And in his discussion of working with Montand, he suggests that the only problem of working with Montand was his "high standards and his sense of perfection" to which he adds praise of Montand's professional experience and performative nuance (Clech et al 11).[172]

An awareness of the tensions with Montand, as well as Legrand, points to the collaborative and financial disparities from his earlier works. In discussing the collaborative process, much of the more recent discourse from cast and crew on the film blames the conflict on Montand, indirectly (and sometimes directly) shifting the responsibility for the film's commercial failure on the star rather than the director. Such an accumulation of anecdotes implies that any failures of the film were the result of Montand invading Demy's creative process. For better or for worse, *Trois places pour le 26* has a production history that is unusual in relation to Demy's normal working methods, but such variety is also consistent with the director's choice to explore new formal strategies with each project. Analysis of *Trois places pour le 26* in relation to Demy's previous musicals, especially in his subtle subversion of the backstage sub-genre's expectations, suggests that he remained in control of his formal vision. His lead actor exerted an unusual degree of pressure on production decisions, but Demy chose to explore musical and choreographic styles that evoked the pop/rock aesthetic of the 1980s, all while working in financial conditions that allowed him a high level of control over the set design, costumes, and overall visual look of the film. And another significant shift to Demy's mode of production, disconnected from Montand, was his ability to work with a French actress who had a background in song and dance training.

Mathilda May and performance progressions

By 1988, dance culture in France had caught up with Demy's choreographic ambitions. In addition to seeing over 600 dancers for the corps (Clech et al 10), Demy suggests that in casting the role of Marion he auditions dozens of talented actors, "which proves that there would be the necessary talent in France to produce musical comedies" (*Trois places pour le 26* press book).[173] For

the first time, Demy could hire a French actress professionally trained in both song and dance, and the subsequent choreographic evolution of May's character, Marion, is documentable thanks to the analytical and descriptive precision of Laban Movement Analysis' vocabulary, especially its dissection of Effort and qualitative movements.

Demy's choices for Mathilda May's performance as Marion are most pertinent for an analysis of figure movement given her character's arc, as opposed to Montand's performance or that of Françoise Fabian, who plays Marion's mother and Montand's former lover. As Altman points out in his discussion of the show musical sub-genre, it is common for a lesser-known or more amateur performer to take over for a star who is "injured, recalcitrant, or absent" (231). Altman suggests that in Hollywood musicals this switch more often occurs in the final moments before the final performance of the film and that the replacement is a "non-performer," which "symbolically merges the stage world . . . and reality" (231) while also emphasizing the supradiegetic qualities of the performance. In contrast, Demy chooses to have the female lead of Montand's show quit earlier in the film (forty-five minutes in), allowing us to observe the process of Marion stepping into the role.[174] Unlike the sort of supradiegetic performances we would observe in a Hollywood film, where it is somewhat implausible that a different performer could execute such flawless performances at the last minute, Demy provides many narrative cues to suggest the labor and effort put into Marion's evolution as an artist. We can observe a carefully structured, deliberately choreographed performance that spans May's dancing and her figure movement. As Erin Brannigan discusses, playing attention to the "distinct performance modalities" that occur in musical stars' performances, not only in the musical numbers but throughout the film, can reveal a richer understanding of their role in the film and the continuities between their unremarkable and danced movements (141, 142). Demy's choices in this regard provide nuance to Marion's character and allows us to observe the shifts in her

physicality once she joins Montand's show and develops as a performer. Moreover, the contrast between May's physicality in *Trois places* and her movement in other films she starred in before working on Demy's film further reinforces that these were deliberate choices that the pair made to provide character development through figure movement. We can see clear differences in May's performance when we compare her physicality in *Trois places* to her work in Tobe Hooper's *Lifeforce* (1985) and Claude Chabrol's *Le Cri du hibou* (1987), two films in which she had leading roles soon before making Demy's film.

In *Lifeforce*, May plays a space vampire who sucks the life force out of the unsuspecting male victims caught in her spell. She appears completely nude in her first few scenes, and while there is a clear focus on the sexuality of her body through more distant camera framings, her movements are more limited to help suggest her alien, inhuman nature. Occasionally her movements are quicker—the first time we see her open her eyes, for example, and when she turns her head to look at someone—but overall she moves with an unchanging slowness. This is fitting, given her role as an alien vampire ensnaring her prey; Laban considered movements that engaged Flow, Space, and Weight efforts with unchanging Time to be brief trance-like moments called Spell drives. May's focus is usually Direct, especially when she is engaged with a victim. Her movements are also usually flourish-free, besides the frequent widening of her eyes; her most expansive movements are the arcing gestures of her arms as she raises them to the sky or towards her victims to draw them towards her.

May's performance in Chabrol's *Le Cri du hibou* is more nuanced but still limited. Here she plays Juliette, a woman who becomes obsessed with Robert, a man whom she finds spying on her from the woods behind her home. Her movements as she interacts with him for the first time are reserved and cautious; she walks slowly as they talk and raises her hand with Sustained Time to drink her coffee. Her Body Attitude is shrunken and small; she holds her arms crossed in front of

her, her torso is bowed slightly towards the front, and she holds her head down, jutting her chin forward when she looks up. Later in the film, when she grows in confidence, she smiles more frequently and holds her head higher, but her Effort life does not change dramatically. Even when she is upset later in the film and she speaks quickly as she cries, she sits still and moves very little. Chabrol's cinematography and staging choices also affect our ability to see much of her physicality. Throughout much of the film he presents May in medium shots or close-ups, and much of the film takes place at night, in cars or darkened rooms. In both films the range of her movement is more limited and what we do see is generally more controlled (exhibiting Bound Flow).

In contrast, May's character in *Trois places* moves with a fluid Flow baseline and playful confidence. When we first see Marion in her apartment, she walks with more Free Flow than her previous roles, which we can observe through the small reverberations that move into her shoulders and torso. Her consistent Effort life baseline combines a frequent use of Time and Flow effort, which Laban called Mobile State. Expressivity of this kind suggests a sense of moving through the world and an ongoing progression through the combination of Time Effort (which Laban associated with decision-making) and Flow Effort (which Laban associated with progression). May's portrayal of Marion relies moreso on Quick Time and Free Flow, suggesting an impulsive nature and a dislike of stasis or delay, which fits with Marion's character and her desire to advance her performance career. This Effort life is especially apparent after her musical number, "Au Concert," in the apartment. Marie-Hélène (her mother) scolds her for the performance and leaves the living room. We cut to Marie-Hélène in the kitchen as Marion walks towards her in the background; she leans against the kitchen doorway and as her shoulder comes into contact with the edge, her arms, hips, and foot ripple in response to the weight shift (figure 3). This example demonstrates that Weight Effort is not a main part of Marion's baseline at this

point in the film—she falls into the wall more so than she does deliberately shift her weight into it—but moments of Light Weight and Indirect Space are common in her Effort life as well, especially when she dances. When sitting, however, she sometimes slumps in her shoulders, especially in her apartment. Although she does not frequently employ larger gestures as she talks or moves, May frequently rotates and turns her wrists with Indirect Space and Light Weight, which we can see when she withdraws her hand from the perfume case as she is talking with her friends at work. May frequently moves her shoulders expressively into verticality to punctuate phrases or as she turns her head as well, bringing a cheek to her shoulder as she looks off to the side.

We can see slight shifts in this baseline depending on Marion's mood as well communicate narrative information. In her first encounter with Montand, Marion appears visibly more agitated and nervous. May still performs little gestures with her hands, but they are more Bound and Strong in their Effort as she twists her fingers and grasps her hands together in a display of Shape Flow as she unconsciously reveals her nervous excitement (figure 4). When she sits she does not collapse quite as much in her upper torso, but she initiates small movements forward into the sagittal plane as she talks. Many of her little movements are also in Quick Time, creating a more Impulsive phrasing to her gestures.[175] Much of May's figure movement is also distinguishable thanks to Demy's choice to favor more distant framings—medium long shots and long shots—than Chabrol, which allows us to observe how May acts with her whole body as well as her face. As a result, we can see the clear choices Demy made in her performance, especially in contrast to May's roles earlier in the 1980s.

More significantly, we can observe a progression of professional performance and maturity in Marion's physicality, both in how she dances and how she moves elsewhere in the film. Some of these cues come from actions Marion performs in the film's broader narrative. Most apparently,

Demy builds a slight clumsiness into her character, which May embodies in her use of Space Effort. The first time we see her in the perfume shop, Marion knocks over a perfume box as she is opening a drawer and telling her friends about her plan to get them tickets for Montand's show. She engages Strong Weight and Direct Space to pull open the drawer but her focus is elsewhere (on her story) and she does not notice the box until it falls. Only at that moment does her Effort life shift to Awake State (with Quick time and Indirect Space, suggesting an awareness and responsiveness to the environment) as she notices her error. Similarly, when Marion leaves Montand's dressing room for the first time, she is focused on Montand and her Flow Bound as she backs away from him, smiling and still processing the compliment he just paid her. She does not look where she is going in her excitement, walks in reverse, bumps into a chair, and stumbles before leaving (figure 5). Her exit in reverse from the dressing room repeats when she leaves for the second time, after Montand agrees to test her in the role now available from Betty's departure. This time she leans forward slightly in excitement before retreating to leave, but she twists towards the chair and gently catches herself by placing a hand on the edge, which prevents her from fully repeating her earlier clumsy exit. This clumsiness—and Marion's later avoidance—is in Demy scénario, a further indication of the attention put into Marion's physicality. For Marion's first exit from Montand's dressing room, Demy writes, "MARION leaves walking backwards. She hits the coffee table, drops her bag, mumbles something resembling an excuse" (Demy "Découpage technique" 47).[176] For her second exit (after Montand agrees to test her in Betty's old role), Demy writes, "She leaves walking backwards, avoids the table, smiles, and closes the door" (Demy "Découpage technique" 70).[177] There are differences from the scénario to the film, most notably the shift from a table to a chair and the elimination of additional details, like the bag dropping and some business about closing doors, but the intent and the reflection on Marion's character remains the same.

Marion's earlier musical numbers—"Au Concert" and "Trois places pour le 26"—also largely emphasize relatively simple, though virtuosic, steps, like single-unit turns (turns where the whole body moves simultaneously), leaps, and leg extensions. In "Au Concert" she usually remains centered, moving through choreography that keeps her vertical or moves her briefly through planes, the sagittal plane in particular. Peters' choreography develops this somewhat in "Trois places pour le 26," moving the three women more into movement along the planes (what Laban would call movement with two-dimensional spatial pulls). Many of the choreographic choices in the latter number also emphasize held shapes and poses rather than the transitions between dance phrases. In "St-Germain des Près," however, the dance Marion performs with the other show members is more nuanced, syncopated, and multi-unit. The choreography more frequently moves her into planes and diagonals, creating a greater sense of mobility and taking her off-center from the vertical axis as she dances. Given the verticality and stability of her earlier dances, these shifts—and her ability to execute them—suggests a progression and development in Marion's training. We can also see an Effort quality change here from her earlier dance phrases, which often emphasized Sustained Time and suspension to draw attention to the shapes created by her body and the long lines of her arms and legs. The choreography in "St Germain" still requires May to extend her limbs into far space, but the motions are often shorter and more quickly executed. Rather than traveling through space, as she frequently does in "Au Concert" and "Trois Places Pour le 26," here Marion stays more in one place, swinging her limbs and torso forward and backward into the sagittal plane (figure 6). In addition, May moves with even more Free Flow than she has previously while dancing, the choreography encouraging a Resilient Phrasing in her shoulders and limbs from the quick little jumps and weight shifts that create small waves of movement through her body. And when she and Montand emerge to take

their bows at the end of their premiere, her physicality has transformed from her earlier baseline of clumsier, quicker shifts and single-unit movement.

Montand's show ends with the pair immobile on stage, Marion's weight shifted forward onto one foot, as extras pass behind them. Marion bounces with excitement as she hugs Montand once the curtain is down, but when they enter for their bows she appears more grounded, relaxed, and confident. As she walks towards Montand, she moves with little fluid steps and greater initiation from her center and more successive (rather than simultaneous or sequential) movements, her hips and shoulders twisting ever so slightly in a quick, shimmying motion, and she poses, without wobbling, with her body twisted, for her bows (figure 7). The more angular and off-center poses are paired with more Sustained Time arm extensions and bows that display less Light Weight and fewer smaller, fidgety gestures. As Marion initially reaches for Montand, she does rotate her wrist once, but the gesture is more subtle, connected to the movement of the rest of her arm, and a function of her Shaping the space as she reaches towards Montand, creating a contrast from her earlier Quick Time, Shape Flow hand gestures.

Demy's narrative organization also implies a development of Marion's talent through what we don't see her perform. May's extended dance solos—"Au Concert" and "Trois Places Pour le 26"—are concentrated in the beginning of the film, and there is a decrease of her dancing as the film progresses as a result. We see her perform in "St-Germain des Près," but the number is brief and features her dancing in only two short segments. The narrative suggests she is improving as a dancer and actress; Montand and Toni (the show's director) have several exchanges in which they comment on her talent, and Marion receives a strong review in the local newspaper the morning after the premiere. We can judge some of this for ourselves based on May's dancing in "St-Germain des Près," which is stylistically different from her earlier dance performances, and we can also observe her greater sense of confidence and more relaxed physicality during the final

number with Montand and her bows after the performance. There is no final, large production number at the end of the film in which Marion showcases her newly acquired talent, however. This choice fits into Demy's experimentation with the show musical sub-genre's structure. But this may have also been a practical choice.

Although May is a talented performer, she does have limitations in her singing and dancing technique. In "Au Concert," Marion's first number, one of the longer notes May holds goes flat as she sings, right as she sits at her vanity table. She also has a tendency to raise her shoulders when her arms extend into upward space; in "Trois places pour le 26" she raises her arms at one moment in such a way that her shoulders appear disconnected from her neck and torso, creating a somewhat awkward line and making her look tense. This could be a deliberate expressive affectation on May's part, but visually it suggests misalignment and breaks with the cleaner lines of her other movements. The decrease in her dancing may have been to match her talents; creating more complex numbers may not have been possible. If the film's choreography was already pushing her to her limits, foregrounding of her dancing early on—with narrative hints to suggest that she becomes even more impressive—is an efficient way to further strengthen a sense of character development. May's physicality as an actress is subtle and nuanced enough, however, to allow Demy to create a consistent performance while also giving her character development through his choreography of her figure movements. Marion's character development is a minor aspect of *Trois places*' plot, but it reveals a prominent use of an actress' ability to display different physicalities in acting and dance performance that were not available to Demy in his earlier musicals.

Stylistic and tonal discontinuities

There are narrative continuities across Mathilda May's performance in *Trois places* that reveal the subtle work May and Demy executed to shape the physicality of her character. In contrast, there are stark incongruities in the styles of the musical numbers. Rather than a unified aesthetic, as in *Demoiselles*, or a delicately blended one, as in *Peau d'âne*, Demy's final musical moves through music and dance styles in more erratic ways. And despite Demy, Legrand, and Montand's hope that a contemporary feel to the songs and dances would attract younger audiences, the resulting styles and their relationship to the narrative and the musical genre creates a disconnect between *Trois places* and other musicals from the 1980s.

Existing descriptions also suggest the film's style is more unified and simplified than it actually is. Incongruities exist between what we can observe in the film itself and the description of the film style perpetuated by press accounts as well as certain of Legrand's characterizations of the film's music and dance. Several of the film's reviews emphasize the connection to American rock and hip hop by mentioning that Michael Peters worked with Michael Jackson ("Trois places pour le 26 (Review)" 19; Clech et al 11). Legrand implies that the dances in the film resemble Michael Jackson's choreography, suggesting that, "it's the encounter of these two generations that is fascinating" (*Trois places pour le 26* press book).[178] In discussing his orchestration of the songs, he describes his music as "very contemporary" and written with the intent of avoiding "references, citations, and evocations of a particular historical period"[179] (*Trois places pour le 26* press book). His musical choices were a departure from Montand's music-hall background because he wanted to avoid "imitating the composers of Montand's songs" even though he points out that "We hear several measures of 'real' Montand songs, that are like radio beacons of his life's history" (*Trois places pour le 26* press book).[180] Legrand's score follows the same impulse for modern electronic orchestration that he used in *Parking* several years earlier; "wanting to inject the musical numbers

with a touch of modernity," he explains, "I arranged part of the music to be performed by synthesizers" (Lerouge 216).

However, the film incorporates a wide range of music and dance styles and, in actuality, its aesthetic has little to do with popular American trends in hip hop. A number of the songs evoke 1980s popular music, especially through their use of noticeably synthesized instruments, but Legrand also makes use of jazz (including the big band standard "In the Mood") and French music-hall styles. Similarly, the choreography provides a range of styles to complement the music of the numbers. Peters' choices mostly fit within the larger dance genres of musical theater, ballet, and jazz, with an occasional hip hop touch. But these categories are large and overlapping, making precise distinctions based purely on dance forms more difficult. A descriptive comparison of the dances—the three supradiegetic dance sequences and the danced stage numbers—provides a clearer understanding of the variety in choreography.

"Interview," "Au Concert," and "Trois Places Pour le 26" are the film's three dance-heavy supradiegetic musical sequences. All draw on a blend of musical theater and jazz vocabulary, with some balletic influences, and all three contain similar electronic instrumentations in their music. However, their movement vocabulary is varied and their choreographic styles differ greatly. "Interview" occurs as Montand and his team leave the train station and the number provides an expressive rendering of Marseille's reporters getting their first scoop on the upcoming show. Much of the choreography concerns itself with this functional task. Unlike the attention to tasks in *Peau d'âne*, where the movement is efficient and straightforward, here the reporters move in exaggerated and stylized phrases, as is common in musical theater. As the first reporter asks his question, others in the background perform a full spin and extend their legs in a kick before extending their microphones towards Montand. As two photographers approach Montand, they leap into frame from the foreground, their bodies twisting as their legs bend. They land, still

focused on Montand in the mid-ground, and kick their right legs to the side, bring that leg back to center and switch their feet, spin into verticality with straight legs, and land in a crouch (figure 8). Only then do they photograph the actor. Another reporter approaches Montand and sings, her whole body bouncing on the vertical axis as her pen is poised over her notebook; the various reporters and camera crews in the background bounce in a similar way, also holding their poses (microphones extended, cameras up). Throughout the number, the choreography has the dancers frequently moving in unison, with some brief moments in canon or waves. The focus of the dancers is on Montand and they move towards and away from him, often making use of the lateral space of the frame. Much of the choreography moves the dancers along the horizontal axis as they walk, run, spin, and undulate to the right and left to surround Montand. Sometimes they move in and out of the frame but more frequently the camera tracks right or left—occasionally craning diagonally as the dancers move up and down the stairs—to follow the group.

In "Au Concert," there is a greater emphasis on jazz-infused ballet steps and on extended, suspended movements as Marion dances around her apartment and demonstrates her dance technique. She mimes a few gestures at the beginning of her dance and interacts with the furniture in the apartment, but the choreography stresses ballet exercises over exaggerated actions. Whereas the reporters initiated phrases from their hips or head that created undulations through their spines, creating a continuity of movement through their bodies, Marion frequently initiates isolated movements with her hips and torso which creates more angular shapes as she extends those body parts into the horizontal plane. Her arms tend to move through traditional ballet shapes as they extend and arc through the sagittal, horizontal, and high vertical axes. This combination is apparent after Marion leaves her bedroom. We cut back to the living room, with the kitchen visible in the background through two sets of doorways. Marion leaps into the mid-

ground as the shot changes (figure 9), her arms extend high into verticality and behind her sagittally, her right hip thrusts out horizontally, and her right leg bends into a parallel passé (her knee pointed forward into the sagittal plane and her toe touching her left knee). She regains her bearings as she falls towards the kitchen doorway and turns, bringing her cheek to her raised left shoulder in a flourish as she pushes the doorway away with her hands (figure 10). She runs forward into the hallway and briefly moves out of frame. Soon she returns with little backwards running steps to set up another ballet move, a *pirouette* (spin). She places her arms sagittal forward (right) and horizontal left (left) before completing a two-rotation turn on her left leg and ends with a suspended pose, her raised leg extending behind her (figure 11). All this occurs in one shot, filmed with a static camera. Marion then continues singing and moving through suspended poses and as she walks forward, the camera tracks backwards with her.

"La Parfumerie" draws on movement vocabulary from both "Interview" and "Au Concert" but with strong choreographic departures from both. This number is more purely expressive than the first two supradiegetic sequences; the choreography reflects the girls' excitement about seeing Montand's show (Marion's friends Alice and Nicole) or about becoming a star (Marion), with fewer exaggerated imitations of functional actions. Much of the dance draws on ballet—pirouettes, leaps, traditional arm shapes and leg extensions—and jazz—isolations and extensions of the hips and torso, quick direction changes, and angular shapes. There is also a brief evocation of break dancing, when the girls bind their flow and isolate the movement of their bent arms from their torsos, creating a brief pop and lock "robot" effect. What makes the number stand out, however, is the choreographic attention to symmetry in the frame that repeatedly draws our attention back to Marion. In Rudolf Laban's conception of symmetry operations, Spatial configurations in the body can be transposed or moved to repeat specific shapes and patterns. Carol-Lynn Moore briefly explains four of these transpositions: "In *reflection*, a given shape is

reversed to produce a mirror image. In *rotation*, the shape is moved a certain number of times around an axis. In *translation*, the shape is moved a set distance and repeated; while *glide reflection* combines the movements of translation and reflection, moving a shape a constant distance and also reversing it" (*Harmonic Structure* 249).

An example of symmetry operations and interactions—between individual figures, the mise-en-scène, and camera movement and placement—occurs in the section of the dance where there is no singing. The girls' singing ends in the fifth shot of the number as they raise their arms (figure 12). Marion's arms, extending fully into the high vertical plane, create a reflection in her body. Alice's and Nicole's exterior arms are also extended into the high vertical plane, but their inner arms create opposition and balance in their bodies as they rest by their sides. Within the frame, however, their opposition enhances the reflection created by Marion's body. Here the slower gesture is emphasized with Sustained Time, combined with an increase of Light Weight as the arms rise.

The girls then transition to their extended unison phrase, where the repetition of movement across bodies creates a translation of the movement in the frame. Their transition creates a moment of lovely opposition and reflection between bodies, as Marion transitions by lowering and folding her right arm to her torso, whereas Alice and Nicole raise and fold their right arms to their torsos while also quickly locomoting backwards (with Vibratory Effort Phrasing[181]) in order to create a greater play with depth in the frame. The difference in Marion's movement and her now larger appearance in the frame as she moves forward also helps draw further attention to her. The dancers then perform the next movements (which emphasize the isolated extending and contracting of the torso) to each side, creating this time a sense of reflection over time. However, the camera begins to track back as the girls begin this portion of their phrase so that by the time they have performed the motion on the other side, they appear smaller in the frame and their

legs are now visible. The camera's resizing of the figures allows for additional variation in our perception of the choreography.

Peters' choreography in this number is highly invested in the sort of symmetry operations that Laban and Lynn-Moore identify. This is aided by the clarity in Demy's conception of the musical numbers' space and the symmetrical layout of the chosen setting. The use of a backlot to create the perfume shop and the street in front of it gave the filmmakers complete control over the layout and arrangement of the space (figures 13 and 14). The space reflects itself length-wise, thanks to the three counters, the rectangular empty space in the center, and the two staircases that frame the back portion of the room, and there is a clear sense of repetition of pathways and positions as the three performers move through the space. The number's stylistic complexity, for the purposes of drawing attention to Marion as she expresses excitement about meeting Montand, and meticulously controlled set design, makes "La parfumerie" Demy's musical number that most closely resembles classical Hollywood conventions.

We can observe a greater contrast in dance—and music—styles in the numbers from Montand's show. "Ciné Qui Chante" is the first number to use partnered dancing, and the only one to include a tap dance routine as the music evokes—and explicitly cites at times—the music-hall and show-tune aesthetics. Throughout the number, pairs of dancers—in costumes evoking Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, and with wigs for the women that evoke Marilyn Monroe—move through the space with quick steps and extended held shapes in their arms and upper torsos. The couples frequently spin and twirl around one another. As the men in the corps of dancers pose with top hats and canes, Montand tap dances to "Cheek to Cheek" in front of them, the dance style reinforced by the sounds of his tapping on the soundtrack. He also throws in a brief "soft shoe" effect as he drags his feet from side to side, though this change in quality is not matched with a similar sonic shift in the soundtrack.

"Esprit Frappeur" evokes Montand's days in the shipyard and reintroduces Legrand's electronic instrumentation. Montand sings about the visceral experiences of the job as a corps of male dancers moves behind and around him on the stage. Here Peters infuses his choreography with the Effort qualities of hip-hop: Strong Weight and Quick Time, with fluctuations between Bound and Free flow as the dancers move through quick poses and direction changes. Indirect Space is visible, too, when the dancers move in unison through particular angular shapes. Primarily, however, the dancers' Effort lives shift in and out of a combination of Strong Weight, Time Efforts, and Flow Efforts, moving them briefly into flickers of Passion Drive, a very internally-focused drive. The movement vocabulary, however, remains firmly in musical theater, jazz, and ballet territory. The dancers perform exaggerated working motions as they wipe their brows and turn and pump their arms as if manipulating equipment. Their spines undulate through the sagittal plane and they expand and contract their arms and torsos towards and away from the midline, frequently with spins, jumps, and vocalized exhales to create broken lines and angular shapes with their bodies (figure 15).

The brief dance on the "Moulin Rouge" set shows dancers practicing a strip tease. The women arch their backs and change positions with each other on stage as they progressively remove items of clothing and pose suggestively. This scene is soon followed by the "Liberation" number in which dancers cross the front of the stage in stylized walking patterns to the Glenn Miller big band standard "In the Mood." The number conveys the end of World War II, and we see German soldiers goose stepping, French men pushing them off-stage, a disgraced French woman holding her shaved head in her hands as she stumbles along, and sailors skipping and kicking as they run by. Finally, the "St-Germain des Près" number uses jazzier music and dance styles. As discussed, we see a different, looser movement quality in Marion's performance, and the choreography draws on jazz and swing dance. The dancers slide and spin to the floor,

Marion rolls over her partner's back, and groups of women slide through their male partners' legs before their partners swing them into the air in conventional swing dance moves (figure 16).

Although there are hints of the hip hop aesthetic in *Trois places pour le 26*, it is less prevalent than accounts of the film make it seem. Overall the dancing is closer to musical theater and jazz styles, though Michael Peters' choreography provides a wide variety of dance styles even from within that larger category. This range of music and dance styles results in a constantly changing aesthetic in the film, as is apparent from a description of the musical numbers. This contrast between music and dancing is also a departure from Demy's aesthetic choices in his earlier musicals.

Legrand focused on a jazz style for *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*, and while the complexity of the choreography varies in that film, the movement vocabulary focuses on a consistent blend of ballet and jazz infused with the angular shapes popular in the 1960s. *Peau d'âne* blends period and contemporary instruments and orchestrations, but Legrand frequently has his songs move smoothly from one to another, or has the same melody carry across numbers with different music styles. Similarly, the choreography of figure movement is varied to reflect the film's genre play, but the movements are simple and repeated across the film. We see a similar musical impulse in Legrand's score for *Parking* as well; Legrand uses leitmotifs and acoustically-produced instruments for the music composed to underscore the dramatic moments, but he blends in electronic orchestrations for the adult contemporary rock music Orpheus performs throughout the film. In contrast, *Trois places* evokes a number of styles with fewer repetitions of specific choreographic phrases or melodies across numbers.

In addition, Demy's treatment of musical homages in *Trois places* points to the deliberate, stark contrasts created between citations. When we see Gene Kelly evoke his choreographic predilections in "Andy Amoureux" from *Demoiselles*, his dancing with sailors and children evokes

On the Town and *An American in Paris*, respectively, but the references are blended to create continuity between portions of the dance and point to general rather than specific moments. In "Ciné Qui Chante," Montand's singing of lyrics from the choruses of songs create clearly defined citations that are supported by broader iconographic references in costuming and dancing. Montand sings the title lyrics from "Singing in the Rain," then sings part of the chorus of "Cheek to Cheek" from *Top Hat* (1935), as he and the male dancers wear costumes evoking Fred Astaire in *Silk Stockings* (1957).[182] One of the chorus girls, in a blonde curly wig, then walks up to Montand and evokes Marilyn Monroe by singing part of "I Wanna Be Loved By You" from *Some Like it Hot* (1959). Montand ends the series of citations by singing the famous line of "Devant le Garage" from *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* (1964) as a man in a French sailor costume and a woman in a saturated yellow dress embrace in the background. These references are not subtle, nor were they meant to be.[183]

Trois places' stylistic and narrative choices point to the discrepancies from his earlier stylistic strategies for music and dance content as well as his formal distance from American film musicals of the 1980s. Demy's films do not fit comfortably within their own eras, especially due to their anachronistic combination of stylistic elements from various periods of film, music, art, and dance history. As part of his justification to himself for using an older script for *Trois places*, Demy told *Cahiers du cinéma,* none too modestly, that he was "always convinced of being ten years ahead of cinematographic society as a whole," adding "even if I see seem pretentious by saying it, it's unfortunately true" (Clech et al 10).[184] In his eyes, it was the misalignment of his aesthetic visions with the preoccupations of contemporary cinema that prevented the implementation and financial success of his projects. The French film community saw *Peau d'âne* as out of touch and disconnected from contemporary film culture because of its (perceived) distance from political issues (Simsolo 76). A closer examination of the stylistic and tonal disparities between *Trois places*

and its filmic musical contemporaries from the 1980s[185] better situates its uncomfortable relationship to its decade.

Even a cursory look[186] at American musicals from the 1980s emphasizes that the dance styles in *Trois places* are not in sync with contemporary trends. This is already apparent given their greater reliance on movement vocabulary from musical theater, jazz, and ballet as opposed to hip hop (break dancing) or the more aerobic jazz and corresponding costumes seen in *Flashdance* (1983) that were especially popular in America during the 1980s. Demy's costume choices are also more reminiscent of the 1950s than the 1980s. Marion's dresses stand out in this regard; they are solid colored and knee-length, with full skirts that more closely resemble the dresses from *Silk Stockings* than the revealing, distressed, aerobics-inspired clothes popular in the 1980s.

Peters' work on the film looks different even from his own choreography for the music videos he made with Pat Benatar—"Love is a Battlefield"—and Michael Jackson—"Beat It" and "Thriller"—all from 1983. There are glimpses of Peters' core movement vocabulary in Demy's film; in both the clips and the film we can see a use of spinal undulations, isolations of the hips and torso, and a lengthening of the arms into the vertical plane (often crossing the midline to create a diameter) with Quick Time and Direct Space before the arms pull back towards the body center. Peters' choreography from *Trois places* shares some similarities to his work on music videos in 1983 but overall his work for Benatar and Jackson stands apart, as each video develops its own choreographic logic to parallel the musical rhythms and reinforce the narratives of the music videos. This versatility is what drew Demy to Peters in the first place: his flexibility as a choreographer and his ability to shape a performance to fit the context at hand.

Differences in editing patterns also make *Trois places* stand out from contemporary films. *Trois places*' overall average shot length shows that Demy's editing pace quickened over the course of his career. Compared to *Demoiselles*' average shot length of 16.5 seconds and *Peau d'âne*'s average

shot length of 11.9 seconds, *Trois places*' average shot length of 9.8 seconds continues a downward trend, and is cut quite quickly within the context of Demy's career. Even comparing the average lengths of musical numbers in *Demoiselles*—35.5 seconds—to *Trois places*—25 seconds—shows an increase in pacing. But in relation to other musical examples from the 1980s, Demy's film is slow from an editing perspective. The figure movement-heavy numbers in *Xanadu* (1980) have an average shot length of 11.6 seconds. The numbers in the musical-science fiction hybrid *Earth Girls are Easy* (1988) have an average shot length of 4 seconds. The three music videos Peters worked on in 1983 have a combined average shot length of 3.9 seconds.[187] Demy wanted to distance himself from the music video aesthetic, which he tells *Cahiers du cinéma* too closely resembles a "super montage, madness . . . it's another language that has nothing to do with our cinematographic expression" (58).[188] Demy's films' editing pace may have sped up, but his numbers in *Trois places* are quantitatively closer to the editing norms of the studio era[189] than of contemporary 1980s averages.

Demy's film moves through a number of choreographic registers as we have seen, but each number creates a sense of self-containment through repeated phrases and a unified aesthetic. In contrast, many of the American musicals from this period play on a sense of aesthetic excess through sheer volume or stylistic combinations within individual numbers. We see this effect in *The Apple* (1982) and *Earth Girls are Easy* (1988), but this is especially apparent in *Xanadu* (1980). This is not a new trend in the musical—Hollywood musicals of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s cannot be accused of avoiding stylistic excess—but we can see these films creating an aesthetic of excess by incorporating a range of stylistic trends from the period to multiply the effect. The different choices made in *Xanadu* and *Trois places* serve as especially pertinent examples, given their narrative similarities. Both emphasize generational differences (through plot and musical numbers): Danny McGuire (Gene Kelly) is a former big band orchestra leader who was famous

in the 1940s. He goes into business with Sonny Malone (Michael Beck), a young artist who has yet to make it big. They are brought together by Kira (Olivia Newton-John), who is actually Terpsichore (one of the nine muses), and though she embraces contemporary 80s culture by roller skating, she wears flowing Grecian-inspired dresses, adding a further generational divide. And like *Trois places*, the plot ostensibly leads up to a big opening night; in *Xanadu* it is the grand opening of the club Danny and Sonny have created.

In *Xanadu*'s titular final production number, for example, rather than picking one movement style, color scheme, or musical melody, director Robert Greenwald, choreographer Kenny Ortega, costume designer Bobbie Mannix, and orchestrator Barry DeVorzon decided that more was better. In the choreography alone, we transition from Gene Kelly leading dozens of performers on roller skates, to jugglers, to break dancers,[190] to large groups step-dancing, to aerobic jazz phrases performed by Kira/Terpsichore's Muse sisters, to tightrope performers, to ballroom dancing, and more (figures 16–19). These various groups of performers join together at times, but often we see multiple sets of organized figure movement occurring in the frame simultaneously. What Ortega presents is not a large group of dancers performing phrases that lead to a holistic effect, like a crowd of Busby Berkeley dancers creating shifting patterns and shapes when shot from above, but rather a constantly changing, sensory overload.

In her discussion of *Xanadu*, Jane Feuer emphasizes that the film contrasts Olivia Newton-John's "disco rollerskating" with Gene Kelly's Danny McGuire, the same name he has in *Cover Girl*, from 1949 (*Hollywood Musical* 93). And the film does play off of music and dance styles from both eras. Feuer suggests that reflexivity in the backstage musical sub-genre is nothing new, however, since the film musical has been quoting, satirizing, and parodying itself (and musical theater) since its beginnings in the late 1920s. Each period of the Hollywood musical quotes from the previous generation, she argues (*Hollywood Musical* 93, 94), but after 1953 the backstage

musical moves into a "period of reflexivity dominated by parody, contestation and even deconstruction of a genre's native tongue," a point that Altman equally stresses (Feuer *Hollywood Musical* 90, Altman 254). Feuer's argument points to a shift in tone that accounts for differences in later musical films, but she does not fully elaborate on this point. Her book also ends in 1980 and most of her discussion of the 1970s focuses on television programs, like the Carol Burnett show. Feuer proposes that "the reflexivity inherent in such a process presents itself most clearly for view in self-conscious films," of which *The Band Wagon* is one of her examples because its plot revolves around the creation of a show with a star (Astaire) whose popularity is tied to an earlier era (*Hollywood Musical* 102). Comden and Green found "an ingenious solution" in the film, she argues, "to the problem of acknowledging the passage of time while at the same time glorifying the entertainment tradition" through a combination of demystification of the backstage process and an affectionate parody of earlier forms, to a nostalgic effect (*Hollywood Musical* 91). What we see in the 1980s, however, is a greater subtlety of difference in the ways these musical films present a self-consciousness in their relationship to the musical genre.

Kelly Kessler argues that the Hollywood musical form shifted between 1966 and 1983, identifying aesthetic, performance-based, and narrative shifts in the genre, distinguishing between musicals made in this period that adhere to the classical form and those that distance themselves from those norms (5, 9–10, 20). What her argument hints at, but does not articulate, are the noticeable tonal shifts that distinguish musicals like Demy's from many of those made in the 1980s. Demy, as he does in his earlier musicals, maintains a sincere tone in his incorporation of musical numbers and narrative. The supradiegetic numbers emerge out of expressive situations and communicate information to us about the characters and the plot. When Marion and her friends dance in the perfume shop, the number functions to express their excitement about Montand's show and to convince us Marion has the talent to take over the female lead, not

to wink at the conventions at the genre. There is an equal earnestness in the numbers that make up Montand's stage show; they serve to remind us of (or introduce us to) Montand's past. Unlike *The Band Wagon*, there are no parodic examples of "bad" theater to create a greater contrast when we see the new show that Astaire and his team create.

Steven Prince argues that the musical's "emotional tone helped to seal its doom" in the 1980s, adding that "its buoyant optimism and frothy sentimentality struck many contemporary viewers as weirdly naive and difficult to relate to. . . . In contrast with the zest for life displayed by the musical, contemporary viewers found a darker and more cynical outlook in film to be a truer reflection of the world they inhabited" (307, 308), a sentiment echoed by Matthew Kennedy (7). A sense of optimism and sentimentality is present in Demy's film, but this description does not apply to many American musicals from this period, including a number that Prince himself references. Although *Annie* (1982) ultimately ends with optimism, for example, much of the film displays the "darker and more cynical outlook" of life that Prince describes. In contrast, many of the musicals from the 1980s maintain a parodic or ironic distance from the norms of the genre largely through the rendering of their musical numbers.[191]

Demy treats the musical genre, as Susan Sontag would say, with "seriousness and dignity" (525). In contrast, *Earth Girls are Easy*, one of the few musicals also released in 1988, approaches the musical in parodic fashion in several of its numbers as it playfully references popular musicals of the 1960s and 1970s. Two numbers in particular demonstrate this. Before Valerie (Geena Davis) meets the aliens (played by Jeff Goldblum, Jim Carrey, and Damon Wayans) who will crash their spaceship in her backyard pool, she undergoes a makeover at the salon where she works to try and win over her (cheating) fiancé. Later in the film, one of Valerie's co-workers, Candy, goes to the beach and sings about the advantages of being blonde. Both numbers ("Brand New Girl" and "Cause I'm a Blond") evoke popular teen musicals like American International

Pictures' *Beach Party* musical cycle from the 1960s and *Grease* (1978) through their use of pop/rock music and playful, sexually suggestive choreography (figures 20 and 21). *Grease* similarly points back to musical teen films—especially in its inclusion of teen idol Frankie Avalon in the "Beauty School Dropout" number—as well as the hot rod and juvenile delinquent film cycles of the 1950s.[192] There are winks at the science-fiction genre in *Earth Girls are Easy*, too; Robby the Robot from *Forbidden Planet* (1956)—juxtaposed with shots from Cocteau's *La Belle et la Bête*—shows up in Valerie's surreal dream sequence.

Pennies from Heaven (1981), starring Bernadette Peters, Jessica Harper, Steve Martin, and Christopher Walken, is also highly reflexive and deviates from classical genre expectations. Set during the Great Depression, the film draws only on songs from the 1920s and 1930s and several of the musical numbers evoke Busby Berkeley-style choreography through the use of expansive sets, patterned simple movements, and top shots of the performers. Some of the numbers serve to reflect the emotions of characters, but this connection is frequently undercut by a number's abrupt end. Throughout the film the actors also lip-sync their performances to existing recordings of the songs, despite the main cast's stage and screen experience as professional singers. Only in the final number do we hear Martin and Peters sing for themselves. Here the reminder of musical numbers' artifice creates an ironic distance from the norms of the genre.

The musical numbers in Demy's film, especially those on stage, stand out in contrast to others from the 1980s because they don't fit with contemporary music or dance styles, because they create a sense of unity within each number even as the styles change over the course of the film, and because they approach their material with sincerity, even if that sincerity is tinted with nostalgia, rather than approaching the genre's conventions with irony or a stylistic excess that leans towards parody. Demy, in discussing his rendering of Montand's life, especially the latter's relationship with Simon Signoret who had recently passed away, suggests that the portrayals of

real people in the film, Signoret in particular, work "because it was done with sincerity." He adds that as a result "I really wanted the show to be a bit cliché. Because the film is a bit complicated anyway. I didn't want the spectator to feel lost. It's for that reason that Montand's show on stage references only things known by all: Piaf, Signoret, Marilyn," and we could add to this list: Astaire/Rogers, *Singin' in the Rain*, and *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* (Grugeau 60).[193]

There are clear stylistic shifts between Demy's musical numbers that prevent *Trois places* from sitting comfortably within either the broader aesthetic of 1980s musicals or the popular music and dance styles of the period. This frenzy of styles also points to the versatility of Demy's cast and crew, especially Michael Peters, and allows us to better understand how Marion is progressing as a performer within the narrative. There is a somewhat unsettling feeling in relation to Montand's show, however, that is the result of Demy's construction of reality and fiction within his film, as well as his unconventional play with the show musical sub-genre.

Contorted conventions of the show musical

Demy's last musical and feature film reveals much about his understanding of genre conventions, and dissecting his formal experimentation sheds light on rarely discussed aspects of the show musical sub-genre. Because of its close ties to the backstage (or show) musical sub-genre, *Trois places pour le 26* is Demy's film that most resembles the classical Hollywood musical, if not those made in Hollywood during the 1980s. This is apparent even in a simple examination of the numbers' supradiegetic makeup; in contrast to *Demoiselles* and *Peau d'âne*, which feature more supradiegetic sequences, the majority of *Trois places*' numbers are motivated by Montand's show or other diegetic situations. But the film also includes a number of narrative disruptions, causing it to deviate from many of the sub-genre's norms.

Scholarly consensus on *Trois places* suggests its adherence to the conventions of the Hollywood backstage musical as well as the Broadway musical theater tradition,[194] and while these authors point out the ways in which Demy's film adheres to the basic conventions of the musical genre, none discuss its significant generic departures. Neither *Demoiselles* or *Trois places* are conventional examples of the sub-genre, but unlike the former, much of *Trois places*' plot is "primarily concerned with putting on a show" (Altman 200) and therefore shares with the show musical a number of the semantic elements—professional performers and the stage setting, especially—that Altman considers crucial. However, Demy's film is off-set from three of Altman's core aspects of the show musical sub-genre:[195] the relationship between the reality found in the world of the city and the fiction found in the world of the stage; the focus on the "white-collar" aspects of the show's production (those elements relating to, for example, performance and directing, as opposed to the construction trades or janitorial work); and the narrative culmination of the film's main romance with the show's achievement. The film's narrative structure also obliquely undercuts generic norms of the show musical, drawing attention to the play of expectations between genres and their audiences and emphasizing that Demy consistently undermines these in his experiments with the musical.

Demy flips the duality of reality and fiction in *Trois places* by including largely biographical information about Montand's rise to fame in the stage show while building a fictional plot to surround it that includes Marion, Marie-Hélène, and their relationships to the star. The realities we see on stage are of a mediated sort, but the details about Montand's experiences during the periods represented are historically verifiable. In the American show musical, Altman writes, "the backstage area is that crucible in which actors are turned into characters, actions into gestures, and real life into art, as well as, in the other direction, the place where ham actors are turned

back into real people and vessels of dramatic fiction into solid citizens of the real world." The "real" of the city is juxtaposed with the "ideal" of the stage (206, 208).

What remains unaccounted for in the scholarly literature are the more subtle ways that Demy blurs the lines between his reversal of reality and fiction and the ways that he uses certain musical numbers to do so. We can see this carry over early on in the subtle ways that Demy writes Montand's mannerisms into the broader script. Executive producer Pierre Grunstein remembers that in the moment of tension between Montand and Demy before the film's production period began, "it was constantly 'don't you believe that,' 'don't you think that,' etc" ("Dans les coulisses").[196] Montand was constantly trying to revise and polish, which even he admits; he told *Le Monde* that he tried making phrasing suggestions for his dialogue, which Demy ultimately rejected. "And he was right," he adds (Sicilier 13).[197] We can observe a similar, albeit less tension-ridden interaction between Montand and Toni, the show's director, as the cast and crew gather for notes after the "Ciné Qui Chante" number. Toni's first comment is "the second number is ready" ("le deuxième numéro est aux point") to which Montand responds that he thinks the end drags a little. Toni insists that the ending plays perfectly, but Montand looks unconvinced. In the hallway outside his dressing room, Montand tells Toni, "It's how I work, you know that" ("c'est ma façon de travailler, tu le sais bien"). When Marion visits him in the dressing room for the second time (after Betty has fainted), Montand similarly expresses his concerns about the pacing of a scene, seeking reassurance from Marion. Although the characters off-stage are fictional, Montand's work habits carry over into the larger fabula. The line between reality and fiction begins to further break down when Marion joins the production. Although she also portrays characters like Edith Piaf in the show, her main role is Maria who, unbeknown to her until the end of the film, portrays her mother. The ambiguity of what is "real" and what isn't

heightens when we see Marion perform the reprise of "Douce Folie" with Montand in the final number of the show and we recall Montand's dance with Marie-Hélène to the same song earlier.

The first iteration of this number occurs when Montand and Marie-Hélène meet at the bar Le Paradis, and the song "Douce Folie" begins to play. Marie-Hélène comments that the "Douce Folie" song is in his show, and he tells her "when I sing this song, it's you I'm thinking about" ("Tu vois, en scène, quand je chante cette chanson, c'est a toi que je pense."). Montand then invites Marie-Helene to dance with him and they walk to the dance floor. He takes her by the hand and then spins her in so that they sway with Marie-Helene facing away from him. She turns towards him and pulls away before letting him pull her back towards him as she tosses her head back (figures 22 and 23), and they move to a closer embrace (a closed framing in social dancing) and spin slowly as they talk. After a single full rotation, Marie-Helene spins herself out and extends her arm to the background and spins back in; they sway a few more times before the number ends.

The same song returns at the end of Montand's stage show when Montand and Marion's character (Maria) meet after years of separation, and Montand's earlier comment about the intention behind the song reinforces that "Maria" is meant to evoke Marie-Hélène. Montand begins to dance with Marion, and the parallels between Marion and her mother are reinforced by similar, albeit parsed-down choreography. As Montand starts to sing, he pulls Marion towards him but she faces away from him, which creates a similar shape as the beginning of his dance with Marie-Helene. They take a few steps forward. Marion turns towards Montand and he takes her hand, stepping away from her to create space between them, like Marie-Helene did earlier (figures 24 and 25). After a few steps in this position, the number ends and the pair holds the last pose until the curtain falls.

The basic structure is the same, as is Montand's performance in both (though of course he sings in the second version). The smaller choreographic details and the women's performances, however, emphasize the differences between the two sequences. Marion's version is significantly parsed down: her movements do not include subtle movements of the head and Montand does not spin her quickly around as he does with Marie-Hélène. The two numbers are also shot differently; the first in three shots to vary the shot scale and the second in a single crane shot that slowly pushes into the couple as they dance. More telling, however, are the dynamic movement differences—Effort qualities—between Francoise Fabian and Mathilda May's performances. In both instances, Demy has the actresses modify their movements to create a contrast in their acting styles elsewhere in the film.

During the first number, Marie-Hélène visibly relaxes and her Effort baseline changes. In her previous and subsequent exchanges with Montand in the bar, her gestures are small and quick and her movements are more Bound (constricted), in her arms and torso. This is especially noticeable when she lies to Montand about her husband's whereabouts before they get up to dance. The shift once the pair begins to dance cues us to notice that she still has affection for Montand despite her earlier suggestion that she is happy in her current marriage. Marie-Hélène's Flow is freer and less constricted as she dances—her torso sways as an extension of the gestures in her head and arms. And she allows herself to go off-balance, trusting Montand to hold her. She leans her head onto his shoulder as she faces away from him and leans her whole torso into back space when she tosses her head back. And as they dance and talk their bodies press together. As the two walk back to their seats, she also allows her arms to swing freely and takes his hand. Once seated, however, her Quicker, more Bound baseline of Mobile State returns, as does the constriction in her arms and torso.

In contrast, Marion's movement during the second number remains Bound and her steps small. She does not allow herself to go off-balance, remaining more upright and stable and maintaining a greater distance between herself and Montand. There are no spins or flourishes, and the number feels more impersonal and distant, especially in contrast to the first iteration where Marie-Hélène lets down her guard. Once the curtain falls, however, we see her relax as she smiles and bounces with Quick time and Free flow—a variation of the same Mobile State her mother reverts to after her dance with Montand—that causes reverberations of movement through her body. The choreographic choices create a feeling of discomfort around this particular pairing, especially when compared to the compatibility apparent in the first number. Marion and Marie-Hélène's Effort baselines are somewhat flipped—Marion's baseline outside of numbers is more inclined towards Quick Time and Free Flow and Marie-Hélène towards Quick Time and Bound Flow—but their equal comfort and return to Mobile State also creates a family resemblance. But the stiffness and control visible in Marion's performance is also a departure from her regular movement baseline, which is usually more relaxed (visible in her excitement after the curtain falls) and peppered with quicker, sometimes clumsy movements. In addition to the creation of unease over the potential romantic union between Montand and Marion, this number also serves to demonstrate that Marion has developed as an actress and dancer over the course of the film. The diegetic improbability of such stylistic similarities between numbers also retroactively makes the earlier number appear more supradiegetic, even though the simplicity of the choreography allows it to be diegetically motivated. It also makes the viewer further question the realism suggested by Montand's show.

Demy's original ending would have taken the play of fiction and reality even further. The separation between reality and fiction was undone in the original, more diegetically ambiguous ending. His script had the interactions between Montand, Marion, and Marie-Hélène remain the

same, as the latter two arrive at the train station and Montand is reunited with his former lover. However, after this reconciliation, Demy had an additional reveal planned for the audience:

> At this moment the camera moves backwards and we discover we are at the theater. The set represents the Saint-Charles station stairs. Dancers dressed as travelers with luggage walk up and down the stairs to the "Interview" melody heard at the beginning of the film. The red velvet curtain falls slowly (Demy "Découpage technique" 148).[198]

After the credits scroll, Demy planned to add a postscript: "Deep down, all this, is cinema.[199] But cinema and life is the same. J.D." (Demy "Découpage technique" 148).[200] Olivier Ducastel remembers editing together this scene; it was filmed on the staircase set and incorporated into the final edit. Production stills suggest that the film even ended with the three of them taking a bow, hands held. Ducastel suggested that the producer (presumably Berri) was confused, however, by Marie-Hélène's presence in the scene, given that she was not part of Montand's show. As a result, Demy ultimately re-filmed the final scene to show Marion and her mother meeting Montand on the same train station steps we see at the beginning of the film (Ducastel personal interview). Production stills of the stairs emphasize how it is likely that audiences could be momentarily fooled by the set if the actors were filmed in tighter shots before the reveal as the camera tracks back; the rising stairs make it difficult to initially identify the set as such, given that the abstract background is barely visible (figures 26–28). The more ambiguous version that ends on stage completes the unraveling effect between Demy's reversal of reality and fiction. The ultimate ending on the stairs, however, makes it more difficult for audiences to deny the denotative details of the fabula: that Montand does actually spend the night with his daughter and that we end with a happy familial reconciliation in spite of this knowledge. The more ambiguous ending equally blurred the line between the members of the show and non-professionals, like Marie-Hélène,

whereas throughout the film Demy stresses the rigor of stage productions and the labor involved in such a process.

In his take on this musical sub-genre, Demy emphasizes much of the labor that goes into the theatrical creation process, labor that is usually elided in Hollywood accounts. We see a number of transitional musical number moments, for example, that give us additional glimpses of the show. Neither the "Moulin Rouge" strip-tease number nor the "Liberation" number features performers from the main cast. The latter, especially, serves as a transition within the play. The stage is divided sagittally, the performers occupying the front portion only of the stage as a curtain hides the depth of the space behind it. We see a similar moment in *Kiss Me Kate* (1953), when Bianca and her suitors dance on the narrow forward strip of the stage while scene changes occur behind the curtain. We see only a brief moment of that performance however, before cutting away. In contrast, Demy holds the camera on the performers in Montand's show, allowing us to see the productions' danced recounting of the end of World War II (figures 29 and 30). His choice to include these transitional moments in full emphasizes the variety of labor involved in a theatrical production, even though that labor has little to do with the film's central plot.

Studio-era show musicals focus on the white-collar aspects of putting on a show, according to Altman. "The show musical takes for granted most of the activities normally performed by a working class," he argues, "masking the blue-collar work of production" (208, 209). Demy devotes much of the film's fabula to these white-collar concerns, but he also addresses the blue-collar aspects and the physical and technical labor involved in staging a show. This becomes apparent from the first moment Toni and Montand go to visit the theater where the premiere will take place. When they arrive, the only person present is a cleaning woman, who vacuums the balcony carpet as they inspect the space. We also see the various pieces of the show's sets

propped up against the walls of the stage, as of yet unassembled. Montand takes the mic, plugs it in, and speaks into it as he tells Toni about Mylene (Marie-Hélène) and their history. The quality and reverberation of his voice changes once the mic is on, and we hear interference as Montand untwists the cable. Toni walks into the auditorium and the two men test the sound, reminding us of the technical labor required for all aspects of production. Demy continues to remind the viewer of the labor—blue or white collar—involved in creating a show, to a greater extent than we would expect from a Hollywood musical.[201] The film continues to give us reminders throughout the scenes taking place in the theater. Before "Ciné Qui Chante," we see the final pieces of the set lowering into place, a worker carrying a ladder, and another sweeping the stage floor. There are tensions over costumes not fitting properly, an actor leaving his hat lying around, and the testing of the mics. Later a scene transition is delayed due to a "technical dove issue" ("un petit problème technique de colombe"). Demy does not portray these as narrative obstructions or insurmountable challenges, but rather as inevitable, expected parts of show business. Furthermore, the emphasis on fixing technical glitches before and after stage performances emphasizes *Trois places'* unusual presentation of musical numbers in relation to the show musical sub-genre.

Demy's ordering of the syuzhet and his choices of where to end the film's fabula are equally distant from conventional genre choices. Classical show musical fabulas usually end with the final number of that show or the culmination of the project and a culmination of the relationship, building a close connection between the romance plot and the success of show (Altman 260). In films of this era, "the problem of putting on a Broadway show and constituting a romantic couple are so effectively intertwined," Altman argues, "that the two separate activities come to be equated, with the long final number celebrating the successful conclusion of show and romance alike" (227). In *Trois places*, however, Montand's show ends ten minutes before the end of the film.

While the culmination of the performance leads to the consummation of a relationship, it is the wrong one, from a moral standpoint, between Montand and his daughter instead of between Montand and Marie-Hélène. Altman points out that there are precedents for show musicals that explore fabula events after the big show, especially in the 1950s and 1960s (261). The two films he mentions in this regard, however, *A Star is Born* (1954) and *The Red Shoes* (1948), are both dramas—which end tragically—rather than comedies, and both are also peripheral musicals in my definition of the genre.

Despite the cultural taboo, Demy chooses to avoid a tragic ending, though he points out that he could have just as easily made it so. In discussing the incest that occurs, he tells *24 Images*

> It's the fate of existence that allows it to occur. I don't see how one can be shocked, insofar as these characters are completely innocent. People, therefore, are perverse. It's the look of others that brings a work to life. If I approach the taboo of incest, I do it to draw people's attention to their own impossibility, their own limits. . . . The idea of this open ending is as though sin did not exist (Grugeau 61).[202]

In spite of the opinion that the treatment of incest that affected audience turnout for the film,[203] such subject matter was once a popular trope of French cinema. Noël Burch and Geneviève Sellier suggest that of the thousand French film productions between 1929 and 1939, about a third touched on incestuous relationships between fathers and daughters (18–23). Not all these films seem to deal with explicitly sexual relationships, however, and some of the examples they discuss feature symbolic or adoptive alliances over biological ties. Burch and Sellier discuss these father figures as "complacent," "self-sacrificing," and "unworthy" (19), but these characters are also aware of their patriarchal roles, whereas Montand is not. He is undoubtably a mentor figure, but the ensuing May-December romance is not unusual in Hollywood musicals, or even in French ones (take Danglard and Nini in Jean Renoir's *French Cancan*, 1954). In his treatment of

this taboo subject matter, Demy foregrounds a naiveté and innocence in his characters that parallels the sincerity of the film's relationship to classical musical genre conventions.

In a more significant departure from generic tradition and in a destabilizing narrative move, *Trois places* offers its stage-bound musical numbers in ways that make us ultimately question what version of the show we have actually seen. *Trois places* presents a culmination of Demy's use of stage-bound numbers in his career, and we can see strong parallels to his earlier work, in *Lola*, especially. The diegetically-motivated nature of these musical numbers is consistent; never in his career does Demy create supra-diegetic shifts in his stage-bound musical numbers as we see in Busby Berkeley numbers or the "Girl Hunt" ballet from *The Band Wagon* (1953).[204] In *Demoiselles*, Delphine and Solange's number "Chanson d'un jour d'été" for the fête foraine remains visually grounded as a stage performance thanks to the almost constant visual presence of audience members crowded around the stage, as well as the formal play Demy creates in the staging of the crowd. Demy cuts to shots of the crowd during the performance, which emphasizes the audience as well as the complex staging of Mr. Dame and Lancien watching the sisters perform, communicated in a single crane shot that shifts from a focus on the sisters performing to their two suitors watching them from the audience. Like the number in *Demoiselles*, Lola's performance in Demy's first feature is equally established within the larger diegetic space. She performs the number in the cabaret where she works, moving through the space as other girls lounge around and perform tasks to prepare themselves for their own work that evening.

Unlike *Les Demoiselles* and *Lola*, however, Demy frames the numbers from Montand's show in such a way as to reveal less of the edges of the stage, creating more of a spatial segmentation between the content portrayed in the stage performances and the frame narrative. And, with a few exceptions, Demy does not include shots of the audience to remind us that this is a stage number. This occurs in the "St-Germain des Près" number, as Montand walks into the theater to

watch the rehearsal. This shot is somewhat ambiguous, however, since within the context of the show rehearsal, Montand is frequently shown watching or interacting with a younger version of himself on stage. The eyeline match between Montand and Marion (still performing) accentuates the impression that Montand's entrance is part of the show. The camera's infrequent departure from the stage production as it plays out makes it easier for the spectator to downplay the contrast between the (by all appearances) polished musical numbers and their appearance in the syuzhet during the rehearsal process. It is not until the end of the film that we realize that we have seen most of the stage numbers before the show's opening night.

Although Altman is not as explicit in his discussion of musical structure, studio-era musicals tend to present the numbers from the final stage show towards the end of the syuzhet (212), as we can observe in Busby Berkeley numbers from the 1930s, *Singin' in the Rain* (1952), and *The Band Wagon*. There are exceptions; the stage-bound numbers in *Kiss Me Kate* begin earlier in the syuzhet, but we see them in the context of the show's opening night. To illustrate this idea, we can take *The Band Wagon* as a point of contrast, a film that is mentioned frequently in comparisons to *Trois places* (Berthomé 386, Père and Colmant 268). This film's stage numbers are shown as finalized, actual performances and as part of the show, instead of as rehearsals. When in *The Band Wagon* we do see a rehearsal version of a number, "Up in Smoke," it is to emphasize all the things that are going wrong in the initial show attempt. We see Tony (Fred Astaire) and Gaby (Cyd Charisse), in rehearsal clothes and states of distraction, attempt to perform their number as fireballs go off unexpectedly around them. The numbers we later see—"New Sun in the Sky," "I Guess I'll Have to Change My Plan," "Louisiana Hayride," "Triplets," and the "Girl Hunt" ballet—are the same versions that the diegetic audiences see and are meant to be understood as part of the repeated performance the cast gives as they tour their show (complete with program names for each number). Although we do not see evidence of a diegetic audience

until the New York performance, the numbers are signaled with an abstracted shot of the orchestra for the first number and with inserts of the show number titles from the program.

In *Trois places*, rehearsals for Montand's show begin in earnest twenty minutes into the film and we see almost all of the show's numbers—"Ciné Qui Chante," "L'esprit Frappeur," "Moulin Rouge," "Libération," and "St-Germain des Près"—before opening night. We see each number in full, without interruptions, and in each instance the cast is in full costume and makeup, despite being several weeks away from the first performance. Come opening night, we see two scenes on stage: the very beginning of the show in which dancers perform a brief phrase before acknowledging Montand's entrance (to enthusiastic applause) and the reprise of "Douce Folie" between Montand and Marion which is immediately followed by the curtain call. In the brief syuzhet moments between these scenes we see the theater owners in the office, with a television monitor showing a section from Marion's dance in "St-Germain des Près." We see the beginning and end of Montand's show on opening night, but not the middle.

The numbers in *Trois places pour le 26*—like Anouk Aimée's performance in *Lola*—are rehearsals for a later show that we never see. This raises some questions about the film's narrational reliability. Did we see the final versions of each number earlier in the syuzhet? Or should we assume that the show continued to change in its last few weeks of rehearsal? Rather than being swept away in one last grand stage performance, we are left wondering if we ever saw the show in the first place. The choice to place the supradiegetic numbers early, and show the stage numbers during rehearsal, disrupts our seemingly clear understanding of the film's fabula. It is credible to believe that we are seeing the final numbers from Montand's show, but the placement of these numbers in the syuzhet creates ambiguity in the violation of the show musical's narrative norms. The combined undermining of the show musical's core conventions—emphasizing "blue collar" as well as "white collar" labor, creating a contrast between a "real"

stage world and the surrounding fictionalized city life, and the low stakes of the show's success relative to romantic realizations—drives the film's unsettling tone of the film as much as the narrative's revelation of incest.

These deviations from show musical conventions emphasize the many subtle ways that Demy undermines the viewer's expectations in regards to musical genre norms. Genre scholars Thomas Schatz, Kelly Kessler, and Steve Neale describe the relationship between filmmakers working in a certain genre and their audiences as a "*reciprocal* relationship" (Schatz 6), or "contract" (Kessler 10), that creates "specific systems of expectation and hypothesis" (Neale 31), echoing Thompson and Bordwell's conception of an active viewer working to construct a coherent fabula from suyzhet events (Thompson 32, 33; Bordwell *Poetics* 43). "As such," Neale adds, "these regimes entail rules, norms and laws" (32). Demy's subtle manipulation of musical genre norms—particularly visible in his ambiguous rendering of the stage numbers in Montand's show—causes his audience to question the viewing practices mobilized by a knowledge of the show musical sub-genre, adding to the tonal malaise *Trois places pour le 26* creates.

Conclusion

Through its divergent choices in choreography, insistence on an earnest musical tone, and departures from key show musical conventions, Demy renegotiates a genre contract with his viewers in *Trois places pour le 26*, challenging his audience to question long-accepted musical norms. This demanding cocktail did not sit well with the moviegoing public, however, and the film ultimately did not succeed financially. Despite positive reviews in the French press,[205] audiences largely avoided it. Berthomé suggests the film received only 54,000 entries in its first week (403), and Simon Simsi's *Ciné-Passions* indicates that it did not break the top twenty films

"rewarded" by the French public in 1988, the twentieth of which—*The Unbearable Lightness of Being*—received close to half a million entries in Paris alone (53). *Trois places* did not top more than 500,000 entries in its entire run (Simsi 272).

Trois places pour le 26 is the culmination of Jacques Demy's commitment to aesthetic innovation. On the one hand, a freedom from budgetary limitations allowed for more complex sets and studio shoots, a greater number of performers for the musical numbers, and additional time to rehearse them. On the other, Demy's use of an older script written for Montand affected his usual collaborative process in ways that both encouraged him to expand his habitual aesthetic strategies while also testing the limits of his authorial control. Yet the contradictions inherent in the film's structure leaves the audience with questions about its diegetic believability and moral repercussions.

Through his choices in staging and organizing the show numbers from *Trois places* we can see Demy's profound understanding of musical genre conventions and his ability to shape the expectations those conventions will create in audiences. Demy's work with Mathilda May in creating character development through figure movement and dance reinforces his interest in subtle forms of communication through a wide range of cinematic techniques. The range of styles in the final film points to the versatility of Demy's cast and crew. Contemporary dance forms were more prominent in France during this period and professional dancers were training in a wider range of styles, allowing Demy to have a broader range of choices in leading actresses and a corps of dancers who could both sing and dance. Demy approved of Michael Peters because of his work with Michael Jackson as well as his ability to provide a range of choreographic styles thanks to his musical theater, jazz, and modern dance experience. The American influence from Michael Peters was a positive factor, given the popularity of American cinema and music in France, and Demy remembers that Montand "was firmly committed to

those American overtones" (Grugeau 60).[206] The more contemporary and popular orchestrations and choreography were present to attract younger audiences to the film, a strategy that ultimately did not succeed, in addition to emphasizing character generational divides, and the appeal for younger audiences would have been necessary at this period in order to re-coup the significant production costs. As an analysis of filmmaking tendencies in the 1980s has shown, Demy's eclectic filmmaking aesthetic was still off-set from audience expectations, causing his film to be out of sync with contemporary trends, in the musical genre, especially.

Demy's film stands out against its contemporaries in tone and its sincere rendering of the musical genre even more so than in its choice to move through a number of musical and choreographic registers. Its distance from audiences in 1988 is not surprising in retrospect, given that the film asks a lot of viewers who were likely expecting a straightforward big-budget genre film. It requires a readiness to enjoy a wide range of aesthetic styles that shift abruptly. Appreciation of its form comes from an inclination to accept show musical conventions that both present musical numbers with sincerity rather than ironic or parodic distance while also disrupting their normative narrative progression. Audiences familiar with Demy's work would be primed to expect some aesthetic and narrative convolutions, but the film's poster, production stills, and press book emphasizes the film's glossy production values, show musical aesthetic, and exploration of Montand's career (*Trois places pour le 26* press book).

May suggests in interviews that, despite the intent to modernize the music, the film was disconnected from her experience of contemporary music culture. She tells *Paris Match* "Michel Legrand's music belongs to a different culture than mine. It isn't current, it isn't passé either, it's separate" (Frain np).[207] She elaborates on her memories of the recording sessions in the making-of documentary "Dans les coulisses." She saw a "slight gap" between the "three sacred giants" of the production—Demy, Montand, and Legrand—and the current time, with the arrival of hip

hop music, especially. She remembers them arguing amongst themselves—"But no! Look at what's happening with *Thriller!* That's what we need to do!"[208]—as they shaped the musical identity of the film. Despite what May may have thought the men's intentions were, *Trois places* was never meant to be a purely American film with a music video aesthetic. But the recognition of *Thriller*'s historical importance is telling, given that the video clip for Michael Jackson's song is a deliberate homage to the horror genre[209] and, like Demy's film, plays off of audience expectations regarding a particular look and feel to the project.

A portion of the script for *Trois places* that ultimately doesn't appear in the final film suggests that Demy was aware that the film's content was at odds with current audience tastes. As Montand is partially through the "Ciné Qui Danse" number, he was to stop performing and turn to the crew members in the audience:

MONTAND stops and remains pensive. The dancers stop in turn.

CONROL TABLE - TONI looks at MONTAND

TONI

What is it? Is something wrong?

MONTAND

I don't know. I have a feeling

That this number is passé?

TONI

Passé? Are you joking or what?

He turns towards MAX

It's retro. Yeah…deliberately.

MAX

What's retro isn't necessarily unfashionable.

Besides, it's your start.

MONTAND

I didn't say unfashionable. I said passé.

Anyway…it's an impression.

TONI

Let's rehearse it to the end. Then we'll see.

MONTAND returns to his place in front of the cinema. Reprise of the couplet danced in "soft shoe" (Demy "Découpage technique" 34, 35).[210]

From that point on, the number proceeds as we see it in the film. By cutting this portion of the scene, Demy also eliminates the film's explicit awareness of the clichéd nature of the stage show, but the awareness is there nonetheless in his planning of the production.

Variety's obituary of Jacques Demy describes *Trois places* as "a fitting reminder of Demy's passion for music, poetry and grand spectacle, as well as his desire to marry the American-style musical with his own narrative spirit" ("Obituaries" 93). Berthomé's playful sign-off in his chapter on the film points to the value he, too, saw in the film. "Since it is the name of the bar where Montand meets Mylène [Marie-Hélène]," Berthomé writes, "let us dare to say it: after the Hell of *Parking*, Demy gives us the final gift of three seats to Paradise" (402).[211] There are

undoubtedly generational tensions in the film, created by the contrast in age between Montand and May, between the time Demy wrote the script and the time he filmed it,[212] between the musical styles Montand (and Legrand) were known for and what we hear in the film, between the more avant-garde dancing Demy initially had in mind and Michael Peters' fluid choreographic versatility. The film may not work for audiences, but we cannot fault its director for failing to accomplish what he set out to do. To some, the foregrounding of such aesthetic contradictions were the film's true success (Berthomé 382, 383; Magny 6–9). Montand and Legrand were powerful influences on *Trois places*' aesthetic, guiding it towards more contemporary music and dance styles. But in the end, as always, Demy got his own way.

Conclusion

The power of observation

Jacques Demy's films force us to confront our tastes and expectations, making them powerful case studies for an analytical project like my own. His work engenders admiration, contempt, and bewilderment, but rarely indifference. An understanding of his musicals gains much from an interdisciplinary methodology based on historically contextualized granular analysis to illustrate and historicize the eccentricities of his work. The observable aesthetic and narrative variety in his films demonstrates my method's ability to study this material with consistent descriptive and analytical precision.

Demy's use of choreographed figure movement in his films enriches the viewer's understanding of plot and character, and my examination of these three films together reveals his career-long formal strategy to experiment with genre norms and challenge audience expectations. Through extreme formal repetition, stylistic variation, and genre hybridity, Demy made a number of musicals that do not fall neatly into scholarly or popular definitions of genre cinema. Although the musical genre in Western filmmaking remains firmly associated with classical Hollywood, Demy did not have the same financial resources or reliable access to multi-talented career dancers, as my focus on choreography in these films demonstrates. Demy never sought to re-create American musicals; he told *Cahiers du cinéma* in 1988, "my approach is so peculiar, my films are bizarre and I want them that way" (Clech et al 61).[213] His minuscule budgets, often a fraction of American standards, put constraints on what was possible, which resulted in a greater use of filming on location, smaller corps of dancers, shorter rehearsal periods, and the frequent use of actors who were not trained dancers and singers. Production constraints and Demy's eclectic taste in film and art led to figure movement, narrative

developments, and aesthetic choices that allowed his films to share a family resemblance with the musical genre while defamiliarizing its norms.

To study his work, I emphasize a consistent and rigorous description and analysis of figure movement—a thorough, pattern-based micro and macro analysis of the expressivity of human movement. I draw upon the work of neoformalist analysis and historical poetics as the foundation for my analytical framework: discussing films as artworks, seeking to answer questions beyond grasping the work's meaning, grounding such lines of inquiry in relevant historical contexts and modes of production, and acknowledging the film spectator as engaging in an active relationship with the films. To better articulate how Demy's films negotiate genre conventions, I categorize musical numbers according to their function and levels of supradiegetic engagement through the application of a musical taxonomy of my own creation. I equally explore what makes someone's movement expressive within his or her unique context. Throughout, I seek to make the language of Laban Movement Analysis useful for film scholars, focusing on the fundamental categories of Space (where the body is in relation to its environment), Effort (how the body's dynamics are a qualitative manifestation of inner expression), Body (what parts of the body are moving and in what sequence), and Shape (how the body is relating to its environment). And I utilize LMA words and phrases throughout my analysis, all of which carry greater linguistic significance than in everyday use.

Les Demoiselles de Rochefort is inspired by choreographed phrases and aesthetic impulses from 1950s and 1960s Hollywood musicals to explore the narrative and expressive use of musical numbers to a parametric degree. Through the repetition of choreographed phrases—citations of Hollywood musicals, Norman Maen's original creations, and Demy's simple staging of actors as they sing—*Demoiselles* withholds the romantic pairings associated with the genre to keep the viewer in suspense about the outcome. Demy's rigorous staging of figure and camera movement

makes even the simplest gestures during musical numbers part of the film's intricate patterns, as my methodology reveals, allowing the viewer to discover new details and parallels upon each subsequent viewing. The result is a clear Space-based repetition of similar phrases, drawing emphasis to the subtle qualitative Effort performance differences that were the result of dancers with divergent dance training and Demy's choice of how to stage them in the frame. My analysis of Demy's use of parallelism across musical numbers reveals that the content of numbers in his films often function expressively to point out continuities and differences between characters, but these parallelisms are also intricate aesthetic embellishments. Here Demy, with composer Michel Legrand and choreographers Norman Maen and Gene Kelly, creates a unified modern jazz style to the songs and choreography, but British and American dancers performed most of the figure movement as French dance training was not in sync with Demy's aesthetic impulses.

Peau d'âne deviates from Demy's prior impulse for a homogenous style to music and choreography by developing narrative and stylistic dichotomies. Demy blends the medieval and Renaissance aesthetics of the French fairy tale with anachronistic details and musical genre norms, contrasts that are paralleled in Legrand's score and Demy's choreographic choices. By making his princess an active agent in her fate, unlike the more passive princesses of classic fairy tales, *Peau d'âne* explores a hybrid genre form to reflect the values of the French Women's Liberation Movement that was at its height in 1970 and to draw attention to the physical labor of domestic tasks. The expressive supradiegetic shifts associated with musical numbers are distinguished from magically motivated moments largely through a distinction between stationary, gesture-based choreography (for the former) and full-body traveling through the cinematic space, often combined with in-camera effects (for the latter). Demy's adaptation of Perrault's tale plays out in part through the polarized figure movement choices between the film's

fairy tale and musical number moments, developed through references to classical Disney animation, post-modern American dance, and 1940s French art cinema.

Trois places pour le 26's aesthetic is the most destabilizing of these three films, however, with little repetition of Michael Peters' choreographic structures and a wide range of music and dance styles. The result is a development of expressive choreography (particularly noticeable in the shifts of characters' Effort lives) that evolves over the course of the film to emphasize both the range of danced material as well as Marion's improvement as a performer. The moments that do reference styles seen earlier in the film—either Marion's final dance with Montand or the 1980s-inspired music and dance choices—are far enough removed to only further enhance the feeling of unease that Demy weaves through the film. *Trois places* was made in financial and collaborative conditions that differ, often greatly, from Demy's previous cinematographic experiences. Not all these experiences were positive for Demy, but changing conditions in France's dance culture allowed Demy to hire a French triple-threat actress, one capable of acting, singing and dancing, with whom he could develop a more nuanced performance within and across the musical numbers and the film's syuzhet. This led to new aesthetic and narrative choices for his final film, which presents a more fragmented and unsettling aesthetic while revealing the ways that Demy experimented with the backstage musical sub-genre to obscure a definite understanding of the stage performances.

Michel Legrand said of Demy's cinema and their career-long collaboration, "we have a common universe, that hasn't changed, but within which we try to never repeat ourselves" (*Trois places pour le 26* press book).[214] Formal analysis of these films emphasizes how Demy's aesthetic was constantly evolving and incorporating new stylistic ideas. However, we can also observe several major continuities throughout his career, continuities that validate my work's significance and point to future potential research projects.

Studying Demy's career in the context of musical genre production reveals much about the differing cultural and industrial conditions between American and French filmmaking that led to the difficulties Demy had in creating his films. Such work begins to answer the question of why musicals never were a dominant filmmaking practice in France. What Demy lacked working in France were the three elements that enabled large-scale musical genre output in Hollywood: financing, professional dance personnel, and audiences. Yet he was committed to the medium-specificity of musical filmmaking, as he told *Cahiers du cinéma* in 1988: "If I have chosen this lens, it's because it's dance, poetry, painting, and in the end, it's cinema that unites them. I couldn't do the same thing in theater, on the radio, or in a book. People refuse it in France, which makes me say, in jest, that I should have been born in New York" (Clech et al 62).[215] In spite of, or because of, these conditions, Demy remains a pivotal influence on contemporary filmmakers exploring the musical genre, in France in particular. In their explorations of musicals in a contemporary setting, filmmakers like Christophe Honoré, Damien Chazelle, Jacques Martineau, and Olivier Ducastel base much of their musical genre specificity on attributes pioneered by Demy or through citations of his films.

Demy's films are frequently referenced in Christophe Honoré's musicals (*Les Chansons d'amour* 2007; *Les Bien-aimés* 2011), and scholars have noted Demy's influence on Honoré's use of the genre (Gerstner 2010, Marie 25, Waldron 169). In *Les chansons d'amour* Honoré pays homage to Demy's seasonal narrative structure from *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* and adopts the impulse for site-specificity by filming exterior scenes on location in Paris as well as Demy and Legrand's conversational style in his songs and their integration into his narrative.

Chazelle goes further in *La La Land* (2016), drawing not only on the seasonal narrative structure, sung conversations, and location shooting for musical numbers, but also encouraging his costume designer to adopt ahistorical and retro costume styles and creating a bittersweet "lost

lovers" conclusion that models itself on Demy's conclusion in *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*. Chazelle creates an explicit nostalgic tone in his earnest[216] approach to the musical genre and choice to film with Panavision cameras—made clear for audiences through the use of the Cinemascope logo as part of the opening credits—which, while not an exclusive nod to Demy, evokes both Demy's early musical films and those made in 1940s and 1950s Hollywood. Chazelle's choice to cast major Hollywood stars for his leads instead of professionally trained singers and dancers also emphasizes that Hollywood itself no longer maintains a staple of singing and dancing stars as it did during the studio era, echoing Demy's constraints in this regard.[217]

In *Jeanne et le garçon formidable* (1998), Ducastel and Martineau make strong gestures towards Demy's musical conventions while also taking their aesthetic in a more innovative direction than Honoré or Chazelle.[218] *Jeanne* reconciles cinephilic links to established musical cycles – predominantly those within the classical Hollywood model and the French musicals of Demy – with a more experimental stylistic incorporation of contemporary dance forms. Like Demy, the filmmakers draw from a variety of music and dance styles, but they take this a step further by allowing the aesthetic variety to emphasize the cultural, economic, and racial diversity of their characters. While Demy's films gesture towards political and social issues,[219] Ducastel and Martineau make this an explicit aspect of their narrative that addresses the political struggles associated with the AIDS epidemic. Ducastel, Martineau, and their choreographer Sylvie Giron, incorporate *danse contemporaine* into the film which serves as an innovative exploration of supradiegetic performance, ultimately pushing its audience to rethink the boundaries of the genre by expanding the possibilities for narratively and stylistically integrated numbers in film musicals. Like Demy, Ducastel and Martineau developed their film as a musical because of narrative necessity. Demy told *Cinema 76* "there are films that cannot be anything besides a musical comedy. I believe passionately in activist films, in 16mm, in small budgets, but I also believe in

the right to spectacle, in the importance of spectacle, in the necessity of this kind of cinema that I have not stopped making, or wanting to make" (Amiel 102).[220] Ducastel and Martineau describe their film similarly in its synopsis, suggesting that it tells "a story so sad that we could only tell it through an enchanted comedy" ("Dossier de Presse").[221]

Yet despite the different directions that French filmmakers have taken the musical genre, there remains little literature on musicals made in France, those that feature dance, especially.[222] This raises important questions that would be worth exploring in a subsequent project: How significantly does Demy differ from the French filmmakers coming before him who explored this genre (Réne Clair and Jean Renoir, especially) and what expectations did he set for those who followed him? How can a further examination of Demy's mode of production reveal additional information about the resources available to French filmmakers working in popular genres during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, as well as the transnational infrastructure that developed from international co-productions? And what are the predominant qualities and conditions of the musical genre, specifically, that prevented it from ever establishing itself as a dominant genre in the French filmscape, as it did in the United States?

In addition to a commitment to the narrative possibilities that the musical genre fosters, Demy was invested in geographical specificity throughout his career. His choice to frequently film on location was financially determined, but the spaces he chose for his films were carefully researched, and they affect the stylistic development of his musical numbers and color the film's narratives. Rochefort-sur-mer was chosen over French cities like Avignon or Toulouse for *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* because of the layout of its central square, and Demy builds the repeated use of certain town locations into his parametric narrative structure.[223] The Loire valley castles differ greatly in their architectural details to signify the Red and Blue realms in *Peau d'âne*, and the iconic French castles of Chambord and Plessis-Bourré serve as reminders of the centuries of labor

and conflict that occurred within their halls. Marseille, as Yves Montand's home city, was the natural choice to film *Trois places pour le 26*, but its choice also reflects Demy's fondness for port towns like Rochefort and Nantes, where he filmed *Lola* and *Une Chambre en Ville*. As in Rochefort, Demy and his crew made use of the city's architectural details to film musical numbers, but even his studio sets evoke the bustle of one of France's largest cities. Outside the perfume shop, construction crews repair the street. Crews work outside as Marion and her friends sing and dance inside, as we see on the square of Rochefort in the background of the musical numbers set in Yvonne's café.

The aesthetic payoff of Demy's emphasis on location shooting and geographical specificity, as the precision of my musical taxonomy demonstrates, is the filmmaker's investment in a spatial grounding of his musical numbers. With the exception of the "Rêves Secrets d'un Prince et d'une Princesse" number from *Peau d'âne*, Demy's musicals—including *The Pied Piper* and *Parking*—avoid supradiegetic spatial shifts. As a result, Demy's films float above the diegetic norms of realism more popular in France during this period, rather than completely departing from them. So other questions arise that merit further exploration: How does Demy's geographic specificity differ from other French directors working with the same limited access to studio sets? And how does Demy's use of location shooting for musical numbers differ from filmmakers working in the same genre?

In addition to geographical specificity, Demy's musicals are invested in functional movements, which frequently emphasize working class and domestic labor in his films. My musical number taxonomy, combined with the descriptive language of Laban Movement Analysis, emphasizes in greater detail that Demy's aesthetic grapples with the tensions between cinematic realism and spectacle. Demy's musicals are seen as disconnected from contemporary audiences, but a close analysis of his movement work shows that much of the performances are

focused on tasks and much of the plots involve themselves with the portrayal of labor, particularly working-class labor. We see the carnival workers assembling stages for the kermesse in the background of the shots on Rochefort's main square; we see Peau d'âne and the women of the village executing domestic tasks; and we see the technical and physical labor that provides the foundation for Yves Montand's stage show. We can see a clear continuity across Demy's films to emphasize the technical aspects of labor, regardless of the profession. *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* opens with Guy fixing a car, Catherine Deneuve's character works as a hairdresser in *L'événement le plus important depuis que l'homme a marché sur la lune* (1973), Calaïs adjusts sound levels in the recording studio as Orphée records a new song in *Parking*, and Demy would have portrayed the technical details of filmmaking and setting up shots on set—while playing himself—in *Anouchka* if the film had been produced. Demy was a realist filmmaker as much as he was an escapist one, and was invested throughout his career—not just in his musical films—in portraying the labor and activities of the French working class. His films may not be realistic, per se, but they investigate contemporary social issues. So how would a deeper contextualization of Demy within his evocation of labor and the social realities in his narratives re-situate him within French and international film history?

Finally, Demy's films were consistently at odds with the expectations of his audiences, given his choice to blend a range of aesthetic traditions with the straightforward conventions of the classical Hollywood musical genre. In the mid-1960s, American producers were hoping for the next *Parapluies de Cherbourg*, but instead Demy gave them a musical that encouraged its viewers to ponder musical conventions through stylistic excess and repetition in *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*. Similarly, *Trois places pour le 26* initially reads like a normative backstage musical, but a sense of unease arises from the fabula's ambiguity in its portrayal of the musical numbers. In addition, *Trois places*, like *Peau d'âne*, feel out of place with its era given the sincere approach to blending

musical numbers with the narrative. Unlike the ironic distance from genre conventions or excess and camp sensibilities of many American musicals from the 1970s and 1980s, Demy remained committed to the earnest use of musical numbers to communicate narrative or expressive information in the tradition of American musicals from the studio era. Despite the modern sensibilities of his plots, this was at odds with what contemporary audiences wanted, as seen in the low attendance records for his later films.

"My films are very different from American musical comedies," Demy told *24 Images* in 1989, "It's truly a question of culture." There he describes his films as having "a spirit of Frenchness" he adds, "one should never try to imitate anything. . . Me, in my films, I tell the story of my country, of what's happening. . . . In a world that always seems sophisticated, fabricated, I try to stay true. . . . Which is very different from the American "musicals" of the 50s" (Grugeau 61).[224] Demy's discourse claims a national identity for his cinema, but he was as much a transnational filmmaker as he was a French one. His films present French bodies and culture in a different light than his French New Wave contemporaries do,[225] but part of this "Frenchness" is only apparent because of the international financing and personnel involved in almost all his films and in the majority of his musicals. We can more easily reflect on French acting performance and dance training in Demy's musicals because those performances are frequently contrasted in the same frame with American or British ones, given the lack of professionally trained French dancers outside of classical dance during most of Demy's career. Despite several attempts, he was never able to collaborate with French choreographers like Roland Petit or Maguy Marin for his musical films, working with British and American choreographers instead. His films were financed by French, British, American, and Japanese investors (and, had *Anouchka* gone into production, Soviet ones) and he filmed his work all around France, in Los Angeles, Germany, and England. He was a voracious consumer of film and art, and it is in part this (predominantly

Western) multicultural aesthetic appetite that creates his films' stylistic breadth. My study focuses on cinematic and figure movement influences, but there remains more to be said about Demy's aesthetic relationship to painting, photography, music, and literature. The eclectic aesthetic that resulted from his wide cinematic interests frequently conflicts with the straightforward genre conventions of the musical as a result.

Although the threads of international influence and conflict with audience genre expectations exist in all aspects of Demy's filmmaking, an analysis of his use of figure movement and dance brings these issues to the surface. Because a study of movement is strongly influenced by the analyst's movement predilections, my methodology's use of the descriptive clarity of Laban Movement Analysis creates a reliable analytical baseline. This work subsequently reveals moments when scholars, critics, or audiences' reception of Demy's films are affected by their pre-determined expectations to the point of analytical inaccuracy. Pure objectivity is not attainable, nor perhaps desirable, but my work encourages greater scholarly consensus and proposes this methodology as a successful way to study media. As a closer analysis of Demy's incorporation of both danced and staged figure movement shows, there are advantages to bridging the gap between various movement traditions as well as the analytical distinction between dancing and figure movement. An interdisciplinary approach allows for more nuanced comparison and encourages a descriptive foundation to an understanding of meaning that avoids subjective or evaluative analyses of movement. Therefore, how else can this unique, rigorous blend of film and movement studies be used to illuminate other unanswered or contested questions of figure movement and performance in film and media history more generally? If scholars seek to study figure movement and dance on screen more closely, a consensus on a descriptive baseline of human movement and expression is essential.

By mixing dancing and musical styles, bending the musical genre framework, and blending fictional narrative elements with autobiographical stories and historically rich locations, Jacques Demy creates a feeling in his films that is designed with a formal rigor to balance his audience on a tightrope between entertainment and bewilderment. Here lies the paradox of his filmmaking career, a paradox greatly clarified through a study of figure movement. Demy always sought to appeal to a broad, popular audience; his films consistently follow the realities of everyday, working-class people and evoke well-known genre traditions. Unlike many of their French filmic equivalents, Demy's characters do not sit and extensively philosophize about their existence; instead they talk or sing about their daily lives as they and the camera meander through their environments.[226] But he equally wanted to challenge those audiences by blending disparate aesthetic traditions, undermining generic expectations, and putting his characters in uneasy situations.[227] Demy's films concurrently confirm audience tastes and generic expectations and challenge their stylistic and moral values. An aesthetic of contradictions, indeed.

Notes

[1] "Mon idée est de faire cinquante films qui seront tous liés les uns aux autres, dont les sense s'éclaireront mutuellement, à travers des personnages communs" (Caen and LeBris 12). All English translations from French interviews are my own unless otherwise noted. All the original French is included in footnotes for reference.
[2] The pun in French between "en chanté" (in song) and enchanté (enchanted) is made frequently in reference to Demy's work.
[3] *Queer Enchantments: Gender, Sexuality, and Class in the Fairy-Tale Cinema of Jacques Demy* (Anne E. Duggan 2013); *Le cinéma enchanté de Jacques Demy* (Camille Taboulay 1996); *Jacques Demy et les racines du rêve* (Jean-Pierre Berthomé 1996); "En Chanté[1]: Music, Memory, and Perversity in the Films of Jacques Demy (Amy Herzog 2010); *Le monde enchanté de Jacques Demy* (Orléan 2013); "Demy Monde: Jacques Demy and The French New Wave*"* (Rodney Hill 2006); "Demy Monde: the New-Wave Films of Jacques Demy" (Hill 2008).
[4] See, especially, Hill "Demy Monde, Hill "The New Wave," Hill "The Films of Jacques Demy," Neupert "Jacques Demy's *Bay of Angels*," Lazen.
[5] Camille Taboulay and Jean-Pierre Berthomé's books, especially, discuss these close collaborations. Demy's collaborations are also core component of the Cinémathèque française's companion book to the 2013 Jacques Demy exposition, *Le Monde enchanté de Jacques Demy*, curated by Mathieu Orléan, and a Demy-centered issue of *L'avant scène cinéma* on *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*.
[6] Butterworth and Wildscut "General Introduction" 1.
[7] Foster *Choreographing Empathy* 2.
[8] Alan Williams' book on contemporary cinema ends in the 1970s and focuses primarily on earlier decades.
[9] Even a 2016 *Post Script* issue devoted to the study of Demy's work and Waldron's 2015 monograph on Demy focus predominantly on his early career.
[10] Some scholars dismiss the end of Demy's career, but there is also less research on his later films. Berthomé and Taboulay's books remain the only scholarly works to survey Demy's entire career; Hill's dissertation goes up to *Peau d'âne* and Duggan's book does not focus on films past *Lady Oscar.* Waldron Darren's *Jacques Demy* (2015) addresses his whole career but still focuses primarily on earlier films. Articles (Hill "Demy Monde: the New-Wave Films," Hill "The New Wave Meets the Tradition of Quality," Hill "Demy Monde: Jacques Demy", Lazen, Virtue, Becker and Williams, Herzog) equally stress the earlier films. One exception is Henneton, but her work does not provide a historical perspective on Demy's career.
[11] David Bordwell uses the term Standard Version to describe a scholarly consensus of where to place causal emphasis in a historical account, emphasizing that such accounts usually lead to an oversimplification of events or the omission of additional, significant causal factors.
[12] We can see similar value placements in the recent exhibition of Demy's work at the Cinémathèque française in Paris (2013); though the exposition covered Demy's whole career, about half of the physical space was devoted to *Les Parapluies of Cherbourg, Les Demoiselles de Rochefort,* and *Peau d'âne*.
[13] Demy's "carrière atteint alors un sommet qu'il ne retrouvera jamais ensuite." He was "obstiné à essayer de refaire le même type de film, à refaire *Lola* et *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort*" (Frodon 90, 814).
[14] "Jacques Demy devra encore lutter pour mettre son imaginaire en images. Car, en même temps que le succès, est né un glissement perverse de la perception de son cinéma, qui allait dégénérer en préjugé assassin, réduisant son étrangeté profonde à une séduisante mièvrerie. . . . Une carrière dont l'éclat vira soudain à l'éclipse, pendant près de dix ans, d'où surgira un phénix : *Une chambre en ville*, suivi d'épilogues en demi-teinte" (Taboulay 5).
[15] "Ce dernier tour de piste confirme de manière cruelle, après l'échec douloureux et injuste d'*Une Chambre en Ville* et celui, prévisible, de *Parking*, le divorce de Jacques Demy avec les spectateurs. . . . Les visions et les envies d'un auteur populaire comme Jacques Demy ne correspondent plus au goût et aux attentes du grand public" (Père and Colmant 268, 270).
[16] "une expérience difficile, traumatisante, qui s'etendra en fait sur une dizaine d'années, puisque *Model Shop* est le premier volet d'un adieu au passé qui ne trouvera sa conclusion qu'avec *Une Chambre en Ville*" (Berthomé 23).
[17] Demy distances himself from *Parking*, in particular, in interviews and expresses regret over making the film. See, for example, Clech et al 61.
[18] Nancy Reynolds and Malcom McCormick's *No Fixed Points: Dance in the Twentieth Century* and Isabelle Ginot and Marcelle Michel's *La danse au 20e siècle* provide a broad historical scope as well as information about specific choreographers and dance culture in the periods I study.
[19] See Svea Becker & Bruce Williams, Rodney Hill, Peter Hogue, and Matthew Lazen.
[20] Such as articles and interviews in *Cahiers du Cinema*, *Variety*, *Cinema*, *Les Inrockuptibles,* and *L'avant scène cinéma*.

[21] A thorough re-examination of the cinematic traditions Demy was drawn to—the classical Hollywood musical, especially—would help to fully contextualize his films, but such an expansive study is also outside the reach of this project.
[22] See *Les Demoiselles On Eu 25 Ans* (1993), *L'Univers de Jacques Demy* (1995), and *Jacquot de Nantes* (1991).
[23] Rick Altman, Jane Feuer (*The Hollywood Musical*), Kelly Kessler, and Matthew Kennedy also discuss tonal shifts in the musical after the studio era, especially in relation to reflexivity and deviations from genre conventions.
[24] Judith Mackrell's *Reading Dance*, Valerie Preston-Dunlop's *Looking at Dances*, and Jacqueline Smith-Autard's *Dance Composition* provide methods in this regard, but I find Susan Leigh Foster's *Reading Dancing: Bodies and Subjects in Contemporary American Dance* to be better suited for my project, though still not as comprehensive for my needs as Laban Movement Analysis. Jo Butterworth and Liesbeth Wildschut's *Contemporary Choreography: A Critical Reader* and Foster's *Choreographing Empathy* also provide some useful guidance for ways to understand dance structure more broadly.
[25] *La danse au XXe siècle* explores ballet, modern, and postmodern dance of the twentieth century and discusses developments in France, Andrea Harris' research on American ballet, and Sally Banes' research studies American avant garde dance (*Terpsichore*, *Democracy's Body*). *No Fixed Points* is also a useful reference, though it is intended as a textbook and therefore is less thoroughly cited and focuses on broader trends.
[26] Butterworth and Wildschut's full lists provides a sense of the historical challenges and prejudices the discipline has faced: "Historically, the dance discipline has been considered to have been neglected or undermined by a number of elements: its ephemerality and transience; little documentation and low social status; religion, especially Puritanism; the perception of dance as a female art; the lack of a canon of literature . . . ; and, as many have identified, its very nature seen as an activity of the body rather than mind where Western dualism since Descartes as privileged the cognitive over the corporeal, revealing the West's religious and ethical biases" (5).
[27] See Douglas Rosenberg's *Screendance*, Erin Brannigan's *Dancefilm*, Judy Mitoma's edited anthology *Envisioning Dance on Film and Video*, Sherril Dodd's *Dance on Screen*, and the Centre national de la danse's *Danse/Cinéma*.
[28] Scholarly research also exists that focuses on individuals. See John Mueller's *Astaire Dancing: The Musical Films*, Martin Rubin's *Showstoppers: Busby Berkeley and the Tradition of Spectacle*, and John Franceschina's *Hermes Pan: The Man Who Danced with Fred Astaire*.
[29] Much of Laban's work in Effort and what he called Space Harmony aims to explain the—albeit unconscious—psychological motivations behind every movement. Every action, Laban argued, has a profound expressive meaning that speaks as loudly, if not moreso, than our words. Laban discusses this fascinating work in *Choreutics* and *The Mastery of Movement*, but given the more experimental nature of these alignments, I have chosen not to develop this aspect of Laban Movement Analysis in my research when I cannot support my claims with sufficient context.
[30] Bartenieff Fundamentals, arguably the core of the Body category but less central to my analytical concerns, consists of exercises and connectivity patterns to restore the body to a full range of movement. For more information, see *Body Movement: Coping with the Environment*.
[31] Carol Lynn Moore distinguishes between conflicting approaches to Shape and articulates the different focuses of Laban's students ("Introduction" 91–101).
[32] For more on the significance and difference between linguistic value and meaning, see Part 2, Ch. IV: "Representation of a language by writing" in Ferdinand de Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics*.
[33] Because much of this system is best learned in person, with movement-based examples, there is also not a comprehensive text for easy citation. However, a number of written works—some by Laban and some by his students or other scholars who have proposed additions and expansions to the work Laban began—provide some written documentation that I will reference when possible for those who seek further information. See, in particular: Rudolf Laban's *Choreutics* and *The Mastery of Movement*, Irmgard Bartenieff's *Body Movement: Coping with the Environment*, Karen Bradley's *Rudolf Laban*, Cecily Dell's *A primer for movement description using effort-shape and supplementary concepts*, Ann Hutchinson Guest's *Motif Notation: An Introduction* and Vera Maletic's *Dance Dynamics*.
[34] Steven Cohan acknowledges that "With the exception of revues, no single musical purely adheres to one form or the other, of course" (44) but he does not expand upon his criteria for separating musical films into aggregate and integrated forms.
[35] Some scholars (Griffin) also discuss racial integration in the musical and Hollywood, but this is a rarer use of the term in relation to the musical genre.
[36] "Chez Demy, chaque déplacement est chorégraphié, y compris dans les films non-musicaux. Les personnages ne cessent de se croiser, de se rater et de se retrouver dans les rue de Nantes, Rochefort ou Marseille : le hasard de Demy est chorégraphe, orchestre des déplacements complexes sur la scène du monde" (Angiboust 68).

[37] Hill mentions the importance of "chance" and the series of missed encounters that occur during the film, and discusses the intricate series of missed moments when Delphine is waiting for Yvonne in the café and Maxence returns for his bag ("Demy Monde: Jacques Demy" 95, 96). In addition, however, Demy's intricate play with coincidental encounters and near-misses is also inspired by some of the narrative premises of *On the Town*. Henneton also points out this connection, which she argues is a significant influence on Demy's film (225). Her argument references the narrative aspects only, however, and not the additional stylistic similarities.
[38] While in LA promoting *Les Parapluies*, Demy made networking contacts in Hollywood and became acquaintances (and later friends) with Gerald Ayers, a young producer at Columbia.
[39] Discussions of *Les Demoiselles*' American distributor frequently refer to the company as Warners–Seven Arts, but Eliot Hyman would not merge the two companies until 1967 (Hoyt 191).
[40] The Technicolor estimate was a cost of nearly £5,000 (Galea "Letter to P. Dussart").
[41] Dale is less well-known for his film work, but both he and Chakiris appeared in early theatrical runs of *West Side Story*.
[42] All the budget data in this paragraph is converted to 1967 equivalent purchasing power for more accurate comparison. More information is available in the appendix budget data charts.
[43] For more on this comparison, see Hill "Demy Monde: Jacques Demy" 55–100 and "Demy Monde: The New-Wave Films."
[44] Shooting in studio interiors may have been prohibitively expensive for most French film productions during this period, as Crisp suggests that rising rental costs led to the closing of many studio spaces in the 1950s (123).
[45] "Petit peut être considéré comme l'héritier de Serge Lifar. Il est aussi, avec Maurice Béjart . . . le seul chorégraphe français qui ait su rivaliser avec les néoclassiques anglo-saxons" (Michel and Ginot (51).
[46] "[Béjart] ne remet en question le langage chorégraphique hérité de la tradition classique" (Michel and Ginot 47).
[47] "Béjart a rendu la danse au public, et le ballet à notre temps" (Michel and Ginot 55).
[48] Although still performed regularly, the cancan had an artistic revival of sorts at nightclubs like the Lido and Moulin Rouge in 1953 ("Cancan Again Kicks Up Stir" 11).
[49] Moskowitz's reviews of the Lido and Moulin Rouge performances suggest that the house dancers of both nightclubs would perform simple choreography based on cabaret styles, some acrobatics, and older popular dances like the cancan, all in flashy costumes and surrounded by elaborate set dressings and other groups of "undraped girls" ("Moulin Rouge, Paris" 1967 101). The descriptions of the Lido and Moulin Rouge shows suggest they were fairly similar, the Lido featuring content that benefitted (or suffered) from better funding and more class.
[50] Berthomé suggests there was a two-week rehearsal period, but memos suggest that George Chakiris' rehearsals started May 9th, about three weeks before principle photography (Berthomé 194, de Goldschmidt "Telegram to Seven Arts").
[51] All the names of the numbers and songs in Demy's films from come from the CD music album names.
[52] A contextualization of Demy within stylistic norms of the Hollywood musical more generally is outside the scope of this project, but such a rigorous analytical context is the next step in a better understanding of Demy's films in relation to Hollywood products. By isolating some of the key choreographic aspects of the numbers in these Hollywood films that directly influenced Demy, I hope to be able to later compare those trends to additional examples of the Hollywood musical in order to determine where they stand in relation to norms for filming and choreographing musical numbers.
[53] *On the Town* and *The Band Wagon* are frequently mentioned in relation to *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* (the former because of the sailor iconography, the latter because of its status as a backstage musical), but the choreographic links between them are less apparent.
[54] This is the case in Becker and Williams' article, and even Berthomé's account of Demy's film is based on incorrect understandings of the musical genre's history.
[55] In his discussion of Demy's musicals, he devotes time to *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg, Les Demoiselles de Rochefort,* and *Une Chambre en Ville*, but not *Peau d'âne*, *Parking*, or *Trois places pour le 26* (49–81).
[56] Hill, for his part, points out the similarities between Demy's exploration of the musical genre and other New Wave directors' exploration of the Hollywood *film noir* and gangster films ("Demy Monde: Jacques Demy" 94) while also suggesting that *Demoiselles* has a "pointedly non-classical structure" ("Demy Monde: Jacques Demy" 95), though he does not thoroughly expand on this claim.
[57] Some of these movement parallels are also present in "Chanson des jumelles," providing hints for later, more explicit citation.
[58] "C'est bien d'hommage qu'il s'agit et non d'imitation, et Demy n'entend pas abdiquer quoi que ce soit de sa liberté créatrice pour la plier à un modèle" (Berthomé 196).

[59] Berthomé mentions this citation (196), as does Robynn Stilwell (136), and Diane Henneton (225).
[60] In *An American in Paris*, Caron puts her arm around Kelly's waist as well.
[61] "*Demoiselles*. . . . s'enrichissait de tout ce que Gene Kelly évoque pour l'amateur de comédies musicales" (Berthomé 394).
[62] Berthomé notes this connection as well (196).
[63] Overhead diagrams for this scene exist in his archival material (Demy "Overheads").
[64] Becker and Williams' analysis is vague here; they do not mention a specific moment, but presumably are referring to Reynold's dancing in "All I Do Is Dream Of You."
[65] "Delphine marche sur un rhythme musical. Elle saute d'un pied sur l'autre, monte sur le trottoir, descend du trottoir. Un pied sur le trottoir, l'autre sur la chaussée." ("Scénario manuscrit" 6).
[66] Genet's *Querelle de Brest* and Cocteau's writings on sailors in *Le Livre blanc*, as well as the latter's sketches of French sailors are part of French gay erotic iconography that Demy likely would have been aware of.
[67] Dale does not appear in the 1961 film of *West Side Story*, but was a member of the theatrical cast.
[68] Berthomé also makes the connection that the sisters and carnies collapsing at the end of "De Hambourg à Rochefort" resembles the end of "Good Morning" from *Singin' in the Rain* (196).
[69] The works that are quickest to criticize *Les Demoiselles*—as a complete flop as well as a choreographic failure—are biographies of Gene Kelly. Clive Hirschhorn's biography of Kelly calls the film "another soggy entertainment, as effete as it was boring" (244). Part of the criticism of Demy's film in Hirschhorn's account may result from his choice to use an emplotment—as Hayden White uses the term—to narrativize Kelly's life that favors a rise-and-fall trajectory. *Les Demoiselles* is a failure, the book hints, because "it hardy gave Gene's ailing career the boost it so badly needed" (244). Subsequent Kelly biographies—by Tony Thomas, Alvin Yudkoff, and Alain Masson—follow Hirschhorn's emplotment of Kelly's life. Since *Les Demoiselles* occurs after the so-called golden period of Kelly's career, which is also often correlated with what is perceived as the decline of the musical genre, this choice to downplay the period in which Demy's film occurs fits into their chosen reading of Kelly's life. These biographies make a point to reference Kelly's unhappiness with his role in the film when asked about it later in his life, but at the time of filming he gives a positive account of his experience in a little interview during the filming of *Les Demoiselles*, where he says (in excellent French) "La chorégraphie du film, c'est très bien fait; le choreographer [*sic*] c'est Norman Maen, il est un jeune anglais, il a les bonnes idées, il est [*sic*] fait les choreographies très modernes, très 'up,' très haut, comme les américains dit, 'up,' comme ça. Moi j'aime beaucoup" ("Tournage des 'Demoiselles de Rochefort'").
[70] Robynn Stilwell also points out the narrative parallels between *Les Demoiselles* and *On the Town* (134).
[71] A movement that initiates with an accent has an impulsive phrasing quality, whereas a movement that increases into an accent has an impactive phrasing quality. For more information about phrasing of movements and the relationship to Laban's Effort qualities, see Vera Maletic's *Dance Dynamics*, especially pages 59 and 60.
[72] This breaks down over the course of the film; as the carnies leave the townspeople continue to dance (including Yvonne and Solange and their romantic and dance partners, Simon and Andy).
[73] Henneton references the "game of musical correspondence" between Yvonne and Simon as well, but in reference to the music only, not the figure and camera movement similarities (228).
[74] The exception to this rule is the second-to-last of these numbers, the "Chanson de Solange," when Delphine joins Solange in singing the refrain that we originally hear in the "Chanson de Maxence."
[75] The stills below do not fully capture the movement qualities, of course, but can serve as a reference point to find the precise moment I am discussing within each number.
[76] The melody from the beginning of Andy's love number is also not shared by any of the other love numbers, but his uses the same melody as Solange's "Concerto," which he has found in the street after their meet cute.
[77] Both Bordwell and Thompson's arguments build off of Noël Burch's discussion of stylistic parameters from *Theory of Film Practice.*
[78] Imagine, for example, if instead of Cosmo cheering Don up with "Make 'Em Laugh" in *Singin' in the Rain* after Don expresses his career doubts, Don instead sang to Cosmo about his car ride with Cathy, the cause of his professional and emotional turmoil.
[79] This data reinforces Hill's comment that, "like *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, *Young Girls* often employs long takes combined with elaborate camera movements, contributing at once to the production values that tie the film to the "Tradition of Quality" and – as oblique references to Ophüls and Welles – to the reflexivity more common to New-Wave films" ("Demy Monde: Jacques Demy" 91).
[80] My claims are based on a quantitative study I have done of 260 numbers from 31 Hollywood musicals, spanning from 1933 to 1961. The chosen numbers come from well-known films from the period like *Dames*, *Top Hat*, *Singin' in*

the Rain, *The Band Wagon*, *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, and *West Side Story*, as well as from films selected randomly according to the method David Bordwell used in The Classical Hollywood Cinema. For more information on this method, see David Bordwell, Janet Staiger and Kristin Thompson in *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*.

[81] *Meet Me In St Louis* does this more than my other American examples, because so much of the narrative action occurs in the Smith's house.

[82] I have yet to compile the data to confirm this, but it would be an intriguing claim to investigate with a larger film sample.

[83] Henneton and Waldron point to location shooting as an important difference between *Les Demoiselles* and Hollywood productions (Henneton 231, Waldron 61).

[84] The sections in which dance would appear in the film was an early part of Demy's writing process. In some notes Demy made in preparation for the film, next to descriptions of the action occurring at "La Maison du Crime," as the location is described, Demy has written "DANSE" in red next to the description. This occurs at several places in his notes ("Notes diverses").

[85] One of these phrases is the repeated quick leg kicks that groups of dancers perform, with bent-over upper bodies, in the opening and closing numbers on the square, as well as in the background of the "Rencontres" number. The *West Side Story*-inspired leg suspension is another.

[86] Rodney Hill mentions the relationship between Demy's careful coordination of color schemes as pointing to "at once the production values of the "Tradition of Quality" and the kind of quasi-Brechtian distanciation associated with the New Wave" ("Demy Monde: Jacques Demy" 92). An even more proximal influence, however, would be the use of coordinated color in Hollywood musical numbers, where decorative functions of film style prevail. Demy's particular aesthetic strategy in *Demoiselles*, as Hill also mentions, is to create color coordination between similar tones in the backgrounds and the costumes of the characters. A similar relationship occurs early in *West Side Story*, when Bernardo reaches out to a red wall behind him that coordinates closely with the red hue of his shirt. It is possible that the inspiration for this color matching came from *West Side Story*, but Demy's use throughout the film is more pervasive.

[87] And when bystanders do join in, they tend to sing instead of dance. Take, for example, Lorelei and Dorothy's guests in "Bye Bye Baby" from *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes.*

[88] The English version of *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* is not readily available, but a comparison of shots and staging between the English and French-language versions would be a compelling study. Demy re-wrote lyrics for the songs, some of which are substantially different, so it would be interesting to see if his staging choices differ as well.

[89] A series of memos back and forth during the exhibition period suggests the French producers' frustration (Sugar, Goldschmidt, Hyman). Goldschmidt's disappointment comes after an agreed $200,000 buyout of his interest in the film in July of 1967 (Katz "Letter to Eliot Hyman").

[90] Simsi lists *Les grandes vacances, Oscar, The Dirty Dozen,* and *You Only Live Twice* as the most-seen films in France for 1967 (32).

[91] Because *Les Parapluies* is all sung and thus does not have supradiegetic shifts in and out of the musical numbers, I do not consider it a core example of the musical genre. Other scholars do discuss the film as a musical, however; see Hill "Demy Monde: Jacques Demy" 63, Waldron 49–60, Herzog 116.

[92] Moskowitz describes the choreography overall as "simple but deft" ("Les Demoiselles" 6).

[93] Rosenbaum supports this perspective, suggesting that "there's no reason to believe that Demy — a filmmaker with a fully developed style and vision of his own when he made *Les demoiselles de Rochefort* — intended to reproduce something we already have."

[94] The reveal that Dutrouz is a murder receives fairly nonchalant responses from the characters, for example.

[95] "comment on danserait dans la vie. . . . Les chorégraphies imaginées par Norman Maen ne cherchent pas à copier à tout prix le spectaculaire des films hollywoodiens mais puissent leur inspiration dans les gestes du quotidien" (Maille 10, 11).

[96] Amy Herzog calls *Peau d'âne* the "most bizarre and least accessible" of the Jacques Demy films she discusses in her chapter on his work, which covers most of his corpus (133).

[97] See, for example, work on performance and acting by James Naremore in *Acting in the Cinema*, Alan Lovell and Peter Krämer's anthology *Screen Acting*, Aaron Taylor's anthology *Theorizing Film Acting*, and Cynthia Baron and Sharon Marie Carnicke's *Reframing Screen Performance*.

[98] Exceptions to this are Adrienne McLean's work on ballet in classical Hollywood in *Dying Swans and Madmen* and Erin Brannigan's *Dancefilm*. David Mayer and Martin Shingler also make reference to the intertwined history of ballet in early film (Mayer 10–30) and certain actors' incorporation of dance into their professional training (Shingler 46–58) in their articles for *Screen Acting*.

[99] Cynthia Baron and Sharon Marie Carnicke have a chapter on Laban Movement Analysis in *Reframing Screen Performance*, but the application of the LMA taxonomy to their analysis is sometimes imprecise. Brenda Austin-Smith (32fn6) and Sean Aita (264) reference Laban Movement Analysis in their articles for *Theorizing Film Acting* but neither uses it as a methodological tool.
[100] Rodney Hill and Amy Herzog are the only Demy scholars to make mention of *Peau d'âne*'s musical status. Hill discusses the film's generic conventions in passing only ("Donkey Skin" 42) and Herzog uses the term as a simple descriptor (133). Williams, in a brief discussion of Demy's work, suggests that the film was Demy's attempt to expand the musical's limits to include the fairy tale (361). Jean-Pierre Berthomé does not discuss the film in terms of its connections to the musical and neither does Anne E. Duggan, Gwénaëlle Le Gras (27–35), or Darren Waldron.
[101] Duggan's purpose in studying *Peau d'âne* is to explore how "Demy camps Perrault's classical fairy tale to shape his film *Donkey Skin*, which will also bring to the fore what made this particular tale so fascinating to Demy" (46).
[102] Duggan's chapter on *Peau d'âne* only discusses one of these two Pathé adaptations (44) and both are directed by Albert Capellani (who directed Pathé's 1913 adaptation of *Germinal*), so it is possible that these are the same film advertised under different names.
[103] There may have been a lull in audience interest for "Peau d'âne" that Demy's film revived; Deneuve suggests the story had fallen out of popularity when he was making the film ("Pour le Cinéma").
[104] "La production française n'aime pas la magie" ("Pour le Cinéma").
[105] Demy's time in Los Angeles introduced Demy to "une nouvelle scène artistique et cinématographique" (Orléan "Los Angeles Trip" 114).
[106] Although production on this film halted in the early stages, Bernard Evein drew up costume and design sketches for the film, which are viewable in Demy's archives at Ciné-Tamaris (Evein "Dessins aquarelles").
[107] Determining the precise budget is difficult. A document purporting to the final budget lists a total price of 5.2 million francs ("Devis Récapitulatif"), but it's final "decor" budget is lower than an earlier estimate, which seems incorrect. Berthomé suggests the cost was around 4 million francs but that the production went over budget by 800,000 francs, approaching the number that exists in Demy's archives (241). *Variety* cites the budget as $1 million (Moskowitz "Gal Producers" 37).
[108] "J'ai dû supprimer un décor sur deux, un figurant sur deux, un costume sur deux, pour pouvoir faire the film. C'est-à-dire l'appauvrir véritablement alors que c'est un film qui réclamait du fric puisque c'est un film sur de la magie et que la magie ça se paie très cher" (Berthomé 240).
[109] Evein preferred abandoning the production of *Peau d'âne* than "lui donner un décor dont j'aurais eu honte après" (quoted in Berthomé 361).
[110] "J'ai fait une chose qui ne se fait jamais en France: avant le tournage, j'ai réuni toute la distribution chez moi. Nous avons passé plusieurs après-midi à travailler le script, à discuter des personnages et des caractères. Ainsi, tout le monde se connaissait en arrivant sur le set. Leur adhésion au film était parfaite" (Simsolo 72).
[111] Berthomé analyzes *Peau d'âne* as having three "'univers fondamentalement différents" (251).
[112] "L'originalité géniale de *Peau d'âne* tient précisément à la richesse des influences que Jacques Demy a su s'approprier" (Varda-Demy and Pierrat 14).
[113] Further investigation of the historical origins for the Peau d'âne costume would be helpful in determining the ways in which Demy was blending aesthetic impulses.
[114] Berthomé 247, Taboulay 100, Duggan 55.
[115] The dance they perform bears strong stylistic and formal similarities to the (clearly identified as such) minuet that the prince teaches Ella in *The Glass Slipper*.
[116] In the chaos of this scene, one young woman in line quietly gets the attention of Thibaud, the man organizing all the women by class status, and whispers something in his ear, after which he loudly repeats, with exasperation, the correct order of class standings. By briefly shifting our attention to that woman amid the bustle of people moving through the frame, Demy finds a subtle but effective way to draw attention to the actress, his adopted daughter, Rosalie Varda-Demy.
[117] For more information on Roland Petit's choreography, see Michel and Ginot (49–52). For more information on ballet pantomime and its origins, ballet d'action, see Nye.
[118] We can see a similar Hollywood impulse to stylize functional tasks in "Lonesome Polecat" from *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (1954), choreographed by Michael Kidd, and "Slow Down" from *The Pajama Game* (1957), choreographed by Bob Fosse.
[119] "Blanche-Neige confectionnant une tarte aidée par les oiseaux" (qtd. in Berthomé 242).

[120] At the end of his career, however, Demy collaborated with French animator Paul Grimault on *La Table Tournante* (1988), filming the transitional scenes that provided continuity between the presentation of Grimault's animated films (Berthomé 375, 376).
[121] The list of films in Demy's "petite cinémathèque" listed as part of the Demy Exposition at the Cinémathèque Française, visited in April, 2013.
[122] Demy's correspondence with Dale makes no mention of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves* or *Cinderella*, so it is possible, though unlikely, that Demy was relying on memories of previous viewings in reference to those films as well (Dale "Letter to Jacques Demy").
[123] Demy's interest in post-modern and contemporary dance is visible later in his life, as he considered hiring a contemporary French choreographer to work on *Trois places pour le 26*, as will be discussed in the next chapter, and attended concerts by American post-modern choreographers like Trisha Brown in the 1980s, as a note from Demy's planner on November 18th, 1987 suggests.
[124] Martha Graham, however, would return to classical forms in her later work.
[125] Robert Dunn's composition workshops at the Merce Cunningham Studio provided the impetus for the Judson Dance Theater group.
[126] I do not, however, wish to suggest that Demy's film employs post-modern dance in a way that directly links him to the post-modern or avant-garde dance movement. The post-modern choreographers who presented a stripped-down style in a revolt against the technical rigor of modern dance were, after all, themselves technically accomplished dancers. Stripping away a technique is not significant if there is no foundation to remove in the first place. I would like to thank Jin-Wen Yu for articulating this important point.
[127] For more on Cocteau and Carné's connections to French avant garde cinema, see Richard Abel's *French Cinema* 137, 270.
[128] As Anne Duggan points out, there are stylistic and figure movement homages to Cocteau's *Blood of a Poet* and *Orpheus* as well (57, 66, 67).
[129] Jean-Pierre Berthomé and Anne Duggan are the most thorough, listing the importance of roses, the living statues, the magic mirror, the plants in the princess' bedroom, and, most significantly, Jean Marais (Duggan 49, 57; Berthomé 243).
[130] Taboulay discusses Demy's use of special effects and his desire to use in-camera effects whenever possible (112).
[131] "Jean Cocteau m'avait dit une fois qu'il ne fallait jamais s'écarter de la réalité, que la poésie était une chose insaisissable, qu'on ne savait pas ce que c'était, et que lui-même n'en avait aucune idée, mais qu'elle était partout, qu'elle était dans la vie… C'est-à-dire que j'ai pris le film comme un film réaliste, avec des trucages simples de caméra: des ralentis, des accélérés, des marches arrière, des choses qui sont évidentes et qui sont toujours très belles" (qtd. in Varda-Demy and Pierrat 25).
[132] A quantitative determination of how common this type of musical number was in Hollywood would be useful in better contextualizing my claim, but such research is outside the scope of my current project.
[133] "Film Reviews: Diamond Horseshoe" 14, "Film Reviews: If I'm Lucky" 14, "Film Reviews: I Married An Angel" 8, "Film Reviews: "It's a Great Feeling" 12, "Film Reviews: My Dream" 11, "Film Reviews: Two Guys" 11, "Film Reviews: Up in Arms" 12, "Film Reviews: You're My Everything" 9.
[134] Closer analysis of Hollywood musicals from before and after 1943 is needed to more precisely determine when this type of musical number actually became more popular.
[135] The subjective sequence in this film is a more peripheral example, but one number includes shots of Yves Montand's character singing, intercut with quick shots of him waltzing with Melinda (whom Barbara Streisand's character can channel while in hypnosis) in a supradiegetic space.
[136] Memos between directors Jerome Robbins and Robert Wise in the preparation stages of the film express their concern over audience's reactions to subjective sequences and less-motivated musical numbers (Robbins "Letter to Robert Wise," Wise "Letter to Jerome Robbins").
[137] "Le sense de l'espace qu'il manifeste, mais un peu comme si il fesait evoluer un ballet" ("Pour le Cinéma").
[138] Demy creates "l'impresson d'un tout esthétique, sans beauté gratuite ni superflue. . . . C'est incroyable ce que Jacques a pu créer avec si peu de moyens. Pour *Peau d'âne* notamment, il est parvenu à déployer un onirisme délicat, malgré les contraintes financières" (Orléan "Il s'agissait" 106).
[139] "Choisir, c'est toujours mieux. Dans l'existence, cela facilite les rapports humains et détruit les barrières. D'abord victime, Peau d'Ane finit par se libérer" (Simsolo 74).
[140] "C'était à la fois sa plus belle réussite commerciale et son adieu au succès" (Lerouge 82).
[141] "La comédie musicale la plus schizophrénique de l'histoire du septième art" (Heymann 13).

[142] Demy's planners from 1976 and 1978 have references to the "Anouchka" script and indicate trips to Russia to visit St Petersburg and Moscow.
[143] Varda-Demy discussed the influence of *Silk Stockings* on her costume design choices for *Trois places pour le 26* in her presentation for the Cinémathèque française, "Experience-Costumes."
[144] "1972 je songe à un scénario basé sur les répétitions d'une comédie musicale. Montand était d'accord, nous avons contacté [the actress] Isabelle Adjani qui était elle aussi partante, Michel Legrand était bien entendu dans le coup, et…nous n'avons jamais trouvé de producteur. On a fini par laisser tomber" (*Trois places pour le 26* press book).
[145] Demy's sophisticated work with actors and their physicality continues in *Lady Oscar* in which Demy and his actress modified her performance to create a contrast between her masculine and feminine tendencies, which is most apparent in the different ways she dances with the queen's lover and with a woman at her own betrothal party.
[146] Demy's 1977 planner has notes about "Sheldon" on January 15th and September 26th; this is likely Sheldon Harnick who translated the lyrics for *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*.
[147] This claim needs further verification and could stem simply from repeated car trouble during this period, but several notes from April of 1976 indicate meetings with Renault.
[148] *Le Monde's* reviewer found the experience of the Césars "un peu triste" (La Bardonnie 26).
[149] For definitions of American modern and post-modern dance, see the "Task-based musical numbers" section from Chapter 3.
[150] "C'est la fin des 'grands maîtres' et, avec elle, de l'élaboration de langages nouveaux, des grandes ruptures, et des redéfinitions esthétiques majeures" (Michel and Ginot 186).
[151] Personal interview with Katy Varda, 2015.
[152] The production "se met en place dans des conditions de confort financier et intellectuel que Demy n'a jamais connues" (Berthomé 380).
[153] "Un tournage, par rapport aux autres films de Jacques, beaucoup plus lourd. Une grosse équipe; une grosse déco de Bernard Evein" ("Dans les coulisses").
[154] Throughout his career, Demy expressed distaste for the monetary aspects of filmmaking. Unlike Demy's wife, Agnès Varda, or Claude Berri, *Three Seats'* producer, Demy did not create his own production company or became deeply invested in the financial aspects of his films. Berthomé suggests that some of Demy's financial issues stemmed from this reluctance to involve himself more deeply in the money behind his projects.
[155] Information comes from the "Devis" file for *Les Demoiselles* and the "Devis Récapitulatif" file for *Peau d'âne.*
[156] None of the budget documents for these three films specifically reference costs for location shooting, which would give an even clearer comparison for the overall production design of each film. Unfortunately, *Trois places*' cost estimate is also vague on the total cost of choreography and dancers.
[157] "C'est ce qui coûte monstrueusement cher : louer une salle de répétition, 50 danseurs présents à chaque séance" (Clech et al 58).
[158] Strangely enough, Gene Kelly may have cost Demy's film budgets the same amount as hiring the group of dancers for *Trois Places*. There is no archival information on the cost of hiring the twenty-five dancers for *Demoiselles*, but a memo provides a list of costs for Gene Kelly, George Chakiris, and Grover Dale. Kelly, not surprisingly, was the most expensive, followed by Chakiris and Dale. Altogether, they cost the production a total of 150,000 dollars in 1967, which had an equivalent value of 3.3 million francs in 1988. Gene Kelly on his own cost the production 2.2 million francs in 1988 currency—when we take into account inflation—this for the one month he spent rehearsing and filming his portions of the film. In comparison, for *Three Seats*, four American dancers (in non-speaking roles) were hired along with the American choreographer, Michael Peters, to supplement the existing dancers who were hired from France and England. The total for the corps of dancers, plus the four Americans, was estimated at 2 million francs ("Devis Récapitulatif").
[159] "Le travail physique a commencé au début de l'année, j'ai appelé Michael Peters à Los Angeles en janvier, il est arrivé en février et jusqu'à mai, on a préparé" (Clech et al 58).
[160] A perfect example of this working relationship is the set of documents that exist for one of Demy's LA projects, a musical version of the "Tristan and Isolde" myth. Evein had created setting and costume sketches before the film ever developed into a serious planning stage (Evein "Dessins aquarelles").
[161] "D'abord je travaille seul, puis la composition avec Legrand est ce qu'il y a de plus long : pour fair six ou huit chansons, il faut une année, on écrit, on réécoute quinze jours après et on constate que parfois ça ne tient pas le coup et le temps passe. Après, je fais appel à Evein, et à Rosalie Varda pour les costumes : des choix de couleurs, un ton à donner par personnage ; chacun a un thème, une couleur, un comportement, une volonté" (Clech et al 58).

[162] "Il a insisté pour porter son vrai nom dans the film. C'est moi qui ai choisi les épisodes de sa vie qui figurent dans le film, ils constituent la légende de Montand aux yeux du groupie que je suis, que j'étais déjà quand j'allais l'écouter chanter au Théâtre de l'Etoile dans les années 50" (*Trois places pour le 26* press book).
[163] "je ne voulais pas casser l'univers, le ton, les couleurs de Jacques Demy" (*Trois places pour le 26* press book).
[164] Demy "avait une façon de travailler extremement à l'opposé de ça. C'était quelqu'un qui travaillé très en amont, tout était écrit, tout était préparé. Ses plans séquences était déjà préparé dans sa tête. Il travaillait avec un scénario, avec un chronomètre et dans sa tête il fesait sa mise-en-scène, il fermait les yeux, il imaginait sa mise-en-scène, il noté. C'est ca, bon…à l'opposé, Montand avait ce coté, 'on refait autrement, on change ça, je rajoute ça,' etc." ("Dans les coulisses").
[165] "Montand était une légende, et donc comme toutes les légendes: très autocentré sur le tournage! Il ne pensait qu'à son bon profile, et intervenait sur la mise en scène de Demy" (Barnett 74).
[166] According to Demy's planner, he was so defeated by the experience that he considered turning the project over to Philippe de Broca or Berri, but the latter refused to accept his resignation.
[167] Montand "c'est calmé un peu" ("Dans les coulisses").
[168] France had some "chorégraphes magnifiques comme Pina Bauch" ("Jacques Demy, ou l'arbre gémeau").
[169] "Trop tourmenté, trop torturé" (Grugeau 60).
[170] "Michel a travaillé différemment, dans la mesure où il s'est beaucoup servi du synthétiseur pour trouver des sons nouveaux, une autre couleur. Montand insistait beaucoup pour avoir des rythmes plus contemporains" (Clech et al 10).
[171] Je n'ai jamais rencontré une telle liberté de travail que celle que j'ai eue avec Berri sur ce film. D'habitude, je suis déformé par l'économie : toujours aller trop vite, ou me dire que puisqu'on n'aura pas les moyens de faire telle chose, la faire avec moins de moyens. Avec lui, pas du tout, il voulait un beau film et me disait : 'L'heure n'est pas au téléfilm, il faut que le spectacle soit un vrai spectacle'. Et il avait raison, dans ce cas précis du musical , je ne parle pas du cinéma en général. Et il n'est jamais intervenue sur rien, il a été admirable (Clech et al 11).
[172] "exigence et son sens de la perfection" (Clech et al 11).
[173] "Ce qui prove qu'il y aurait en France les talents nécessaires pour réaliser des comédies musicales" (*Trois places pour le 26* press book).
[174] We see something closer to this structure in *Easter Parade* (1948) when Ann Miller's character leaves and is replaced by Judy Garland, but this film seems to be the exception rather than the rule according to Altman's analysis (248).
[175] Vera Maletic describes Impuslve phrasing as that movement with an initial accent that decreases in intensity (59).
[176] "MARION sort à reculons. Elle heurte la table basse, lache son sac, bafouille quelque chose qui ressemble à une excuse" (Demy "Découpage technique" 47).
[177] "Elle part à reculons, évite la table, sourit, et ferme la porte" (Demy "Découpage technique" 70).
[178] "C'est la rencontre de ces deux genérations qui est passionnante". . . Legrand describes his music as "très contemporaine," avoiding "les références, les citations, les rappels d'une période historique" (*Trois places pour le 26* press book).
[179] However, as filmmakers Olivier Ducastel and Jacques Martineau point out, the use of electronic instruments provides its own historical marker on the music (personal interview).
[180] Legrand wanted to avoid "pasticher les compositeurs des chansons de Montand" even though he points out that "on entend quelques mesures de 'vraies' chansons de Montand, qui sont comme des radios-phares de l'histoire de sa vie" (*Trois places pour le 26* press book).
[181] Maletic suggests Vibratory phrasing "consists of sudden repetitions that continue over a shorter or longer period of time" (60).
[182] Demy included the costume reference—which also closely resembles Astaire's costume from *Top Hat*—for Rosalie Varda-Demy's benefit, as *Silk Stockings* was one of her favorite musicals ("Experience-Costumes").
[183] There is a similar clear reference to Simone Signoret and her role in *Casque d'or* (1952) in one of the show's later scenes.
[184] Demy was "toujours persuadé d'avoir dix ans d'avance sur l'ensemble de la société cinématographique. . . . même si j'ai l'air d'être prétentieux en le disant, c'est hélas vrai" (Clech et al 10).
[185] A subsequent analysis would benefit from a broader comparison between Demy's film and popular cinema in the 1980s from both France and Hollywood. Peripheral musicals from the 1980s, like *Victor Victoria* (1982) and *School Daze* (1988) are also excluded from my current discussion.
[186] More research on 1980s musicals is needed to better understand the changes the genre underwent during this period. Steven Prince's discussion in *New Pot of Gold: Hollywood Under the Electronic Rainbow, 1980–1989* helps to clarify

some ways in which the films from this period were using the genre markedly differently from *Trois places.* However, his account focuses more on his perceived decline of the form—which he attributes to the disappearance of the studio-era production unit, changes in audience tastes, and the emotional tone of the genre—more than on a discussion of the films in question (307). Prince also considers a number of dance films from this period—*Staying Alive* (1983), *Flashdance* (1983), *Dirty Dancing* (1987), and so on—to be a core component of the musical genre, whereas I see these films more on the periphery of the genre (308, 309).

[187] For information on individual musical numbers or music videos, see data chart.

[188] Demy saw the music video aesthetic as "super collage, de la folie furieuse . . . c'est un autre langage qui n'a plus rien à voir avec notre expression cinématographique" (Clech et al 58).

[189] My collection of average shot lengths of musical numbers from the studio era shows an average of 24.3 seconds for numbers created between 1934 and 1961.

[190] One of the break dancers, Adolfo Quinones, would go on to star in *Breakin'* (1984) several years later.

[191] One exception to this would be *Little Shop of Horrors* (1986) which, like *Trois places*, uses most of its musical numbers sincerely, as expressions of characters' emotions or to advance the plot. It is this "serious" approach to the genre and the narrative, combined with an aesthetic of artifice (through the puppetry especially) that closely aligns *Little Shop of Horrors* with Susan Sontag's conception of "camp" (518, 525). For the sake of containment and a greater similarity between modes of production I am focusing my discussion on live-action musicals. However, we can also see a similar sincerity and a use of musical numbers for narrative and expressive functions in the animated features released during this period, like Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* (1987) and *The Little Mermaid* (1989).

[192] For more on these teen cycles, see Doherty's *Teenagers and Teenpics* 54–114.

[193] Portrayals of Signoret work "parce que c'était fait avec sincérité." He adds that as a result "je voulais vraiment que le spectacle soit un peu cliché. Parce que le film est un peu compliqué quand même. Je ne voulais pas que le spectateur se sente perdu. C'est pour cela que le spectacle de Montand sur scène ne fait référence qu'à des choses connues de tous: Piaf, Signoret, Marilyn" (Grugeau 60).

[194] See Père & Colmant 268, Taboulay 142, Berthomé 386, Angiboust 64, Henneton 227.

[195] Additional analysis of show musicals from the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s would help to nuance the shifts in genre norms. Altman discusses later filmic examples, but the bulk of his analysis is based on films from the 1930s.

[196] "C'était sans arret 'tu ne crois pas que,' 'tu ne pense pas que,' etc" ("Dans les coulisses").

[197] "Et il avait raison" (Sicilier 13).

[198] "A ce moment la caméra recule et nous découvrons que nous sommes au théâtre. Le décor représente les escalier de la Gare SAINT-CHARLES. Des danseurs costumés en voyageurs, montent et descendent les escaliers avec leur bagages sur le thème de l'INTERVIEW entendu au début du film. Le rideau de velour rouge tombe lentement" (Demy "Découpage technique" 148).

[199] The French expression "c'est du cinéma," means "it's all an act," and does not have an equivalent in English that maintains the pun.

[200] "Au font, tout ça, c'est du cinéma. Mais le cinéma et la vie, c'est pareil. J.D." (Demy "Découpage technique" 148).

[201] One notable exception is *Singin' in the Rain* (1952), which devotes a whole scene to the technical complications involved in the shift to talking pictures.

[202] "C'est le hasard de l'existence qui fait que ça arrive. Je ne vois pas comment on peut être choqué, dans la mesure où les personnages sont complètement innocents. Donc, les gens sont pervers. C'est le regard des autres qui fait vivre une œuvre. Si j'aborde le tabou de l'inceste, je le fais pour mettre les gens le nez dans leur impossibilité, leurs propres limites. . . . L'idée de cette fin ouverte, c'est comme si le péché n'existait pas" (Grugeau 61).

[203] Rosalie Varda-Demy expresses this opinion to Jean-Marc Lalanne (73). The incest seems to have played particularly poorly to American audiences, as the *Variety* reviewer of the film found the plot to be in "poor taste" ("Trois places pour le 26 (Review) 19).

[204] Berthomé discusses the diegetic grounding of the stage numbers as well (389, 390).

[205] *Le Monde* and *Cahiers du cinéma*'s reviews of the film were positive overall (Siclier 13, Magny 6–9). *Variety*'s reviewer, however, found the film to be in "surprisingly poor taste" (Len. 19).

[206] Montand "tenait beaucoup à cette connotations américaine"(Grugeau 60).

[207] "La musique de Michel Legrand appartient à une autre culture que la mienne. Elle n'est pas actuelle, elle n'est pas démodée non plus, elle est à part" (Frain np).

[208] May saw a "pétit décalage" between the "trois monstres sacrées" of the production. She remembers them arguing, "mais non! Regarde ce qui ce passe avec *Thriller*! C'est ca qu'il faut qu'on fasse!" ("Dans les couisses").

[209] As discussed in the documentary "The Making of *Thriller*," Jackson wanted John Landis to direct the his music video—and make it into something more akin to a short film—after seeing Landis' *An American Werewolf in London* (1981).

[210] MONTAND s'arrête et demeure pensif. Les danseurs s'arrêtent à leur tour.
LA TABLE DE REGIE - TONI regard MONTAND

TONI
Qu'est-ce que tu as? Quelque chose ne va pas?
MONTAND
Je ne sais pas. J'ai l'impression
Que ce numéro est démodé?
TONI
Démodé? Tu plaisantes ou quoi?

Il se tourne vers MAX

C'est rétro. Oui…Volontairement
MAX
Ce qui est rétro n'est pas forcément ringard.
Et puis ce sont tes débuts.
MONTAND
Je n'ai pas dit ringard. J'ai dit démodé.
Enfin…C'est une impression.
TONI
Répétons-le jusqu'à la fin. Après on verra.

MONTAND reprend sa place devant le cinéma. Reprise du couplet danser en "soft shoe" (Demy "Découpage technique" 34, 35).

[211] "Puisque c'est là le nom du bar où Montand retrouve Mylène, osons le dire : après l'Enfer de *Parking*, Demy nous fait le dernier cadeau de trois places au Paradis" (Berthomé 402).

[212] From the opening number, when Montand is explaining how long he has lived in Marseille (20 years) and how long it's been since he left (another 20 years), it becomes quickly apparent that time is missing from the film's chronology. Demy addresses this in an interview, saying that "There's a cheat because the film should have been made fifteen years ago. Everything comes from that, from the gap between the writing and the production. . . . I chose an atemporal side of things because what's important is elsewhere" ("Il y a une tricherie car le film aurait dû être fait il y a quinze ans. Tout vient de là, du décalage entre l'écriture et le tournage. . . . j'ai choisi le côté intemporel puisque l'essentiel est ailleurs," Clech et al 57).

[213] "Ma démarche est tellement particulière, mes films sont bizarres et je les veux comme ça." (Clech et al 61).

[214] "Nous avons un univers commun, qui n'a pas changé, mais à l'intérieur duquel nous essayons de ne jamais nous répéter" (*Trois places pour le 26* press book).

[215] "Si j'ai choisi cette optique-là, c'est parce que c'est la danse, la poésie, la peinture, et finalement, c'est le cinéma qui permet de les réunir. Je ne pourrais pas faire la même chose au théâtre, à la radio ou dans un livre. Les gens le refusent en France, ce qui me fait dire, par boutade, que j'aurais mieux fait de naître à New York" (Clech et al 62).

[216] Chazelle talks about this choice in an interview with *The Hollywood Reporter* ("One Epic Conversation").

[217] The small number of contemporary musical television shows and one-off live musical events suggests that television may be the new medium for developing a larger body of singing and dancing stars known for their appearance in musicals. Series like *Galavant* (ABC, 2015–2016), *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* (CW, 2015–present), *Empire* (FOX, 2015–present), *Star* (FOX, 2016–present), and previously *Glee* (FOX, 2009–2015) and *Smash* (NBC, 2012–2013), indicate that there is still an audience for musical genre media.

[218] Hill and Waldron point out Demy's influence on Martineau and Ducastel as well (Hill "The Films of Jacques Demy" 5, Waldron 166–169). I also expand on these points of influence in an article for *Studies in French Cinema*.

[219] Demy explicitly addresses class and social conflict in *Lady Oscar* and *Une Chambre en Ville*, but his films are more often subtle in broaching these issues.

[220] "Il y a des films qui ne peuvent pas être autre chose qu'une comédie musicale. Je crois passionnément aux films militants, au 16mm, aux petits budgets, mais je crois aussi au droit au spectacle, à l'importance du spectacle, à la nécessité de cette sorte de cinéma que je n'ai pas cessé de faire, ou de vouloir faire" (Amiel 102).

[221] "Une histoire si triste qu'on ne pouvait la raconter qu'à travers une comédie enchantée" ("Dossier de Presse").

[222] Michel Chion's *La Comédie musicale* touches briefly on French interations of the genre. For more information on songs in French cinema and musicals, see Conway *Chanteuse* and "France," Dauncey and Cannon 2003, Lacombe and Porcile 1995.
[223] Nancy Virtue also discusses the spatial qualities of *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* (22–40).
[224] "Mes films sont très différents des comédies musicales américaines. C'est vraiment une question de culture." There he describes his films as having "l'esprit français." He adds, "Il ne faut jamais essayer d'imiter qui que ce soit. . . Moi, dans mes films, je raconte mon pays, ce qui s'y passe. . . . Dans un univers qui a l'air toujours sophistiqué, fabriqué, j'essaye de rester vrai. . . . Ce qui est très différent dans les 'musicals' américains des années 50" (Grugeau 61).
[225] In a personal interview, Olivier Ducastel and Jacques Martineau posit that Demy's emphasis on physicality was a key aspect of what distinguished his work from contemporary French filmmakers, who, they argue, were more focused on intellectual themes and dialogue than they were with their actors' physical performances.
[226] We could compare, for example, Yves Montand's character in *Trois places pour le 26* to his role in Marcel Carné's *Les Portes de la nuit* (1946).
[227] Regarding *Trois places pour le 26*, Demy found that some audience members even tried to convince themselves that the act of incest had not occurred, despite unequivocal narrative confirmation (Clech et al 57).

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Appendices

1. Laban Movement Analysis glossary

2. Frame stills and figures

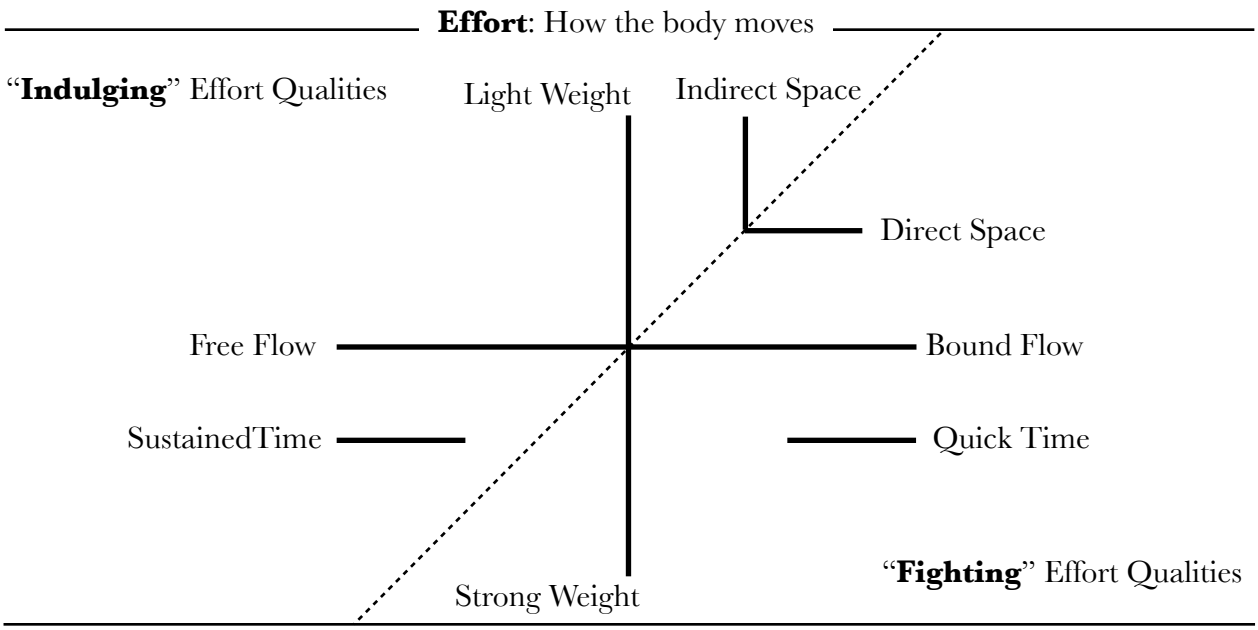
3. Analytical data

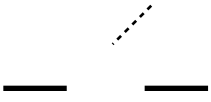
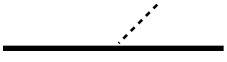
    3.a. Budget data

    3.b. Quantitative film data

    3.c. Spatial maps

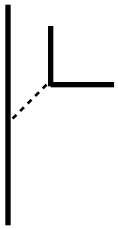
1. Laban Movement Analysis Glossary



Movement Factors	Bipolar Qualities	Association (Laban / Yung)	Symbol
Weight: "the effort exerted to apply the right amount of pressure" (Moore "Introduction" 55)	**Strong**: increasing pressure, firm, forceful, solid **Light**: decreasing pressure, delicate, fine touch, sensitive	Intention / Sensing	
Space: "the effort exerted to aim and orient movement" (Moore "Introduction" 55)	**Direct**: specific, pinpointing, straight-forward, single-focused **Indirect**: flexible, scanning, pliant, multi-focused	Attention / Thinking	
Time: "the effort exerted to pace movement adroitly" (Moore "Introduction" 55)	**Sudden**: quick, accelerating, speeding up, urgent, simultaneous **Sustained**: decelerating, slowing down, gradual,	Decision-making / Intuiting	
Flow: "the effort exerted to control movement" (Moore "Introduction" 55)	**Bound**: binding, careful, controlled, restrained **Free**: relaxed, ongoing, fluent	Progression / Feeling	

Effort States
(Two movement factors manifest simultaneously.)

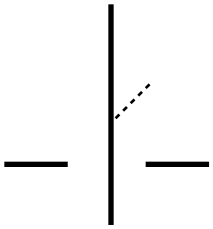
Stable (W + S)
Grounded (to self), connected to the space



Mobile (T + F)
Going, moving through the world



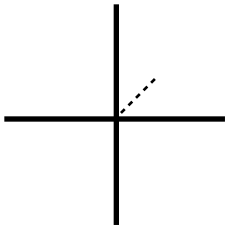
Rhythm / Near
(W + T)
Presence; more about the mover than the environment



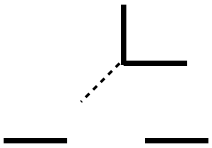
Remote (S + F)
Deliberate navigation of the environment



Dream (W + F)
Inner state, ongoing feeling of flow, sensing of weight

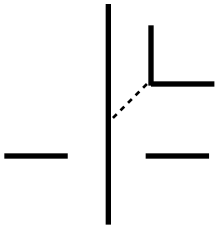


Awake (T + S)
Outer state, aware and responding to the environment

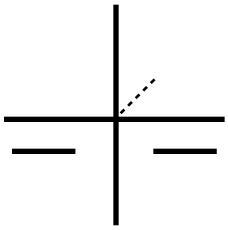


Effort Drives
(Three movement factors manifest simultaneously. Drives are marked by the movement factor they lack.)

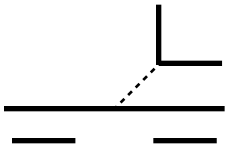
Action Drive (no Flow)
Task-oriented



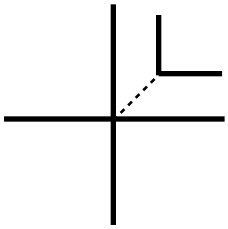
Passion Drive (no Space)
Inner impulses dominate



Vision Drive (no Weight)
Outer connection without emotional investment



Spell Drive (no Time)
Trance-like, controlling or being controlled



Effort Phrasing
from Vera Maletic, *Dance Dynamics*

Impulsive/Decreasing-Intensity: "changes the movement quality in that it decreases its initial intensity" (59)

Resilient: "a result of repetitive, rebounding qualities that can be performed with three different emphases," elastic, buoyant, weighty (60).

Vibratory: "consists of sudden repetitions that continue over a shorter or longer period of time" (60)

Impactful/Increasing-Intensity: "the performance of a quality that changes in that it increases in intensity" (59)

Space: Where the body moves

The Kinesphere: "the sphere around the body whose periphery can be reached by easily extended limbs without steppinga way from that place which is the point of support when standing on one foot" (Laban *Choreutics* 10) also known as the stance or ones' personal space.

Spatial sub-divisions:

Dimensions/axial movement (six total):

Along the **vertical** axis: movement up (towards the head) and movement down (towards the feet)

Along the **horizontal** axis: movement closing across the midline or opening away from the midline (right and left)

Along the **sagittal** axis: movement forward (in front of the body) or movement backward (in back of the body)

Movement in **planes**/along **diameters** (twelve total):

In the **vertical** plane: predominantly up or down, with a secondary, lesser pull into horizontality.

In the **horizontal** plane: predominantly closing or opening (right and left) with a secondary, lesser pull into sagittal space.

In the **sagittal** plane: predominantly forward or back, with a secondary, lesser pull into verticality.

Movement along **diagonals** (eight total):

An equal spatial pull along all three dimensions: vertical, horizontal, and sagittal:

Right foward high; Left back low; Left forward high; Right back low; Left back high; Right forward low; Right back high; Left forward low

Stability and Mobility: Laban describes dimensional-inclined movement as inherently more stable and diagonally-inclined movement as inherently more mobile (*Choreutics* 94).

Crystalline models: Laban based his understanding of spatial pulls and symmetry in the body on a "kind of dynamic crystallography of human movement," associating dimensional, planar, and diagonal spatial pulls with three platonic solids: the octahedron, the cube, and the icosahedron, respectively (*Choreutics* 103–105), and developed movement "scales" in each crystalline shape to train the body and increase range of motion. He developed notation symbols for all 27 spatial pulls as well (*Choreutics* 16).

Body: Which parts of the body are moving

Movement: any distinguishable change or individual movement
Stillness: arrested movement, suspension
Body attitude: the resting shape a body takes (erect, hunched, leaned to one side, etc)
Single-unit movement: one primary movement occurring at a time
Multi-unit movement: secondary movements occurring at the same time as a primary movement
Body part phrasing:

Simultaneous: all body parts move at once
Successive: movement flows from one body part to another
Sequential: unconnected body parts move one after the other

Basic Body Actions (fundamental movement options, organization from Si-Hyun Yoo):

Name	*Description*
Traveling	Any pathway (straight or curving)
Change of Support	A weight shift leading to a new place of support
Rotation	A full or partial revolution in any dimension, of any body part
Flexion	A narrowing, contracting, folding, or adducting motion
Extension	A widening, extending, unfolding, or abducting motion
Spring	Any movement in which all limbs leave the ground
Falling	A loss of balance in any direction

Shape: How does the body move in relation to its environment

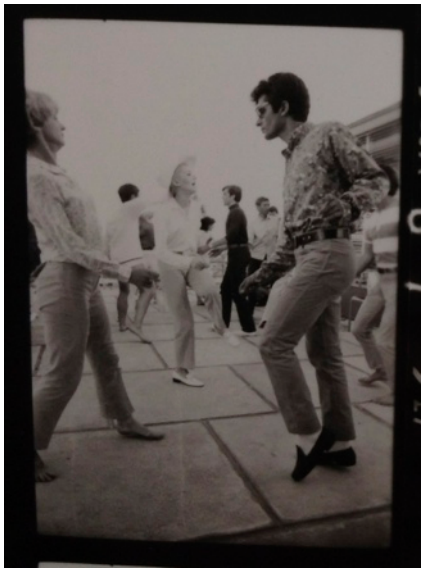
Shape studies the changing dimensions of the Kinesphere in relation to the environment.
The **Modes of Shape Change** are three dominant categories of movement in the Shape category:
Shape flow: Movement that is more internally focused, attentive towards the self. The Columbia College Chicago GLCMA faculty combine conflicting accounts of Shape and define it as "the growing and shrinking of the actual kinesphere as manifested in growing and shrinking of the body shape" (Moore "Introduction" 95).
Carving/Shaping: a moulding, dynamic, multi-dimensional relationship to the environment.
Directional movement: a more straightfoward relationship to the environment.

Spoke-like directional: "movement tracing a linear pathway to a point" (Moore "Introduction" 101).

Arc-like directional: "movement tracing a flat arc through space" Moore "Introduction" 101).

2. Frame Stills and Figures

Les Demoiselles de Rochefort:





Figures 1–3. The cast and crew of *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* relaxes after a day of shooting on the roof of the Grand Bacha hotel. Images courtesy of Ciné-Tamaris.



Figure 4. *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* "Two Little Girls from Little Rock": costume and staging similarities



Figure 5. *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort* “Chanson D'un Jour D'été”: costume and staging similarities



Figure 6. *An American in Paris* “Our Love Is Here To Stay”: a suspended turn cited in Demy’s film



Figure 7. “Concerto”: the suspended turn



Figure 8. “Départ des Forains”: the suspended turn





Figures 9 and 10. *An American in Paris* “Our Love Is Here To Stay”: a kiss and embrace cited in Demy’s film



Figures 11 and 12. “Concerto”: a kiss and embrace



Figure 13. *An American in Paris* “I Got Rhythm”: the ‘airplane’ turn



Figure 14. “Concerto”: the ‘airplane’ turn



Figure 15. *West Side Story* “prologue”: the leg suspension



Figure 16. “Pont Transborder”: the leg suspension



Figure 17. “Andy Amoureux”: the leg suspension



Figure 18. “Les Rencontres”: the leg suspension with a leap



Figure 19. West *Side Story* “prologue”: halting others



Figure 20. “Arrivée des Camionneurs”: halting others



Figure 21. “Les Rencontres”: the suspended turn



Figure 22. *West Side Story* “prologue”: turning and leaping



Figure 23. “Arrivée des Camionneurs”: turning and leaping



Figure 24. Spatial parallels between the sisters’ leg shape...



Figure 25. ...and the carnie’s leg shape

"Love Numbers":



Figures 26–29. Maxence's Shape Flow and head movements with Direct Space Effort



Figures 30 and 31. Delphine's Shape Flow and head movements with Direct Space Effort



Figures 32 and 33. Simon's Shape Flow and head movements with Direct Space Effort



Figures 34 and 35. Yvonne's Shape Flow and head movements with Direct Space Effort



Figures 36 and 37. Solange's Shape Flow and head movements with Direct Space Effort





Figures 38 and 39. Andy's Shape Flow and head movements with Direct Space Effort



Figure 40. "Andy Amoureux": the 'catch-step melt'





Figures 41 and 42. “Les Rencontres”: the ‘catch-step melt’



Figure 43. “Départ des Forains”: the ‘catch-step melt’

Frame stills for *Peau d'âne*:



Figure 1. Villagers dance for the prince



Figure 2. Courtiers dance for the king and queen



Figure 3. Jim Leon's psychedelic aesthetic is noticeable particularly in the designs for Peau d'âne's bedroom



Figure 4. Court dance parallels in *La Belle et la Bête*



Figure 5. Fersen dances with Oscar in *Lady Oscar*



Figure 6. Renaud and Anne dance with limited enthusiasm in *Les Visiteurs du Soir*



Figures 7 and 8. Romance grows between Madame de... and Donati over several evenings of dancing in *Madame de...*



Figure 9. The princess cracks real ingredients for her cake



Figure 10. Ella opts for a nice arabesque instead in *The Glass Slipper*





Figures 11 and 12. Creative cleaning techniques in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*...



Figure 13. ...and *Cinderella*



Figure 14. Cinderella brushes her hair with deliberate strokes in *Cinderella*...

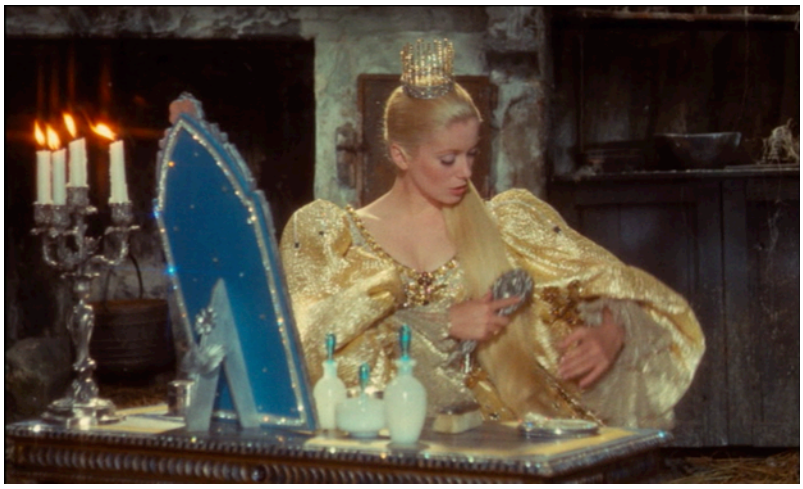


Figure 15. ...and the princess does, too



Figure 16. Characters avoid getting out of bed in *Lion's Love*



Figure 17. Belle checks if the coast is clear in *La Belle et la Bête*...



Figure 18. ...and the princess does the same



Figure 19. After which, Belle adds an additional flourish



Figure 20. La Bête's castle is visible in the background in *La Belle et la Bête*



Figure 21. Similarly, the fairy and her mirror are visible in the background as the princess springs back from the opening branches



Figure 22. Josette Day creates a particular shape with her arms and large strides as she runs in *La Belle et la Bête*



Figure 23. Catherine Deneuve creates a similar shape in her body as she runs



Figure 24. Data trends for the terms “dream sequence” and “dream ballet” courtesy of Arclight



Figure 25. The prince and princess wander through a domesticated forest in the subjective musical sequence

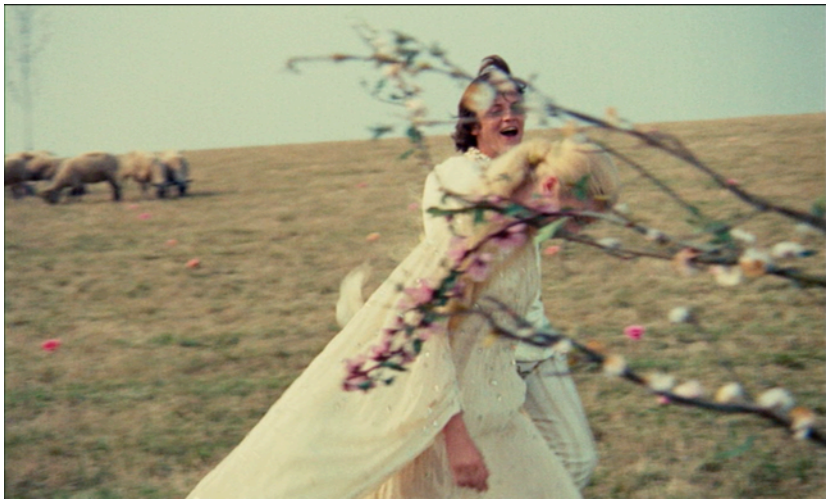


Figure 26. They let go of all courtly decorum as they wander

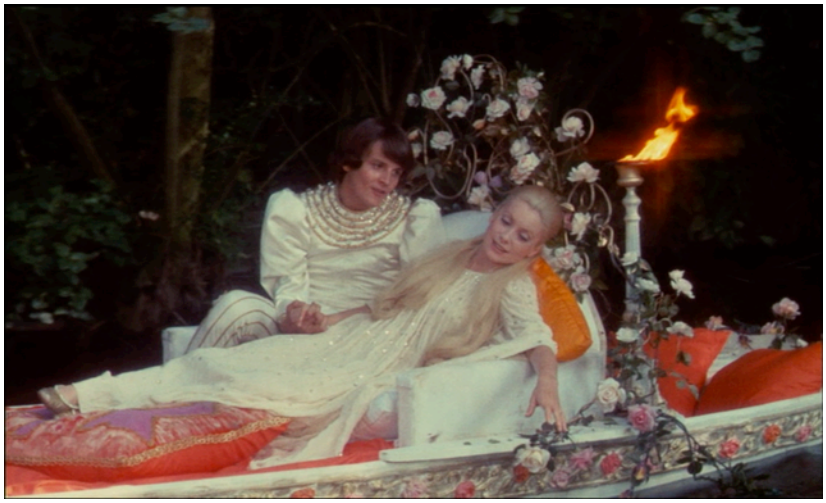


Figure 27. By the end of the number, their relaxed postures suggest they have had their fill of unconstrained pleasure



Figure 28. While singing in the forest, the prince and princess press their cheeks together



Figure 29. They also walk and sing face to face...



Figure 30. ...and repeat a similar staging on the hillside

Frame stills for *Trois places pour le 26*



Figures 1 and 2. Bernard Evein's sketch for *Trois places pour le 26* (Ciné-Tamaris) and the Raoul Dufy painting that served as inspiration, "Tour Eiffel," 1953 (courtesy of freemanart.ca)



Figure 3. We see Marion's Free flow as she leans on the doorframe



Figure 4. We can see Marion's agitation from the tension in her hands



Figure 5. Marion backs into a chair leaving Montand's dressing room



Figure 6. Marion's movement qualities shift in "St-Germain des Près"

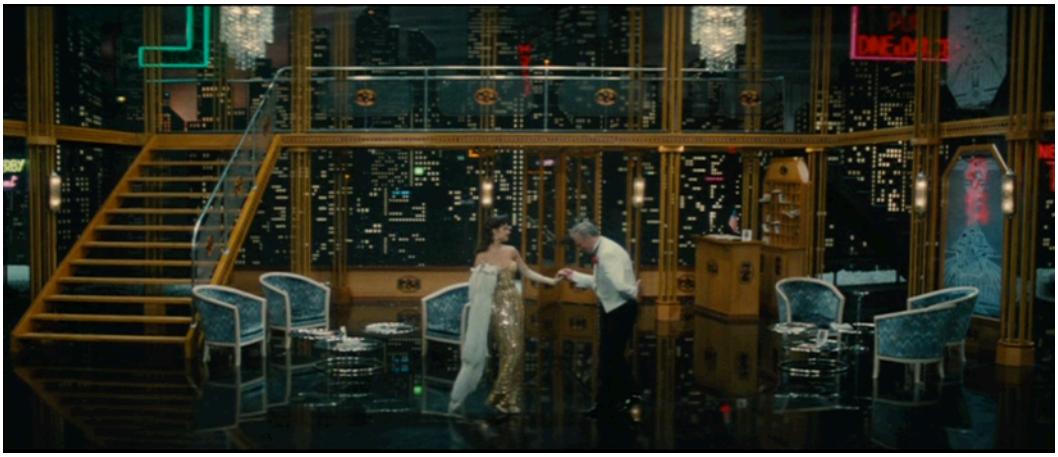


Figure 7 Marion twists with shimmying motions during her bows



Figure 8. Photographers move with exaggerated movements before taking Montand's picture



Figure 9. In "Au Concert" Marion moves through simple ballet and jazz vocabulary



Figure 10. As Marion changes directions she moves through her familiar raised shoulders and tilted head movements



Figure 11. Marion pirouettes



Figure 12. Alice, Marion, and Nicole's arms create symmetry in the frame





Figures 13 and 14. Production stills from filming the perfume shop scenes. Images courtesy of the Fondation Jérôme Seydoux-Pathé



Figure 15. Dancers wipe their brows expressively behind Montand in “Esprit Frappeur”



Figure 16. Swing dance moves in “St-Germain des Près”



Figure 17. The final number from *Xanadu* moves through a number of choreographic registers



Figure 18. The final number from *Xanadu* moves through a number of choreographic registers



Figure 19. The final number from *Xanadu* moves through a number of choreographic registers



Figure 20. *Earth Girls are Easy* parodies 1960s and 1970s teen musicals in “Brand New Girl”...



Figure 21. ...and in “Cause I’m a Blond”



Figures 22 and 23. Marie-Hélène visibly relaxes as she dances with Montand in "Douce Folie"



Figures 24 and 25. We see a similar choreography but different expression in the reprise of "Douce Folie" between Montand and Marion



Figure 26. Production stills show the set Demy built for the film's final scene. Here Demy talks with Peters (to Demy's right) and Peters' assistants. Image courtesy of the Fondation Jérôme Seydoux-Pathé



Figure 27. Montand and Françoise Fabian on the studio train station steps. Image courtesy of the Fondation Jérôme Seydoux-Pathé



Figure 28. For comparison, the same moment as Demy framed it on the actual Marseille train station steps



Figure 29. In *Kiss Me Kate*, we see only a glimpse of the transitional number "Bianca"



Figure 30. In *Trois places*, Demy holds on the performance and gives us a frontal angle

3. Analytical Data

3.a Budget Data
(for primary films and existing data cost comparisons)

Les Demoiselles de Rochefort

Demy Films:	**Year**	**Cost (original, in millions)**	**Comparative Cost (in 1967 millions of dollars)**	**Country (financing)**	**Source**
Les Demoiselles de Rochefort	1967	5.76 (Fr)	1.17	France/USA	Ciné-Tamaris
Les Parapluies de Cherbourg	1964	.9 (Fr)	0.2	France	Hill
Other Films:					
Thoroughly Modern Millie	1967	6 ($)	6	USA	Farmer
Half a Sixpence	1967	6 ($)	6	USA	*Variety*
West Side Story	1961	6.75 ($)	7.54	USA	Mirisch
The Band Wagon	1953	2.873 ($)	3.59	USA	Fordin
Singin' in the Rain	1952	2.593 ($)	3.24	USA	Fordin
An American in Paris	1951	2.724 ($)	3.5	USA	Fordin
On the Town	1949	2.133 ($)	2.99	USA	Fordin
Meet Me in St. Louis	1944	1.185 ($)	2.25	USA	Fordin

Peau d'âne

Demy Films	**Year**	**Cost (original, in millions)**	**Comparative Cost (in 1970 millions of dollars)**	**Country (financing)**	**Source**
Peau d'âne	1970	5.28 (Fr)	0.96	France	Ciné-Tamaris
Lady Oscar	1979	2 (Fr)	0.27	Japan	Haustrade
Other Films:					
La Belle et la Bête	1946	20.2 (Old Fr)	0.35	France	Cinémathèque française

Trois places pour le 26

Demy Films	**Year**	**Cost (original, in millions)**	**Comparative Cost (in 1988 millions of dollars)**	**Country (financing)**	**Source**
Trois places pour le 26	1988	56 (Fr)	9.35	France	Pathé
Peau d'âne	1970	5.28 (Fr)	29.6	France	Ciné-Tamaris
Les Demoiselles de Rochefort	1967	5.76 (Fr)	23.2	France/USA	Ciné-Tamaris
Contemporary American Films:					
Earth Girls Are Easy (J. Temple)	1988	10 ($)	10	USA	IMDb
School Daze (S. Lee)	1988	6.5 ($)	6.5	USA	IMDb
Who Framed Roger Rabbit (R. Zemeckis)	1988	70 ($)	70	USA	IMDb
Le Grand Bleu (L. Besson)	1988	80 (Fr)	13.4	France	IMDb

3.b Quantitative Film Data
(Average shot lengths and musical number durations)

General Hollywood data:
Film average shot length: 8-11s (Bordwell *Way Hollywood Tells It* 121)
Hollywood musical number average shot length: 24.3s

Hollywood musical number data

Film	**Year**	**Number ASL**	**Musical Number Quantity**
Meet Me In St. Louis	1944	28.4	11
On The Town	1949	35.6	14
An American in Paris	1951	28.7	11
Singin' in the Rain	1952	19.8	13
Gentlemen Prefer Blondes	1953	14.9	7
The Band Wagon	1953	33.7	14
West Side Story	1961	11.7	14
Average:		**25.2**	

Vincente Minnelli	**ASL (all data from Cinemetrics)**
Meet Me in St Louis	17.8*
Gigi	20.9
An American in Paris	21.75*
The Band Wagon	20.6
Brigadoon	32.9
Minnelli ASL Average	**22.79**
Jean Renoir	
La Grande Illusion	19.45*
La regle du jeu	18.9*
French Cancan	8.9*
Max Ophuls	
Madame de…	15.5
La Ronde	18.5
Le Plaisir	20.3

*Average of multiple ASL database entries

Les Demoiselles de Rochefort data
Average shot length: 16.5s
Total musical number run time: total: 68m 51s

Musical Number	**Number ASL**	**Location**
Pont Transborder	12.8	bridge
Arrivée des Camionneurs	17.5	square
Chanson Des Jumelles	13.9	apartment
Chanson de Maxence	46	café
Delphine a Lancien	56	street
Delphine a Lancien 2	42.7	gallery
Nous Voyageons de Ville en Ville	10.2	café
Chanson de Delphine	97	apartment
Concerto	10.8	music store
Chanson de Simon	120	music store
Marins, Amis, Amants ou Maris	16.9	square
Andy Amoureux	24.3	street
Chanson d'Yvonne	98	café
Chanson de Maxence (reprise)	31	gallery
Chanson de Solange	35	apartment
De Hambourg à Rochefort	11	apartment, various
La Femme Coupée en Morceaux	27	café
Les Rencontres	45.9	street
Chanson d'Andy	54	music store
Dinner	8.8	café
Kermesse	9.7	square
Chanson D'un Jour D'été	19.7	square
Toujours, Jamais	22.5	square
Concerto (reprise)	26	music store
Départ des Forains	5.8	square
Average:	34.5	
“Love Numbers” average:	**69**	

Peau d'âne data
Average shot length: 11.9

Musical Number	**ASL**	**Time**	**Shots**	**Genre**
"Amour, Amour"	18.14	2.07	7	musical
"Conseils de la Fée des Lilas"	37	1.51	3	both
Peau d'âne s'enfuit	25.4	152.4	6	fairy tale
"Amour" reprise	9.9	9.9	1	musical
"Les Insultes"	15.1	2.31	10	musical
"Rigodon à la Ferme"	10	20.1	2	
Prince "Amour" reprise	41.7	41.7	1	both
Princess "Amour" reprise	5.4	38	7	musical
"Chanson du Prince"	101.7	101.7	1	both
"Le Bal du Chat et des Oiseaux"	7.7	46.2	6	
"Recette pour un cake d'amour"	4.2	2.52	41	musical
"Rêves secrets d'un prince et d'une princesse"	21.3	4.16	12	both
"Le massage des doigts"	17.1	2	7	musical
Average	**24.2**			

Trois places pour le 26 data
Average shot length: 9.8

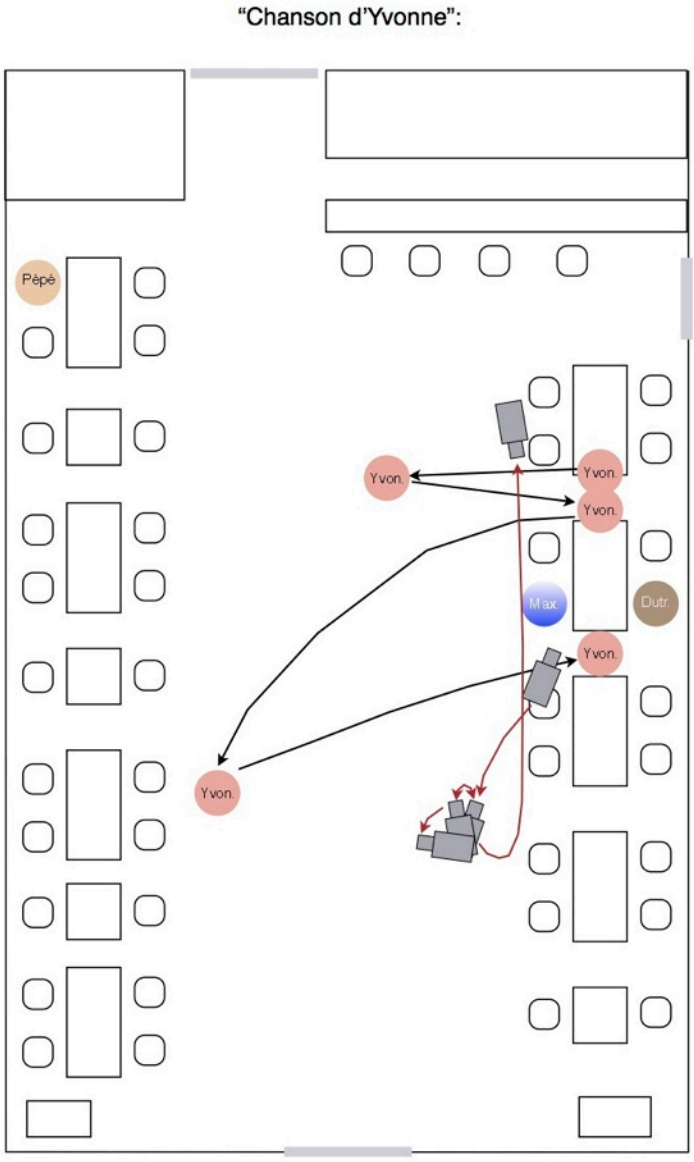
Musical Number	**ASL**	**Time**	**Shots**
"Interview"	6.12	3.22	33
"Au Concert"	71.6	1.58	5
"Losqu'on Revient"	30	1.30	3
"La Parfumerie" (Trois places pour le 26)	10.9	2.33	14
"Ciné Qui Chante"	15.4	3.36	14
"Qui Luxure"	6.1	1.37	16
"L'esprit Frappeur"	12	3.12	16
"Au Concert" (Ballet)	55	55	1
"Douce Folie"	23.7	1.11	3
(Moulin Rouge dance)	7.2	36	5
(Liberation)	46	46	1
"Saint-Germain-Des-Prés"	7.2	1.26	12
(Show opening)	9	27	3
"Douce Folie" (reprise)	51	51	1
Average:	**25.1**		

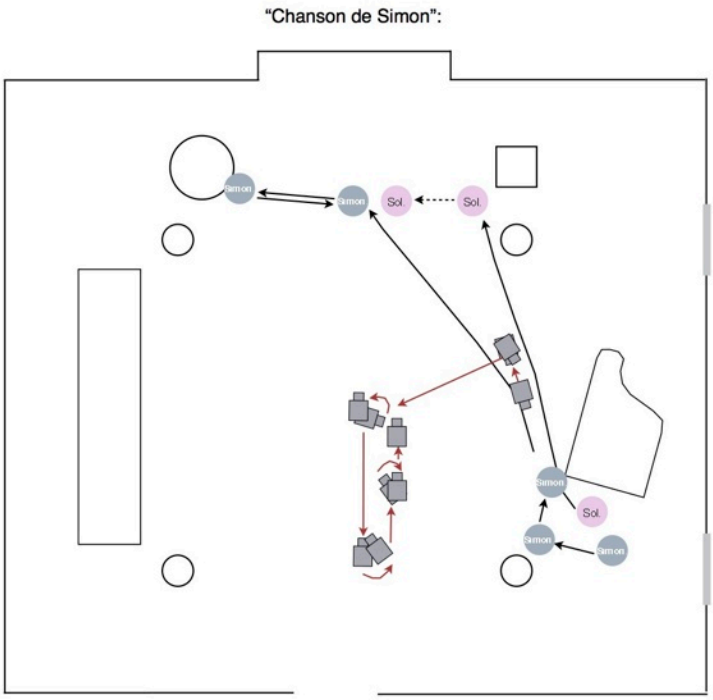
Music Videos and Contemporary Hollywood Data

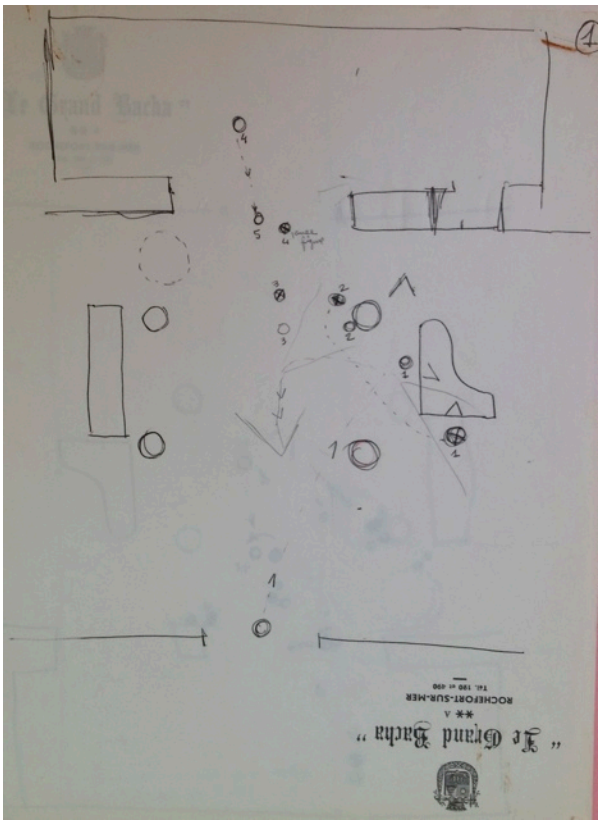
Music videos:	**ASL**	**Time**	**Shots**
"Love is a Battlefield"	3.45	5.17	92
"Beat It"	4.9	4.56	58
"Thriller"	3.4	13.31	234
Average:	**3.9**		
Other films (dance numbers):			
Xanadu, "Whenever You're Away From Me"	20.6	4.48	14
Xanadu, "Suddenly"	20.9	3.50	11
Xanadu, "Dancin'"	6.1	6.52	67
Xanadu, "All Over the World"	4.6	3.56	51
Xanadu, "Xanadu"	5.8	9.19	97
Average:	**11.6**		
Earth Girls Are Easy, "Brand New Girl"	2.6	2.34	60
Earth Girls Are Easy, "The Ground You Walk On"	3.3	2.43	49
Earth Girls Are Easy, "Baby Gonna Shake"	2.9	3.52	81
Earth Girls Are Easy, "'Cause I'm a Blond"	7	2.13	19
Average:	**3.95**		

3.c Spatial maps

Les Demoiselles de Rochefort







An overhead drawn by Jacques Demy, presumably for the same scene as portrayed in the map above. Image courtesy of Ciné-Tamaris.