

Origin Stories: Louise Talma's Early Life

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AMERICAN COMPOSER LOUISE TALMA is a pioneering figure in the history of women in music. She was the first American instructor invited to teach at the Conservatoire Américain (1936) and was the first woman awarded back-to-back Guggenheim Fellowships for composition in 1946 and 1947. In 1963, she was the first female composer to win the Sibelius Medal for composition, and, in 1974, was the first woman elected to the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. Yet the standard sources on Talma and her life, including accounts by Madeleine Goss, Susan Teicher, and Sarah Dorsey and Anna Neal, contain little information about Talma's youth and early training and works, and much of what they do contain is factually incorrect. In this article, I will present previously unknown information about Talma's family background and youth that may shed new light on her works as well as her intense desire for privacy and independence in her personal life.

What has been "known" to date about Talma's background and early career is encapsulated in Goss's *Modern Music Makers* from 1954, one of the first published accounts of Talma's childhood. Goss states that Talma's mother, Cecile,¹ gave up her singing career to

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teach her prodigy daughter and that Talma's father died when Louise was young.² Biographical material on Talma is confused and often contradictory regarding her place of residence during her childhood. Some sources hold that she and her mother came to the United States for a brief visit when Louise was three years old, and did not return until after the First World War, when she would have been in her teens;³ others have her coming to the United States for the first time when she was six.⁴ Susan Teicher, citing Goss, addresses Talma's birth and background in her 1983 DMA thesis,⁵ and writes the following in a later article, based on her thesis, published in *The Musical Woman*:

Talma, an only child, was born on October 31, 1906, in Arcachon, France. Her mother, Alma Cécile Garrigue, an opera singer who appeared at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York and in companies in Europe, happened to be working in France at the time of Louise's birth. Her father, Frederick Talma, a pianist, died when Talma was an infant. Both parents were American, and Talma has always been an American citizen. After a brief visit to the United States when she was three years old, Talma returned to America during the summer of 1914; with the outbreak of World War I in Europe, she and her mother had little choice but to stay.⁶

Another typical version comes from *Notable American Women*:

Louise Juliette Talma was born in Arcachon, France, an only child of American parents, both of whom were professional musicians. Her father, Frederick Talma, a pianist and his wife's opera coach, died when Louise was an infant. Louise was brought up by her mother, Alma Cécile Garrigue [sic], an opera singer who was singing in France at the time of her daughter's birth. Louise's mother gave up her career to nurture her daughter's musical aspirations.⁷

Almost none of these statements are true.

Talma, and the documents she left behind at her death, chose to begin her life story in her late teens, and the facts of much of her adult life are not in dispute. Talma entered the Institute of Musical

Arts (now Juilliard) in New York in 1922, where she studied both piano and composition. In 1926, Talma spent her first summer at the Conservatoire Américain in Fontainebleau, France, where she met musical pedagogue Nadia Boulanger. Talma returned for more than thirty summers to study with and eventually teach alongside Boulanger, finding her an important mentor. Under Boulanger's guidance, Talma gave up her piano studies in order to focus on composition, converted from agnosticism to Roman Catholicism with Boulanger as her godmother, and adopted a lifestyle similar to Boulanger's in its ascetic devotion to music. She was a full-time member of the music faculty at Hunter College in New York from 1928 until 1979, during which time she helped author two harmony textbooks for her students. In the 1940s, Talma began spending each summer at the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire, where she met and worked with Thornton Wilder on their opera, *The Alcestiad*, and where most of her later period works were composed. Talma continued to compose prolifically into her eighties, spending summers at the MacDowell Colony and the Yaddo Artist Colony, where she died in 1996. At her death, she left a million dollars to the MacDowell Colony, and made the colony her heir, assigning it all of the rights to her music.

Talma herself was reticent to discuss her childhood and early adult life, and actively discouraged interviewers from asking about it, even supplying them with inconsistent and incomplete information, deliberately obfuscating or omitting details and facts. This has made it difficult to fully understand many of her earlier compositions, as much of her work is highly autobiographical, reflecting events in her life as well as her views on contemporary culture and her own experiences.

However, a number of recently discovered sources now allow for a preliminary construction of a narrative of Talma's youth. These materials are revelatory, suggesting new explanations for several key events and decisions in Talma's life, as well as helping to illuminate her first compositions. In this article, I will address the myths that have propagated regarding Talma's childhood and provide new, fac-

tual evidence based on government documents, letters, and other materials that reshape the understanding of her parentage and youth.

In analyzing Talma's works, it becomes clear that much of her work, although not all of it, has autobiographical elements. Texts often correspond directly to events and emotions catalogued in Talma's letters. She created rhythmic and melodic motifs that she used to represent herself within her works; even key signatures and tonal centres represent emotions and the presence of certain individuals in her life. In a study of women's autobiography, Hélène Cixous has famously written that "women must write themselves," and this need not be limited in any way to prose writing.⁸ Indeed, Mary Klages notes that "we must look for women's writing in places, and using instruments, not traditionally associated with writing, because those traditions are defined by male authors."⁹ As Jane Marcus has written of composer and memoirist Ethel Smyth,

[O]ne may see that the writing of music, putting down notes on a page to represent the sounds of instruments, is a very powerful form of symbolic inscription. Smyth's tremendous success at the game of *écriture* came from her ability to re/sign the drive to create music into storytelling and to write [...] her memoirs.¹⁰

Although Marcus's point about music is a very simple one, it is nonetheless the case that a musical score, a painting, or an annotated date-book, such as that of Martha Ballard in Laurel Thatcher Ulrich's *A Midwife's Tale*, might become a woman's autobiography.¹¹

This is not to say that all work by women is autobiographical, or that any single work by a particular woman is so. However, correlations between Talma's prose—found primarily in her letters—and music are obvious; life and performance are the same. Talma, always highly aware of her position as a woman—as a daughter, teacher, and composer—and in primarily masculine institutions, appears to have implicitly understood that performance of self—in the classroom, in composing—necessarily meant self-construction. Her religious works, in particular, along with her adoption of Nadia Boulanger's

habits, mannerisms, and even dress, are obvious examples of constructing an identity, producing autobiography. In many ways, Talma's works function as both reality and metaphor, speaking truth while at the same time slyly obscuring it or finding ways to distance it from the author.

There are numerous other examples of autobiography in Talma's works. As I have demonstrated elsewhere, her *Three Madrigals* (1929) likely reflect her desire for an erotic relationship with Boulanger, as do her settings of five sonnets from Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (1934) for voice and piano.¹² Her 1934 conversion to Catholicism is marked by works including "The Spirit of the Lord" (1934), for voice and piano, and the conversion narrative *Hound of Heaven*, for tenor and orchestra (1938), which sets the poem of the same name by Francis Thompson. Talma's frustration with service and teaching and the limited life career choices available to women of her time, and her desire to work exclusively at composition, informs her opera *The Alcestiad* (1961). Other musical works that serve as outlets for her own experiences and emotions include *A Time to Remember* (1966-67), an elegy for John F. Kennedy in which Talma set Kennedy's own speeches for mixed chorus and orchestra; and *Voices of Peace* (1973), a collection of prayers for mixed chorus and strings that documents her reaction to the Vietnam War. Her chamber opera *Have You Heard? Do You Know?* (1976), for which she wrote her own libretto, features a smart, practical, single woman living in New York who is very much in the mold of Talma herself. She dedicated several works to friends and colleagues, and there is evidence that, for some of these, the music itself represents Talma's relationships with them: her close friend Thornton Wilder received several such dedications; Talma dedicated her *Carmina Mariana* (1943) to Boulanger; and she composed *Ave Atque Vale* (1989) for the funeral of Frederic Ewen, the husband of her friend and colleague Miriam Gideon.¹³ Finally, Talma's very late works "Heaven-haven" (1993) and *The Lengthening Shadows* (first titled *Elegies*, 1981-82) are personal examinations of the end of life.

It might be tempting for some scholars to brush off concerns over the factuality of these accounts. But because Talma's musical compositions are so often tied closely to her life, and serve in many ways as her autobiography, it is essential to know the truth about her formative years. By examining Talma's writings—primarily letters—and scores simultaneously, it is possible to understand the connections between her personal life and feelings and the works she was composing at the time. Knowing what she was reading and listening to, what was on her mind politically and personally, and her reactions to all of these elements can make clear the meaning of Talma's choices of text and text-setting, instrumentation, and methods of composition. To this end, a more complete and accurate representation of Talma's family history and the period prior to 1926, when she began her studies with Nadia Boulanger, a point often cited as the beginning of her composition career, is crucial.

Not every piece Talma wrote deals with her personal narrative; some works are nostalgic in their autobiographical flavour, and some works have hardly a trace of autobiographical material. For the vast majority of Talma's works, however, there is some element of self-writing involved, whether from text choices and text-setting to thematic or harmonic conflict. Talma was a prolific letter-writer and note-taker, themselves forms of writing her own life, and her notes and missives to herself, friends, colleagues, students, and others offer information about her works and their origins in her life to a very high degree. Because her prose is so detailed, often including musical examples or notes, direct connections can be made that illuminate her state of mind, intentions, and the processes by which she worked. Talma kept both copies of her own letters to others and theirs to her, from which events can be constructed chronologically. Talma is uncharacteristically silent on the topic of her family in her voluminous correspondence, and the reasons for this silence and the influence of her family story on her work make the new information I present here significant to our understanding of her life and work.

Alma Cecile Garrigues, Talma's mother, was born in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 8 September 1872, and came to New York when

she was two years old.¹⁴ Her father was Henry Garrigues, an obstetrician who is credited with introducing aseptic surgery to the United States. Her sister Edith, a painter, was the primary caretaker for their mother, who was at times mentally and physically ill and often estranged from her husband.¹⁵ Cecile, as she was most often known, was a soprano, who from at least 1900 was billed as “Mlle. Cécile Talma,” although it is unclear when she changed her surname and whether she changed it through marriage or adopted it as a stage name.

Cecile performed in France under the auspices of the United States' State Department Prix de Paris in 1900,¹⁶ and in 1903 she began singing with the London-based Carl Rosa Opera Company.¹⁷ Heralded as “the best Susanna [in *The Marriage of Figaro*] seen here [Birmingham] in a long time,”¹⁸ she was made *prima donna* of the company by the following year. Despite her success in Europe, Cecile returned to New York on 21 September 1904¹⁹ to be an understudy at the Metropolitan Opera for the 1904-05 season.²⁰ Whatever hopes she had for a performance career in America were all but dashed after she received a poor reception at her debut performance with the Met in New York in 1904. Filling in for an ailing Marguerite Lemon as Nedda in *I Pagliacci*, Cecile was criticized as “inadequate,” and the *New York Times* critic brusquely dismissed the idea of her career continuing with any success.²¹ Cecile toured with the Met the following year as one of the flower maidens in *Parsifal*, but dropped off the Met rolls after 1905, save only a single final performance, again as a flower maiden, in January of 1910. All in all, she performed with the Met twenty-one times.²² Claiming that she was “of Danish birth and French descent but an American by adoption,”²³ Cecile made her last public performances of note in 1914, when she served as a soloist at the Spartanburg Music Festival in South Carolina²⁴ and in New York at Carnegie Hall in Handel's *Acis and Galatea*, in which she was again critically panned.²⁵ After these publically recognized failures, Cecile made a living giving piano and voice lessons, and may have worked as an anonymous music critic.²⁶

During the first decade of the century, Cecile was also supported at least in part by a benefactor her sister Edith referred to only as “Mr. Smith.” Writing to Talma, Edith stated that she acted for Cecile (whom she calls Alma) when “she was abroad, with old man Smith,” and later intervened with him when he wanted to leave Cecile:

And you might as well know, that Mr. Smith was about to end all with her, as she remained in Europe, after you were born, when he wanted her to come here—this was the cause of his anger against her. Seeing her danger I wrote and wrote her to come on for her own interests. [...] You were one year old—and Mr. Smith chose such a time to come to tell me in very evident anger, that he was giving Alma the interest, monthly on \$90,000, and that he didn't even have the pleasure of seeing her, and that he felt he could and would not continue. [...] With all the strength I could muster, I showed him how he had voluntarily offered to finance Alma's operatic studies, had been giving her all the luxuries of life, fine clothes, the greatest masters to instruct her in singing, French diction, ballet, and what not, —had, in fact accustomed her to a life far above that which she would have had if she had been limited to what her father could have given her, and for him to cut her off, wasn't just the fair thing to do; and a lot more I told him. [...] I know that [this meeting] resulted in his seeing the error of his intentions, and thus I saved not only the \$100 monthly she is now receiving, but the capital of \$30,000 which you will inherit at her death.²⁷

Between 1900 and 1910, interest rates averaged around 3.53 percent,²⁸ so Cecile's income could have been quite substantial—up to \$260 a month, at a time when the average hourly wage was twenty-two cents and the average annual salary of a male worker was \$750.²⁹ This income, saved or invested, in addition to the capital inherited by Talma on Cecile's death in January 1942, could have provided the initial base of the million left by Talma to the MacDowell Colony. However, it is not known how long “Mr. Smith” provided

Cecile with these funds, or whether there were other benefactors who also served in this role.

What is clear is that it is unlikely that Cecile gave up her career for her daughter, as has been sometimes asserted. Rather, she was simply not proficient enough for a career as a vocalist, and found other means of support. The facts are also at odds with the idea that Cecile groomed Talma from the start for a career in music. In fact, Talma herself often stated that at school she excelled not only in music, but in chemistry as well, and had considered a career in the sciences.³⁰ Louise began teaching piano when her mother became ill with Parkinson's disease, as a means to help support the two of them, and she was undecided about a career path into her twenties.

After her stint with the Met, Cecile is next documented travelling from France and arriving in New York on the ship *La Gascogne* on 6 August 1906; her marital status is left blank. Either she returned to France very soon afterward to give birth to Louise, or she falsified the oft-provided information that Talma was born in Arcachon, France, on 31 October of that year. In the 1920 New York census, Talma is listed as being born in New York. However, a 1913 passenger manifest of the ship *Niagara* records Louise's birthdate as 7 October 1905.³¹ Either date seems possible, particularly in light of the fact that Cecile provided inaccurate data for her own birthdate as she aged. If the 1905 birthdate is actually correct, and Talma did not in fact travel with her mother on her 1906 trip, it would explain Cecile's later trip to Europe in 1909 to fetch her daughter home for a short visit. If Talma was born in 1905 and Cecile travelled to the United States without her in 1906, this would explain the fact that Talma's first language was French, rather than English or her mother's native Danish: she may have been looked after by friends in France while Cecile was travelling. For her part, Louise Talma used 31 October 1906 as her birthdate throughout her life.

Documents next show that Cecile and Talma travelled to the United States in 1909 from Cherbourg, France on the ship *Teutonic*, arriving in New York on October 29. Cecile gave her marital status as married and her age as thirty-four.³² She arrived in time to perform

that one last time in *Parsifal* with the Met in early 1910,³³ and on August 26 of that year, Cecile made an application for a United States passport for herself and “a minor child” to travel abroad. The application does not state the name or age of the child. In 1913, Cecile and Talma are listed as passengers on the ship *Niagara*, traveling from Le Havre on July 5 and arriving in New York ten days later. Cecile gave her address as the Hotel Lucerne in New York and her marital status as divorced. The pair does not seem to have left the United States again until they travelled to France in 1926.

The origins and the identity of Talma’s father are more difficult to trace. In several interviews, Talma identified her father as Frederick Talma, an American musician; presumably she was told this by her mother.³⁴ However, on Cecile’s 1910 passport application, she writes that she is “absolutely divorced from my husband, George Talma.” Cecile’s legal relationship with Louise’s father is also unknown. Until Louise was twelve, Cecile maintained that the elusive Mr. Talma had died before Louise was born; she later claimed that they had been divorced before Louise’s birth; and, finally, in the 1920 United States census, Cecile Talma listed herself as a widow.³⁵ Sarah Dorsey and Anna Neal have suggested that Cecile was married in a “shotgun wedding,”³⁶ but, near the end of her life, Louise Talma confided to a friend that she believed that her parents had probably not married at all.³⁷ Either of these circumstances would explain why Talma might have been born in an obscure resort town in France, if she was actually even born in France: the *département* of Gironde, in which Arcachon is located, has no records of her birth in its archives. Such health resort towns, or spas, often catered to women who needed abortions or who wished to give birth with no questions asked about their marital status or the identities of fathers. In France, the nineteenth century had seen a rise in illegitimate births, and the first part of the twentieth century witnessed illegitimacy rates of ten to twenty percent overall, with higher rates in large cities like Paris.³⁸ A French account contemporary with Talma’s birth suggests that indifferent or even positive attitudes towards out-of-wedlock births and “irregular” (non-legalized) relationships were common throughout

the social strata, and in the middle and upper classes in particular, with such relationships considered a sign of “emancipated,” rather than immoral, behaviour.³⁹ French law at the time did not give an illegitimate child the right to discover the name of his or her father, and the father’s name could only be put on a birth certificate if “adultery” were not involved; if the father was married to another woman, the child’s documentation would list the mother’s name only. It is also possible that she was delivered by her grandfather, who was an obstetrician, in New York.⁴⁰

It is not certain whether Talma believed throughout her adult life that her parents had not been married, or whether she came to the conclusion over time. At one time, Talma maintained—at least to Nadia Boulanger—that her parents had been married, albeit briefly. She wrote to Boulanger in 1935:

I do know, from records that I have seen, that my mother and father were married in London September 15th, 1905, that they separated the following summer and that I was born October 31st, 1906. I say this to you because I think it is due her [Cecile] that I should tell you. The feeling I have concerning my father which you now know about is, therefore, purely the result of having not heard one word about him until I was twelve, and then only his name, nationality, and profession and ten years later the fact that they separated before my birth, and since then nothing more from my mother, and from others only what I wrote you last year. Forgive me for annoying you again with this, but I feel I had to make it clear.⁴¹

However, there is no marriage record in either the English or Welsh Register Office, for either the name Talma or Garrigues, and these records date back well into the eighteenth century.⁴²

Perhaps the best source for information on the Talmas after their return to America in 1913 is the 1920 census, dated January 14-15. It found Cecile Talma living in New York in rented lodgings at 1115 Amsterdam Avenue, not far from the Hotel Lucerne.⁴³ She is listed as having been born in Denmark, and Danish is given as her

first language. She gave her age as forty as of her last birthday—although, according to her 1910 passport application, she would have actually been forty-four—and is listed as the head of the household. She lists her primary occupation as “teacher-music.” Louise is listed as thirteen years old at the time of the census, which would put her birthdate as sometime in late 1906, and her first language is listed as French. But what is most intriguing about the 1920 census is a record of a second Talma daughter. Beneath Louise’s name in the Talma family entry is an entry for a Laura Talma. Laura is recorded as having been born in New York, and is listed as ten years old at her last birthday, indicating that she would have been born sometime in late 1909, as Cecile travelled with Louise alone on the *Teutonic* in October 1909 and her last performance in *Parsifal* was on 15 January 1910. The space for Laura’s first language is left blank, usually an indication in American census records that it was English. The nationality of the father of both girls is listed as French. Cecile claimed that both Louise and Cecile herself were born in New York and that Louise had entered the United States after being abroad in 1908, slightly earlier than what is indicated by the passenger list of 1909.⁴⁴

To date, there are no other available records on Laura Talma, and the identity of her father is impossible to ascertain. The 1930 census, taken on April 30, lists only Cecile and Louise Talma at the same address as the previous census. There is no question that these are the same individuals counted in 1920. Cecile gave her age as fifty-six, and Louise is listed as twenty-three. Cecile is listed as a widow, Louise as single, and both are listed as music teachers: Cecile as a voice teacher and Louise as a piano teacher.⁴⁵ Cecile gives her age at the “time of first marriage” as thirty. There are a few differences from the 1920 census: Louise’s record lists the nationality of her father as Russian, and states that she was born in 1907. Both women were listed as having attended school or college since September of the previous year, which probably referred to their intensive summer studies in music at the Conservatoire Américain in Fontainebleau, France, which they began attending together in 1926. This time around, Cecile was listed as having immigrated to the United

States in 1870, and Louise in 1913. Perhaps Cecile was offering more factual information as she aged, or perhaps she forgot what she had stated in the past. There are several possible explanations for Laura's disappearance from government records after 1920, but few make much sense. It is possible that Laura could have been given up for adoption, sent away from New York, or put into service. But, since Cecile kept and raised Louise, and still had Laura living with her when Laura was ten, adoption is unlikely. Nor is it likely that her mother and sister would have left her in the care of family or friends, disowned her, or broken off all contact. The most likely scenario is that Laura died sometime between being counted in the 1920 census and the spring of 1926, when Cecile and Louise went to France together.

Given the lack of records, it is impossible to know Laura's exact fate, but it is possible to make an informed guess. Because no other documents, no death certificate or burial record for Laura has been found, it is very possible that she died in the influenza pandemic that began in 1918 and claimed victims until 1922. The so-called "Spanish" flu killed between 500,000 to 675,000 Americans, particularly affecting those in highly populated cities, such as New York. Outbreaks of polio were also common during this period. Because of the flu's nature, in which the body's immune system attacks itself in what is known as a cytokine storm, young individuals with healthy immune systems were far more likely to die than their older counterparts. Jeffery K. Taubenberger and David M. Morens have ascertained that, "Influenza and pneumonia death rates for those 15–34 years of age in 1918–1919, for example, were [more than] 20 times higher than in previous years."⁴⁶ Across New York, more than 33,000 people died from the flu between 1918 and 1922.⁴⁷ In such large cities, victims of the flu were often gathered daily in carts and buried in mass graves. In Manhattan, where all burials had been banned after 1851, and where it was mandated that flu victims be buried within twenty-five hours, the dead were transported to neighboring boroughs for burial, often wrapped in shrouds but without coffins. Because of the scale of the pandemic, death records were not always

filled out or filed; where they do exist, they are often incomplete or contain spelling and other errors.⁴⁸

Several scenarios regarding the birth of Laura and whereabouts of Louise between her birth and 1913 present themselves. If Louise Talma was born in 1905, Cecile may have left her in Europe with family or friends when she travelled to America in 1906, returning later that year or in 1907 to collect her. If Louise had been born in 1906 in the United States, she would have to have been then taken to Europe by Cecile in order to account for her trip from Europe to the United States in 1909. In conjunction with Louise's own memories, either scenario would place Louise in Europe from 1906 to 1909 and again from 1909 to 1913. The evidence of only one child travelling with Cecile on the *Teutonic* in 1909 suggests that, after finding herself pregnant with a second child in early 1909, Cecile took Louise to America and they stayed there together while Cecile waited to give birth in late 1909 or very early January 1910 in New York. Cecile then appears to have taken Louise back to Europe with her, leaving Laura behind with family or close friends. Letters to Talma from the executor of her aunt Edith's estate reminisce about Louise being in America briefly as a small child; the executor wrote that Talma's cousin Alyce remembered Louise as a "very little girl [who]... had just come home from Paris with your mother—in fact you hadn't learned to speak English as yet."⁴⁹

In an interview in the 1960s, Talma remembered having spoken "German, Italian and French at home as well as English." She was indeed fluent in German and French, but never spoke Danish.⁵⁰ She also wrote that "One of my earliest recollections, from my fourth year, is of being the baby to her [Cecile's] friend Cornelia Fabbri-cotti's *Butterfly*."⁵¹ According to archives documenting performances and casts of *Madama Butterfly* in Italy, Fabbri-cotti performed the role in 1912, when Talma would have been five and six. Cecile spoke only Danish, English, and a little French at this time, and while Talma clearly remembered being in performances in Florence, there are no records of Cecile ever having appeared there. Cecile did not apply for a passport addendum for her "minor child" until 1910,⁵²

when she was in New York singing in *Parsifal* for the last time, and Louise did not re-enter the United States until 1913, both of which support this series of events in Italy.⁵³ If Talma was Butterfly's child on stage with Fabbriotti in Florence, she could not have been in the United States in 1911 or 1912, as Fabbriotti's only season in the role was during the 1911-12 opera season. Talma's recollection of speaking Italian and French at home presumably referred to her childhood stay with Fabbriotti. The question as to why Cecile gave her daughter to friends to raise for several years and why she did not continue with the Met in even a small capacity is perhaps explained by evidence of Laura's birth in late 1909.

As shown above, Talma can be firmly placed in New York as of 1913, thanks to the records of the *Niagara*. Its manifest indicates that Cecile's 1910 passport application would have been for herself and Louise, so that she could bring Louise back from Europe. That the *Niagara* manifest lists only Cecile and Louise further confirms that Laura did not make the trip from Europe. Talma's own memories further serve in the construction of a timeline for her childhood, placing her in Europe between the ages of three, when she came to the United States in October of 1909, and seven, when she and Cecile travelled on the *Niagara*. Thus, the following timeline emerges.

Year	Date	Event
1872	September 8	Alma Cecile Garrigues is born in Copenhagen, Denmark.
1900	October 26	Cecile (as Cecile Talma) performs for the Prix de Paris committee in France.
1903		Cecile becomes a member of the Carl Rosa Opera Company in London.
1904		Cecile is listed as the <i>prima donna</i> of the Carl Rosa Opera Company in London.

1904	September 21	Cecile arrives in New York on the <i>Vaderland</i> from Antwerp to be an understudy at the Metropolitan Opera Company. She is listed as 24 years old and single.
1904	February 21	Cecile performs at the Met as Nedda in <i>I Pagliacci</i> .
1905	Various	Cecile performs with the Met as a flower maiden in <i>Parsifal</i> .
1905	October 7	One possible birthdate for Louise.
1906	August 6	Cecile arrives in New York on <i>La Gascogne</i> from Le Havre. She is listed as 26 years old and gives no marital status.
1906	October 31	Another possible birthdate for Louise Talma, which she used throughout her life
1909	October 28	Cecile and Louise arrive in New York on the <i>Teutonic</i> from Cherbourg. Cecile is listed as 34 years old and married.
Late 1909- early 1910		Laura is born in New York.
1910	January	Cecile sings in <i>Parsifal</i> again with Met.
1910	August	Cecile applies for a US passport for herself and her minor child. She states that she is divorced.
1912	c. January to May	Talma is the baby in <i>Butterfly</i> in Italy.
1913	July 15	Cecile and Louise arrive in New York on the <i>Niagara</i> from Le Havre.

		Cecile is listed as 41 years old and divorced.
1920	January	1920 census lists Cecile, Louise, and Laura in New York. Cecile is listed as a music teacher. Her marital status is given as widow. The girls' father listed as French. Cecile is listed as 40 years old; Louise listed as 13; and Laura as 10.
1920-1926	After January 15, 1920, but before late spring, 1926	Laura dies or otherwise leaves Cecile's household.
1926	Late spring or early summer	Cecile and Louise attend the Conservatoire Américain de Fontainebleau for first time.
1930	January	1930 census lists Cecile and Louise in New York. Cecile says she is 56, Louise is 23. Cecile gives age at time of first marriage as 30 and says that she has been in US since 1870 and Louise since 1913.

The implications of these findings are significant. The short life and early death of a younger sister might well explain a number of events and choices in Louise Talma's life. Laura clearly could not have been kept a secret to those who knew the Talmas during this period, but her obvious illegitimacy may have been a factor in Louise Talma's later desire for privacy and her strong disinclination as an adult to discuss her childhood and family life. Laura's death, which had to have occurred between January 1920, when she was counted in the census, and spring 1926, when Cecile and Louise went to France, could have been the impetus for the two surviving Talma women to immerse themselves in music studies anew at the Conservatoire Américain. By this time, the Talmas had moved from their previous lodgings to an apartment on Amsterdam Avenue, where they would reside for the next thirty years, and Louise Talma was already

well on her way to a career as a concert pianist and teacher. She had attended the Institute for Musical Art (which later became the Juilliard School) for her undergraduate studies; had given her first public New York recital in March 1925; and was already teaching theory at the Neighborhood Music School and piano privately.⁵⁴ Undertaking a new course of study, particularly one as involved and as expensive as that of the Conservatoire Américain, which lasted for three months and cost several hundred dollars per student in tuition and lodging fees (not to mention transportation costs), was a rather drastic move for both women. Nonetheless, for the next five years they travelled together every summer for three months of intense study in Fontainebleau.

Laura's death may also have encouraged Talma's desire to bond with and emulate Nadia Boulanger, who had also lost a younger sister early in life. Although Talma had been taking composition in addition to theory courses and had won several prizes for her art songs, she had not considered composing full-time until attending the Conservatoire in 1926, where she met Boulanger, then her harmony teacher. Boulanger encouraged Talma to shift her major area studies from piano with Isidor Philipp to composition with Boulanger herself, which Talma did for the 1927 summer session.⁵⁵ Following her sister Lili's early death from Crohn's disease at age twenty-four, Nadia Boulanger devoted herself almost fanatically to preserving Lili's memory and promoting her works, arranging for performances and recordings. Although Talma never made specific references to her sister in any correspondence with Boulanger, she may well have felt a kinship with Boulanger in part because of this commonality. Certainly Talma tried to draw other parallels between Boulanger and herself throughout their long relationship, linking their French origins, the musical backgrounds of their families and early musical training and career ambitions, Talma's nursing of her mother during her last illness with Boulanger's similar care-giving experiences,⁵⁶ and her struggles working as a teacher when, like Boulanger in her earlier years, she desired to work as a composer.⁵⁷ Ultimately, Talma modelled herself on Boulanger so entirely that she converted to Ca-

tholicism, adopted Boulanger's teaching methods, and assumed many of Boulanger's habits in dress, speech, and even mannerisms.⁵⁸ Talma's early perception of obvious similarities could well have been the beginning of these efforts to emulate Boulanger. In addition, Boulanger presented to Talma an example of single, successful, independent womanhood, a female musician without the restrictions that marriage or motherhood might place on a woman. Self-sufficient and highly competent, Boulanger was in many ways an anti-Cecile, and Talma chose to imitate Boulanger rather than her own mother. Cecile, who studied piano and harmony at the Conservatoire, evidently knew Boulanger as well, although their relationship was not as close. In the considerable correspondence between Talma and Boulanger, Cecile is primarily mentioned in passing, and while Boulanger's Christmas cards were addressed to both women, her letters went to Talma alone.

Laura's death could have also been a previously unseen factor in Talma's religious questioning and ultimately her conversion to Catholicism. Raised as a Protestant, probably of the Lutheran variety, Talma professed herself to be an agnostic in her early twenties. Her sister's early death may have at first caused her to reject religion, and then to look for answers or comfort in it, or, depending on whether Talma had embraced agnosticism prior to Laura's death, may have sent her onto the path of the faith-seeker. If this is the case, Boulanger capitalized on Talma's spiritual searching by leading her to Catholicism without ever knowing one of Talma's underlying reasons for returning to religious belief.

Talma may also have been dedicated to financial self-sufficiency because she did not want to rely on money from others, which could be given or taken away without notice, as her mother had done. While she was able to provide some financial support for her own relatives and assisted students and former students with some expenses, she repeatedly turned down offers of money to offset professional expenses. While working on her opera with Thornton Wilder, for example, she returned cheques he sent to her for printing and other costs, insisting that she was uncomfortable taking money she had not earned herself.⁵⁹ Talma may have rejected marriage or

partnership and motherhood for many of the same reasons. Talma's correspondence indicates that, in addition to her attraction to Boulanger, she conducted at least one other intimate, romantic relationship with another woman, but the relationship does not appear to have lasted long, and Talma rebuffed attempts by friends to introduce her to single men as potential romantic partners.⁶⁰ She remained distant with most of her students, and showed little interest in children.⁶¹

Most important, Laura's death may have directly influenced Talma's first musical compositions. These works, mostly songs for female voice and piano, express loss and mourning. Talma's first extant song, "Invocation to the Rain," dated 1925, is a melancholy musical setting about the nature of growth and endings. The text is a Hopi corn-planting song called "Invocation to the Rain." The poem was included in a number of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century anthologies of "women's poetry"⁶² and was also published in *Harper's Magazine* in 1903:

Yellow butterflies over the blossoming virgin corn
with pollen painted faces chase one another in brilliant throng.
Blue butterflies over the blossoming virgin corn
with pollen painted faces chase one another in brilliant streams.
Over the blossoming corn over the virgin corn wild bees hum.
Over the blossoming corn over the virgin beans wild bees hum.
Over your field of growing corn all day shall hang the thunder cloud.
Over your field of growing corn all day shall come the rushing rain.⁶³

Talma's composition is for voice and piano, and divides the poem into three sections, giving each a separate and distinct tempo, texture, and harmonic sound. Although it begins pleasantly with arpeggiated major chords in the piano, the song becomes more melancholy as it progresses, moving to a minor key. Talma frequently uses a motif that focuses on descending major and minor seconds (C to B or B-flat, for example), something long associated in art music with sadness, often referred to as a "sigh gesture."⁶⁴

“On the Surface of Things” (1926) sets the poem of the same name by Wallace Stevens. Again, Talma chose a text that mentions the natural world and elements of “blueness” and sadness:

I

In my room, the world is beyond my understanding;
But when I walk I see that it consists of three or four
hills and a cloud.

II

From my balcony, I survey the yellow air,
reading where I have written,
‘the spring is like a belle undressing.’

III

The gold tree is blue,
the singer has pulled his cloak over his head.
The moon is in the folds of the cloak.

As in “Invocation,” Talma frequently uses the minor second in the vocal line melodically while also positioning the melody against the accompaniment to create dissonances between the voice and the piano and between lines of the piano part. The vocal line meanders over static chords in the piano, never fully cadencing in a traditional manner. The dissonances created at the beginning of the song grow to the end, where Talma emphasizes the lack of musical resolution between the parts. Taken as a whole, the song sounds plaintive and a little raw. The motion of the voice against static accompaniments is restless, and the voice seems to seek a tonal home while wondering at the instability and beauty of the surrounding world. Talma’s setting of “When the Storm Breaks,” an anonymous Irish poem, appears to date from the same time as “Invocation” and “On the Surface,” and she re-used the work in her later elegy for John F. Kennedy, *A Time to Remember*. This song displays many of the same characteristics of the two earlier songs. The song is keyless and changes meter often to accommodate the text. Like the earlier songs, it is composed in distinct blocks. Talma also uses a third voice in the piano’s bass to occa-

sionally emphasize a dissonance, usually a major second—the romantic or sorrowful “sigh” motif.

Talma’s “Song in the Songless” (1928) uses a text by English poet George Meredith and appears to be a more experimental work than her previous pieces.⁶⁵ “Song in the Songless” has no key signature or meter and is unbarred, save for a single measure line after the first two lines of text, about one-quarter of the way through the piece. The tempo is a dirge-like quarter note = 46, and the tone is decidedly lugubrious. As with “On the Surface,” Talma creates a different section for each stanza, in this case four distinct parts of two lines each.

They have no song, the sedges dry,
And still they sing.
It is within my breast they sing,
As I pass by.
Within my breast they touch a string,
They wake a sigh.
There is but sound of sedges dry;
In me they sing.

Much like “Invocation,” “On the Surface,” and “When the Storm Breaks,” “Song” also frequently uses the minor second and dissonant tritone both melodically and harmonically. The vocal line is carefully crafted to fit the stresses of the text. Each even-numbered line is set on the motif of three static eighth notes that rise to a semitone to a quarter or longer note.

This collection of Talma’s early songs suggests that the composer had heavy thoughts on her mind, setting texts about loss, confusion, and the cyclical nature of the world. Talma’s first exclusively instrumental work employs similarly melancholy folk songs for its melodic material. *Isabeau Poème*, written for a 1927-28 Canadian Pacific Railway composition contest, is scored for a chamber orchestra and uses several French and French-Canadian folk songs as its basis, including “Isabeau s’y Promène,” and “Alouette.” Talma alters the melodies slightly from their traditional form, and sets both songs in G minor. In a communication to the competition jury included

with the score, Talma notes that she has also used phrases from “La Belle Française,” “Une Perdriole,” “Sept Ans Sur Mer,” “Le Miracle du Nouveau-Né,” and “La Bergère Muette.”⁶⁶ Like the poems set for voice and piano, Talma sets these songs in minor keys and slow tempi, and uses the “sigh” motif repeatedly.

It is not clear how Talma chose the songs for the piece, although it is likely that their Canadian origins played a significant role. “Alouette” is a children’s song, introducing the names for parts of the body as the singer prepares to pluck them from the lark. “Isabeau” has two sets of text, both sad love songs. In one, a young woman is wooed by a sailor singing on his ship. When she joins him on his ship to learn the song, she finds that she has lost her golden ring. He dives for it, and on his third dive, drowns. In the other version, the woman hears the sailor singing, and cries because her own heart is inconstant, and while she gives it away repeatedly, it is always broken. The sailor tells her to keep singing, and she will find true love. “La Belle Française,” is about the sorrow of a young woman who cannot marry her beau before he is sent to war. “Sept Ans Sur Mer” is a sea chantey in which sailors lost at sea for seven years are hallucinating about beautiful women as they lie starving, haven eaten all of the ship’s stores, mice, and rats. They are drawing lots to see which sailor will be the first eaten by his crewmates. In “Le Miracle du Nouveau-Né,” a mother casts her illegitimate baby out to sea, but as the child drowns, its soul ascends to heaven. “La Begère Muette” tells the story of a shepherdess to whom the Virgin Mary appears. *Isabeau Poème* is not very successful: it is very academic, with little originality in the treatment of the songs, and is too static in its harmonies and presentation of melodic material to hold interest for very long. If any of Talma’s works can be labelled “student works,” with the suggestions of tedium and monotony that term carries, this is one. Nonetheless, the songs are morbid and melancholy, and it is possible that in selecting children’s songs and sad ballads she was again expressing sadness at the early death of Laura and her unfulfilled potential.

Two later works also suggest a connection to children and death. *A Child's Fancy* (1935), a setting of poems for children by Edith Kingdon Gould, and "One need not be a chamber to be haunted" (1941), with text by Emily Dickinson, also hint at nostalgia for an earlier, happier time in Talma's life and a following sense of loss. While neither the text nor score for *A Child's Fancy* has survived, the Dickinson poem is well known. In it, the poet cautions that personal secrets, particularly those locked away for a long time, are far more frightening and do more damage than any real ghost or any physical danger to the secret-holder:

One need not be a chamber to be haunted,
 One need not be a house;
 The brain has corridors surpassing
 Material place.
 Far safer, of a midnight meeting
 External ghost,
 Than an interior confronting
 That whiter host.

Far safer through an Abbey gallop,
 The stones achase,
 Than, moonless, one's own self encounter
 In lonesome place.

Ourselves, behind ourselves concealed,
 Should startle most;
 Assassin, hid in our apartment,
 Be horror's least.

The prudent carries a revolver,
 He bolts the door,
 O'erlooking a superior spectre
 More near.⁶⁷

Talma sets the text for soprano and piano, again using minor and major seconds in the "sigh" motif. The work begins with a repeated line in the piano and a recitative-like line for the voice. As the work progresses, the texture becomes sparse, and the vocal line becomes al-

ternately more melodic and more fragmented as the text builds to an anxious climax marked by a loud and fast passage for the piano that mimics the beating heart of the poem's protagonist. Once again, Laura Talma is a possible candidate for the work's inspiration.

Lacking any further documentation, it is impossible to prove that the loss of her sister at a young age was an influence on Louise Talma's early compositions. However, what is clear is that she had a sister, alive and living with her and her mother as of January 1920; that her first compositional works arrive rather abruptly after a previous declaration of a career as a performer and teacher; and that these works express sorrow, grief, and bereavement. Cecile Talma may have had a number of reasons for obfuscating her personal life and that of her daughters. Unmarried motherhood met with strong disapproval in the early part of the twentieth century in the United States, and divorce, also stigmatized, was uncommon. In 1915, less than one percent of the population was divorced, and to be divorced was still often considered scandalous.⁶⁸ To be a mother who had never married was even worse: it was unlikely that a woman with one or more illegitimate children would have been entrusted with the children of others as students, being viewed as morally suspect. It is unclear why Cecile provided different first names for Louise's father to Louise and on her passport application: perhaps the man used both names, perhaps she changed her mind about what name to give, perhaps she forgot what she used on her passport application and created a new name when Talma was old enough to be told the divorce version of the story. We will probably never know the identity of Louise's and Laura's father(s); never know where, when, and how Laura Talma died; and never know the full impact her life and death had on Cecile and Louise Talma. It is understandable that Talma, in recognizing the social attitudes surrounding divorce and illegitimacy, would have kept to a single family mythos in order to protect her mother's reputation—and her own. In spite of the details we may never know, it is essential to correct what has stood as the historical record for Talma for the past several decades, and to be cognizant of what facts do exist. Ultimately, understanding Talma's true origins and family cir-

cumstances can only contribute to a fuller understanding of her adult life and career.

Notes

- ¹ Cecile Talma often spelled her name “Cécile,” contrary to the customary French “Cécile.” Because she also used “Cecile” without any accents, I have normalized her name to this throughout.
- ² Madeleine Goss, *Modern Music-Makers* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1952), 383.
- ³ Susan Teicher, “Louise Talma: Essentials of Her Style As Seen Through the Piano Works,” in *The Musical Woman: An International Perspective*, ed. Judith Lang Zaimont, vol. III (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984), 130. Also, Christine Ammer, *Unsung: a History of Women in American Music* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 2001), 157. Ammer states that her information comes from Goss, *Modern Music Makers*, 383-91; a biographical questionnaire Talma filled out for the American Music Center, New York; and a curriculum vita Talma sent to Ammer in 1978.
- ⁴ Sarah B. Dorsey and Anna Neal, “Sarah, Anna and Louise—What No Thelma? Discovering Louise Talma and Her Shorter Piano Works,” *Music Reference Services Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (February 2008): 37.
- ⁵ Susan Teicher, “The Solo Works for Piano of Louise Talma,” DMA in Piano Performance, Peabody Conservatory of Music, 1983.
- ⁶ Teicher, “Louise Talma: Essentials,” 130.
- ⁷ Susan Ware, *Notable American Women: a Biographical Dictionary Completing the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 625.
- ⁸ Helene Cixous, “The Laugh of the Medusa,” *Signs* 1, no. 4 (Summer 1976): 886.
- ⁹ Mary Klages, “Helene Cixous: ‘The Laugh of the Medusa,’” *Helene Cixous: “The Laugh of the Medusa,”* 1997, <http://www.colorado.edu/English/courses/ENGL2012Klages/cixous.html>. Accessed May 26, 2010.
- ¹⁰ Jane Marcus, “The Private Selves of Public Women,” in *The Private Self: Theory and Practice of Women’s Autobiographical Writings*, ed. Shari Benstock (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 125.
- ¹¹ Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife’s Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard based on her diary, 1785–1812* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 2007).
- ¹² Kendra Preston Leonard, “A Great Desire: Autobiography in Louise Talma’s Early Vocal Works,” *Current Musicology*, Issue 92/Fall 2011, 7-31.
- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ Passport application for Cécile Talma, 26 August 1910. However, on other documents she claimed to have been born, variously, in 1872, 1875, 1879, and 1880. Accessed through Ancestry.com, 12 September 2012.

- ¹⁵ Edith Hawthorne to Louise Talma, 6 October 1936, Louise Talma Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
- ¹⁶ *American National Institute (Prix De Paris): 1895-1905* (Washington: United States Department of State, 1905).
- ¹⁷ Mildred Aldrich, "American Singers Who Have Won Fame in Europe, Part I," *The Theatre* 5, no. 57 (November 1905): 281.
- ¹⁸ "Music in England," *Musical Times* 44 (November 1, 1903): 743.
- ¹⁹ Passenger Record for Cécile Talma, 21 September 1904, The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation. Accessed 12 September 2012.
<http://www.ellisland.org/default.asp>.
- ²⁰ Mildred Aldrich, "American Singers Who Have Won Fame in Europe, Part II," *The Theatre* 5, no. 57 (December 1905): 312.
- ²¹ "'Abigail' as Pretty as a Picture Book," *New York Times*, 22 February 1905.
- ²² "Metropolitan Opera Records BiblioTech PRO V3.2a." Accessed 12 August 2010. <http://archives.metoperafamily.org/archives/frame.htm>
- ²³ "Great Artists in Spartanburg," *The Anderson Intelligencer*, 18 February 1914 8.
- ²⁴ "Soloist Mme. Cecile Talma, Spartanburg Music Festival, Converse College Auditorium, May 6, 7 & 8 1914," May 1914.
- ²⁵ "With the Musicians," *New York Times*, 29 March 1914.
- ²⁶ Jane Weiner LePage, *Women Composers, Conductors, and Musicians of the Twentieth Century: Selected Biographies* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1980), 226.
- ²⁷ Edith Hawthorne to Louise Talma, 6 October 1936, Louise Talma Collection, Library of Congress.
- ²⁸ "Statistical Abstract of the United States: No. HS-39. Bond Yields and Interest Rates: 1900 to 2002" (U. S. Census Bureau, 2003).
- ²⁹ Peggy Whitley, "American Cultural History 1910 – 1919," n.d., <http://kclibrary.lonestar.edu/decade10.html>. Accessed 10 August 2010.
- ³⁰ Raymond Ericson, "Celebrating Louise Talma," *New York Times*, 4 February 1977.
- ³¹ Passenger Manifest of the Ship *Niagara*, 5 July 1913, The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation. Accessed online, 12 September 2012.
- ³² Passenger Record for Cécile Talma, 6 August 1909, The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation. Accessed 10 August 2010.
- ³³ "Metropolitan Opera Records BiblioTech PRO V3.2a."
- ³⁴ Teicher, "'Louise Talma: Essentials.'"
- ³⁵ United States Government, 1920 Census, New York. Accessed via Ancestry.com, 12 August 2010.
- ³⁶ Dorsey and Neal, "Sarah, Anna and Louise."
- ³⁷ John Graziano, personal communication with the author, 24 February 2010.

- ³⁸ Cassie Fairchilds, "Female Sexual Attitudes and the Rise of Illegitimacy: a Case Study," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* VIII, no. 4 (Spring 1978): 627.
- ³⁹ Walter Lionel George, *France in the Twentieth Century* (London: Alston Rivers, 1908), 353.
- ⁴⁰ Louis Bergès, directeur des Archives départementales de la Gironde, personal communication with author, 9 September 2012.
- ⁴¹ Louise Talma to Nadia Boulanger, September 1935, Louise Talma Collection, Library of Congress.
- ⁴² England and Wales Marriage Registries, <http://www.freebmd.org.uk/cgi/search.pl>, searches for Talma, Garrigues, and variants. Accessed 7 September 2012.
- ⁴³ United States Government, 1920 Census, New York. Accessed via Ancestry.com, 12 August 2010.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid.
- ⁴⁵ United States Government, 1930 Census, New York. Accessed via Ancestry.com, 12 August 2010.
- ⁴⁶ Jeffrey K. Taubenberger and David M. Morens, "1918 Influenza: The Mother of All Pandemics," *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 12, no. 1 (January 2006): 17.
- ⁴⁷ Sara Francis Fujimura, "Purple Death: The Great Flu of 1918," http://www.paho.org/english/dd/pin/Number18_article5.htm. Accessed 10 September 2012.
- ⁴⁸ Alfred W. Crosby, *America's Forgotten Pandemic: The Influenza of 1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 137.
- ⁴⁹ Cecil L. Bagg to Louise Talma, 18 April 1952, Louise Talma Collection, Correspondence, Bagg.
- ⁵⁰ Ruth Berges, "Interview with Louise Talma," *The German-American Review*, September 1962, 33.
- ⁵¹ Louise Talma to Thornton Wilder, 19 March 1954, Thornton Wilder Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Archives of casts of *Madama Butterfly* indicate that the Philadelphia-born Countess Cornelia Roosevelt-Fabbricotti sang *Butterfly* in Florence in 1912. <http://www.lavoceantica.it/Cronologia/M%20-%20N%20-%20O/Madama%20Butterfly.htm>. Accessed 14 May 2010. Biographical information from <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&d=EP19130809.2.131&l=mi&e=-----10--1----0-all>. Accessed 14 May 2010.
- ⁵² Passport application for Cécile Talma, 1910. The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation. Accessed 12 September 2012.
- ⁵³ Passenger Manifest of the Ship *Niagara*, The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation. Accessed 12 September 2012.

- ⁵⁴ “Reception for Miss Louise Talma,” *New York Times*, 1 April 1925. Also: *Fontainebleau Alumni Bulletin*, Alumni News, January 1929.
- ⁵⁵ Margaret Fairbank Jory, Louise Talma, “Interview with Louise Talma,” interview by Margaret Fairbank Jory, transcript, 1967, 1, Rodgers and Hammerstein Archive, New York Public Library.
- ⁵⁶ Louise Talma to Boulanger, September 1935. Louise Talma Collection, Library of Congress.
- ⁵⁷ Louise Talma to Nadia Boulanger, 17 May 1942, Louise Talma Collection, Library of Congress.
- ⁵⁸ Interviews by the author with Emile Naoumoff, 14 October 2000; Allan Atlas, 14 November 2009; Doreen Powers, 21 September 2009.
- ⁵⁹ Louise Talma to Thornton Wilder, 7 May 1956, Thornton Wilder Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.
- ⁶⁰ Ethel Chapman to Louise Talma, “1965/1/30”, 30 January 1965, Louise Talma Collection, Chapman box, Library of Congress.
- ⁶¹ Interview by the author with Doreen Powers, 21 September 2009.
- ⁶² Society for the Study of American Women Writers, *19th Century Women’s Poetry*, <http://www.lehigh.edu/~dek7/SSAWW/writ19CenFolk.htm>. Accessed 3 August 2010.
- ⁶³ Natalie Curtis, “An American-Indian Composer,” *Harper’s Magazine*, vol. 107, 631. The image of butterflies as women and girls is analyzed in Michelle Wick Patterson, *Natalie Curtis Burlin: a life in Native and African American music* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 152.
- ⁶⁴ Anthony Gritten, *Music and gesture* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2006), 51.
- ⁶⁵ Louise Talma, “Song in the Songless,” 1928, Louise Talma Collection, Library of Congress.
- ⁶⁶ Louise Talma, *Isabeau Poème for Small Orchestra*, score, n.d., Louise Talma Collection, Box 12/x, Library of Congress. *Poème for Small Orchestra*, 1927-28, Louise Talma Collection, Library of Congress.
- ⁶⁷ Emily Dickinson, *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1924); Bartleby.com, 2000. www.bartleby.com/113/.
- ⁶⁸ James R. Wetzel, “American Families: 75 Years of Change,” *Monthly Labor Review* (March 1990): 5.