

instrumentalists depicted are not using music. Brown's PLATE IV, a miniature illustrating the *Mystère de Sainte Apolline*, shows a small choir of angels accompanied by an organ.²⁶ The *menestriers* played many of the soft instruments, and church musicians who participated in the performance would have played the organ (the positive organ required two performers, one to pump the bellows and a second to operate the keyboard).

A fourth ensemble type, probably not recognised as a musical group at the time, was the collection of noisemakers used for infernal scenes. These instruments — utensils, really — were charged with making the horrible, terrifying sounds that accompanied the entrance and exits of Lucifer and his minions. Only the *tambour* (large gong) and the organ pipe are recognizable musical instruments, although the latter may not have been treated in the standard manner.

Instrumental Music in the Individual Plays

The most prevalent type of music in French mystery plays is the multi-functional *pause* or *silete*.²⁷ These instrumental intervals were of variable duration ranging from a few notes to entire musical pieces. The instruments to be played during these intervals depended on the type of scene: if coming from heaven, a *bas* ensemble of some sort was used, as testified by the *St Stephen* copyist:

*Et ce temps pendant se fera joye en paradis avec instrumens musicaulx, comme orgues, violes, ou psalterions, avec chansons armonieuses, Dieu estant assis au moyant de ses anges dira.*²⁸

'And during this pause joyous music will play from heaven, with musical instruments including organs, *vielles*, or *psalterions*, with harmonious songs; then God, being seated among his angels, will say.'

Trumpet bands were used in military scenes, where they performed well-known calls, as already noted. Single trumpet players, the civic musicians of the town, served the function of announcing royal proclamations in court or imperial scenes. The minstrels (*menestrieres*), as they are identified in the *St Martin* text, played the instruments associated with the *alta capella*, and they would have either improvised or played from memory, selecting pieces from their own repertoire that corresponded to the desired mood of the performance.²⁹ Often, the texts only describe the joyful or restrained nature of the requisite pieces, leaving the selection thereof to the musicians themselves.³⁰ Hellish sounds, made by the various noisemakers already described and which *St Stephen*'s compiler qualifies as

fors espouventable a ouyr ('truly horrific to hear'), emanated from the Hellmouth.³¹

In simple, linear plays, these musical *pauses* commonly serve one of two functions: they announce a transition as the narrative thread moves from one *décor* to another, or they allow time for portable props to be put in place.³² However, in complex narratives like the three in the present study-set, these intervals may have served a number of additional functions, helping us to distinguish among their performance styles, as the following comparison demonstrates.

St Lawrence

Despite its 8,812 spoken lines, the *St Lawrence* play contains only sixteen musical *pauses*. While it is conceivable that *St Lawrence*'s sixteenth-century editor removed most of these references from an edition that was not meant to be performed,³³ a more convincing explanation for this relative paucity of musical intervals is that the play's verbal performance alone did not require (or desire) music as an organisational feature. After all, that edition does include 257 staging notations that coordinate the actors' movements and clarify the narrative. Printing constraints, then, do not seem to have been an editorial concern. Had the sixteenth-century editor included these hypothetical intervals in the surviving edition of *St Lawrence*, it is likely that noisemakers were used in the scenes with Lucifer and the other devils, and that soft instruments participated in the several celestial scenes, as convention would have dictated. However, the only instruments that are mentioned specifically are trumpets, and then only in conjunction with the one battle scene. Moreover, none of the players refers to them or to the familiar military calls; the trumpets are named only in the three relevant stage directions:

*Adonc marchent Arculés et les tirans (et Passevent va devant) en maniere de bataille comme une avantgarde a tout trompettes devant.*³⁴

'Then Arculés and the mercenaries (with Passevent heading off first) proceed ahead in advance-guard formation with all the trumpets playing.'

*Adonc les trompettes sonnent, et viennent les ungs contre les aultres sans s'entremesler et bataillent fort sans parler, et Arculés chet mort et puis reculent les Romains et Arthus dit.*³⁵