

## ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: AN EXPLORATION OF SELECTED VOCAL  
WORKS BY GERMAINE TAILLEFERRE  
(1892-1983)

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Voice, 2022

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French composer and pianist Germaine Tailleferre (1892-1983) is commonly known as the sole female member of the French music collective *Les Six*, however her prolific career and abundance of compositions encompass a range of artistic endeavors and compositional expertise beyond this customary title. Important primary sources detailing her inspirations, compositional philosophies and artistic insights include a short, self-dictated memoir, letters, contemporary articles, critical reviews, interviews and music scores. Many of her manuscripts have remained unpublished or lost amid the destruction of World War II. And though a large number of her works enjoyed performances during her lifetime on Radio-France, archive recordings are unavailable to the public and subsequent performances have been rare by both French and international institutions. The vocal works of Tailleferre therefore offer fertile ground for further analysis, exploration and consideration for standard repertoire and academic discussion.

The first performance event features a lecture introducing the life and works of Germain Tailleferre, similar in format and content to a higher education song or opera literature lecture. The discussion includes biographical information, compositional characteristics and analysis and performances of two song sets and operatic excerpts. The second and third performance events share the U.S. premiere of the complete operatic cycle *Quatre opéras bouffes: petite histoire lyrique de l'art français, du style galant au style méchant*. The Part 1 performance features *La fille d'opéra* and *Le bel ambitieux* and the Part 2 performance features *La pauvre Eugénie* and *M. Petitpois achète un château*.

Supplemental materials accompanying this dissertation project include video recordings of each performance event and the complete supertitle files created with original translations and utilized during the performances of *Quatre opéras bouffes*.

AN EXPLORATION OF SELECTED VOCAL WORKS BY  
GERMAINE TAILLEFERRE (1892-1983)

by

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

Germaine Tailleferre has long been recognized for her membership in the early 20th century French composer collective, *Les Six*. Branded by music critic Henri Collet, members Francis Poulenc, Georges Auric, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, Louis Durey and Germaine Tailleferre shared notable inspiration from Erik Satie and Jean Cocteau while being viewed as arbiters of a French musical movement in response to the late Romantic musical styles of Germany and France. Though each individual composer of *Les Six* contributed to the evolution of French *mélodie* and French opera, academic discussion of French vocal music during this era often focuses on Francis Poulenc while occasionally mentioning Milhaud and Auric. Further research, discussion and performance of the works of Germaine Tailleferre would be beneficial to our understanding of the divergent branches of French vocal and instrumental music during the early- and mid-20th century. Tailleferre's *oeuvre* includes works for voice, piano, solo instrument, chamber ensemble, chorus and orchestra and offers an array of musical forms, from solo works and chamber sonatas to numerous operas, ballets, concerti, film scores and radio scores. Her choice of narratives and poetry are often described as decidedly feminist, offering the opportunity to balance historically male-dominant discussions of French composers through further study of Tailleferre's compositions.

Repertoire for these projects is representative of the two major areas of vocal literature study common in academic programs: solo art song and opera. *Pancarte pour une porte d'entrée* (1959) and *Trois Chansons de Jean Tardieu* (1977) are two sets of

French art songs that offer vantage points for Tailleferre's various styles and compositional influences. *Pancarte pour une porte d'entrée* exhibits clear influence from cabaret, Parisian street music and atonal styles and includes texts that occasionally reference the roles of women and femininity. *Trois Chansons de Jean Tardieu* provides a more tonal and distilled compositional style portraying innocence and a child-like curiosity and optimism. *Quatre opéras bouffes: petite histoire lyrique de l'art français, du style galant au style méchant* (Four comic operas: a short lyrical history of French art, from the gallant style to the unrefined style) (1955) is a series of four one-act chamber operas with a libretto by Tailleferre's niece, Denise Centore. Written originally for radio broadcast, each of these 20-minute chamber operas parodies the style of previous French opera composers, including the baroque style of Jean-Philippe Rameau, the Romantic comedy style of Gioachino Rossini, the naturalist style of Gustave Charpentier and the operetta style of Jacques Offenbach. These operas provide fascinating context for the evolution of French opera in the mid-20th century. Additionally, the scale and demands of *Quatre opéras bouffes* offer fertile ground for singers in training to refine performance practice and understanding of contrasting operatic styles, making these works worthy of consideration for university voice and opera programs.

The *oeuvre* of Germaine Tailleferre, demonstrating unique integrations of modern and classical stylistic elements, invites performers and academics to consider the immense value of studying, exploring and performing such complex and thoughtful works. The United States premieres and performances of a number of her vocal works in this project are a step toward further incorporation of Tailleferre's compositions in the

field of classical music. May our current strides lead to a richer and more profound experience of our cherished art forms.

## Chapter 2

### Lecture Recital—The Life & Career Of Germaine Tailleferre

#### Early Life & Career (1904-1917)

Germaine Tailleferre (originally Taillefesse) began piano studies with her mother, contrary to the vehement objections of her father.<sup>1</sup> Her father's refusal to allow Germaine to pursue musical ambitions would temporarily lead her away from the Paris Conservatory to a convent school.<sup>2</sup> Her studies at the Paris Conservatory, under the auspices of such influential French composers as Charles-Marie Widor, Gabriel Fauré, Maurice Ravel, Claude Debussy and Charles Koechlin, earned her numerous top prizes in harmony, counterpoint, fugue and piano accompaniment, more prizes in fact than any of her classmates.<sup>3</sup>

It was at the Paris Conservatory where she would meet life-long colleagues and future *Les Six* collaborators Darius Milhaud, Arthur Honegger and Georges Auric. With the rising conflicts of the First World War in 1914, many Conservatory opportunities were postponed or suspended, including the esteemed Prix de Rome. Though continuing her studies through Charles-Marie Widor's weekly compositional class, Tailleferre supplemented her artistic explorations with a budding new group of young composers, musicians and poets gathered by Darius Milhaud. Nicknamed "chez Darius," these

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Shapiro, "Germaine Tailleferre" in *Les Six: The French Composers and Their Mentors Jean Cocteau and Erik Satie*, (London: Peter Owen Publishers, 2011), 451.

<sup>2</sup> Laura Hamer, *Female Composers, Conductors, Performers: Musiciennes of Interwar France, 1919-1939*, (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2018), 95.

<sup>3</sup> Hamer, *Female Composers*, 95.

evenings encouraged creative discussions as well as casual school chatter, all of which served a welcome respite from the looming threats of war.<sup>4</sup>

In her earliest compositions during this time, Tailleferre showed remarkable acumen and understanding of the complexities of various musical styles through her imitative works and skillful borrowing of elements from her mentors' compositions. Her works showcased many of the style characteristics of the *fin de siècle*, such as salon performance pieces, including reductions and transcriptions of Stravinsky's ballets and other orchestral works for four-hand piano.<sup>5</sup> As Robert Shapiro describes, "Tailleferre's music, especially during [the 1910s and early 1920s], reflects the language of the masters she revered, her French forefathers, Jean-Philippe Rameau, Louis Couperin, Jean-Baptiste Lully, and the Italians Alessandro and Domenico Scarlatti and [it] made no apologies for such affinities."<sup>6</sup> Most of her works in this era were for piano, her primary instrument, with the exception of a chamber work for violin and piano and compositions for harp, greatly influenced by harpist and Conservatory mentor Mme. Caroline Tardieu. Representative works of this time period include *Impromptu* (1909) and *Romance* (1913), which share the popular miniature forms found in late 19th century piano pieces and feature borrowed melodies from Fauré, impressionist elements, imitation and direct quotations.

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<sup>4</sup> Laura Mitgang, "Germaine Tailleferre: Before, During, and After Les Six," *The Musical Woman: An International Perspective* 2 (1984-1985): 180.

<sup>5</sup> Melissa Cummins, "Use of Parody Techniques in Jacques Offenbach's Opérettes and Germaine Tailleferre's 'Du Style Galant au Style Méchant'" (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 2017), 127.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Shapiro, *Germaine Tailleferre: A Bio-Bibliography*, (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1994), 9.

### Les Six Career (1917-1935)

A chance meeting in 1917 with prominent French composer Erik Satie, a day which Tailleferre later deemed "Lucky Sunday," gained her attention in the innovative artistic circles of Paris and would lead to career-defining collaborations with other young promising composers. Satie, composer for the scandalously successful *Parade* (1917) and collaborator with Jean Cocteau, Pablo Picasso and Serge Diaghilev, overheard Tailleferre's piano duet *Jeux de plein air* (1917) and declared her at once his "fille musicale."<sup>7</sup> He included Tailleferre in his heralded new collection of decidedly French composers, *Les Nouveaux Jeunes*, which included Georges Auric, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, Louis Durey, Francis Poulenc and Germaine Tailleferre. Satie featured these promising young composers in a series of concerts accompanying art exhibits in a Montparnasse studio, an event he deemed *musique d'ameublement*.

This group would come to be praised as *Les Six* by music critic Henri Collet in his 1920 articles written for *Comoedia*. This new musical moniker was a clear response to other nationalist music collectives such as The Russian Five.<sup>8</sup> Though few aesthetic similarities were shared among the composers of *Les Six*, the group's intentions were distilled in Cocteau's *Le Coq et l'Arlequin* (1918), a manifesto describing in part the new anti-romantic and anti-impressionist style of music that turned the attention of the young composers to the sounds of everyday French life.<sup>9</sup> As Cocteau hints in the manifesto, "... while Debussy was delicately expanding his feminine grace, displaying Stéphane Mallarmé in 'Le Jardin de l'infante,' Satie was continuing along his little classical route... Satie rarely looks at the painters and does not read the poets, but he loves to live where

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<sup>7</sup> Hamer, *Female Composers*, 97.

<sup>8</sup> Hamer, *Female Composers*, 98.

<sup>9</sup> Cummins, "Use of Parody," 129.

life rumbles; he instinctively knows the good taverns...”<sup>10</sup> The international fascination with *Les Six*, coupled with her distinct compositional skills, garnered acclaim and career opportunities that were largely unparalleled for most women composers of the early 20th century. Reflecting on her time with the prominent composer collective and as a female composer in the early 20th century, Tailleferre states, “No [I do not believe women have less talent than men]. I know several gifted young ladies, but terrible difficulties have remained in this field, one does not trust women, no one helps them. And then... the sentimental life of a woman, her home, her children, prevent the fulfillment of vocations. It is nothing new... [I was] tremendously lucky to have been adopted by [*Les Six*], I worked, lived, created in a marvelous ambiance.”<sup>11</sup>

Tailleferre’s compositional style during the height of *Les Six* is characterized by incorporation of modernist techniques and greater exploration of her earlier neoclassicism in expanded forms. Bitonality and polytonality are introduced in momentary instances, for example in *Jeux de plein air* (1917) where one hand plays all white keys while the other hand plays all black keys. Similar momentary infusions of modernist techniques occur with appearances of modal and pentatonic melodies. Formal structures are also cleverly reimagined, such as her variations of sonata form that forgo common harmonic relationships between sections and present thematic material unexpectedly and out of traditional order. Important works sharing some of these influences include her two contributions to Cocteau’s production of *Les Mariés de la Tour Eiffel*, the “Quadrille” and “Valse des dépêches.” Tailleferre also continued to distill elements of past composers in what she described as a neoclassical style. Describing her process for some of these

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<sup>10</sup> Jean Cocteau, *Le Coq et l’Arlequin*, (London: The Egoist Press, 1920), 19.

<sup>11</sup> Martine Cadieu, “Musiciens d’aujourd’hui: Duo avec. . . Germaine Tailleferre,” *Nouvelles Littéraires*, March 15, 1962.

works, she commented, “Having recently very much attached myself to old music, I colored, here and there, my little work with faded tones taken from old palettes, without thinking for one second of an evolution in my temperament and my instincts.”<sup>12</sup> Of her ballet *Le Marchand d'oiseaux* (1923), one critic notes that, “Some see Bach in it, others Scarlatti, Rameau or Chabrier—the composer claims consciously to have made many references.”<sup>13</sup> One further example is Tailleferre’s *Piano Concerto in D Major* (1924), of which she states, “The classic form which I have used in this work may be regarded as in a way a reaction against Impressionism and Orientalism, and as an indication of an attempt to find an expression purely musical, exempt from all literary implications.”<sup>14</sup> This period of Tailleferre’s career is also highlighted by her first ventures into vocal writing. Compositions for voice during this period include *Nocturno-Fox for two Baritone Voices and Ensemble* (1928), an opéra comique *Zoulaina* (1931), numerous songs for voice and piano, and her first song cycle *Six chansons françaises* (1929). The *Six chansons françaises* are especially notable for their feminist perspective on love and sexuality, with poetry celebrating female independence and rebellion against moral and sexual standards expected from women.

### Gender Bias

A recurring theme in the exploration of Tailleferre’s career is gender bias and the resistance endured as a female composer in the early- and mid-20th century. As she describes in an interview with Laura Mitgang in 1982,

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<sup>12</sup> Mitgang, *The Musical Woman*, 193.

<sup>13</sup> Mitgang, *The Musical Woman*, 193.

<sup>14</sup> Mitgang, *The Musical Woman*, 193.

Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. I married a well-known American who went mad. The first thing he did was to buy me a player piano. And then the second husband, when I was writing the *Cantate du Narcisse* with Paul Valéry, which was a very important thing for me, he constantly prevented me from working. Perhaps it is jealousy because men never like it that women... I began to be famous rather quickly because of the Groupe des Six, and so that annoyed them. I have had a very difficult life, you know. Only I do not like to talk about it, because I write happy music as a release. But anyway, things were always against me. Whatever happened, it was against me.<sup>15</sup>

Indeed, neither Tailleferre's first or second husband seemed to support her musical career, similar to the contrary force of her father during childhood. Her first husband, Ralph Barton, was a successful American caricature artist who was famously jealous of Tailleferre's success, refusing to ever be considered, "Monsieur Tailleferre."<sup>16</sup> This first marriage inspired much of the marital unhappiness depicted in the *Six chansons françaises*. Laura Mitgang comments, "[The *Six chansons françaises*] reflect her dwindling faith in marriage. Bored and restless, Barton was seeing other women. According to Tailleferre, he needed a more exciting life of arguments, tears and reconciliations, which she did not provide. After growing up in a home full of marital tensions, she thought it best to remain conciliatory. This only aggravated Barton further."<sup>17</sup> Tailleferre's marriage with Barton would end abruptly in 1931 after a physical altercation, threat of gun violence and subsequent miscarriage.

Tailleferre's second marriage would mirror many of the tragedies experienced with her earlier partner. Her relationship with Jean Legat, a young French lawyer, developed into marriage by coercion due to Tailleferre's pregnancy with their child. Legat was similarly jealous of Tailleferre's success as well as physically abusive.

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<sup>15</sup> Laura Mitgang, "One of *Les Six* is Still at Work," *New York Times*, May 23, 1982, 25.

<sup>16</sup> Germaine Tailleferre, "Memoires à l'Emporte-Pièce," Recueillis et annotés par Frédéric Robert. *Revue Internationale de Musique Française* 19, (February 1986): 54.

<sup>17</sup> Mitgang, "Germaine Tailleferre," 197.

Tailleferre describes in her memoir, “I worked in tears, in the middle of scenes of an unbelievable violence... he did not hide it that he would never put up with playing the ‘Monsieur Tailleferre’. Exactly like Barton.”<sup>18</sup>

Tailleferre experienced further diminution based on her gender, whether intentional or unintentional, from her colleagues and critics, as seen in the following excerpts. From her close friend Milhaud: “Tailleferre is a delightful musician. . .She produces little, but each work is remarkably *mise au point* [well developed]. Her music has the great merit of being without pretension; it is most attractive because it is sincere. It is really the music of a young girl in the loveliest sense of the word.”<sup>19</sup>

From her colleague François Poulenc:

How lovely she was in 1917. . .How sweet and gifted she was! She still is, but I sometimes regret that, through an excess of modesty, she was never able to exploit all the possibilities in herself as could, for example, someone like Marie Laurencin [a popular French Cubist painter], who knew how to extract the most from her feminine genius. Be that as it may, [Tailleferre] made a most charming and precious contribution to music and one that always delights me.<sup>20</sup>

In reaction, Tailleferre dismissed many of the qualifiers attached to her music:

But what difference does it make? The essential thing is that it be music. I do not see any reason why I should not write what I feel. If it gives the impression of being feminine, that is fine. I was never tormented by explanations. I tried to do the best I could, but I never asked myself if it was feminine or not. If it is music, it is music.<sup>21</sup>

And lastly, Robert Shapiro summarizes the issues found within Tailleferre’s own artistic circles:

Tailleferre was required to fight against the traditional assumption that men only were capable of writing important and timeless musical works. Although women

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<sup>18</sup> Germaine Tailleferre, Interview, 1982.

<sup>19</sup> Darius Milhaud, “La Musique française depuis la guerre,” *Etudes* (Paris: Editions Claude Aveline, 1927), 18.

<sup>20</sup> Francis Poulenc, *Entretiens avec Claude Rostand* (Paris: René Julliard, 1954), 42.

<sup>21</sup> Mitgang, “One of *Les Six*,” 25.

have been readily accepted as musical performers, they are often merely perceived as the glorified servants of music.<sup>22</sup>

### Middle Career (1935-1946)

The years spanning the conflicts of the Second World War brought many obstacles to Tailleferre's compositional pursuits as well as fortuitous partnerships with many notable artists. She moved frequently between New York, Paris, Grasse and Switzerland on account of Jean Legeat's failing health and wartime instabilities. She published an article in the 1942 issue of *Modern Music* rejecting German occupation, speaking against anti-Semitism and describing the hardships placed upon and importance of artists under tyrannical authority.<sup>23</sup> She revealed in an interview with Robert Shapiro that many of her manuscripts were destroyed or lost during the occupation, when her home in Grasse was commandeered by a German officer and her papers were used as fuel for the fireplace.<sup>24</sup>

Despite intense setbacks, Tailleferre managed to build partnerships with leading artists of the time and raise her daughter, Françoise Lageat. New and continued collaborations with Jean Cocteau, Erik Satie, Artur Rubinstein, Pablo Picasso, Sergei Diaghilev, Paul Valéry, Paul Claudel, Jean Tardieu and Igor Markevitch would last the rest of her career and help sustain her through the horrific personal traumas of her second marriage. Tailleferre and Markevitch co-orchestrated the *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* (1937) and she and Valéry worked together closely to craft the *Cantate du Narcisse* for baritone, soprano, treble chorus, strings and timpani. The evolution of the *Cantate* particularly displays Tailleferre's keen compositional acumen, in which the same

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<sup>22</sup> Shapiro, "Germaine Tailleferre," 261.

<sup>23</sup> Mitgang, "Germaine Tailleferre," 201.

<sup>24</sup> Shapiro, *Les Six*, 266.

text, ensemble and work in its entirety is set in two different stylistic versions, one in the neoclassical style and the other in the impressionist style.

Her exploration and expansion of genres similarly showcases the development of her compositional focus during this time period. Her contribution to the Paris Exhibition of 1937 included a further step into the operatic form with a one-act comic opera, *Le Marin de Bolivar*. She also ventured into compositions for film, leading to numerous scores for the screen, such as *Provincia* (1937), *Le petit chose* (1938), *Bretagne* (1940), *Les deux timides* (1941) and *Coincidences* (1946), among others.

#### Late Career (1947-1983)

After years living in the United States, which included celebrated performances of her works in New York, Boston and Philadelphia, Tailleferre returned to France and soon embarked on a lasting relationship with Radio-France, who commissioned many of her later compositions for radio plays, orchestral works and operas. Jean Tardieu, French writer, son of Paris Conservatory harp professor Caroline Tardieu and friend of Tailleferre, brokered this fruitful collaboration as head programmer for the major media organization.<sup>25</sup> Works commissioned by Tardieu included incidental music for radio plays, scores for documentaries and original works for broadcast.<sup>26</sup> Such a collaboration for radio compositions capitalized on the rise in importance of radio broadcast during the war. Radio-Londres, Radio-Paris, Radio-Vichy and the “la guerre des ondes” illustrated the significant position of radio broadcasts in both wartime and post-war France and its

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<sup>25</sup> Cummins, “Use of Parody,” 133.

<sup>26</sup> Cummins, “Use of Parody,” 145.

power in shaping national narratives.<sup>27</sup> Radio-France's choice commissions and cultural programming worked in part toward uniting the people of France after years of division.

This period represents the largest proportion of Tailleferre's compositional output as well as her longest instructional positions teaching and accompanying at the Schola Cantorum and École alsacienne. During this time, she composed at least 31 scores for radio, television and film, media which prompted experimentation with new formal structures. Such media broadcasts required brief compositional forms, episodic segmentation, prescribed narrative lengths and use of chamber orchestras. These radio commissions also comprise nearly the entirety of Tailleferre's operatic *oeuvre*, including *Il était un petit navire* (1951), *Quatre opéras bouffes* (1955), *La petite sirène* (1957) and *Le maître* (1959). Interestingly, *La petite sirène* and the *Sonate for Solo Clarinet* (1957) alone represent Tailleferre's experimentation with serialism. Of these experiences Tailleferre explained that, "I never locked myself into a system, I despise [using a set style]. [I only used polytonality] when my instinct dictated the choice,"<sup>28</sup> and "My music doesn't interest me anymore and twelve-tone music, which attracts me, represents such a task that I no longer have the strength to undertake it. It would almost be like wanting to express myself in Chinese! It is a bit too late to learn."<sup>29</sup> Tailleferre continued composing into her 80s, learning new forms and styles, including wind ensemble composition, teaching young musicians and, fortunately, providing insight into her artistic perspective through her memoir and interviews.

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<sup>27</sup> Daisy Fancourt, *The Role Of Radio In Wartime France*, <https://holocaustmusic.org/resistance-and-exile/french-resistance/role-of-radio-in-wartime-france-x266b>

<sup>28</sup> Cummins, "Use of Parody," 141.

<sup>29</sup> Cummins, "Use of Parody," 140.

Numerous works for voice are represented in this era, including *Paris sentimentale* (1949), *La rue chagrin* (1955), *Concerto des Vaines Paroles* for Baritone (1956), *Pancarte pour une porte d'entrée* (1961), *L'adieu du cavalier* (1963) in honor of Francis Poulenc, *Trois chansons de Jean Tardieu* (1977) and *Concerto de la fidélité* (1981). These vocal works and her operas contain many of the hallmarks of Tailleferre's mature compositional style. Imitative and neoclassical techniques are acutely employed alongside modernist tonalities and avant-garde poetry and narratives. Brief pieces continue the aesthetic advocated by the *Les Six* collective and formal musical and dance structures are recalled, reimagined and playfully distorted.

### General Style Characteristics

Through her self-described neoclassical style, Tailleferre composed music for ballet, orchestra, opera, film, television, solo instruments, voice and her major instrument, piano. Shapiro describes her music as, “vastly innovative, [revealing] a constant originality. Well crafted, intriguing, melodious, substantive, sophisticated, and emotional.”<sup>30</sup> Her earliest works exemplify the roots of imitation that would grow into neoclassical expertise, including reductions and transcriptions of works by Stravinsky and *Impromptu* (1909) and *Romance* (1913) for solo piano with direct quotes and borrowed elements from Fauré and Debussy. Melissa Cummins describes that, “Her ability to realize the figured bass lines in stylistically appropriate renditions meant that she had a solid knowledge of the composers' styles and was therefore able to replicate them... This ability colored her original compositions, as she often created works in the

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<sup>30</sup> Shapiro, *Les Six*, 261.

styles of various composers.”<sup>31</sup> And as Scott Messing explains, “The invention of the terms neoclassicism and new classicism, whatever their semantic fineness, supplied a convenient code by which composers could put forward aesthetic ideas based upon a nostalgic evocation of a moribund style.”<sup>32</sup>

Tailleferre’s 1917 piano duet, *Jeux de plein air*, which attracted the attention of Erik Satie, Jean Cocteau and Artur Rubinstein, showcased an additional command of modernist compositional techniques, including polytonality, with inspirations from everyday life. This connection with anti-Romantic and anti-Impressionist French music would influence much of her remaining compositional output. As Sunmie Kim describes, the music of Tailleferre shares many qualities with that of her *Les Six* colleagues, such as “a combination of simplicity influenced by neoclassicism and twentieth century characteristics such as polytonality, frequent key and meter changes, and independent piano accompaniment...”<sup>33</sup>

Tailleferre's vocal works incorporate considerable modernist influences, including surrealist and avant-garde poets, cabaret and street music styles and experimentation with polytonality, modal melodies and short forms. *Pancarte pour une porte d'entrée* (1961) displays such stylistic associations by setting the poetry of *nouveau roman*, avant-garde poet Robert Pinget, matching the narrative ambiguity and modern language deconstruction with musical elements of chromaticism, polytonality, short forms and musical fragments reminiscent of waltzes and street accordions. Similar linguistic-musical experiments appear in *Trois chansons de Jean Tardieu* (1977) as

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<sup>31</sup> Cummins, “Use of Parody,” 136.

<sup>32</sup> Scott Messing, “Polemic as History: The Case of Neoclassicism” in *The Journal of Musicology*, Volume 9, 4 (Autumn, 1991), 492.

<sup>33</sup> Sunmie Kim, “A Study of Selected Songs of ‘Les Six:’ Pedagogical Analysis for College Voice Students in Korea” (Doctor of Education diss., Columbia University, 2006), 157.

Tardieu's humorous twists of language are paired with subtly imperfect repetitions, flirtations with polytonality and the simplicity of children's songs. Her chamber works for solo voice and operas continue to exhibit her affinity for imitative techniques, including the cabaret-style "La rue chagrin," two versions of her *Cantate du Narcisse* in neoclassical and impressionist styles, and the collection of parody chamber operas, *Quatre opéras bouffes*, each utilizing distilled elements of the great French opera composers in her own neoclassical compositional language.

### Selected Art Songs

#### *Pancarte pour une porte d'entrée* (1961)

Tailleferre's song set *Pancarte pour une porte d'entrée* (Handbill for an entrance), commissioned by American soprano Alice Swanson Esty, premiered on March 12, 1961 on Radio-France. The work sets texts by avant-garde modernist French writer Robert Pinget (1919-1997). Colleague of Samuel Beckett and similarly influenced by "Theatre of the Absurd" works, Pinget was closely associated with the *nouveau roman* movement of the mid-20th century, characterized by experiments in novel structures, including reimaginings of chronology, narrative, punctuation and syntax. John Taylor describes the reconstruction of Pinget's novels by stating, "The reader must sift through the facts and assertions, as if he were the writer constructing the novel. What emerges from the reader's imaginative and creative toiling is a vast Human Comedy that Balzac himself would have appreciated. Yet this Human Comedy of course remains unwritten; it cannot be read, reread; it exists only in the (fading) imagination and memory of the reader."<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> John Taylor, "Reading Robert Pinget," *Dalkey Archive Press* (September 13, 2013), <https://www.dalkeyarchive.com/2013/09/13/reading-robert-pinget/>

Such ambiguity of narrative, characters and speakers is also evident in the poetry of *Pancarte pour une porte d'entrée*. Instead of illustrating a scene or emotion, these poems infer the existence of a scene or conflict, often providing only fringes of detail or parameters for context. For example, the opening poem “Les Chapeaux” features a single question clearly separated from a larger dialogue, seemingly interrupting an ongoing conversation about evening plans. “Must we depart this evening/and leave behind here/as surety for our heads some old-fashioned hats?”<sup>35</sup> Tailleferre chooses to repeat this short poem twice for her song setting, cleverly allowing the listener more opportunities to infer the narrative elements. Pinget’s poetry also includes misplaced and imperfect rhymes, including rhymes occurring in the middle of poetic lines, such as in “Désinvolutione,” “Vous n’êtes plus que de mauvais augure amie qu’ignorant/j’aimais sous couleur de m’enfuir/Avec ta chevelure comme un volage/et pour votre cœur mon goût de ta désinvolutione.”<sup>36</sup>

Further analysis of *Pancarte pour une porte d'entrée* reveals many characteristics shared with the songs of fellow *Les Six* composers. Immediately recognizable is the brevity of the songs, each approximately 1 minute in length. Influences from cabaret and Parisian street music are evident, such as the raucous waltz of “Sainte Nitouche” and billowing repeated piano figures reminiscent of street accordions. The modernist poetry of Pinget resembles that of other poet choices and her treatment of the text is similarly inventive. For instance, Tailleferre treats the ending [ə] both traditionally and in the modern manner, setting it both with music and without, clearly influenced in part by the text setting innovations of one of her mentors, Maurice Ravel. Musical fragments are

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<sup>35</sup> Germaine Tailleferre, *Pancarte pour une porte d'entrée*, (Lagny-sur-Marne, France: Musik Fabrik, 2000), 2-3.

<sup>36</sup> Tailleferre, *Pancarte*, 4.

repeated and subtly transformed, such as repeated patterns presented with major, minor, diminished and augmented variations. Melodic material contains a variety of diatonic, pentatonic and chromatic constructions and the harmonic language remains largely tonal with Tailleferre's trademark momentary infusions of polytonality.

*Trois Chansons de Jean Tardieu (1977)*

*Trois Chansons de Jean Tardieu*, composed in 1977, sets three poems by playwright, poet, Radio-France programmer and close friend of Tailleferre, Jean Tardieu. Similar to Pinget, Tardieu's works were also influenced by the "Theatre of the Absurd," which inspired Tardieu's distinctive humor, simplicity and deconstruction of language. As Guy Sacre describes, "Ordinarily, what we like and admire in Tardieu is the virtuoso worker of the language, who dismantles the machinery of our speech and hearing, so amusingly and cruelly, and sets fire to all the distressing verbal exchange between the poor creatures that we are, condemned to professing Man's inanity by means of a few phonemes..."<sup>37</sup> In this manner, Tardieu plays with letter order, for example "Récapitulons/Récatonpilu," and comically switches suffixes, for example "locomotivons/locomotivu."<sup>38</sup>

Tailleferre's settings of these poems highlight the simplicity and playfulness of the poetry through repetitive patterns, similar to the construction of children's songs. Narrow melodic patterns of seconds, thirds and fourths repeat in regular two- and four-measure phrases, as in the opening eight measures of "Récatonpilu." This same

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<sup>37</sup> Guy Sacre, "Deux Poèmes de Jean Tardieu," *Symétrie*, <https://symetrie.com/en/titles/sacre-deux-poemes-jean-tardieu>

<sup>38</sup> Germaine Tailleferre, *Trois chansons de Jean Tardieu*, (Lagny-sur-Marne, France: Musik Fabrik, 2002), 2.

opening song showcases a playful use of tonality as the text “But the perfect game...” is accompanied by imperfect octaves that wander apart by minor and major seconds, revealing a childlike deception or tease from the speaker. The range of the piano displays similar comic affect beginning with narrow, simple triads and slowly growing distant, ending four octaves apart. The final text, “la la la la la la la la la la,” is laughably highlighted with an a cappella musical setting, leaving no doubt about the frivolity of the text and speaker.

“Petite flamme” depicts an honest and innocent hope for comfort and assurance. The opening piano pattern features an ostinato G below parallel harmonies that double the melody. This texture increases in density as the text turns to “night,” “sleep” and “the end of all things.” The simple left hand ostinato pattern changes to lower sonority chords with added chord tones, creating the ominous, dark environment which the speaker fears will come in a world without the little flame. The dense texture begins to subside as the song resolves with a musically hopeful Picardy third.

Lastly, “L’Éternel enfant” portrays a young child proudly practicing courteous phrases in a continuous stream of consciousness. The piano gestures mirror this juvenile mood by alternating every beat with major and minor second harmonies, similar to the unstable motion of a child learning to walk. The melodic material changes tonal center in measures 15-18 while the piano maintains its original pattern, showcasing a playful and momentary use of bitonality. The song ends with a characteristic short piano gesture, dropping down to bass clef for the first time in the song with a tied quarter note over the final double bar.

## Chapter 3

### *Quatre opéras bouffes*

#### About *Quatre opéras bouffes*

*Quatre opéras bouffes* was commissioned by Jean Tardieu and Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française (Radio-France) with music by Germain Tailleferre and libretto by Denise Centore, Tailleferre's niece. During the post-World War II boom of household radios, Radio-France began an innovative programming initiative creating radiophonic art for home audiences, including radio plays, operas and orchestral works.<sup>39</sup> Receiving its premiere broadcast in 1955, this cycle of "pocket operas" combines distilled elements of the great French opera composers with Tailleferre's own neoclassical compositional language.<sup>40</sup> As Tailleferre shares, “[I have composed for the radio before,] but I found it much more fun to write my opéras-bouffes *Du style galant au style méchant*: a faux 18th century [piece], a faux romantic [piece], a faux Offenbach [piece] – the most successful, I think, of all these “in the manner of” [works]—and a faux naturalistic [piece]...”<sup>41</sup> Though each contains a different and unconnected story, each opera evokes themes of money, love and often sudden and unexpected outcomes. As Robert Shapiro describes in *Germaine Tailleferre: A Bio-Bibliography*,

These brief operas perfectly evoke, with virtuosic synthesis, the 18th- and 19th-century style inherent in the operettas of Rameau, Alfred Bruneau, François Boieldieu, Daniel Auber and Gustave Charpentier and are virtually forgotten in our day; a revival of these gems would undoubtedly enrich the repertoire... That a revival of them has never materialized is due not only to a simple ignorance of their existence but also to the fact that the operas invoke a bygone stylistic era and that such period evocations are often considered lightweight or pretentious... The

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<sup>39</sup> Cummins, “Use of Parody,” 133.

<sup>40</sup> Germaine Tailleferre, *Quatre opéras bouffes: Réduction pour voix et piano*, (Paris, France: Gérard Billaudot, 2012), 3.

<sup>41</sup> Tailleferre, “Mémoires,” 76.

opéras bouffes... will not escape the next revival of such archaic but compelling musical fodder.<sup>42</sup>

The performance history of *Quatre opéras bouffes* since its premiere includes a concert performance in Paris, France in 1962, a staged and recorded performance in Limoges, France in 2014, a performance of *Le bel ambitieux* in Yvetot, France in 2016 and a staged and radio performance of *M. Petitpois achète un château* at the University of Kansas in 2017.<sup>43</sup> This project features the United States premiere of the complete *Quatre opéras bouffes* at the University of Maryland.

### *La fille d'opéra*

The musical and textual elements of *La fille d'opéra* are modeled from the operatic works of French Baroque composer Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764). A praised music theorist, organist and composer, Rameau is recognized in part for introducing the characteristics of late Baroque harmony to his operas, including expressive chromaticism, frequent secondary dominant chords and greater use of distant modulations.<sup>44</sup> These harmonic traits are most apparent in the dramatic recitatives of *La fille d'opéra* heightened by chromatic harmonic progressions and distant modulations, as well as the tragic "Trio de la Bastille" and "Finale." The "Finale" in particular showcases fascinating secondary dominant harmonic motion which quickly transports tonal centers at times as frequently as every two measures.

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<sup>42</sup> Shapiro, *Germaine Tailleferre*, 269.

<sup>43</sup> Cummins, "Use of Parody," 6; l'Opéra de Limoges, "Affaire Tailleferre," November 11 and 13, 2014, performance recording, 1:42:03, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEvb1NznoLM>

<sup>44</sup> Robert Canon, *Opera (Cambridge Introductions to Music)*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 55.

Musical elements common to French Baroque style and featured in Tailleferre's operatic parody include the French overture, over-dotting and dance forms.<sup>45</sup> The opera opens with the customary binary sections of the French overture form concisely represented in the slow and stately "Ouverture" and attacca animated introduction of the lovers in "1. Duo."<sup>46</sup> The French Baroque tradition of over-dotting is also found throughout the score and in both the vocal and orchestral material. This gesture is employed in many dramatic contexts, including the tragic duet between the lovers, the anguished forlane of Pouponne and the scheming trio of the inspector, bootmaker and hairdresser. Dance forms appear throughout the opera, recalling another distinguishing trait of Rameau and the French Baroque style.<sup>47</sup> While a ballet is noticeably absent from this Rameau-inspired score, possibly due to the radio medium lacking any visual portrayal of dancing, many of the arias and ensembles utilize traditional dance forms, including the sarabande, forlane, passacaglia and chaconne.

Further comparisons specific to the musical style of Rameau include trademark innovations of the composer, such as instrumentation, lyrical recitative and heightened importance of text. A direct musical reference to Rameau's famous *Castor et Pollux* includes the use of bassoon obligato similar to Telaira's Act 1 "Lament," however Tailleferre twists the meaning of the instrumental obligato from tragic to comedic with the entrance of the charlatan bootmaker and hairdresser.<sup>48</sup> The tragic trios of these two operas also explore an expressive chromaticism that heightens their dramatic conflicts. Tailleferre's instrumentation continues to emulate French Baroque style through the

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<sup>45</sup> Matthew Boyden, *The Rough Guide to Opera*, 3rd ed, (London: Rough Guides Ltd, 2002), 46.

<sup>46</sup> Boyden, *Rough Guide*, 19.

<sup>47</sup> Boyden, *Rough Guide*, 19.

<sup>48</sup> Jean-Philippe Rameau, *Castor et Pollux*, (Paris: A. Durand & Fils, 1903), 45-46.

frequent use of harpsichord musical gestures, trills, grace notes and the inventive pairing of piccolo and harpsichord in order to imitate the rural sounds of the hurdy-gurdy associated with provincial France. Rameau's transformative, anti-Lullian use of recitative, including more lyrical vocal writing, accompanied recitatives and more chromatic harmonic progressions, appears frequently in Tailleferre's opera.<sup>49</sup> Interestingly, each of the recitatives are placed within the context of larger duets, trios and quartets, further highlighting Rameau's equal treatment of recitative and arias for dramatic continuity. An elevated importance of text clarity and precise use of coloratura also mirrors Rameau's evolution beyond the vocal acrobatics of Lullian opera.

Lastly, the text by Centore offers numerous similarities and parodies of 18th century French opera libretti. References to Greek mythology abound, including mentions of the Titan Phoebe, commonly connected with the moon, as well as the narrative themes of self-sacrifice, conflicts of love and family and the restoration of life. The rather quick introduction and death of Milord Mac Sennet, which proves to be incredibly beneficial for Pouponne, can even be related to the *deus ex machina* convention found in Rameau's *Castor et Pollux* and throughout Greek mythology. This narrative, however, slyly turns Enlightenment era ideology and morality on its head as Pouponne achieves her change in station through questionable means and with seemingly little regard for her former lover. One pointed enlightened reference appears when Pouponne reminds herself, "do not forget you are a philosopher!" Centore chooses linguistic affects to depict the time period, including archaic French words that have transformed considerably in modern French. Such choices also accentuate dialects that represent varying hierarchies of class and wealth, including the poor grammar and

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<sup>49</sup> Boyden, *Rough Guide*, 46.

misspelled vocabulary of Pouponne's mother and father from the rural town of Arpajon. Examples include “on jase,” referring to chatting in a very casual or rural manner, “viaux,” a purposefully poor pronunciation of the term for calves, and “goton,” which at the time indicated a farm girl lacking manners but has evolved to become a modern suggestion of promiscuity.

### *Le bel ambitieux*

The musical and textual elements of *Le bel ambitieux* are rooted in the operatic styles of Romantic era composers Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868), François-Adrien Boieldieu (1775-1834) and Daniel Auber (1782-1871). Though Rossini composed only four operas to French libretti, only one of which being a comic opera, his ever-popular compositional style and influential presence in Paris nevertheless transformed French opera and its native composers Boieldieu and Auber. Boieldieu's simple and refined textures, colorful orchestrations and frequent use of repetition which earned him the title of, "one of the creators of a distinctively French nineteenth-century sound," owe much to Rossini.<sup>50</sup> Auber's famous opera *Fra Diavolo*, praised for its synthesis of French and Italian comic opera styles, employs the tunefulness, sparkling coloratura, light textures and patter songs characteristic of Rossini's operas.<sup>51</sup>

Parody is on full display from the opening bars of the overture. The repeated orchestral figure in measures 1-6 is a direct adaptation of Rossini's famous overture to *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Furthermore, the instrumental melody above this orchestral material is a self-quotation from Tailleferre's own overture to *La fille d'opéra*, serving as possible

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<sup>50</sup> Boyden, *Rough Guide*, 128.

<sup>51</sup> Boyden, *Rough Guide*, 130.

commentary on Rossini's well-known propensity for borrowing arias and overtures from his own works.<sup>52</sup> Further multi-layered parody is evident in the Baron's wedding song, in which the immediately recognizable “Bridal March” from Wagner's *Lohengrin* pays homage to a suspiciously similar chorus from Boïeldieu's *Les deux nuits* composed 20 years prior.<sup>53</sup> Immediately noticeable in the opening lover's duet is the colorful and accompanimental orchestration, favoring lighter textures that support the tuneful melodies and harmonic borrowing from relative major and minor tonal centers. These Romantic era orchestral conventions continue throughout the score with textures that take advantage of contrasting instrumental sonorities while never competing with the dominant melodies.

Imitation of Rossini's *bel canto* style and French Romantic opera continues with the Rossini crescendo, emphasis of ensembles and choice of dance forms. The practice of increasing intensity by repeating a phrase with higher pitches and added instruments, known as the “Rossini crescendo,” appears in the finale of *Le bel ambitieux*.<sup>54</sup> Alphonse and Euphrasie introduce melodic phrases that are subsequently repeated by more characters and at increasingly higher pitch levels until the climactic ending of the opera. Ensemble numbers and finales, which increased in importance during the Romantic era, find similar emphasis in Tailleferre's opera. In fact, the structure of the entire opera could be viewed through the lens of a typical ensemble finale as characters are continuously added to the same scene, building the conflict step by step, until the large ensemble reaches a resolution. Tailleferre also highlights the popular dance forms of the era with multiple waltzes and a mazurka, in clear reference to Frédéric Chopin.

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<sup>52</sup> Boyden, *Rough Guide*, 167.

<sup>53</sup> Boyden, *Rough Guide*, 128.

<sup>54</sup> Canon, *Opera*, 136.

Denise Centore's libretto continues to allude to 19th century Paris and the Romantic era. The characters employ Anglicisms throughout the dialogue that would have been fashionable at the time, including "dear," "Ophelia" (in reference to Shakespeare) and frequent commentary about tea. Similar to the Rossini comic operas, Centore's narrative contains a simplified plot, absent of confusing subplots, with imperfect characters that would be more relatable to the general public.<sup>55</sup> The increased amount of spoken dialogue is also notable for its similarities to the popular operas of Boïeldieu (*La dame blanche*) and Auber (*Fra Diavolo*).

### *La pauvre Eugénie*

The musical and textual elements of *La pauvre Eugénie* are formed from the naturalist operatic style exemplified by the late Romantic French composer Gustave Charpentier (1860-1956). Though Charpentier's "musical novel" *Louise*, with music and libretto by the composer, was his only operatic success, the style of this widely acclaimed and internationally successful work serves as an important milestone in the evolution of French opera.<sup>56</sup> *Louise* encapsulates the French expression of naturalism, similar to Bizet's *Carmen* and related to Italian *verismo* through Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci* and the Second Viennese School through Berg's *Wozzeck*.<sup>57</sup> Novelist Émile Zola helped codify this artistic perspective as an analysis of human psychology in which no character should appear larger than life and the environmental and hereditary influences of violence, alcohol and prostitution could be unflinchingly examined.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Canon, *Opera*, 129.

<sup>56</sup> Boyden, *Rough Guide*, 397.

<sup>57</sup> Canon, *Opera*, 259-260, 303-305.

<sup>58</sup> Canon, *Opera*, 257-258.

The music of *La pauvre Eugénie* employs many late Romantic gestures, harmonies and direct references to Charpentier's *Louise*. The opening bars of the overture are a notable departure from the remaining operas of *Quatre opéras bouffes*. Rapid dynamic shifts, tremolos and a 32nd note gesture immediately thrust the listener into the heightened drama common in late Romanticism. Indications of the famous soprano aria from *Louise*, "Depuis le jour," are nestled in the major sixth melodic leaps and slow ascending motif that recurs similarly in the titular character's musical material. Increased chromaticism and a tonally ambiguous ending creates an atmospheric segue into the first character entrances.

With the entrance of Le Patron, Titine and Paula, the vocal lines are noticeably constructed to closely match the prosody of spoken French and often place little significance on lyrical or melodic patterns. This speech-singing affect continues throughout the opera and shows influence reminiscent of the *Sprechgesang* recitative style in which dramatic proclamation of text rises in musical importance relative to the melodic pitches of the recitative, a recitative style commonly associated with the music dramas of Richard Wagner. Near the end of the opening scene, Eugénie reveals her recurring motif, the slow ascending melody hinted in the overture with borrowed material from "Depuis le jour." In similar triple meter, this motif is followed by phrases constructed of monotone text leading to accelerated scalar passages and large leaps to sustained phrase endings. To solidify the reference, at this moment Eugénie sings the phrase, "Depuis ce jour plein d'illusions," a clear nod to Louise's line, "Depuis le jour."

The harmonic language and textures throughout the score are largely dense, with added chord tones of 9ths and 11ths as well as continued increased chromaticism. The

use of tremolos and broad-ranging orchestration help imitate the large orchestras and expansive sonorities of naturalist operas. This affect shifts momentarily in Eugénie's first solo, "Le Rond de saucisson de l'ouvrière honête." This chanson is comprised of clearer tonality communicated through arpeggios and a simple melody utilized to illustrate the pure intentions of Eugénie that are in striking contrast to the harsh realities of lower working class Paris. Eugénie's second monologue, "M'sieur J. Duplan," musically succumbs to the turmoil of Paris as she recounts her unrequited love, the departure of her daughter's father and the lesson she has learned about giving into such deceptive passions. The climactic duet between Eugénie and her new faithful lover, Gégène, features more lyrical melodic material for both voices and builds a slow moving and luscious orchestral timbre with added-chord tones evocative of similar moments between Louise and Julien in Charpentier's score. The close of the opera presents the full cast in a homophonic fanfare finale praising the lovers, the redemption of Eugénie and the hopeful promise for Paris' bright future. This finale echoes the last moments of the chorus in Act IV of *Louise*, "O jolie Paris," as Louise finally decides to run back to Paris and away from her family. The borrowed text from *L'Idole* by poet Auguste Barbier, "Au grand [fier] soleil de messidor!" offers a conclusion that anticipates French freedom and overcoming of hardships after nearly a century of political and industrial revolutions.<sup>59</sup>

The libretto of *La pauvre Eugénie* similarly reflects that of Charpentier's *Louise*. Both Eugénie and Louise find themselves working as dressmakers in a lower class neighborhood of Paris. The bohemian lifestyle allows ample moments for commentary on class hierarchies and inequalities between the working class and the bourgeoisie.

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<sup>59</sup> Nicolas Vasseur, "La Pauvre Eugénie," *Domaine de Musique Jaurès Montreuil*, accessed April 8, 2022, [https://nicolas-vasseur.canoprof.fr/eleve/Pauvre\\_Eugenie\\_corrige@3/#FfzAQTBYw6BZAsATz5q5i](https://nicolas-vasseur.canoprof.fr/eleve/Pauvre_Eugenie_corrige@3/#FfzAQTBYw6BZAsATz5q5i)

Prostitution serves as a recurring theme to highlight the patriarchal dangers of predatory middle and upper class men as well as the extents to which many are forced in order to climb the financial and social ladder out of destitution. Eugénie speaks of the lengths to which she strives to remain unseen by men on the street and the actions of Mame Phémie draw plenty of suspicion from her husband, Titine and Paula. From this perspective, the voicing of Mame Phémie for tenor can be viewed as a parodic twist by Tailleferre and Centore on the social norms and gender expectations of the time period. The prose and syntax of these working class characters typifies their social standing through unrefined grammar and numerous contractions rarely observed in French opera libretti. Such themes and character specificity help embody the ideals of realism championed by novelists Zola and Balzac. *La pauvre Eugénie* showcases the unfiltered humanity demanded by realism through complex, morally ambiguous characters and plentiful descriptions of scenes and environments. Distinct descriptions, such as Eugénie's garlic sausage, the events with M'sieur J. Duplan, the color and texture of the pink feather boa and the vivid vision of Eugénie and Gégène's new life together, are common tools of realist literature to enhance the humanity of the characters and their scenic context. Lastly, *La pauvre Eugénie* uses a common tactic in realist literature of personifying cities and inanimate objects, allowing them to take on human qualities and serve as living characters in a narrative. Similar to Zola's *Les Rougon-Macquart*, Balzac's *La Comédie humaine* and Charpentier's *Louise*, Paris is imbued at the close of the opera with the breath of human qualities as the maternal figure for the new lovers, Eugénie and Gégène.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Canon, *Opera*, 257-258.

*M. Petitpois achète un château*

The musical and textual elements of *M. Petitpois achète un château* parody much of the style of operetta made famous in the mid-19th century by Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880). Of Offenbach's more than 100 staged works, his one-act opérettes, opéras comiques, opéras bouffes and opéras bouffons share signature traits of his compositional style, including humorous narratives and wordplay, emphasis of dance forms, recurring musical material and increased use of ensemble numbers and refrains. These compositional characteristics would come to influence later composers, such as Johann Strauss Jr. and Arthur Sullivan, and propel the emergence of a new internationally sensational genre, operetta.<sup>61</sup> Tailleferre and Centore imitate and twist many of these elements in their pocket opera parody, *M. Petitpois achète un château*.

The light and fast-paced overture immediately shows greater use of percussive orchestration and instrumentation, including distinct contrasts of tonal registration, repeated octaves and staccato phrases. This helps highlight the addition of cymbals, triangle and glockenspiel commonly found in Offenbach's orchestrations. The overture also introduces one important trademark of Offenbach, the Can-Can. This raucous duple meter dance form was popular in the music halls and cabarets of the time and frequently featured an acrobatic dance performed by a chorus line, both celebrated and chastised for its risqué tussling of skirts, kicks, splits and cartwheels.<sup>62</sup> Offenbach's most famous can-can is the "Galop Infernal" from *Orphée aux Enfers*, which is easily recognizable from many references in popular culture since its debut. The overture also presents

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<sup>61</sup> Cummins, "Use of Parody," 58-60.

<sup>62</sup> Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Can-Can." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, March 31, 2022, accessed April 9, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/art/cancan>.

melodic material that is featured and largely unaltered in later numbers in the opera, including the ensemble "Signez, signez, Mr. Petitpois" and the Finale, similar to the musical borrowing found in many of Offenbach's works.<sup>63</sup>

Military music and dance forms continue to serve an important role in *M. Petitpois*. Military marches can be found throughout Offenbach's *oeuvre*, including *La Périchole*, *La vie parisienne* and *La Grande Duchesse de Gerolstein*, to name a few. Adelestan's opening air continues this militaristic tradition as he proclaims his successes and exploits both on the battlefield and in romantic affairs. Such an entrance of a romantic hero is mirrored in Offenbach's *Croquefer* and *La belle Hélène*.<sup>64</sup> Martial influence returns in Adelestan and Le Duc's "Cri de guerre des La Bombardière" in which the father-son duo, accompanied by a hunting horn motif, declare the beginning of the duel between Adelestan and Oreste by singing their ancestral battle cry. Dance forms such as the waltz and mazurka are also employed to closely imitate the operettas of Offenbach. Mr. Petitpois' flamboyant entrance trio, "La Moustachette," makes use of the Tyrolienne waltz. This waltz form set in the traditional triple meter comes from Tyrolese dances and Alpine songs, called "Yodelers and Ländlers," which exhibit characteristic yodeling melodic passages, in this instance, sung by Petitpois' daughter Héloïse and nephew Oreste. Similar Tyrolienne waltzes can be found in Offenbach's *La belle Hélène* and *La vie parisienne*.<sup>65</sup> Another dance form, the mazurka, is utilized in Le Duc's air "La galerie des ancêtres." Made widely-known by Frédéric Chopin, the Polish folk dance is

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<sup>63</sup> Boyden, *Rough Guide*, 296.

<sup>64</sup> Nicolas Vasseur, "Mr. Petitpois achète un château," *Domaine de Musique Jaurès Montreuil*, accessed April 9, 2022, [https://nicolas-vasseur.canoprof.fr/eleve/Monsieur\\_Petitpois\\_corrige@1](https://nicolas-vasseur.canoprof.fr/eleve/Monsieur_Petitpois_corrige@1)

<sup>65</sup> Cummins, "Use of Parody," 123, 173.

depicted in this air with characteristic dotted rhythms and moderate tempo while the rhythm and poetic prosody help emphasize the second and third beats of each measure.

Other recognizable musical elements of the operetta form include direct musical quotation, prevalence of ensemble music and music finales. The duet between Adelestan and Héloïse directly quotes melodic and harmonic material from the title song of Offenbach's *La chanson de Fortunio*, which was popularly programmed in recitals in early 20th century France and would have been immediately appreciated by French audiences in Tailleferre's time.<sup>66</sup> Ensemble singing is also at the fore in *M. Petitpois* and many of Offenbach's operettas. Ensemble refrains during solo airs occur in all three of the opening entrance numbers. Likewise, full ensemble numbers occur throughout the score, including "Patatra," all three "Cri général," "Signez, signez, Mr. Petitpois" and the "Finale." "Patatra" resembles a typical act finale found at the midpoint of Offenbach operettas which intensifies the action and highlights the chaos of the narrative conflicts. The three "Cri Général" are short ensemble recitatives responding to the impassioned behaviors of the characters embroiled in conflict. Such musical responses share characteristics with Offenbach's *mélodrames*, short musical numbers played underneath particularly heightened spoken dialogue.<sup>67</sup> Lastly, the brief finale includes distinctive musical quotations from earlier numbers and sums up the sudden turn of events leading to the happy ending for all.

The libretto of *M. Petitpois* similarly matches the humorous conventions of Offenbach's operettas. The narrative shares many aspects of the libretto of *Château à Toto* and *Croquefer*, including the selling of a castle, the lovers' entanglement, medieval

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<sup>66</sup> Cummins, "Use of Parody," 168.

<sup>67</sup> Cummins, "Use of Parody," 178-179.

elements and upholding ancestral traditions.<sup>68</sup> Wordplay permeates each scene and musical number, including diminutive nicknames, repeated syllables and rapid text setting. Mr. Petitpois, literally translated as "little pea," is referred to by creative turns of French phrases as a tadpole, a green bean and a lentil. Le Duc brags about his illustrious ancestors, who all have silly nicknames, including "Ermangard le Mal-Cuit" (Ermangard the Undercooked) and "Luitpol Longue-Oreille" (Luitpol Long-Ears). Other character names seem to pay homage to Offenbach operettas and popular French figures. Héloïse references the strong, independent female characters of Offenbach's *Barbe-bleue* and *La belle Hélène*. Oreste is named directly after the son of Agamemnon in *La belle Hélène*. Cunégonde also appears in Offenbach's *Le roi Carotte* as well as Voltaire's *Candide*, possibly depicting a similar character found trapped by their follies.<sup>69</sup>

Immediately apparent from the first air to the finale is the rapid setting of the French text and repetition of syllables, both hallmarks of Offenbach. The stuttered warnings to Adelestan, the bombastic yodels of "La moustachette," the amazement of the ancestral lineage, the chaotic outbursts of "Patatra" and the urgent pleas to Mr. Petitpois to buy the château are all emphasized with repeated, nonsensical syllables and lightning fast text. Such characteristic treatment of the French language is famously evidenced in Offenbach's quintet of the kings in *La belle Hélène*. These textual and musical elements combine for an unforgettably witty and tuneful experience in Tailleferre's *M. Petitpois achète un château*.

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<sup>68</sup> Cummins, "Use of Parody," 158.

<sup>69</sup> Cummins, "Use of Parody," 160.

## Chapter 4

### Opportunities In Higher Education Vocal Studies

#### Accessibility

One of the main goals of this project is to increase accessibility and visibility of Tailleferre's vocal works within academic and professional institutions in the United States. Currently, many obstacles exist for English speaking artists, instructors and students that understandably inhibit the exploration and inclusion of her influence and works in courses of study and performance programs. Barriers to accessibility addressed in this project include lack of available instructional support, language and lack of materials to guide performance practice.

Many instructional materials that support existing song and opera literature courses do not include adequate information or are completely void of information to prepare instructors to lead scholarly discussions about Tailleferre. Three common French song literature texts, *The Interpretation of French Song* by Pierre Bernac, *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature* by Carol Kimball and *A French Song Companion* by Graham Johnson and Richard Stokes, are prime examples. Bernac's highly influential performance guide includes song translations, detailed musical discussion or mentions of compositions of forty-three French song composers, including 20th century contemporaries Francis Poulenc, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud and Georges Auric, but fails to include any mention of Germaine Tailleferre.<sup>70</sup> Similarly, Kimball's comprehensive song literature text that expands literature exploration beyond Western

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<sup>70</sup> Pierre Bernac, *The Interpretation of French Song*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1978).

European composers, does not include discussion of Tailleferre.<sup>71</sup> Johnson and Stokes textbook on the historical development of French song offers one page of biographical and compositional information pertaining to Tailleferre and one song translation, "Souvent un air de vérité" from *Six chansons françaises*. Serving as a brief starting point for further research, the authors close the discussion of Tailleferre by stating, "The time has come to reassess a composer who really benefited from the camaraderie of Les Six, and whose career never fully recovered, in the eyes of the public at least, from the collapse of that group's communal *esprit*."<sup>72</sup> Popular instructional texts pertaining to opera literature, including *Opera* by Robert Canon and *The Rough Guide to Opera* by Matthew Boyden, also fail to mention Tailleferre's contributions to operatic evolution and literature in their current editions.

To help bridge this instructional gap found in course materials, the lecture recital portion of this project provides a concise framework for fellow academic instructors to introduce Tailleferre and her works into standard curriculum. This presentation meets many requirements for standard higher education literature courses, including necessary discussion topics, a common structure of compositional examination and analysis of a variety of vocal works. This lecture recital provides biographical information to contextualize Tailleferre's influences and output, an outline of general style characteristics to easily compare with other composers and more detailed discussion of specific works to pinpoint the composer's style characteristics in musical scores. This lecture also divides Tailleferre's compositional career into four time periods, a common

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<sup>71</sup> Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature*, Revised ed (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2006).

<sup>72</sup> Graham Johnson and Richard Stokes, *A French Song Companion*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 487.

tool in literature courses to structure understanding of a composer's evolution and to better prepare students for the demands of masters and doctoral comprehensive exams. In analyzing Tailleferre's vocal works, it was important to provide examples pertaining to both song literature and opera literature in the hopes of offering maximum opportunities for instructional integration in current literature courses. Therefore, score discussions include two song sets with a variety of stylistic influences and excerpts from *Quatre opéras bouffes* of varying styles within the operatic genre. Lastly, the duration of this lecture being approximately 45 minutes, excluding the full musical performances, matches the time frame commonly allotted for higher education lectures.

Another step toward accessibility achieved in this project includes translations of Tailleferre's vocal works. Current valuable resources for instruction and performance preparation, such as the opera libretti translations and transcriptions by Nico Castel and the song texts and translations available in LiederNet Archive and Oxford Lieder, include few to no translations or transcriptions of Tailleferre's works. The original translations of *Trois Chansons de Jean Tardieu* and *Quatre opéras bouffes* created as part of this project encourage considerable progress toward accessibility of these works for English-speaking artists and audiences. The full libretto translation of *Quatre opéras bouffes* in particular, including translated dialogue and performance supertitles, opens the door for academic and professional organizations to easily mount future productions with accompanying materials commonly expected of standard opera productions. This is especially beneficial considering the eccentricities of Centore and Tailleferre's libretto, including archaic French vocabulary, various peculiar French dialects and grammatical liberties used to parody or depict time periods and social and economic classes. This translation is of

highest value for singers, coaches, directors and teachers preparing a production as a tool for learning the score and as a guide for deciphering the complicated and absurd narratives employed to parody each composer and time period.

Lastly, this project provides performance recordings and program notes for *Quatre opéras bouffes* that will aid future production preparations. The project performances feature the first recording of the operatic cycle performed solely from the reduction for piano published by Gérard Billaudot. Performances of operas with piano reduction are a common, economical and practical choice for higher education scene study courses and innovative academic and professional productions. This project's recordings can serve as a guide for performance practice with piano reduction, offering options for performance modifications, considerations for performing without a conductor and specific vocal performance practice choices based on compositional styles. The program notes accompanying these performances present analyses of narratives, characters, music and text that may also prove constructive for future production preparations.

### Applications To Vocal Training

The song sets *Pancarte pour une porte d'entrée* and *Trois Chansons de Jean Tardieu* represent repertoire of Tailleferre's that is easily applicable to higher education vocal training. A variety of compositional elements and vocal demands make them ideal for improving the skills and employing the academic knowledge of university level voice students. The range of stylistic influences, including neoclassical, modern and impressionist musical traits, offers ample opportunities for students of singing to decipher compositional details and showcase educated musical choices based on knowledge and

skills acquired in music theory, aural skills and French diction courses. With song structures and vocal demands ranging from simplistic to complex, individual songs from these sets could be introduced as a student progresses in their studies, methodically building in rigor and confidence in their approach and command of French song.

*Quatre opéras bouffes* can be similarly and successfully applied to undergraduate opera studies. The clearly delineated stylistic imitations outlined by the composer and librettist offer voice students an educational gateway into varying operatic styles. Students have the opportunity to discern direct imitations and quotations of differing operatic styles as well as the chance to encounter musical caricatures and purposeful contradictions, which can be valuable pedagogical tools to inspire a more thorough understanding of compositional techniques and operatic conventions. This educational approach to *Quatre opéras bouffes* can encourage discussions of historically-informed performance practice while also welcoming greater flexibility and ingenuity with the parodied material. The wide range of operatic styles represented in the cycle afford the rare ability for students of differing voice types, *fachs* and age within the same program to perform full roles and experience styles that best suit their voices and stages of training. Furthermore, the brevity of each opera and of each role allows for a safe and structured environment in which to experiment with new styles and vocal demands without the pressure and expense of such experimentation in larger roles and productions. Lastly, the episodic construction of these operas favors the practical time frame and format of many opera scenes performances, offering the ability for individual operas from the cycle to be featured alongside other operatic scenes or for the cycle in its entirety to serve as a complete scenes performance.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

The vocal works of Germaine Tailleferre offer an abundance of musical, historical and pedagogical opportunities to further understand the progress of French art song and opera throughout the 20th century. Tailleferre's close collaborations with many of the era's most influential artists and provocateurs, as well as her prolific partnership with a major French media outlet, offer unique insight into the evolving philosophies, artistic movements and *zeitgeist* of the time period. This project's consolidated research, structured lecture, musical analyses, original translations and premiere performances endeavor to provide valuable instructional and performance-related materials to increase access to and further disseminate these exceptional works. The array of compositional styles and demands represented in her *oeuvre* provide advantageous possibilities for projects incorporating diverse voice types, skill levels and integration with core academic studies. Especially remarkable is the balance of gender perspectives and discussions available with her inclusion in courses of song and opera literature, among others. May the work of this project and of fellow artists and researchers help to more fully realize the powerful impact of Tailleferre's legacy within our institutions of higher education.

# Appendix A

## Program #1

**Lecture Recital  
December 2, 2021  
Gildenhorn Recital Hall**

Lecture: *Introduction to the Life, Influences, Compositional Style & Repertoire of Germaine Tailleferre*

INTERMISSION

*Pancarte pour une porte d'entrée* (1959)

Poet: Robert Pinget

Les Chapeaux  
Désinvolution  
L'Oiseau des Îles  
Cours  
L'Émeraude  
Sainte Nitouche  
Partage  
L'Insecte  
L'Hirondelle  
Le Serpent  
Pancarte pour une porte d'entrée

*Trois Chansons de Jean Tardieu* (1977)

Poet: Jean Tardieu

L'éternel enfant  
Petite flamme  
Récapontilu

Excerpts from *Quatre opéras bouffes* (1955)

*La fille d'opéra*

Et quand le roi l'a dit  
Cet écossais revient des îles

*Le bel ambitieux*

Mazurka  
Air

*M. Petitpois achète un château*

Valse tyrolienne "La Moustachette"  
La galerie des ancêtres

# Appendix B

## Program #2

### *Quatre opéras bouffes - Part 1*

March 15, 2022

Gildenhorn Recital Hall

#### *La fille d'opéra*

In the style of Jean-Philippe Rameau

Cast:

|                           |                   |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Mlle. Pouponne</i>     | Rhiannon Vaughn   |
| <i>La Mère</i>            | Melissa Mino      |
| <i>Mistouflet</i>         | Thomas Lloyd      |
| <i>Le Merlan</i>          | David Starry      |
| <i>L'Inspecteur</i>       | Zachary Bryant    |
| <i>Le Père/Le Bottier</i> | Christian Simmons |

INTERMISSION

#### *Le bel ambitieux*

In the style of Gioachino Rossini

Cast:

|                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Clémentine</i>    | Morghana Pastrana |
| <i>Euphrasie</i>     | Melissa Mino      |
| <i>Petit Jacques</i> | Thomas Lloyd      |
| <i>Alphonse</i>      | Zachary Bryant    |
| <i>Le Baron</i>      | Christian Simmons |

## Appendix C

### Program #3

#### *Quatre opéras bouffes - Part 2*

April 14, 2022

Gildenhorn Recital Hall

#### *La pauvre Eugénie*

In the style of Gustave Charpentier

Cast:

|                    |                        |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Eugénie</i>     | Allysa Packard         |
| <i>Titine</i>      | Denique Isaac          |
| <i>Paula</i>       | Madeline Miskie-Jaeger |
| <i>Mme. Phémie</i> | David Starry           |
| <i>Gégène</i>      | Zachary Bryant         |
| <i>Le Patron</i>   | Henrique Carvalho      |

#### INTERMISSION

#### *M. Petitpois achète un château*

In the style of Jacques Offenbach

Cast:

|                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Héloïse</i>       | Denique Isaac          |
| <i>Cunégonde</i>     | Madeline Miskie-Jaeger |
| <i>Adelestan</i>     | David Starry           |
| <i>Oreste</i>        | Thomas Lloyd           |
| <i>Notaire</i>       | Josh Bates             |
| <i>Mr. Petitpois</i> | Zachary Bryant         |
| <i>Le Duc</i>        | Henrique Carvalho      |

## Appendix D

### Quatre opéras bouffes Full Libretto

#### LA FILLE D'OPÉRA

##### 1. Duo - Scene 1

POUPONNE

*(vivement)*

Le financier qui m'abandonne  
Me permet enfin de t'aimer  
Et croyant affliger Pouponne  
La livre à la félicité

POUPONNE - MISTOUFLET

Profitons d'un heureux moment

MISTOUFLET

Trop longtemps la triste contrainte  
Nous accabla sous son empire  
Bannissons à jamais la feinte  
Que rien ne gêne nos plaisirs

##### Scene 2

POUPONNE

Cache-toi promptement, chevalier; le temps se gâte,  
j'aperçois sur le place deux figures qui ne me disent rien de bon...

MISTOUFLET

Quoi, ce paysan et cette paysanne qui examinent votre balcon  
en ouvrant la bouche d'une oreille à l'autre?

POUPONNE

Vite, vite... Fourre-toi derrière le paravent, ils arrivent tout droit  
d'Arpajon, je gage...

MISTOUFLET

Je n'entends rien à cet imbroglia...

POUPONNE

Ne te montre pas, surtout... *(à part)*. Il y a bien six mois que  
j'ai oublié de leur envoyer l'intérêt des 50 livres qu'ils m'ont  
avancées pour m'établir lingère à Paris... Allons, tiens ferme,  
Pouponne, n'oublie pas que tu es philosophe...

##### 2. Trio - Scene 3

LA MÈRE

Je sommes venue d'Arpajon  
Dans la carriole à Lucas  
J'avons quitté nout' canton  
Dans l'but d'avoir nos ducats

LA PÈRE

C'est y donc là vos manières

##### 1. Duo - Scene 1

POUPONNE

*(strongly)*

The financier who abandons me  
Finally allows me to love you  
And thinking he is offending Pouponne,  
Actually abandons her to her deepest pleasure

POUPONNE - MISTOUFLET

Let's take advantage of a propitious moment

MISTOUFLET

Too long the sad constraint  
Overwhelmed us under its sway  
Let's banish the pretense forever  
Let nothing hinder our pleasures

##### Scene 2

POUPONNE

Hide quickly, sir; the storm clouds gather,  
I see on the square two figures that don't inspire trust...

MISTOUFLET

What, these peasants who examine your balcony, gossiping  
back and forth?

POUPONNE

Quick, quick... Get behind the screen, they come straight from  
Arpajon, I bet...

MISTOUFLET

I don't understand this mess...

POUPONNE

Above all, don't show yourself... *(aside)* It's been six months  
since I forgot to send them the interest on the 50 pounds they  
advanced me to establish myself as a seamstress in Paris...  
Come on, hold yourself together, Pouponne, don't forget you're  
impressively clever.

##### 2. Trio - Scene 3

LA MÈRE

I came all the way from Arpajon  
In Lucas' poor little cart  
I wandered far off from home  
To settle our debts

LA PÈRE

So those are your manners

D'faire du tort à son vieux père?

POUPONNE

Mon père, ma mère, que vos discours fâcheux  
Mon père, ma mère, allez donc soigner vos boeufs

LA MÈRE

On jase de vous au pays  
bien vilainement la belle  
On dit qu'les beaux messieurs d'Paris  
Vous couvrent de fines dentelles

LA PÈRE

Et qu'ils vous bâillement pour en bécot  
Et quoi acheter une paire de viaux

POUPONNE

Mon père, ma mère, ce propos là me consterne  
Mon père, ma mère, allez allez faucher vos luzernes

LA MÈRE

J'va vous soigner à ma façon  
D'une bonne giroflée  
Vous v'la nippé comme un' goton  
Et ça fait la mijaurée!

LA PÈRE

La mère finis ton madrigal  
d'main, j'la f'rons met' à l'hôpital!

MISTOUFLET

Sortez d'ici manants ou j'appelle la garde

LA MÈRE

Mon homme tiron nous d'là

LA PÈRE

La femme sortons d'ici  
Il a une fière colichemarde

POUPONNE

Mon père, ma mère, je suis bien votre servante  
Mon père, ma mère, votre très humble servante.

### 3. Duo - Scene 4

POUPONNE - MISTOUFLET  
Des gêneurs la projet s'arrête,  
Ranimons les feux d'un amour  
Dont aucun mortel ne s'apprête  
À déranger la tendre cours  
Profitons d'un heureux moment

### 4. - Scene 5

MISTOUFLET  
Qu'est-ce là, Messieurs, et que signifie ce tapage?

LE MERLAN - LE BOTTIER

Monsieur le chevalier,  
Voici votre bottier

To wrong your old man?

POUPONNE

My father, my mother, your speeches annoy me  
My father, my mother, go take care of your oxen

LA MÈRE

They don't speak kindly of you  
In the country, little girl  
They say the handsome gentlemen of Paris  
Cover you with fancy lace

LA PÈRE

And they yawn to kiss you  
And to buy a pair of calves

POUPONNE

My father, my mother, this dismays me  
My father, my mother, go trim your alfalfa

LA MÈRE

I'll take care of you in my own way  
Like a good gillyflower  
Here you're all dressed up like a misbehaved farm girl,  
Acting like such a highfalutin girl!

LA PÈRE

Mother, finish your ditty  
Tomorrow, I'll put her in the hospital!

MISTOUFLET

Get out of here beggars or I'll call the guard

LA MÈRE

Let's get out of here

LA PÈRE

Let's leave here  
He's got a proud sword

POUPONNE

My father, my mother, I am indeed your servant  
My father, my mother, your most humble servant.

### 3. Duo - Scene 4

POUPONNE - MISTOUFLET  
Obstacles stop our affair,  
Let's rekindle the fires of a love  
Of which no mortal is prepared  
To disturb its tender course  
Let's enjoy a happy time

### 4. - Scene 5

MISTOUFLET  
What is it, Gentlemen, and what does this uproar mean?

LE MERLAN - LE BOTTIER

Good sir,  
Here is your shoemaker

Voici votre merlan  
Tous deux dévoués à vos ordres

POUPONNE - MISTOUFLET  
On pourrait croire qu'ils vont nous mordre

LE MERLAN - LE BOTTIER  
Vous nous devez cent pistoles  
Évidemment depuis six mois sur parole

POUPONNE - MISTOUFLET  
Mais qu'ont-ils donc ces pauvres gens?

LE MERLAN  
Deux fois dix-huit pots de pommade  
Quatre vingt dix neuf sous de poudre

LE BOTTIER  
Des mules pour la promenade  
Et quatre tiges à resemeler

LE MERLAN  
Trente coiffures à la française,  
La barbe faite à Monsieur Blaise

LE BOTTIER  
Un grand tire bottes plus la rosette  
Que Madam' perdit à la fête

LE MERLAN  
Et pour accommoder Monsieur,  
Dix huit frisures troussées au mieux

LE BOTTIER  
Et j'ai noté un lacet neuf  
Plus douze sols de pâte à l'oeuf

LE MERLAN - LE BOTTIER  
Ce qui fait bien évidemment  
Cent pistoles sur ma parole.

POUPONNE - MISTOUFLET  
Mais qu'ont-ils donc ces pauvres gens  
Leurs têtes me paraissent folles  
Pour un si médiocre mémoire venir  
Nous rompre les oreilles  
Messieurs, vraiment  
Je m'émerveille à tel point que je n'ose y croire

LE MERLAN - LE BOTTIER  
Oh! Quoi! Mais! Qu'est ce! Ah! Ciel!  
C'est peu de chose assurément  
Mais il nous faudrait quelque argent  
Ou nous irons fort à regret  
Déposer plainte au Châtelet

MISTOUFLET  
Laissez-moi ces broutilles et revenez demain, Messieurs,  
j'aurai de quoi vous satisfaire.

Here is your hairdresser  
Both devoted to your orders

POUPONNE - MISTOUFLET  
We would think they might bite us

LE MERLAN - LE BOTTIER  
You owe us a hundred pistoles  
Obviously for six months on my word

POUPONNE - MISTOUFLET  
But what do these poor people have?

LE MERLAN  
Two times eighteen pots of pomade  
Ninety-nine cents of powder

THE BOOTMAKER  
Mules for the walk  
And four soles to repair

LE MERLAN  
Thirty hairstyles à la française,  
The beard done like Monsieur Blaise

LE BOTTIER  
A large boot puller plus the rosette  
That Madame lost at the party

LE MERLAN  
And to accommodate sir,  
Eighteen curls bundled at best

LE BOTTIER  
And I noticed a new shoelace  
Plus twelve sols of shoe shine

LE MERLAN - LE BOTTIER  
Which obviously makes  
A hundred pistoles on my word.

POUPONNE - MISTOUFLET  
But how crazy do these poor people  
Look to me,  
Hurting our ears  
Because of such a mediocre record book.  
Gentlemen, truly  
I'm so amazed that I dare not believe it

LE MERLAN - LE BOTTIER  
Oh! What! But! What is that! Ah! Heavens!  
It's certainly a small thing  
But we need some money  
Or we will go very reluctantly  
To file a complaint at the Châtelet

MISTOUFLET  
Leave me these trifles and come back tomorrow, gentlemen,  
I will have something to satisfy you.

LE MERLAN  
Nous reviendrons dans un moment; il nous faut parler à Madame.

LE BOTTIER  
Nos cœurs ne sont point taillés dans le marbre, et nous aurons peut-être un honnête arrangement à vous proposer.

**5. - Scene 6**

MISTOUFLET  
Pouponne, c'en est fait le sort nous est contraire  
Il faut prendre parti, il faut nous y résoudre

POUPONNE - MISTOUFLET  
Il faut prendre parti, il faut nous y résoudre  
Fuyons dans les déserts n'attendons pas la foudre

MISTOUFLET  
Me suivrais tu jusqu'à Limours?

POUPONNE  
Je te suivrais jusqu'à Limours

MISTOUFLET  
J'y possède un château flanqué de quatre tours  
Où sous l'antique ogive nous verrions luire Phoebé  
Occupés de nous seuls, de nous seuls enivrés

POUPONNE - MISTOUFLET  
Occupés de nous seuls, de nous seuls enivrés  
Ah! Fuyons sans tarder, fuyons jusqu'à Limours  
Oui, laissons des cités, le pernicieux séjour.

**Scene 7**

L'INSPECTEUR  
Il est trop tard, Monsieur le Chevalier. Voilà douze minutes que la diligence de Limours a quitté la rue des Postes...

MISTOUFLET  
Palsambleu! Quelle insolence! Qui vous a permis d'entrer en cet appartement?

L'INSPECTEUR  
Souffrez que je me présente: Inspecteur Prunelle, dépêché auprès de vous par Monsieur le Lieutenant de Police.

MISTOUFLET  
Et qu'ai-je à faire avec la Police, s'il vous plaît?

L'INSPECTEUR  
Vos parents, Monsieur le chevalier, se plaignent fort au roi de vos extravagances, et je crains bien d'avoir, d'ici quelques jours, l'honneur de vous faire monter de grand matin dans une voiture de la lieutenance de Police, pour vous mener loger aux dépens de Sa Majesté, en son château de la Bastille Saint-Antoine...

LE MERLAN  
We'll come back in a moment; we must speak to Madame.

LE BOTTIER  
Our hearts are not carved in stone, we may have an honest arrangement to offer you.

**5. - Scene 6**

MISTOUFLET  
Pouponne, it's over, fate is against us  
We have to make up our minds, we have to come to terms with it

POUPONNE - MISTOUFLET  
We have to take sides, we have to resolve it  
Let's flee to the deserts, let's not wait for lightning

MISTOUFLET  
Would you follow me to Limours?

POUPONNE  
I would follow you to Limours

MISTOUFLET  
I have a house there flanked by four towers  
Where under the ancient arch we would see Phoebe shining  
Occupied with us alone, with us alone intoxicated

POUPONNE - MISTOUFLET  
Occupied with us alone, with us alone intoxicated  
Ah! Let's flee without delay, let's flee to Limours  
Yes, let's leave the city's pernicious stay.

**Scene 7**

L'INSPECTEUR  
It's too late, good sir. It's been twelve minutes since the Limours stagecoach left the rue des Postes...

MISTOUFLET  
My God! What insolence! Who allowed you to enter this apartment?

THE INSPECTOR  
Allow me to introduce myself: Inspector Prunelle, dispatched to you by the Lieutenant of Police.

MISTOUFLET  
And what have I to do with the Police, please?

THE INSPECTOR  
Your parents, Sir Knight, are complaining loudly to the King about your extravagances, and I am afraid that in a few days I will have the honor of getting you into a car belonging to the Lieutenant of Police very early in the morning, to take you to stay at the expense of His Majesty, in his castle of the Bastille Saint-Antoine...

POUPONNE  
Ciel, Mistouflet! On te mettrait à la Bastille?

MISTOUFLET  
À la Bastille, moi! Monsieur l'Inspecteur, mais c'est atroce...

L'INSPECTEUR  
Non, c'est prudent. Vos plaisirs coûtent un peu trop cher à Monsieur votre Père.

### 6. Trio de la Bastille

MISTOUFLET  
Tristes plaisir, funestes réjouissances,  
Appats trompeurs trop précieuse folie,  
Coupe enchantées où s'égarant mes sens  
Vous dire adieu, Pouponne c'est trancher ma vie.

L'INSPECTEUR  
Oui, le fatal décret, dicté par la famille  
Grave au coeur des amants une sombre fureur  
Mais quand le roi l'a dit logeant à la Bastille  
On s'étudie au frais à réformer ses moeurs

POUPONNE  
Ah, barbare, tyran, tu te ris de mes peines,  
Ce fer à ton côté, plonge dans mon sein!  
Mets donc fins à mes jours achève mon destin,  
Et cesse d'insulter à ma douleur extrême.

Vous m'ôtez mon époux au nom de la famille  
Que cet ordre m'enrage et me met en fureur

MISTOUFLET  
Abominable loi d'une ingrate famille  
Que cet ordre m'enrage et me met en fureur

L'INSPECTEUR  
Mais en vain le décret du père de famille  
Vous met mes chers bijoux dans sombre fureur

POUPONNE - MISTOUFLET - L'INSPECTEUR  
Pourtant le roi l'a dit logeant à la Bastille  
On s'étudie au frais à réformer ses moeurs.

### 7. Duo - Scene 8

MISTOUFLET  
Juste ciel, les revoilà!

L'INSPECTEUR  
Voici, me semble-t-il, un merlan et un bottier. Ils viennent de la part de milord Mac Sennet.

POUPONNE  
Il faut que je leur parle, Mistouflet. Je sens bien que si l'on me met à l'hôpital, j'en tomberai malade... Je vous laisse un moment.

POUPONNE  
Heaven, Mistouflet! Will they really put you in the Bastille?

MISTOUFLET  
At the Bastille! Me? Inspector, oh it's atrocious...

THE INSPECTOR  
No, it's wise. Your pleasures cost your Father a little too much.

### 6. Trio de la Bastille

MISTOUFLET  
Sad pleasures, fatal rejoicings,  
Deceitful lures, too precious madness,  
Enchanted cup where my senses wander  
To say goodbye to you, Pouponne, is to end my life.

L'INSPECTEUR  
Yes, the fatal decree, dictated by the family  
Grave in the hearts of lovers a dark fury  
But the King says that when one lives in the Bastille,  
One has time to reflect upon their actions, by changing their moral values.

POUPONNE  
Ah, barbarian, tyrant, you laugh at my sorrows,  
This iron at your side, plunge into my bosom!  
Put an end to my life, complete my destiny,  
And stop insulting my extreme pain.

You take my husband away from me in the name of the family  
This order enrages me and makes me furious

MISTOUFLET  
Abominable law of an ungrateful family  
This order enrages me and makes me furious

L'INSPECTEUR  
But in vain the decree of the father of the family  
Puts you, my sweethearts, in dark fury

POUPONNE - MISTOUFLET - L'INSPECTEUR  
Yet the King says that when one lives in the Bastille  
One has time to reflect upon their actions, by changing their moral values.

### 7. Duo - Scene 8

MISTOUFLET  
Fair heavens, here they are again!

L'INSPECTEUR  
Here, it seems to me, is a hairdresser and a shoemaker. They come from Lord Mac Sennet.

POUPONNE  
I must talk to them, Mistouflet. I feel that if they put me in the hospital, I will fall ill... I'll leave you for a moment.

L'INSPECTEUR  
Causons un peu, jeune homme.

MISTOUFLET  
Et moi, grand Dieu! Quelle position! Je me vois entre le  
Châtelet et la Bastille, comment traverser cet embarras!

L'INSPECTEUR  
Cédez donc la mignonne à milord Mac Sennet, Monsieur le  
chevalier, cela arrangera tout.

MISTOUFLET  
Jamais! Plutôt mourir!

L'INSPECTEUR  
Oh jeunesse, oh inconscience! Milord est fou des charmes  
de Pouponne, il médite de la faire entrer à l'Opéra pour faire  
crever de jalousie ce grand cheval de Cleophile qu'un prince  
moscovite lui a enlevée.

MISTOUFLET  
Pouponne à l'Opéra! Jamais. Plutôt mourir!

L'INSPECTEUR  
Délire, balivernes, encore un mot, fariboles... La petite ne  
pourra plus être mise à l'hôpital, elle sera pensionnaire du  
roi...

Et quand le roi l'a dit,  
Chantant à l'Opéra,  
On se rit des fureurs  
De son cher vieux papa  
En vain d'Arpajon,  
La trame va s'ourdir,  
Sous le sceptre du prince,  
L'enfant enfin respire.

L'INSPECTEUR - MISTOUFLET  
Sous le sceptre du prince,  
L'enfant enfin respire.

MISTOUFLET  
Et qui me paiera mes dettes, à moi?

L'INSPECTEUR  
N'êtes-vous pas aimé?

MISTOUFLET  
Follement.

L'INSPECTEUR  
Alors... mais voici Pouponne. Son air me paraît des plus  
rassérénés.

### 8. Forlane - Scene 9

POUPONNE  
On me parle d'un gentil homme  
Aimable et riche et me dit-on  
Très amoureux de ma personne,  
Étranger mais de fort bon ton

L'INSPECTEUR  
Let's talk a bit, young man.

MISTOUFLET  
And me, great God! What a position! I find myself between the  
Châtelet and the Bastille, how will I get through this tough spot!

L'INSPECTEUR  
Give the darling to Milord Mac Sennet, Monsieur le Chevalier,  
that will settle everything.

MISTOUFLET  
Never! I'd rather die!

L'INSPECTEUR  
Oh youth, oh inconsequence! Milord is mad about the charms  
of Pouponne, he considers letting her enter the opera to make  
this great horse of Cleophile die of jealousy, which a Russian  
prince has taken away from him.

MISTOUFLET  
Pouponne at the opera! Never. I'd choose death!

L'INSPECTEUR  
Craziness, nonsense, one more word, poppycock... The little  
one can no longer be put in the hospital, she'll be a ward of the  
crown...

And when the king spoke  
Of singing at the opera,  
We laughed at the fury  
Of the dear old papa  
In vain from Arpajon,  
The weft will become thin,  
Under the sceptre of the prince,  
The child finally breathes.

L'INSPECTEUR - MISTOUFLET  
Under the sceptre of the prince,  
The child finally breathes.

MISTOUFLET  
And who will pay my debts?

L'INSPECTEUR  
Are you not loved?

MISTOUFLET  
Madly.

L'INSPECTEUR  
So... but here is Pouponne. Her air seems most reassured to  
me.

### 8. Forlane - Scene 9

POUPONNE  
They talk to me about a nice man.  
Kind and rich, and they tell me  
He's very much in love with me,  
A foreigner but in good taste

Ceci vaut bien qu'on en raisonne  
Car il m'envoie, voyez, ma foi,  
Des girandoles, des girandoles  
Ceci vaut bien qu'on en raisonne

Je ne sais s'il a de l'esprit  
Cet article n'est point porté  
Sur le billet qu'on m'a remis  
Mais sa plume a des probités

Dont on peut rester attendrie,  
Car il m'envoie, voyez, ma foi,  
Trois milles pistoles, trois milles pistoles  
Ceci vaut bien qu'on en raisonne

Se faisant scrupule en causant  
De gâter la conversation,  
On le dit badin cependant.  
Je lui rendrai satisfaction

Car ne troublant point son penchant  
Il n'aura de moi sur ma foi,  
Qu'un bonheur sans parole  
Qu'un bonheur sans parole...

#### **9. Scene 10**

L'INSPECTEUR

Cet écossais revient des îles  
Ceci le rend intéressant  
Il pousse là bas des diamants  
Comme à Paris des imbéciles

J'ai ouï dire que le soupirant  
Périt de fièvre et de mal blanc,  
Et vous serez bientôt tranquille.

LE MERLAN - LE BOTTIER - L'INSPECTEUR

Cet écossais revient des îles  
Ceci le rend intéressant  
Il pousse là bas des diamants  
Comme à Paris des imbéciles

J'ai ouï dire que le soupirant  
Périt de fièvre et de mal blanc,  
Et vous serez bientôt tranquille.

#### **10. Final - Scene 11: Tous**

POUPONNE

Ah, que m'importe le Calédonien,  
Bientôt de l'Opéra, je serai la deesse  
On m'y verra briller, clans l'éclat purpurin  
D'une parure enchanteresse...  
Et de Monsieur Rameau  
Embellissant les airs...

Je ferai des ah...  
Sur des modes divers ah...

This is well worth considering  
For he sends me, see, gracious me,  
Fireworks, fireworks  
This is well worth considering

I don't know if he has any sense  
This item is not worn  
On the ticket I was given  
But his pen has integrity

Of which we can remain tender,  
For he sends me, see, gracious me,  
Three thousand pistoles, three thousand pistoles  
This is well worth considering

Having scruples while talking  
To spoil the conversation,  
Is said to be mischievous, however,  
I will satisfy him

Because not troubling his inclination  
He will only get from me, on my faith,  
But a wordless happiness  
But a wordless happiness...

#### **9. Scene 10**

L'INSPECTEUR

This Scotsman returns from the islands  
Which makes him interesting  
He grows diamonds there  
Like imbeciles in Paris

I have to say that the suitor  
Perishes of fever and white sickness,  
And will soon be quiet.

LE MERLAN - LE BOTTIER - L'INSPECTEUR

This Scotsman returns from the islands  
Which makes him interesting  
He grows diamonds there  
Like imbeciles in Paris

I have heard it said that the suitor  
Perishes of fever and white sickness,  
And will soon be quiet

#### **10. Final - Scene 11: Tous**

POUPONNE

Ah, what does the Caledonian matter to me,  
Soon from the Opera, I will be the goddess  
You will see me shine there, in the purpurin radiance  
With an enchanting appearance...  
And Mr. Rameau  
Beautifying the air...

I will do "ah..."  
In various modes "ah..."

TOUS

Ah quel aimable dénouement  
Ah quelle heureuse catastrophe

POUPONNE

De Monsieur Piccini j'entonnerai les strophes  
Et de Monsieur Destouches les suaves psalmodies

TOUS

Ah! Que la conclusion me touche  
Ah quelle sublime tragédie

POUPONNE

Reine ou bergère, fille ou mère  
Vierge sacrée ou confidente austère

Rivale ou amante adorée  
Noble perfide ou sacrifiée  
N'en doutez pas je serai sans pareille  
Car j'ai la gorge faite ainsi qu'une merveille

Et nul n'ignore  
Veut qu'à Paris  
Tienne dans le corsage

TOUS

Ah! Que la conclusion me touche  
Ah quelle sublime tragédie  
Et nul n'ignore que l'usage  
Tout le succès tienne dans le corsage  
Ah quelle sublime conclusion  
Ah quel aimable dénouement

ALL

Oh what a lovely ending  
Oh what a happy disaster

POUPONNE

I will sing the stanzas of Monsieur Piccini  
And the sweet psalmodies of Monsieur Destouches

ALL

Ah! How the conclusion touches me  
Oh what a sublime tragedy

POUPONNE

Queen or shepherdess, daughter or mother  
Sacred virgin or austere confidante

Rival or adored lover  
False noble or sacrifice  
Do not doubt it I will be without equal  
Because my breasts are made like a marvel

And everyone knows  
Desires only in Paris  
What is in the bodice

ALL

Ah! How the conclusion touches me  
Oh what a sublime tragedy  
And everyone knows the custom  
All the success is in the bodice  
Oh what a wonderful conclusion  
Oh what a lovely ending

## LE BEL AMBITIEUX

### 1. - Scene 1

*(parle sur la musique)*

ALPHONSE

Angel... consens à te fixer un instant sur la terre...

CLÉMENTINE

Va... oublie-moi, mon enfant... je saurais encore pardonner et bénir...

### 2. Duo

*(toujours parlé sur la musique jusqu'au chiffre 1)*

ALPHONSE

Tu blasphèmes, chère idole, t'oublier, moi?

CLÉMENTINE

Est-ce donc impossible?

ALPHONSE

Demande au myosotis d'oublier son ruisseau, mais ne demande pas à Alphonse d'oublier Clementine...

CLÉMENTINE

Vous voyez bien que vous me faites souffrir...

ALPHONSE

Tu souffres et je meurs  
Inexplicable amante  
Ton beau front fléchissant  
S'appuyant sur ma main  
Me révèle le poids de ta pensée ardente  
Tu songes à ma douleur

CLÉMENTINE

Ah! Ta douleur m'étreint  
Ainsi que le vent traîne  
Une feuille tombée  
Ta douleur te vêt tel un lourd manteau noir  
Emporte dans ses plis mon âme désolée  
Et ma vie se consume en un lent désespoir

ALPHONSE

Exhale ton délire  
Ô sublime Ophélie  
Lève au ciel un regard aveuglé par les pleurs

ALPHONSE - CLÉMENTINE

Il entend des soupirs la divine harmonie  
Et moi j'entends l'écho qui me répète:  
Elle (il) meurt  
Que le chaste repos d'une couche funèbre  
Nous unisse à jamais dans un même tombeau,  
Que dans l'ombre éternelle le Génie des Ténèbres  
Se taise et se recueille écoutant nos sanglots  
Puisque sur nous la terre referme ses secrets,  
Seul tu pourras dire jadis elle (il) m'aimait.

### 1. - Scene 1

*(talking over the music)*

ALPHONSE

Angel... please stay for a moment on the earth...

CLEMENTINE

Go... forget me, my child... I would still know how to forgive and bless...

### 2. Duo

*(always spoken on the music until the number 1)*

ALPHONSE

You blaspheme, my dear idol! Would you forget me?

CLEMENTINE

Is it impossible?

ALPHONSE

Ask the forget-me-not to forget its stream, but don't ask Alphonse to forget Clementine...

CLEMENTINE

You can clearly see that you make me suffer...

ALPHONSE

You suffer and I die  
inexplicable lover  
Your beautiful bending brow  
Leaning on my hand  
Reveals to me the weight of your ardent thought  
You think of my pain

CLEMENTINE

Ah! Your pain embraces me  
As the wind drags  
A fallen leaf  
Your pain dresses you like a heavy black coat  
Carrying in its folds my desolate soul  
And my life is consumed in a slow despair

ALPHONSE

Exhale your delusion  
O sublime Ophelia  
Raise to the sky a gaze blinded by tears

ALPHONSE-CLEMENTINE

He hears sighs of the divine harmony  
And I hear the echo repeating to me:  
She (He) dies  
The chaste rest of a funeral bed  
Unite us forever in the same tomb,  
That in the eternal shadow the Genius of Darkness  
Is silent and meditates listening to our sobs  
Since on us the earth closes its secrets,  
Alone, you will be able to say once that she (he) loved me.

**Scene 2**

CLÉMENTINE

Sonnez donc pour le thé, dear...

ALPHONSE

Vous savez que je vais me faire sauter la cervelle?

CLÉMENTINE

À propos de quoi, mon cher?

ALPHONSE

Trente mille francs perdus hier au jeu sur parole, cinq soeurs à marier nichées au château de Palpebral dont, par parenthèses, les dernières ardoises sont tombées pendant la Terreur...

CLÉMENTINE

*(languissamment)*

Vraiment, mon ami... mais quelle idée...

**3. Mazurka**

ALPHONSE

Ma chère j'examine la chose

En vrai dandy

Et je crois que rien ne s'oppose

À ce parti

Le suicide est une élégance

De très bon goût

Et qui vous pose en évidence

Dans les raouts

Mais il serait d'un genre

Suprême et plus hardi

De partir tous les deux pour Brême

Ou Napoli.

**4. Récitatif**

CLÉMENTINE

Partir pour Napoli, mais ce serait folie le voudrais je le puis je le dois je

ALPHONSE

Mais oui! Ne t'aimé je pas?

CLÉMENTINE

Je n'y suis pour personne

PETIT JACQUES

Le Baron Pschutt arrive de Lisbonne Madame

CLÉMENTINE

Introduisez ce cher Baron Pschutt Alphonse pas un mot Chut! Chut! Chut! Chut!

**Scene 2**

CLEMENTINE

So ring for tea, dear...

ALPHONSE

You know I'm gonna blow my brains out?

CLEMENTINE

About what, my dear?

ALPHONSE

Thirty thousand francs lost on parole yesterday, five marriageable sisters nestled in the Château de Palpebral, the last slates of which, incidentally, fell during the Terror...

CLEMENTINE

*(languidly)*

Really, my love... what an idea...

**3. Mazurka**

ALPHONSE

My dear I examine the thing

As a true nobleman

And I believe that nothing opposes

This prospect

Suicide is an elegance

Of very good taste

And which makes you a hot topic

At a social gathering

But it would be more

Supreme and bolder

To leave together for Bremen

Or Napoli.

**4. Recitative**

CLEMENTINE

Leave for Napoli? But that would be madness. Would I, can I, must I?

ALPHONSE

But yes! Don't I love you?

CLEMENTINE

It's not my fault.

PETIT JACQUES

Baron Pschutt arrives from Lisbon Madame

CLEMENTINE

Introduce this dear Baron Pschutt. Alphonse, not a word Hush! Hush! Hush! Hush!

**Scene 4**

LE BARON

Mes hommages, Madame...

CLÉMENTINE

Vous connaissez le Vicomte de Palpebral?

LE BARON

Je n'ai pas cet honneur... mais je subodore que ce jeune gentilhomme est à la veille de perpétrer quelque sottise.

ALPHONSE

Et comment le savez-vous, Monsieur?

LE BARON

Je sais tout, je vois tout, je me tais.

ALPHONSE

Alors, Baron, dites-moi ce que je dois faire...

**5. Air - Scene 5**

LE BARON

Si vous voulez vous pousser  
Dans la sphère politique  
Il vous faut sans hésiter  
Faire un ouvrage historiqueTâtez moi la question d'Orient  
C'est un sujet amusant  
Soyez d'abord obscur, énigmatique,  
Usez de la figure allégorique  
Surtout n'oubliez pas la pragmatique  
Mettez ici et là du germaniqueN'en dites pas beaucoup  
Mais dites en assez  
Affirmez fortement ce que vous ignorez.  
Si vous réussissez, vous aurez du génie,  
Et l'on vous emploiera dans la diplomatie.

ALPHONSE

*(enthousiaste)*

N'ajoutez rien Baron, vous m'avez décidé.

CLÉMENTINE

*(inquiète)*

Ce livre, s'il le signe, faudra-t-il qu'il le lise?

LE BARON

Vous êtes ingénue... chère comtesse.

**6. Trio Valse - Scene 6**

CLÉMENTINE

Glissons d'un vol discret

ALPHONSE

Courons d'un pied léger

**Scene 4**

THE BARON

My respects, Madame...

CLEMENTINE

Do you know the Viscount of Palpebral?

THE BARON

I don't have that honor... but I suspect that this young gentleman is about to perpetrate some mischief.

ALPHONSE

And how do you know that, sir?

THE BARON

I know everything, I see everything, I keep it quiet.

ALPHONSE

So, Baron, tell me what to do...

**5. Air - Scene 5**

THE BARON

If you want to enter  
The political sphere  
You definitely need to  
Make a historical workTry me a question of the East  
It's a fun topic  
Be first obscure, enigmatic,  
Use allegory  
Above all, do not forget pragmatics  
Put Germanic here and thereDon't say much  
But say enough  
Strongly affirm what you do not know  
If you succeed, you will have genius,  
And you will be employed in diplomacy.

ALPHONSE

*(enthusiastic)*

Don't add anything Baron, you've convinced me.

CLEMENTINE

*(worry)*

This book, if he signs it, will he have to read it?

THE BARON

You are ingenuous... dear countess.

**6. Trio Valse - Scene 6**

CLEMENTINE

Let's slide with a discreet flight

ALPHONSE

Let's run lightly

LE BARON  
Marchons d'un pas altier

CLÉMENTINE - ALPHONSE - LE BARON  
Où l'ambition nous porte  
Où l'amour nous transporte  
Vers les lambris dorés  
Courons, glissons, volons

ALPHONSE  
Écrasant nos rivaux  
Et méprisant les sots,  
Plantons notre bannière  
Au seuil du ministère

CLÉMENTINE  
Glissons d'un vol discret  
Au sein des cabinets

ALPHONSE  
Courons d'un pied léger

LE BARON  
Marchons d'un pas altier  
Vers les salons dorés

CLÉMENTINE - ALPHONSE - LE BARON  
Où l'ambition nous porte  
Où l'amour nous transporte

LE BARON  
Étudiant les détours  
Des plus illustres cours,  
Sachons à l'occasion  
Redorer nos blasons

**Scene 7**

CLÉMENTINE  
*(languissante)*  
Vicomte?... Sonnez donc pour le thé.

LE BARON  
Décoction ultra-diplomatique, en ce qu'elle refroidit  
considérablement la lymphe et tonifie l'estomac. Le thé et le  
keepsake expliquent la puissance britannique.

ALPHONSE  
Ceci est profond, mon cher.

CLÉMENTINE  
Prodigieusement. Mais qu'attendez-vous? Sonnez pour le  
thé... *(on frappe)* Qu'y a-t-il encore, Petit Jacques?

PETIT JACQUES  
*(avec précaution)*  
Madame, c'est Mademoiselle que Mademoiselle Berthe a  
déposée chez Mademoiselle Séraphine et qui vient d'arriver  
dans le briska de Mademoiselle Emerentienne...

THE BARON  
Let's walk with a proud step

CLEMENTINE - ALPHONSE - THE BARON  
Where ambition takes us  
Where love carries us  
Towards the golden paneling  
Run, slide, fly

ALPHONSE  
Crushing our rivals  
And despising fools,  
Let's plant our banner  
On the threshold of the ministry

CLEMENTINE  
Let's slide with a discreet flight  
Within the offices

ALPHONSE  
Let's run lightly

THE BARON  
Let's walk with a proud step  
Towards the golden salon

CLEMENTINE - ALPHONSE - THE BARON  
Where ambition takes us  
Where love carries us

THE BARON  
Studying the detours  
Of the most illustrious courts,  
Let's be able to sometime  
Restore your prestige

**Scene 7**

CLEMENTINE  
*(languishing)*  
Viscount?... Ring the bell for tea.

THE BARON  
Most diplomatic potion, in that it considerably cools the lymph  
and tones the stomach. Tea and souvenirs explain British  
power.

ALPHONSE  
This is profound, good sir.

CLEMENTINE  
Abundantly. But what are you waiting for? Ring for tea...  
*(knock)* What else is there, Little Jacques?

PETIT JACQUES  
*(with caution)*  
Madame, it is Mademoiselle whom Mademoiselle Berthe  
dropped off at Mademoiselle Séraphine and who has just  
arrived in Mademoiselle Emerentienne's carriage...

CLÉMENTINE  
*(agitée)*  
Mademoiselle! Mais quel jour sommes-nous donc?

LE BARON  
Hum, hum, hum...

ALPHONSE  
*(à part)*  
Peste... on me cache quelque chose...

PETIT JACQUES  
*(de plus en plus consterné)*  
Le jour de la naissance de Madame la comtesse, Madame...

CLÉMENTINE  
*(de plus en plus agitée)*  
Mais alors, elle est là?

PETIT JACQUES  
*(lugubre)*  
Oui, Madame. Mademoiselle est là avec un bouquet.

CLÉMENTINE  
*(sans voix)*  
Un bouquet...

LE BARON  
Hum, hum, hum...

ALPHONSE  
*(à part)*  
Le récit de ce vieillard jette Clémentine dans un trouble affreux. Tout ceci me semble sibyllin, mais je saurai la vérité!

CLÉMENTINE  
Qu'elle aille dans sa chambre.

PETIT JACQUES  
Mademoiselle se propose de réciter un compliment à Madame.

CLÉMENTINE  
*(mourante)*  
Je suis perdue...

PETIT JACQUES  
*(haute voix)*  
Mademoiselle Euphrasie demande à présenter ses devoirs à Madame...

CLÉMENTINE  
Seigneur...

PETIT JACQUES  
*(s'éloignant)*  
Entrez Mademoiselle... Madame vous attend.

CLEMENTINE  
*(agitated)*  
Mademoiselle! But what day is it?

THE BARON  
Hmm, um, um...

ALPHONSE  
*(aside)*  
Plague... something is being hidden from me...

PETIT JACQUES  
*(increasingly dismayed)*  
The day of the birth of Madame the Countess, Madame...

CLEMENTINE  
*(increasingly agitated)*  
But then, is she there?

PETIT JACQUES  
*(dismal)*  
Yes Madam. Mademoiselle is there with a bouquet.

CLEMENTINE  
*(voiceless)*  
A bouquet...

THE BARON  
Hmm, um, um...

ALPHONSE  
*(aside)*  
This news throws Clementine into a frightful confusion. All this seems cryptic to me, but I will know the truth!

CLEMENTINE  
Let her go to her room.

PETIT JACQUES  
Mademoiselle proposes to recite a compliment to Madame.

CLEMENTINE  
*(dying)*  
I'm lost...

PETIT JACQUES  
*(high voice)*  
Mademoiselle Euphrasie asks to present her homework to Madame...

CLEMENTINE  
Lord...

PETIT JACQUES  
*(walking away)*  
Enter Mademoiselle... Madame is waiting for you.

**7. Romance - Scene 8**

EUPHRASIE

En ce beau jour de votre fête  
 Que je me plais ma chère maman  
 À ne compter sur votre tête  
 Que le poids toujours ravissant  
 De quarante et deux printemps.

Une mère est toujours contente  
 Du doux aveu de la candeur,  
 Et je vois que je vous enchante  
 Mais ne dérobez pas vos pleurs  
 Sous une main tremblante.

**7bis. Récitatif**

CLÉMENTINE

Il suffit, Mademoiselle, je vous l'ordonne.  
 Sortez! Et ne reparaissiez que si je vous appelle.

EUPHRASIE

Mais maman, je n'ai pas final c'est la fin le plus joli.

CLÉMENTINE

Vous me l'enverrez par la poste. Allez sortez point de riposte.

**Scene 9**

LE BARON

*(à part)*

Le tact ici conseille que sans vaine péroraison je m'éclipse par  
 la porte dérobée et que, dans le salon voisin, j'aille étudier les  
 gravures qui représentent les malheurs de Virgine. *(ii sort)*

ALPHONSE

*(à part)*

Nous sommes seuls, elle ne me cachera plus rien  
*(haut d'un ton amer et hautain)*  
 Ainsi, Madame, c'est votre fille?

CLÉMENTINE

*(douloureuse)*

Elle est horriblement menteuse...

ALPHONSE

Vous la disiez en nourrice à Pont-aux-Dames?

CLÉMENTINE

Elle est très grande pour son âge... d'ailleurs, elle raffole de la  
 campagne...

ALPHONSE

*(glacial)*

Un mot, un seul, Madame. Ce sera le dernier...

CLÉMENTINE

*(an désespoir)*

Ah... bourreau...

ALPHONSE

Sa dot?

**7. Romance - Scene 8**

EUPHRASIA

On your beautiful feast day  
 How I like it dear mother  
 Would no more be counted on your head  
 Than the always lovely weight  
 Of forty-two springs.

A mother is always happy  
 From a sweet sincere confession,  
 And I see that I enchant you  
 But don't hide your tears  
 Under a trembling hand.

**7b. Recitative**

CLEMENTINE

Enough, Mademoiselle, I command you.  
 Get out! And don't come back unless I call you.

EUPHRASIA

But mom, I haven't finished the ending, it's the prettiest ending.

CLEMENTINE

You can mail it to me. Go, leave without response.

**Scene 9**

THE BARON

*(aside)*

Prudence here advises that I slip away by the hidden door and,  
 in the next room, study the engravings of the misfortunes of  
 Virginia. *(he leaves)*

ALPHONSE

*(aside)*

We are alone, she won't hide anything from me anymore  
*(aloud in a bitter and haughty tone)*  
 So, Madame, is this your daughter?

CLEMENTINE

*(painful)*

She's a terrible liar...

ALPHONSE

You mentioned a nurse at Pont-aux-Dames?

CLEMENTINE

She is very tall for her age... besides, she loves the  
 countryside...

ALPHONSE

*(glacial)*

One word, one word, Madame. This will be the last...

CLEMENTINE

*(in despair)*

Ah... executioner...

ALPHONSE

Her dowry?

CLÉMENTINE  
*(très calme soudain)*  
Six cent mille francs et le petit domaine des Minaudières avec  
la ferme, le moulin, les prés et le château.

ALPHONSE  
*(noble et simple)*  
Clémentine, j'épouse ta fille.

CLÉMENTINE  
*(ravie)*  
Ciel! Tu l'épouserai?

ALPHONSE  
*(froidement)*  
Vous ne la reverrez jamais, sauf le jour des noces, c'est  
concevable, c'est du reste! usage, mais le soir même, foi de  
gentilhomme, je conduis la vicomtesse aux Minaudières. J'y  
reste huit jours avec elle, et je reviens seul... seul, et tout a toi!

CLÉMENTINE  
*(rêveuse)*  
Tiens... mais pourquoi pas?

ALPHONSE  
Je sauve la fortune des l'Estourbi, je restaure celle des  
Palpébral, vous restez jeune, et je deviens riche. Avouez, ma  
chère, que ce calcul passablement napoléonien a pourtant  
quelque chose de "confortable"...?

CLÉMENTINE  
*(transportée)*  
Alphonse, vous êtes le lion idéal... *(soudain élan  
poético-douloureux)* Ah... mon ami, y pensez-vous!  
Vous donner ma fille, mon Euphrasie, cet ange... elle! à vous!  
Vous! à elle!

ALPHONSE  
*(même ton)*  
Quoi ! Vous hésitez... Ah ! je comprends... vous ne m'aimez  
plus!

CLÉMENTINE  
Dilemme atroce... je suis mère, je suis femme...

### 8. Duo tragique

CLÉMENTINE  
Voici l'instant inévitable et redouté  
Où ce petit être si follement aimé  
Ce doux fruit de ma chair,  
Cette fleur de l'âme  
S'élançant vers son jeune amour va oublier  
Soyez donc épouse, mère,  
Soyez femme

ALPHONSE  
Ô ingratitude moi

CLEMENTINE  
*(suddenly very quiet)*  
Six hundred thousand francs and the small domain of  
Minaudières with the farm, the mill, the meadows and the  
castle.

ALPHONSE  
*(noble and simple)*  
Clementine, I'm marrying your daughter.

CLEMENTINE  
*(delighted)*  
Heavens! Would you marry her?

ALPHONSE  
*(coldly)*  
You'll never see her again, except on the wedding day, that's  
conceivable, that's the custom, but that same evening,  
gentleman's honor, I take the Viscountess to the Minaudières. I  
stay there eight days with her, and I come back alone... alone,  
and all yours!

CLEMENTINE  
*(dreamy)*  
Oh my... but why not?

ALPHONSE  
I save the fortune of the Estourbi, I restore that of the  
Palpébrals, you stay young and I become rich. Admit, my dear,  
that this somewhat Napoleonic calculation has something  
"comfortable" about it...?

CLEMENTINE  
*(transported)*  
Alphonse, you are the ideal lion... *(suddenly poetic-painful  
impulse)* Ah... my love, do you think!  
Give you my daughter, my Euphrasia, this angel... Her! to you!  
You! To her!

ALPHONSE  
*(same tone)*  
What? You hesitate... Ah! I understand... you don't love me  
anymore!

CLEMENTINE  
Atrocious dilemma... I am a mother, I am a woman...

### 8. Duo tragique

CLEMENTINE  
Here the inevitable and dreaded moment  
Where this little being so madly loved  
This sweet fruit of my flesh,  
This flower of the soul  
Soaring towards her young love will forget  
So be wife, mother,  
Be a woman

ALPHONSE  
O ingracious me

Qui sacrifie à cette femme  
Idole que j'adore  
En lui demandant la main  
De son Euphrasie  
La flamme superbe,  
Disons plus encore  
Le brazier de mes désirs  
Les plus farouches car enfin,  
Cette Euphrasie, elle louche

CLÉMENTINE - ALPHONSE  
Je te la donne (pardonne)  
Je te pardonne (Tu me la donne)  
Je te la donne (pardonne)

**Scene 10**

CLÉMENTINE  
(*languissante*)  
Sonnez donc pour le thé, dear... (*on frappe*)

EUPHRASIE  
Ma chère maman, pardonnez-moi, j'ai oublié mon mouchoir  
sur le couvercle du forte...

CLÉMENTINE  
Pourquoi pleurez-vous?

EUPHRASIE  
J'étais à côté, avec le Baron Pschutt; il me racontait le  
congrès de Vérone; je pleure toujours quand je bâille....

ALPHONSE  
(*à part*)  
Elle a quelque chose de la nature des huîtres, mais elle est  
délicieusement sottée, à la façon des paniers...

CLÉMENTINE  
Prenez votre mouchoir, tenez-vous droite. Vous allez épouser  
Monsieur.

EUPHRASIE  
Oui, maman.

ALPHONSE  
(*lyrique*)  
Ah... Mademoiselle... vous me rendez fou de bonheur. Un seul  
mot, un seul regard, un seul sourire, un seul jour...

CLÉMENTINE  
(*sèchement*)  
Contenez-vous, il n'y a personne...  
Ah si... voici Petit Jacques et le Baron... Continuez Alphonse...

ALPHONSE  
Ah... Mademoiselle...

EUPHRASIE  
Ah... Monsieur...

Who sacrifices to this woman  
Idol that I adore  
By asking for her hand  
Of her Euphrasia  
The superb flame,  
Let's say more  
The brazier of my desires  
The fiercest because finally,  
This Euphrasia, she's questionable

CLEMENTINE - ALPHONSE  
I give it to you (Forgive me)  
I forgive you (You give it to me)  
I give it to you (Forgive me)

**Scene 10**

CLEMENTINE  
(*languid*)  
Ring the bell for tea, dear... (*knock*)

EUPHRASIA  
My dear mother, forgive me, I forgot my handkerchief on the lid  
of the piano...

CLEMENTINE  
Why are you crying?

EUPHRASIA  
I was next door, with Baron Pschutt; he told me about the  
Congress of Verona; I always cry when I yawn...

ALPHONSE  
(*aside*)  
She has something reminding me of the quality of oysters, but  
she is delightfully stupid, more like the oyster baskets...

CLEMENTINE  
Take your handkerchief, stand up straight. You are going to  
marry the gentleman.

EUPHRASIA  
Yes mom.

ALPHONSE  
(*lyrical*)  
Ah... Mademoiselle... you make me thrilled. One word, one  
look, one smile, one day...

CLEMENTINE  
(*dryly*)  
Control yourself, there is no one... Ah yes...  
Here is Petit Jacques and the Baron... Continue Alphonse...

ALPHONSE  
Oh... Miss...

EUPHRASIA  
Oh... sir...

**Scene 11**

LE BARON

*(ému et paternel)*

Un vieil ami, chère comtesse, écoute toujours un peu aux portes...

PETIT JACQUES

*(larmoyant)*

De même qu'un vieux domestique, Madame...

LE BARON

Agréez mes compliments pour ce ravissant bonheur.

Vicomte...

PETIT JACQUES

*(toujours larmoyant)*

Quelle satisfaction pour un serviteur fidèle, que de voir marier Mademoiselle si peu de temps après avoir vu marier Madame...

CLÉMENTINE

La douce émotion qui m'étouffe m'ôte la parole, mes amis...Il me faudrait mon thé, il me faudrait mon thé...

ALPHONSE

Comment exprimerais-je, Messieurs, l'ivresse d'un homme qui embrasse enfin le but de ses insomnies?

EUPHRASIE

Je voudrais bien savoir quoi dire, moi...

**9. Final - Scene 12**

LE BARON

Parfaite et charmante Euphrasie,

Ne sonnez mot je vous en prie.

Gardez donc ce silence exquis

Et cet air vraiment surpris.

**9bis. Valse nuptiale**

EUPHRASIE

Monsieur je vous admire

De trouver tant à dire

Et votre style orné

Me porte à vous aimer

ALPHONSE

Allons d'un bond gracieux

Par les autels radieux

Où l'ambition nous porte

Où l'amour nous transporte

CLÉMENTINE

Ce mariage heureux

Qui comble tous nos vœux

Nous donne avec des rentes,

Une belle mère charmante.

**Scene 11**

THE BARON

*(moved and paternal)*

An old friend, dear Countess, always listens a bit at the door...

PETIT JACQUES

*(tearful)*

As well as an old servant, Madame...

THE BARON

Accept my compliments for this delightful happiness.

Viscount...

PETIT JACQUES

*(still tearful)*

What satisfaction for a faithful servant, to see Mademoiselle married so soon after having seen Madame married...

CLEMENTINE

The sweet emotion that suffocates me leaves me speechless, my friends...I need my tea, I need my tea...

ALPHONSE

How would I express, gentlemen, the exhilaration of a man who finally embraces the goal of his sleepless nights?

EUPHRASIA

I would like to know what to say, I...

**9. Final - Scene 12**

THE BARON

Perfect and charming Euphrasia,

Please don't say a word.

So keep this exquisite silence

And that really surprised look.

**9b. Valse nuptiale**

EUPHRASIA

Sir i admire you

Finding so much to say

And your ornate style

Makes me love you

ALPHONSE

Let's take a graceful leap

By radiant altars

Where ambition takes us

Where love carries us

CLEMENTINE

This happy marriage

Which fulfills all our wishes

Gives us with annuities,

A charming mother-in-law.

CLÉMENTINE - PETIT JACQUES - LE BARON

Allez, charmants époux  
Bercés par des mots fous  
Oui l'ambition vous porte  
Et l'amour vous transporte

EUPHRASIE

Monsieur je vous admire  
De trouver tant à dire  
Et votre style orné  
Me porte à vous aimer

ALPHONSE

Allons d'un bond gracieux  
Par les autels radieux  
Où l'ambition nous porte  
Où l'amour nous transporte

ALPHONSE - PETIT JACQUES - LE BARON

Allons d'un bond gracieux  
Par les autels radieux  
Où l'ambition nous porte  
Où l'amour nous transporte

CLEMENTINE - LITTLE JACQUES - THE BARON

Come on, lovely spouses  
Lulled by crazy words  
Yes, ambition takes you  
And love carries you

EUPHRASIA

Sir i admire you  
Finding so much to say  
And your ornate style  
Makes me love you

ALPHONSE

Let's take a graceful leap  
By radiant altars  
Where ambition takes us  
Where love carries us

ALPHONSE - LITTLE JACQUES - THE BARON

Let's take a graceful leap  
By radiant altars  
Where ambition takes us  
Where love carries us

## LA PAUVRE EUGÉNIE

### Première tranche de vie

*(parlé sur la musique)*

LE PATRON

Où's qu'elle est donc la patronne? C'te grande carne. Où's qu'elle est donc?

TITINE

Alle est sortie chercher des pommes?

LE PATRON

Où's qu'elle est donc la patronne? J'crois qu'elle oublie son miroton

PAULA

C'est pas pour dire. Il est sciant s't'homme.

LE PATRON

J'vas m'foutre en rogne c'est embêtant ça m'abime le tempérament

EUGÉNIE

Faut pas vous fâcher M'sieur Ernesse  
On n'y va pas c'est qu'l'ouvrage presse  
Y a six jupons qu'on est après.  
Le miroton. Faudrait l'tourner  
Passez donc la queuillère en fer  
Qu'est pendue à la cuisinière

LE PATRON

Où veux tu que j'trouve ta queuillère  
Viens t'occuper d'ça c'est pas mon affaire

EUGÉNIE

Je viens juste le temps de poser mon dé

LE PATRON

Tu peux bien v'nir avec ton dé, pochetée.

PAULA

Alla bien tort de s'laisser faire  
L'patron c'est un bon à rien faire  
Toujours assis dans d'te cuisine  
Y d'vient si gros ma pauvre Titine  
Qu'y a pus moyen de l'ôter d'là

TITINE

C'est pourtant vrai c'que tu dis là

EUGÉNIE

Laissez moi donc

TITINE - PAULA

Qu'est-ce que t'as Eugénie?  
Ah! Mon Dieu qu'est-ce qu'elle a?

EUGÉNIE

Après l'instant  
où je me suis livrée  
Au souffle glorieux du printemps

### First Slice of Life

*(spoken over the music)*

LE PATRON

Where's the boss? It's your big meat. Where is she then?

TITINE

Is she out looking for apples?

LE PATRON

Where's the boss then? I think she forgot her beef stew.

PAULA

No offense. He's outstanding.

LE PATRON

I'm going to get mad, it's annoying, it enrages my temper

EUGÉNIE

Don't get angry M'sieur Ernesse  
We're not going there, it's because the work is urgent  
We're after six petticoats.  
The beef stew. We should stir it  
So pass the spoon  
That's hanging on the stove

LE PATRON

Where do you want me to find your spoon  
Come and take care of that, it's not my job

EUGÉNIE

I come with barely enough time to put down my thimble

LE PATRON

You can come with your thimble, pocketed.

PAULA

He was very wrong to let himself be pushed around  
The boss is good for nothing  
Always sitting in the kitchen  
He's getting so big, my poor Titine,  
That there's no way to get him out of there

TITINE

It is however true what you say

EUGÉNIE

Then let me

TITINE - PAULA

What's wrong with you Eugénie?  
Ah! My God, what's wrong with her?

EUGÉNIE

After the moment  
Where I surrendered  
To the glorious breath of spring

Au seuil de ma seizième année  
Et à ce Monsieur J. Duplan  
Depuis ce jour plein d'illusions  
Je suis le jouet des passions

TITINE  
Eugénie dis la vérité

PAULA  
Eugénie ne nous cache rien

TITINE  
C'est la vie

PAULA  
C'est la destin

TITINE  
C'est sûr le patron t'a pincée

EUGÉNIE  
(*refoulant ses larmes*)  
Allons mes enfants, le travail attend...

PAULA  
Du coup, j'ai perdu mon devant...

TITINE  
Tiens Paula, le voilà. J'étais assise dessus...

### Deuxième tranche de vie

MADAME PHÉMIE  
Mes compliments, l'ouvrage avance,  
On a beau vous dire qu'c'est pressé, qu'c'est pour une noce,  
Ces demoiselles, ça chante des romances  
Mais qu'est-ce qu'elle chantera Mame Fildécosse  
Quand elle aura pas le trousseau de sa demoiselle

EUGÉNIE  
Mame Phémie regardez ce jupon  
C'est presque fini il manque plus que la dentelle

MADAME PHÉMIE  
Misère, Mais c't'horreur  
C'te dégoutation j'peux pas y croire elle mange du saucisson  
à l'ail.  
Du saucisson à l'ail, elle salit tout son travail! Je vous mets  
dehors, illico presto. Faites votre paquet, Mame Eugénie, au  
trot! (*parlé*) Je veux des filles sérieuses ici, pas de  
farceuses...

EUGÉNIE  
(*belle indignation*)  
Je ne suis pas une fille sérieuse, moi!

### Le Rond de saucisson de l'ouvrière honnête

EUGÉNIE  
Pauvre et laborieuse fille de Paris  
D'un rond de saucisson, je me nourris

On the threshold of my sixteenth year  
And to this Mr. J. Duplan  
Since that day full of illusions  
I am the plaything of passions

TITINE  
Eugénie, tell the truth

PAULA  
Eugénie, hide nothing from us

TITINE  
That's life

PAULA  
It's destiny

TITINE  
For sure the boss caught you

EUGÉNIE  
(*holding back her tears*)  
Come on my children, work awaits...

PAULA  
Suddenly, I lost my front...

TITINE  
Here Paula, here it is. I was sitting on it...

### Second Slice of Life

MADAME PHÉMIE  
My compliments, the work is progressing,  
No matter how much we tell you it's urgent, it's for a wedding,  
These ladies sing romances  
But what will she sing Mame Fildécosse  
When she won't have her young lady's wedding clothes

EUGÉNIE  
Mame Phémie, look at this petticoat  
It's almost finished, all that's missing is the lace

MADAME PHÉMIE  
Misery, oh it's horrible  
This disgusting thing, I can't believe it, she eats garlic sausage.  
With garlic sausage she dirties all her work! I'll kick you out, in  
no time. Pack your things, Mame Eugénie, quick! (*spoken*) I  
want serious girls here, not pranksters...

EUGÉNIE  
(*beautiful indignation*)  
I'm not a serious girl!

### The sausage ring of the honest worker

EUGÉNIE  
Poor and hard-working girl from Paris  
From a circle of sausage, I eat

Que je vais, la journée finie  
Manger sur un banc du square Morny

Par son odeur probe et sincère  
Qui fleure bon la ménagère  
Il me garde des adultères  
Qu'adonne le patchouli pervers

Nul ne me suit, nul ne m'arrête,  
Je vais droit en levant le tête  
Fière d'être l'ouvrière honnête  
Honte au fêtard en gouquette

### Troisième tranche de vie

MADAME PHÉMIE

Ça cause comme une vraie féministe  
Ça raisonne comme une vraie anarchiste  
Je n'veux pas d'ça à l'atelier  
Ça mettrait l'feu à tout l'quartier

LE PATRON

J't'attends d'puis une heure trois quart  
Ça va barder nom d'un pétard

MADAME PHÉMIE

Oui mon Ernesse, oui mon trésor,  
C'est pas ma faute si j'suis en r'tard

TITINE

Ce vieux chameau... Causons d'une sauterelle, ça alors...  
c'est pas une femme, c'est une sangsue...

PAULA

T'as raison, Titine... Mame Phémie, c'est une ménagerie  
à elle toute seule; mais faut penser à Eugénie,  
la v'la sans place, la pauvre créature...

EUGÉNIE

Je sais ce qui me reste à faire...

PAULA

Écoute voir, j'ai un ami qu'a une jolie situation,  
il est homme-tronc à la Foire du Trone, paraît que dans sa  
baraque on cherche une femme sans tête...  
Si t'allais te présenter?

EUGÉNIE

Femme sans tete? J'aurais pas la patience.

TITINE

Moi aussi, j'ai un ami. Lui, c'est pas foulant son travail. Il écrit  
des livres. Quand il a fini, il recopie, et quand il a fini de  
recopier, il déchire tout et il recommence.

PAULA

C'est original.

EUGÉNIE

J'aurais pas la patience.

That I will, at the end of the day  
Eat on a bench in Square Morny

By its honest and sincere smell  
Who reminds you of a housewife  
It guards me from the adulteries  
That accompany the perverse patchouli

No one follows me, no one stops me,  
I walk straight with my head up  
Proud to be the honest worker  
Shame on the partygoers enjoying themselves

### Third Slice of Life

MADAME PHÉMIE

She talks like a real feminist  
She reasons like a real anarchist  
I don't want that at the workshop  
It would spark outrage in the whole neighborhood

LE PATRON

I've been waiting for you for an hour and a quarter  
There's gonna be hell to pay

MADAME PHÉMIE

Yes my Ernesse, yes my treasure,  
It's not my fault if I'm late

TITINE

This old camel... Let's talk about a locust, gosh... it's not a  
woman, it's a leech...

PAULA

You're right, Titine... Mame Phémie, it's a menagerie  
on her own; but you have to think of Eugénie,  
She has no place to live, the poor creature...

EUGÉNIE

I know what I have to do...

PAULA

So listen, I have a friend who has a nice situation,  
he is a limbless man at the Foire du Trone, it seems that in his  
barrack they are looking for a headless woman...  
What if you were going to introduce yourself?

EUGÉNIE

Headless woman? I wouldn't have the patience.

TITINE

I too have a friend. He's not trampling on his work. He writes  
books. When he's finished, he rewrites, and when he's finished  
rewriting, he tears everything up and starts over.

PAULA

It's original.

EUGÉNIE

I wouldn't have the patience.

PAULA  
Faut quand même te chercher une position...

EUGÉNIE  
Je vais aller me jeter dans la Seine.

**Quatrième tranche de vie**

TITINE - PAULA  
Et ton enfant chère tête frileuse  
Penchée au bord du nid ah, malheureuse  
Ne sois pas mère dénaturée

TITINE  
Eugénie pense au gamin

PAULA  
Et n'oublie pas ton orphelin

**M'sieur J. Duplan - Air**

EUGÉNIE  
C'est l'enfant de M'sieur J. Duplan  
Un homme qui portait des gants blancs  
Qu'avait du linge en fin' baptiste  
Et qui citait les symbolistes

C'est pas qu'il était tellement beau  
Mais il était chef de bureau  
Alors j'ai cru qu'il m'épous'rait.  
Ces gens là, c'est tellement parfait

Et il m'a quitté un beau jour  
Just' au coin de la rue du four.  
Quand il a su qu'j'allais être il m'a dit:  
J'suis déjà grand père il était né aux colonies  
Et on l'avait marié tout p'tit.

Il m'a expliqué en pleurant  
Qu'il n'avait pourtant qu'vingt neuf ans  
Le jour de la noce à sa fille  
Qu'était une étoile de quadrille  
Ah, ça, je n'lui reproche rien  
J'ai été victime du destin

Après l'instant  
où je me suis livré  
Au souffle glorieux du printemps,  
Au seuil de ma seizième année  
Et à ce Monsieur J. Duplan  
Depuis ce jour plein d'illusions  
Je suis le jouet des passions.

PAULA  
Y a quelqu'un qui frappe...

TITINE  
*(voix aiguë)*  
Entrez!

PAULA  
You still have to find a position...

EUGÉNIE  
I'm going to throw myself in the Seine.

**Fourth Slice of Life**

TITINE - PAULA  
And your child dear cold one  
Leaning on the edge of the nest ah, poor wretch  
Don't be a twisted mother

TITINE  
Eugénie, think of the kid

PAULA  
And don't forget your orphan

**M'sieur J. Duplan - Air**

EUGÉNIE  
It is the child of Mr. J. Duplan  
A man who wore white gloves  
Who owns the finest baptiste linen  
And who quoted the symbolists

It's not that he was so handsome  
But he was an office manager  
So I thought he would marry me.  
These people, it's so perfect

And he left me one day  
Just around the corner of rue du four.  
When he knew that I was pregnant he said to me:  
I'm already a grandfather, he was born in the colonies  
And we had married him as a child.

He explained to me while crying  
That he was only twenty nine years old  
The day of his daughter's wedding  
That was a quadrille star  
Ah, I don't blame him for anything  
I was a victim of fate

After the moment  
where I surrendered  
To the glorious breath of spring,  
On the threshold of my sixteenth year  
And to this Mr. J. Duplan  
Since that day full of illusions  
I am the plaything of passions.

PAULA  
There is someone knocking...

TITINE  
*(high-pitched voice)*  
Come in!

GÉGÈNE  
C'est-y ici Mame Euphémie, lingère?

EUGÉNIE - PAULA - TITINE  
Mame Euphémie? C'est ici.

PAULA  
Qu'est-ce que vous y voulez?

GÉGÈNE  
J'suis La Belle Jardinière...

EUGÉNIE - PAULA - TITINE  
Ah?

TITINE (*à Paula*)  
C'est La Belle Jardinière

GÉGÈNE  
J viens livrer le boa.

EUGÉNIE - PAULA - TITINE  
Le boa?

PAULA  
Il vient livrer le boa.

GÉGÈNE  
Le boa en plumes d'autruche cyclamen pour Madame Euphémie.

#### **Cinquième tranche de vie**

TITINE  
Un boa! Non, r'gardez moi ça  
C'te Mame Phémie qu'a l'air d'une perche  
Elle va s'coller un boa mauve

PAULA  
S'mettre au cou un boa comme une cocotte  
Quand on vient d'mettre à la rue  
Une fille mère c'est la vie c'est (t)honteux

GÉGÈNE  
Une fille mère a la rue si c'est ça le progrès  
C'est pas encore dit que je vais  
Lui livrer son boa

TITINE  
Même que la v'la qui veut s'détruire

PAULA  
Tout ça pour un rond d'saucisson

GÉGÈNE  
Mais où est-elle?

EUGÉNIE  
C'est moi!

GÉGÈNE  
Is she here, Madame Euphémie, the laundry maid?

EUGÉNIE - PAULA - TITINE  
Madame Euphémie? She's here.

PAULA  
What do you want?

GÉGÈNE  
I am La Belle Jardinière...

EUGÉNIE - PAULA - TITINE  
Oh?

TITINE (*to Paula*)  
This is La Belle Jardiniere

GÉGÈNE  
I'm coming to deliver the boa.

EUGÉNIE - PAULA - TITINE  
The boa?

PAULA  
He comes to deliver the boa.

GÉGÈNE  
The pink ostrich feather boa for Madame Euphémie.

#### **Fifth Slice of Life**

TITINE  
A boa! No, look at that  
It's Mame Phémie who looks like a pole  
She's going to wear a purple boa

PAULA  
Put a boa around your neck like a cocotte  
When we have just put on the street  
A young mother, it's life, it's shameful

GÉGÈNE  
A young mother on the street if that's progress  
It's not sure yet that I'm going  
To give her the boa

TITINE  
She wants to destroy herself on top of that

PAULA  
All that for a round of sausage

GÉGÈNE  
But where is she?

EUGÉNIE  
It's me!

TITINE - PAULA  
C'est Eugénie l'amie à M'sieur J. Duplan

GÉGÈNE  
Tu t'appelles Eugénie  
Je m'appelle Gégène  
Vois-tu c'est le destin  
Qui près de toi m'amène  
J'apportais le boa  
Et je trouve mon Eve  
Ne me repousse pas  
Ne détruis pas un rêve  
Viens avec moi petite  
Allons vers les ivresses  
Allons vers le bonheur  
Des ardentes caresses

EUGÉNIE  
Oui je vais avec toi, libre, forte et heureuse  
Quittant sans un regret l'infamale exploiteuse  
Son boa cyclamen son affreux miroton  
Les jupons de la noce M'sieur Ernesse le patron  
Oublieuse à jamais du fameux M'sieur Duplan  
Tu sera mon G'gène le père de mon enfant

GÉGÈNE  
Vers les Buttes Chaumont je vois un p'tit garni

EUGÉNIE - GÉGÈNE  
Où le vin n'est pas cher  
Et les chambres jolies  
Les yeux clos j'aperçois  
L'accueillante banquette  
Où assis côte à côte  
Effeillant la pâquerette  
Nous redirons tout bas  
Tendrement enlacés  
Les vers si émouvants de M'sieur François Coppée

#### **Choeur Final**

EUGÉNIE - TITINE - PAULA - PHÉMIE - PATRON - GÉGÈNE  
Au fier soleil de Messidor  
Qu'Eugénie est donc belle  
Dans les bras de son Gégène  
Par le printemps livrée  
Elle s'en va dans l'aurore  
De la cité nouvelle  
Au souffle glorieux  
D'un fraternel été  
C'est l'enfant de Paris  
à l'oeil tendre et hardi

EUGÉNIE - TITINE  
Où y'a Gégène, Mesdames il y'a l'plaisir

PAULA - PHÉMIE - PATRON - GÉGÈNE  
Amoureux éternel éperdument chéri  
De tous les coeurs brisés  
Qui rodent par les rues

TITINE - PAULA  
This is Eugénie, the friend of Mr. J. Duplan

GÉGÈNE  
Your name is Eugénie  
My name is Gégène  
You see it's destiny  
Who brings me near to you  
I brought the boa  
And I find my Eve  
Don't push me away  
Don't destroy a dream  
Come with me little one  
Let's go to euphoria  
Let's go to the happiness of  
Ardent caresses

EUGÉNIE  
Yes I'm going with you, free, strong and happy  
Leaving the infernal exploiter without a regret  
His pink boa, her awful beef stew  
The petticoats of the wedding, Mr. Ernesse the boss  
Forgetful forever of the famous M'sieur Duplan  
You will be my Gégène the father of my child

GÉGÈNE  
Towards the Buttes Chaumont I see a little furnished room

EUGÉNIE - GÉGÈNE  
Where the wine is not expensive  
And the pretty rooms  
I see with my eyes closed  
The welcoming bench  
Where we sit side by side  
Leafing the daisy  
We will say in a whisper  
Tenderly entwined  
The moving verses of M'sieur François Coppée

#### **Final Chorus**

EUGÉNIE - TITINE - PAULA - PHÉMIE - PATRON - GÉGÈNE  
In the proud sun of Messidor  
How beautiful is Eugénie  
In the arms of her Gégène  
By the spring delivered  
She leaves in the dawn  
For the new city  
In the glorious breath  
Of a fraternal summer  
She is the child of Paris  
With a tender and bold eye

EUGÉNIE - TITINE  
Where Gégène is, ladies, there is pleasure

PAULA - PHÉMIE - PATRON - GÉGÈNE  
Everlasting lover madly cherished  
Of all the broken hearts  
Who roam the streets

EUGÉNIE - TITINE - PAULA - PHÉMIE - PATRON - GÉGÈNE  
Où y'a Gégène, Mesdames il y'a l'plaisir.

EUGÉNIE - TITINE - PAULA - PHÉMIE - PATRON - GÉGÈNE  
Where Gégène is, ladies, there is pleasure.

## M. PETITPOIS ACHÈTE UN CHÂTEAU

### Scene 1

LE DUC

Qu'en dites-vous Cunégonde?

CUNÉGONDE

*(sans se compromettre)*

Bah...

POINTILLARD

Cinquante mille francs, Monsieur le Due, c'est un prix... certes, le château le vaut, ce nonobstant les hypothèques dont il est grevé et les avaries notables constatées ici et là...

LE DUC

Cunégonde, qu'en dites-vous?

CUNÉGONDE

*(toujours sans se compromettre)*

Hé... bé...

POINTILLARD

*(à part)*

Cette nourrice dévouée est sourde comme neuf tapis... *(haut)* Il est visible Monsieur le Due, que Madame Cunégonde adopte entièrement ma position...

LE DUC

Mais-z-encore, toujours-z-est-il, mon cher Notaire, que ce... comment dites-vous? ce Petit-Haricot me semble bien chétif personnage pour loger dans un si vaste domaine.

POINTILLARD

Monsieur Petitpois, Monsieur le Duc est un célèbre industriel dont les inventions ont retenu l'attention de Sa Majesté l'Empereur, à la dernière Exposition...

LE DUC

Ah... voui, voui... l'Empereur... très gentil garçon... Eh bien... marchons pour vos Pois, mon cher Pointillard. Je suis père vous le savez.

CUNÉGONDE

Hélas.

POINTILLARD

Hélas.

LE DUC

Nous attendons, d'ailleurs, le lieutenant d'un moment à l'autre.

POINTILLARD

*(un tantinet ironique)*

Avec une jolie culotte, comme d'habitude.

LE DUC

Il s'amende considérablement. Il vient de quitter Mademoiselle Pluchérie Badaboum des Variétés Amusantes.

### Scene 1

LE DUC

What do you say Cunégonde?

CUNEGONDE

*(without compromising herself)*

Bah...

POINTILLARD

Fifty thousand francs, Monsieur Le Duc, is quite the price... certainly, the château is worth it, notwithstanding the mortgages with which it is encumbered and the notable damage observed here and there...

LE DUC

Cunégonde, what do you say?

CUNEGONDE

*(always without compromising herself)*

Hey... well...

POINTILLARD

*(aside)*

This dutiful nanny is as deaf as nine rugs... *(aloud)* It is apparent, Monsieur Le Duc, that Madame Cunégonde entirely adopts my position...

LE DUC

But still, is it still, my dear Notary, that this... how do you put it? this Petit-Haricot seems to me a very puny character to live in such a vast domain.

POINTILLARD

Monsieur Petitpois, Monsieur Le Duc is a famous industrialist whose inventions caught the attention of His Majesty the Emperor at the last Exposition...

LE DUC

Ah... yes, yes... the Emperor... very nice boy... Well... let's walk for your peas, my dear Pointillard. I am a father you know.

CUNEGONDE

Alas.

POINTILLARD

Alas.

LE DUC

We are expecting, by the way, the lieutenant any moment now.

POINTILLARD

*(a tad ironic)*

With pretty panties, as usual.

LE DUC

He is improving considerably. He has just left Mademoiselle Pluchérie Badaboum of Variétés Amusantes.

*(changeant de ton)* En croirai-je mes yeux? N'est-ce pas notre cher Adelestan que j'aperçois à l'entrée de la galerie?

**Scene 2**

ADELESTAN

Mon père!

LE DUC

Bonjour, lieutenant.

ADELESTAN

Ah, nounou... si tu savais... je ne tiens plus en place... Mais c'est le notaire... Comment va, Pointillard? Figurez-vous que je viens de rencontrer à Romorantin la plus jolie, la plus aguichante, la plus blonde des filles d'Eve...

LE DUC - CUNÉGONDE - POINTILLARD

*(constemés)*

À Romorantin...

ADELESTAN

Ce petit trésor aux yeux bleus trimbalait deux ganaches, une espèce de crétin en carrick et un gros têtard, sûrement le papa, garni d'une chaîne de montre à se prendre les pieds dedans...

POINTILLARD

*(même jeu)*

Seigneur! Vous le vîtes à la gare ?

ADELESTAN

*(surpris)*

Sans doute... je les vis à la gare.

LE DUC

*(même jeu)*

À la gare... Adelestan, mon enfant...

CUNÉGONDE

*(même jeu)*

Oh la la, mon fanfan...

POINTILLARD

*(même jeu)*

Ah mon lieutenant...

**1. Un joli hussard**

ADELESTAN

Un joli hussard voyez vous  
Ne redoute point les hasards  
À la guerre il est un peu fou  
En amour il est foudroyant

CUNÉGONDE - LE NOTAIRE - LE DUC

Adelestan tan tan, Adelestan tan tan  
C'est un instant critique  
Attention mon enfant, attention mon fan fan  
Mon lieut'nant attention Ade Ade Adelestan

*(changing tone)* Will I believe my eyes? Isn't it our dear Adelestan that I see at the entrance to the gallery?

**Scene 2**

ADELESTAN

My father!

LE DUC

Hello, lieutenant.

ADELESTAN

Ah, nanny... if you only knew... I can't sit still... But it's the notary... How are you, Pointillard? Imagine that I just met in Romorantin the prettiest, the most enticing, the blondest of Eve's daughters...

LE DUC - CUNÉGONDE - POINTILLARD

*(contested)*

In Romorantin...

ADELESTAN

This blue-eyed little treasure was carting around two blockheads, a kind of nitwit in a car and a big tadpole, probably the dad, wearing a watch chain to trip over...

POINTILLARD

*(same game)*

Lord! Did you see him at the station?

ADELESTAN

*(surprised)*

No doubt... I saw them at the station.

THE DUKE

*(same game)*

At the station... Adelestan, my child...

CUNEGONDE

*(same game)*

Oh la la, my boy

SPOTLIGHT

*(same game)*

Oh my lieutenant...

**1. Un joli hussard**

ADELESTAN

A good horseman you see  
Doesn't fear the odds  
In the war he is a little crazy  
In love he is deadly

CUNÉGONDE - LE NOTAIRE - LE DUC

Adelestan tan tan, Adelestan tan tan  
It's a critical moment  
Watch out my child, watch out my boy  
My lieutenant, attention, Ade Ade Adelestan

ADELESTAN  
Et quand une belle croyez moi  
Fait de l'oeil sous son ombrelle  
Mon coeur aussitôt en émoi  
Me bat la charge éperdument

CUNÉGONDE - LE NOTAIRE - LE DUC  
Adelestan tan tan, Adelestan tan tan  
C'est un instant critique  
Attention mon enfant, attention mon fan fan  
Mon lieut'nant attention Ade Ade Adelestan

ADELESTAN  
Mais sur le terrain, sacrebleu  
Jamais je ne manquais d'entrain  
Je fais honneur à mes aïeux  
Expliquez moi vos bégaiements

CUNÉGONDE  
Monsieur Le Duc... les v'là tout juste, Les Petitpois...

**Scene 3**

ADELESTAN  
(à parté)  
Ah... e'est elle, e'est bien elle...

POINTILLARD  
(à parté)  
Monsieur le Due, permettez-moi de vous presenter Monsieur  
Petitpois et son neveu...

ORESTE  
Oreste Petitpois.

PETITPOIS  
Et voici ma demoiselle, ma fille unique, mon Helo'ise...

ORESTE  
Ma fiancée.

ADELESTAN  
(à parté)  
Je m'en doutais.

LE DUC  
Mon fils, Adelestan de la Bombardiere.

ORESTE  
(agressif)  
Nous avons deja vu le lieutenant a Romorantin.

ADELESTAN  
(incisif)  
Parfaitement.

ORESTE  
(menaçant)  
Ouais.

ADELESTAN  
And when a beauty believe me  
Makes eyes at me under her parasol  
My heart immediately in turmoil  
Beats me to death

CUNÉGONDE - LE NOTAIRE - LE DUC  
Adelestan tan tan, Adelestan tan tan  
It's a critical moment  
Watch out my child, watch out my boy  
My lieutenant, attention, Ade Ade Adelestan

ADELESTAN  
But on the ground, good lord  
I never lacked enthusiasm  
I honor my ancestors  
Explain to me your stutters

CUNÉGONDE  
Monsieur Le Duc... here they are, The Petitpois...

**Scene 3**

ADELESTAN  
(aside)  
Ah... that's her, that's her...

POINTILLARD  
(aside)  
Monsieur Le Duc, allow me to introduce Monsieur Petitpois  
and his nephew...

ORESTES  
Oreste Petitpois.

PETITPOIS  
And here is my lady, my only daughter, my Heloïse...

ORESTES  
My fiancée.

ADELESTAN  
(aside)  
I suspected it.

LE DUC  
My son, Adelestan de la Bombardiere.

ORESTES  
(agressive)  
We have already seen the lieutenant at Romorantin.

ADELESTAN  
(incisive)  
Absolutely..

ORESTE  
(threatening)  
Yeah.

PETITPOIS

*(débordant l'éloquence)*

Monsieur le Duc, j'ose dire que vous avez devant vous, en ma modeste personne, l'inventeur de l'universelle, de la prodigieuse « Moustachette Petitpois », adoptée par sa Majesté l'Empereur Napoléon et par toute sa cour, sans parler des cours de Russie, d'Angleterre, d'Italie, de Bavière, de Bulgarie et de « tutti Jes quanti », lesquelles ne peuvent plus le port de la moustache sans l'appui de mon appareil éducatif, hygienique et séducteur... entièrement fait en filotulle et en liaison élastique...

LE DUC

*(étonné)*

Vraiment Monsieur?

POINTILLARD

*(affirmatif)*

Vraiment Monsieur.

## 2. Valse tyrolienne "La Moustachette"

PETITPOIS

Des fameux produits de l'industrie  
Qu'un siècle éclairé se plaît à vanter  
Le plus merveilleux le moins coûteux  
C'est la moustachette Petitpois

HÉLOÏSE - ORESTE

C'est la la tou  
La moustachette  
pois

PETITPOIS

Ce simple appareil dans le sommeil  
Sans nuire au repos sans gâter la peau  
Se pose léger, souple et discret  
C'est la moustachette Petitpois

HÉLOÏSE - ORESTE

C'est la la tou  
La moustachette

PETITPOIS

C'est la moustache qui attire  
Le sexe enchanteur à l'époux vainquer  
Faites vous aimer Messieurs portez  
C'est la moustachette Petitpois

HÉLOÏSE - ORESTE

C'est la la tou  
La moustachette

## Scene 4

ADELESTAN

*(bas à Héloïse)*

Chère Mademoiselle Héloïse, s'il faut porter la Moustachette Petitpois pour être aimé, certes, dès ce soir, je l'adopte... mais ce sera pour rêver de vous...

PETITPOIS

*(overflowing eloquence)*

Monsieur Le Duc, I dare say that you have before you, in my humble person, the inventor of the universal, of the prodigious "Moustachette Petitpois", adopted by his Majesty the Emperor Napoleon and by all his court, without talk about the days of Russia, England, Italy, Bavaria, Bulgaria and "so on", which no longer allow us to wear a mustache without the support of my educational, hygienic and seductive apparatus... fully made of silk and elastic binding...

LE DUC

*(amazed)*

Really sir?

POINTILLARD

*(affirmative)*

Really sir.

## 2. Valse tyrolienne "La Moustachette"

PETITPOIS

Famous products of the industry  
That an enlightened century likes to boast about  
The most wonderful the least expensive  
Is the Petitpois Mustachette

HÉLOÏSE - ORESTE

That's all  
The Petitpois Mustachette

PETITPOIS

This simple device in sleep  
Without disturbing your rest, without spoiling your skin  
Sits light, flexible and discreet  
It's the Petitpois Mustachette

HÉLOÏSE - ORESTE

That's all  
The Petitpois Mustachette

PETITPOIS

It's the mustache that attracts  
The enchanting sex to the conquering husband  
Wear it and make yourself loved gentlemen  
It's the Petitpois Mustachette

HÉLOÏSE - ORESTE

That's all  
The Petitpois Mustachette

## Scene 4

ADELESTAN

*(soft to Héloïse)*

Dear Miss Héloïse, if you have to wear the Mustache Petitpois to be loved, of course, from tonight, I'm adopting it... but it will be to dream of you...

CUNÉGONDE  
*(le tirant par derrière)*  
Attention fanfan...

LE DUC  
*(toussant très fort)*  
Hum, hum... Monsieur Petitpois, vous seriez disposé, me dit-on, à acquérir ce château?

PETITPOIS  
Il faut d'abord visiter, Monsieur le Due...Je n'achète pas château en poche... *(il rit)*

ORESTE  
Ça me paraît vieux. Et puis, c'est humide... toute cette eau en bas de l'immeuble, vous direz ce que vous voudrez, ça n'est pas sain...

LE DUC  
*(noblement)*  
Ce sont les douves, Monsieur.

HÉLOÏSE  
Ça doit être joliment poétique, ce parc au clair de lune...

ADELESTAN  
Oh oui... surtout dans les coins sombres...

POINTILLARD  
*(le tirant par derrière)*  
Attention mon lieutenant...

LE DUC  
*(toussant à nouveau)*  
Hum, hum... si nous visitons, Monsieur Petitpois?

PETITPOIS  
Visitons Monsieur le Due.

### **3. La galerie des ancêtres**

LE DUC  
Admirez ici Messieurs  
Quelques portraits de mes aïeux  
Peints dans le genre camaïeux  
C'est ce qui se fait de mieux

PETITPOIS  
Crénom fillette  
C'est un peu chouette  
D'avoir des ancêtres

TOUS  
D'avoir des ancêtres

LE DUC  
Voici sur son destrier  
Rodolphe surnommé Beaupied  
Qui faisait pour son dîner  
Rotir un sarrasin entier

CUNÉGONDE  
*(pulling him from behind)*  
Attention boy...

LE DUC  
*(coughing loudly)*  
Hum, hum... Monsieur Petitpois, you would be willing, I am told, to acquire this château?

PETITPOIS  
One has to visit first, Monsieur Le Duc...I'm not buying a castle without having examined it... *(he laughs)*

ORESTE  
Looks old to me. And then, it's damp... all this water at the bottom of the building, say what you like, it's not healthy...

LE DUC  
*(nobly)*  
It's the moat, sir.

HÉLOÏSE  
It must be pretty poetic, this park in the moonlight...

ADELESTAN  
Oh yes... especially in dark corners...

POINTILLARD  
*(pulling him from behind)*  
Watch out my lieutenant...

LE DUC  
*(coughing again)*  
Hum, hum... how about we visit, Monsieur Petitpois?

PETITPOIS  
Let's visit Monsieur Le Duc.

### **3. The ancestors gallery**

LE DUC  
Admire here gentlemen  
Some portraits of my ancestors  
Painted in the monochrome genre  
It's the best that is currently being done

PETITPOIS  
Holy cow, daughter  
It's a little nice  
To have ancestors

ALL  
To have ancestors

LE DUC  
Here is on his steed  
Rodolphe nicknamed Beaupied  
Who for his dinner  
Roasted a whole Saracen

PETITPOIS  
Crénom fillette  
C'est un peu chouette  
D'avoir des ancêtres

TOUS  
D'avoir des ancêtres

LE DUC  
Voici enfin le plus grand:  
Aimable Charles Adelestan  
Qui prêta onze serments  
À différents gouvernements

PETITPOIS  
Crénom fillette  
C'est un peu chouette  
D'avoir des ancêtres

TOUS  
D'avoir des ancêtres

LE DUC  
Du célèbre Maréchal  
Nous n'avions que les initiales  
Le peintre eut l'idée géniale  
De représenter son cheval

TOUS  
D'avoir des ancêtres

PETITPOIS  
Ah mes enfants  
Qu'est-ce que c'est épatant  
D'avoir des ancêtres

*(enthousiasmé)*  
Fille, tu as raison, le local est bigrement poétique...  
On va voir plus loin, Monsieur le Duc ?

LE DUC  
Veuillez me suivre...

### Scene 5

ORESTE  
Chic, nous voilà seuls... lève ton bibi, bichette, et donne une  
bibise à ton Re-reste...

HÉLOÏSE  
Tu n'y pense pas, le lieutenant est encore là...

ORESTE  
Je m'en tamponne du lieutenant... fais pas ta tête, Zizi.  
*(bruit de baiser)*

HÉLOÏSE  
*(furieuse)*  
Va devant, tu m'as décoiffée, idiot...

PETITPOIS  
Holy cow, daughter  
It's a little nice  
To have ancestors

ALL  
To have ancestors

LE DUC  
Here is finally the biggest:  
Kind Charles Adelestan  
Who took eleven oaths  
To different governments

PETITPOIS  
Holy cow, daughter  
It's a little nice  
To have ancestors

ALL  
To have ancestors

LE DUC  
From the famous Maréchal  
We only had the initials  
The painter had the brilliant idea  
To represent his horse

ALL  
To have ancestors

PETITPOIS  
Oh my children  
How amazing  
To have ancestors

*(enthusiastic)*  
Little girl, you're right, the premise is mighty poetic...  
Are we going to see further, Monsieur Le Duc?

THE DUKE  
Please follow me...

### Scene 5

ORESTE  
Finally, here we are alone... raise your hat, my darling, and  
give a kiss to your Re-rest...

HÉLOÏSE  
Don't you think about it, the lieutenant is still there...

ORESTE  
I don't care about the lieutenant... don't be shy.  
*(sound of kissing)*

HÉLOÏSE  
*(furious)*  
Go on, you messed my hair, you idiot...

HÉLOÏSE  
Ça doit être joliment poétique, ce parc au clair de lune...

ADELESTAN  
Me permettez-vous de vous offrir mon bras, mademoiselle Héloïse...

HÉLOÏSE  
Avec plaisir lieutenant... Aïe... j'ai une poussière dans l'œil...

ADELESTAN  
Ah... divine?

PETITPOIS  
Visitons Monsieur le Duc.

#### 4. Duo

HÉLOÏSE  
J'étais faite, je vous l'avoue  
Pour de plus gracieuses tendresses,  
Pour le baiser charmant et doux  
Que l'amour ose avec adresse

ADELESTAN  
Rapide et délicieux aveu  
Faut-il donc croire que tu m'aimes  
Une larme brille en tes yeux  
Faut-il donc croire que tu m'aimes

HÉLOÏSE  
Pour le sourire un peu rêveur  
Qu'on échange à la dérobée  
Et qui fait défaillir le cœur  
Dans une suave envolée

HÉLOÏSE - ADELESTAN  
Ah ne cherchons pas à savoir  
Si ta main qui frôle la mienne  
Si ton regard brûlant d'espoir  
Qui veut que le mien le retienne,  
Si ce trouble qui près de toi  
Me fait soupirer et m'enfièvre  
De l'amour expérimente la loi  
Ou bien n'est qu'un trop joli rêve.

#### Scene 6

ORESTE  
Mais qu'est-ce que j'aperçois ! Héloïse dans les bras du hussard!  
(*criant*) Mon oncle venez voir! Ça vaut la visite! Votre fille qui se bécote avec le fils du propriétaire!

#### 5. Patatra

TOUS  
Patatras quel dégât, quel gâchis  
Quel samis, quel souci,  
Pest', ceci est funeste  
 Craignons les fureurs d'Oreste

HÉLOÏSE  
It must be pretty poetic, this park in the moonlight...

ADELESTAN  
Would you allow me to offer you my arm, Mademoiselle Héloïse...

HÉLOÏSE  
With pleasure lieutenant... Ouch... I have dust in the eye...

ADELESTAN  
Oh... divine?

PETITPOIS  
Let's visit Monsieur Le Duc.

#### 4. Duo

HÉLOÏSE  
I was made, I admit it to you  
For more gracious tenderness,  
For the charming and sweet kiss  
That love dares with skill

ADELESTAN  
Quick and delicious confession  
Should I believe that you love me  
A tear shines in your eyes  
Should I believe that you love me

HÉLOÏSE  
For the slightly dreamy smile  
That we exchange in secret  
And which makes the heart fall  
In a sweet flight

HÉLOÏSE - ADELESTAN  
Oh let's not try to find out  
If your hand that brushes mine  
If your gaze burning with hope  
Wants mine to hold it,  
If this trouble that near you  
Makes me sigh and makes me feverish  
Experience the law of love  
Or is it just too pretty a dream.

#### Scene 6

ORESTE  
But what do I see! Héloïse in the arms of the horseman!  
(*shouting*)  
Uncle come see! It's worth the trip! Your daughter smooching with the landlord's son!

#### 5. Patatra

ALL  
Crash what a mess, what a waste  
What a hodgepodge, what concern,  
Plague, this is disastrous  
Let us fear the fury of Orestes

ORESTE  
Monsieur le Duc votre fils est un paltoquet

HÉLOÏSE - CUNÉGONDE  
Qui l'eût dit?

ORESTE - NOTAIRE  
Qui l'eût cru?

TOUS  
C'est fini, c'est fini  
Qui l'eût dit, qui l'eût cru  
C'est fini, c'est fichu  
Héloïse perd l'esprit  
Adelestan est épris

PETITPOIS - LE DUC  
Pest ceci est funeste  
Craignons les fureurs d'Oreste

ORESTE  
Mon lieutenant, vous êtes un foutriquet!

#### Scene 8

ADELESTAN  
Monsieur, ai-je bien ouï vos paroles?

LE DUC  
Mettez vos gants lieutenant.

ORESTE  
*(hors de lui)*  
Je n'en prendrai pas pour vous annoncer que je m'en vais  
flanquer mon pied au derrière à votre polichinelle de rejeton!

#### Cri Général

TOUS (no Oreste)  
Oreste

ADELESTAN  
Ne me traitâtes-vous pas, il y a un instant, de paltoquet?

ORESTE  
*(même jeu)*  
Et de foutriquet, parfaitement, et même de polichinelle!

ADELESTAN  
Monsieur Petitpois, Oreste, si je ne m'abuse, j'ai l'honneur de  
vous jeter mon gant à la figure!

#### Cri Général

TOUS (no Adelestan)  
Adelestanhan!

ORESTE  
*(gouenard)*  
Eh bien, ramassez-le, maintenant!

ORESTES  
Monsieur Le Duc your son is rude!

HÉLOÏSE - CUNÉGONDE  
Who would have said it?

ORESTE - NOTAIRE  
Who would've believed that?

ALL  
It's over, it's over  
Who would have said it, who would have believed it  
It's over, it's over  
Héloïse has lost her mind  
Adelestan is in love

PETITPOIS - LE DUC  
Plague, this is disastrous  
Let us fear the fury of Orestes

ORESTES  
My lieutenant, you are a nobody!

#### Scene 8

ADELESTAN  
Sir, did I hear you correctly?

LE DUC  
Put on your gloves, lieutenant.

ORESTE  
*(out of control)*  
I wouldn't want to tell you that I'm going to kick your clownish  
son's butt!

#### Cri Général

ALL (No Oreste)  
Oreste

ADELESTAN  
Didn't you call me, a moment ago, a ruffian?

ORESTES  
*(same game)*  
And a jerk, perfectly, and even of a clown!

ADELESTAN  
Monsieur Petitpois, Oreste, if I'm not mistaken, I have the  
honor of throwing my glove in your face!

#### Cri Général

ALL (No Adelestan)  
Adelestanhan!

ORESTE  
*(jokingly)*  
Well, pick it up, now!

LE DUC  
Monsieur, vous êtes l'offenseur.

ORESTE  
*(tout à fait furibard)*  
Ça c'est mirobolant!  
Il embrasse ma fiancée clans le cou et c'est moi qui l'offense,  
crénom d'une bobinette à ressort, c'est un peu fort de café!

HÉLOÏSE  
Je vais me trouver mal...

**Cri Général**  
TOUS (no Héloïse)  
Héloïse, Héloïse, Héloïse

LE DUC  
*(obligé)*  
Cunégonde, mettez donc Mademoiselle dans la chaise à porteur... Monsieur, toujours est-il mais encore que vous avez insulté mon fils sous mon toit!

ORESTE  
*(un peu inquiet)*  
Pas vrai... je ne l'ai pas tutoyé.

LE DUC  
Il est dans notre famille une tradition qui date du tournoi historique entre Ermangard le Mal-Cuit et Luitpol Longue-Oreille et à laquelle nous n'avons jamais dérogé depuis 700 ans. Un La Bombardière insulté sous son toit lave l'offense dans un combat sans quartier...

ORESTE  
Blgre...

LE DUC  
Armes: épée à deux mains et rondache. Le combat se déroule sur la plateforme de la Tour Barbe, le vaincu doit sauter dans les douves et plonger dans les lentilles. Adelestan...

ADELESTAN  
j'y suis père.

LE DUC  
Le cri de guerre: attention... un-deux-trois...

## 6. Cri de guerre des La Bombardière

ADELESTAN - LE DUC  
C'est le cri honte à qui s'en dédit  
C'est le cri aux lentilles les drilles  
Aux oubliettes la moustachette  
À la poivrière le Notaire  
Au fond du donjon le patron  
Au machicoulis le commis

LE DUC  
Sir, you are the offender.

ORESTE  
*(completely pissed off)*  
That's amazing!  
He kisses my fiancée on the neck and it's me who offends him,  
Dammit, that's a bit much to swallow!

HÉLOÏSE  
I'm going to faint...

**Cri Général**  
ALL (No Héloïse)  
Héloïse, Héloïse, Héloïse

LE DUC  
*(obliging)*  
Cunégonde, put Mademoiselle in the sedan chair... Sir, the fact remains that you insulted my son under my roof!

ORESTE  
*(a little worried)*  
Not true ... I did not disrespect you.

LE DUC  
There is a tradition in our family that dates back to the historic tournament between Ermangard le Mal-Cuit and Luitpol Longue-Oreille and from which we have never departed for 700 years. An insulted La Bombardière under his roof washes away the offense in a fight without quarter...

ORESTE  
Good heavens...

LE DUC  
Weapons: two-handed sword and shield. The fight takes place on the platform of the Tour Barbe, the loser must jump into the moat and dive into the weeds. Adelestan...

ADELESTAN  
I understand.

LE DUC  
The battle cry: attention... one-two-three...

## 6. Battle Cry of the Bombardière

ADELESTAN - LE DUC  
It's the cry of shame to those who renounce it  
It's the cry into the weeds of the mercenaries  
Forget the mustachette  
At the turret the Notary  
At the bottom of the dungeon the boss  
In the battlements the clerk assistant

PETITPOIS  
Bravo. Mais quand même les Petitpois ne sont pas faits pour  
se mélanger avec les lentilles!

POINTILLARD  
*(affolé)*  
Je ne vois qu'un moyen d'arranger l'affaire, Messieurs...

LE DUC  
*(interrompant et s'éloignant)*  
Point, point, point!

ADELESTAN  
*(de même)*  
Notaire, notez de vous taire!

POINTILLARD  
*(bas et vite)*  
Signez l'acte de vente, Mr Petitpois... je l'ai là tout prêt...  
Vous devenez propriétaire du château, et la tradition s'éteint,  
c'est simple comme bonjour...

HÉLOÏSE  
Signe donc, papa...

ORESTE  
Signez mon oncle...

**7. Signez, signez, Mr Petitpois**

TOUS (no Petitpois)  
Signez Monsieur Petitpois

HÉLOÏSE - CUNÉGONDE  
Vous voyez d'ici notre effroi

ADELESTAN - ORESTE - NOTAIRE - LE DUC  
Ayez soin de votre famille

HÉLOÏSE - CUNÉGONDE  
Ciel! Le neveu va aux lentilles

TOUS  
Ciel! Le neveu va aux lentilles

TOUS (no Héloïse)  
Où l'on vous montrera du doigt

HÉLOÏSE - CUNÉGONDE  
Quoi une faible vétille

TOUS  
Le neveu ira aux lentilles

ADELESTAN - ORESTE - NOTAIRE  
Évitez ce fichou tournois

HÉLOÏSE - CUNÉGONDE  
Déjà le brochet frétille

PETITPOIS  
Well done. But still, Petitpois are not made to mix with lentils!

POINTILLARD  
*(distracted)*  
I see only one way to settle the matter, gentlemen...

LE DUC  
*(interrupting and walking away)*  
Sh, sh, sh!

ADELESTAN  
*(similarly)*  
Notary, please keep quiet!

POINTILLARD  
*(low and fast)*  
Sign the deed of sale, Mr Petitpois... I have it there all ready...  
You become the owner of the castle, and the tradition goes out,  
it's simple as pie...

HÉLOÏSE  
Sign, dad...

ORESTE  
Sign, my uncle...

**7. Sign, sign, Mr Petitpois**

ALL (No Petitpois)  
Sign, Mr. Petitpois

HÉLOÏSE - CUNÉGONDE  
You see our fear from here

ADELESTAN - ORESTE - NOTAIRE - LE DUC  
Take care of your family

HÉLOÏSE - CUNÉGONDE  
Heavens! The nephew goes to the weeds

ALL  
Heavens! The nephew goes to the weeds

ALL (no Héloïse)  
Where you will be pointed

HÉLOÏSE - CUNÉGONDE  
What a weak trifle

ALL  
The nephew will go to the weeds

ADELESTAN - ORESTE - NOTAIRE  
Avoid that damn tournament

HÉLOÏSE - CUNÉGONDE  
Already the pike wriggles

TOUS  
Signez Monsieur Petitpois  
Maître enfin sous ce noble toit  
Vous changez l'aspect du quadrille  
Le neveu rira des lentilles

**Scene 9**

PETITPOIS  
C'est bon, je signe, mais je prends le cri de guerre par dessus  
le marché.

LE DUC  
Soit, j'y consens.

ADELESTAN  
L'honneur exige une réparation. j'ai compromis Mademoiselle  
Héloïse, Monsieur Petitpois je vous demande sa main...

ORESTE  
Sa main!

HÉLOÏSE  
Ah... Adelestan...

Adelestan  
Héloïse!

ORESTE  
Et v'lan, elle retombe dans les bras du hussard... mais c'est  
une manie, ma parole...  
Tenez, mon oncle, je la plante là, moi, votre Héloïse...  
J'épouserai Théodora des Bretelles Méphistophélès, elle ne  
peut pas voir les militaires en peinture.

PETITPOIS  
(*furieux*)  
Tu nous quittes pour les Bretelles Méphistophélès? Je te  
renie, traître !

LE DUC  
Cette douce Héloïse fera, ma foi, une charmante duchesse!  
Allons... ne te trouve pas mal...  
Regarde Rodolphe sur son destrier... Quand on a des  
ancêtres, saquerlotte... faut de la tenue... Soyons vieille  
France, nom de nom... je paye le champagne à toute la  
société... Vive la vie de château, y a que ça de beau!

**8. Final**

TOUS  
En achetant ce château  
Il fait sa fille duchesse  
Il tir' d'affaire le nigaud  
Et entre dans la noblesse

LE DUC - PETITPOIS  
Ah mes enfants qu'est épatant d'avoir des ancêtres

TOUS  
Ah mes enfants qu'est épatant d'avoir des ancêtres

ALL  
Sign, Monsieur Petitpois  
Master at last under this noble roof  
You change the aspect of the dance  
The nephew will laugh at weeds

**Scene 9**

PETITPOIS  
Ok Ok, I'll sign, but I'll take the battle cry on top of the contract.

LE DUC  
Whatever, I agree.

ADELESTAN  
Honor demands reparation. I compromised Mademoiselle  
Héloïse, Monsieur Petitpois I ask you for her hand...

ORESTES  
His hand!

HÉLOÏSE  
Ah... Adelestan...

ADELESTAN  
Héloïse!

ORESTES  
And there it is, she falls back into the arms of the horseman...  
it's a habit, my word!...  
Here, uncle, I'm leaving her there, your Héloïse...  
I will marry Théodora of the Méphistopheles Suspenders, she  
cannot stand the sight of soldiers.

PETITPOIS  
(*mad*)  
Are you leaving us for the Méphistopheles Suspenders? I deny  
you, traitor!

LE DUC  
This sweet Héloïse will make a charming duchess! Come on...  
don't think you're bad...  
Look at Rodolphe on his steed... When you have ancestors,  
good gracious... you must look presentable... Let's be old  
France, for crying out loud... I'm buying champagne for  
everyone... Long live castle life, it's the only beautiful thing!

**8. Final**

ALL  
By buying this castle  
He makes his daughter a duchess  
He bails out the simpleton  
And enters the nobility

LE DUC - PETITPOIS  
Ah my children, how amazing to have ancestors

ALL  
Ah my children, how amazing to have ancestors

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