MUSIC, THE MARKET, AND THE MARVELLOUS

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Tommaso Sabbatini is a music historian specialising in 19th-century French theatre. He is currently a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Bristol and McGill University; his research has been supported by the French Government, the American Musicological Society, and the British Academy. He has edited the Opéra-Comique production book from the French première of Giacomo Puccini's *Tosca* (Turin: EDT, forthcoming).

MUSIC, THE MARKET, AND THE MARVELLOUS

Parisian *Féerie*, 1864–1900

Tommaso Sabbatini

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This book has also accreted over many years of professional and personal growth. When I decided to apply for PhD programmes, I thought *féerie* might deserve a chapter in a dissertation on opera and boulevard theatre. Since then, I have stopped using the expression 'boulevard theatre', I have grown suspicious of 'opera', and that planned chapter has eventually grown into a monograph. Over this period, which I have spent across five countries and three Canadian provinces, I have had the privilege of enjoying financial support for my research: while a doctoral student, I received a stipend, wages, and travel funds from my university, a Chateaubriand Fellowship from the French Embassy in the United States, as well as a Eugene K. Wolf travel grant and an Alvin H. Johnson AMS 50 Dissertation Fellowship from the American Musicological Society; I revised my dissertation into this book while on a Newton International Fellowship from the British Academy, and I am currently on a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Global Postdoctoral Fellowship (awarded by the European Commission, disbursed by UK Research and Innovation).

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Overture: *Féerie* and Theatre with Music

Evidence: *Les bibelots du diable* (1858)

Among the manuscript orchestral parts from the Théâtre des Variétés that have found their way to the Bibliothèque nationale de France, there is one set of parts that stands out for its apparently hybrid nature (Fig. 1.1).[1] It contains, divided into three acts, more than 50 brief vocal numbers of the kind one would expect in a 19th-century vaudeville: a few have original music, some recycle music composed for previous productions at the same theatre, most are based on pre-existing tunes (*timbres*, popular opera or operetta numbers, or songs). That the music found in these parts does not belong to a vaudeville, however, is evident from the sheer amount of instrumental music: in addition to the overture and entr'actes, the play is punctuated by numerous orchestral intrusions ranging from a single chord to a balletic divertissement in seven numbers. Indeed, included are not one but two divertissements, as in most canonic *grands opéras*, and dancers also perform two pantomimes (involving moving statues and mute harem guards). But music is also used, in melodramatic fashion, to underscore the stage action, as one can verify through a comparison with the printed text of the play:[2] we find music for a combat scene (a fixture of melodrama);[3] all the tricks that create the appearance of magic are accompanied at least by a pertinent musical gesture; and the effect of open-curtain changes of scenery (*changements à vue*) is amplified by music. Counting both fully fledged set pieces and short cues, music occurs over 80 times in the course of the play (Table 1.1).

This set of parts is a valuable document of a little-studied but highly relevant genre in 19th-century Parisian theatre, *féerie*. Specifically, it is the music of *Les*

[1] F-Pnas fonds Variétés 4-COL-106(926,1) and 4-COL-106(926,2). For RISM sigla, see http://www.rism.info/en/sigla.html (accessed 8 February 2024). To avoid clutter, citations for post-1864 primary sources will not normally be given in footnotes: the reader is referred to Appendix 1 instead.

[2] Théodore Cogniard and Clairville, *Les bibelots du diable* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1858, both as a brochure in the Théâtre contemporain illustré series and as an 18mo volume).

[3] The well-known satirical *Traité du mélodrame* (signed 'A! A! A!' and written by Abel Hugo, Armand Malitourne, and Jean-Joseph Ader) describes melodrama's musically enhanced combats: A! A! A!, *Traité du mélodrame* (Paris: Delaunay, Pélicier, Plancher, 1817), 39–40 and 55.

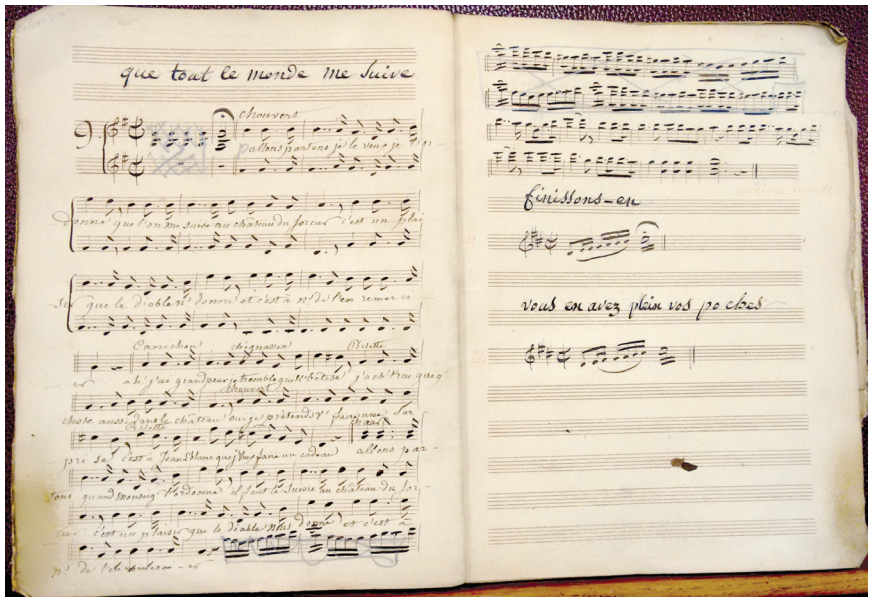


Figure 1.1 *Violon conducteur* part for *Les bibelots du diable*. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des arts du spectacle.

bibelots du diable (The Devil's Trinkets, 1858) by playwrights Théodore Cogniard and Clairville.[4] Not only is *Les bibelots du diable* one of a handful of *féeries* dating from before 1870—and possibly the only one from the Second Empire—for which the music is fully preserved, but it is also an extremely successful specimen of the genre, written by two of its foremost practicioners.[5] Even though the

[4] Richard Sherr has examined the music for two *revues de fin d'année* given at the Variétés in close temporal proximity to *Les bibelots du diable*, *Ohé! les p'tits agneaux!* (1857), of which he has given a critical edition, and *As-tu vu la comète, mon gas?* (1858): Richard Sherr, ed., *Ohé! les p'tits agneaux!: A Parisian* revue de fin d'année *for 1857* (Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2021); Richard Sherr, 'Comets, *Calembours*, Chorus Girls: The Music for the *revue de fin d'année* for the Year 1858 at the Théâtre des Variétés: A Preliminary Evaluation', in *Musical Theatre in Europe, 1830–1945*, ed. Michela Niccolai and Clair Rowden (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 23–48. He and I visited the fonds Variétés around the same period and independently reached similar conclusions about the functioning of the musical library of the Théâtre des Variétés and the compiling of scores consisting of mostly pre-existing music.

[5] See Roxane Martin, *La féerie romantique sur les scènes parisiennes, 1791–1864* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2007), 599–605 for a (provisional) bibliography of extant *féerie* scores up to 1864. Martin lists 13 full scores or complete sets of parts dating between 1798 and 1843 (as well as the score for Adolphe d'Ennery's supernatural melodrama *Faust*, from 1856), and makes use of the score for *Les mille et une nuits* (1843) on pp. 303–24 of her book. In addition to those, the fonds Variétés and the fonds Ambigu-Comique (also at the Bibliothèque nationale de France) have parts for *Le Petit Poucet* (1845) and *L'étoile du berger* (1846), respectively. Jean-Claude Yon has examined a manuscript vocal score for a Second Empire *féerie*, *Rothomago* (1862): see his 'La féerie ou le royaume du spectaculaire: L'exemple de *Rothomago*', in *Le spectaculaire dans les arts de la scène du Romantisme à la Belle Époque*, ed. Isabelle Moindrot (Paris: CNRS éditions, 2006), 126–33.

Table 1.1 Music for *Les bibelots du diable* (1858), after F-Pnas fonds Variétés 4-COL-106(926,1) and F-Pnas fonds Variétés 4-COL-106(926,2), *violon conducteur* part.

I: instrumental; VT: vocal, based on pre-existing tune (*timbre*, opera excerpt, etc.); VS: vocal, stock music (music composed for a previous production at the Théâtre des Variétés); VO: vocal, original music. Shaded items date, or might date, from the 1862 revival.				
Act 1				
number in ink	**number in red pencil**	**type**	**description / incipit**	**remarks**
		I	Ouverture	
1		VT	Approchons en silence	
2		VT	C'est un marquis, il faut qu'on se le dise	
3		VT	Quelle réjouissance	
4		VT	Respectez mon âne	
5		VT	Chacun m'repète	
6		VO > VT	Berger de la montagne	after Offenbach, *Le Pont des Soupirs* (operetta, 1861), supersedes 'La nuit j'en rêve', music by Boucher
6bis	7	VT	Chaque jour je soupire	after Clapisson, *La promise* (*opéra comique*, 1854); replaced with a setting after Offenbach, *Le Pont des Soupirs*, but first setting reinstated
7	8	VT	Honneur! honneur!	after Meyerbeer, *Les Huguenots* (*grand opéra*, 1836)
~~8~~	~~9~~	~~VO~~	~~Voyez ce vieux château maudit~~	music by Nargeot; crossed out (cut in 1862?)
9	10	VT	Allons, partons, je le veux, je l'ordonne	
	11	I	[ascending scale]	
	12	I	[ascending scale]	
10	13	VT > VT	De l'or à moi, de l'or en masse	after Offenbach, *La chanson de Fortunio* (operetta, 1861), supersedes 'Quoi! dans mes mains, de l'or! de l'or! est-il possible', after Adam, *Le brasseur de Preston* (*opéra comique*, 1838)

(*Continued*)

Table 1.1 (Cont.)

number in ink	number in red pencil	type	description / incipit	remarks
11	14	VS?	Nous voici, nous accourons	used in *Lanterne magique* (1856)
11bis	15	I	[melodramatic music: transformation]	
12	16	VS?	Avant cette vente à l'encan	used in *Le royaume du calembour* (1855)
12bis	17	I	[melodramatic music]	
13	18	VT	Ah! cré coquin	
	19	I	[trill and cymbal clash]	
14	20	VS	Quel est ce nouveau mystère?	used in *La bourse au village* (1856)
14bis	21	I	[melodramatic music]	
15	22	I	[descending scale]	
		VT	Qu'est-ce que je vois?	after nursery rhyme 'À mon beau château'
16	23	I	[descending scale]	
		VT > VT	Quoi! c'est à moi ces beaux habits?	after song by Paul Henrion, replaces 'C'est mon inconnu', on a *timbre* attributed to Beethoven
17	24	VT	Ah! que d'amour j'inspire!	after song by Paul Henrion
18	25	I	[ascending scale]	
		VT	Ô ciel! quel changement!	after Hérold, *La clochette* (*opéra comique*, 1817)
19	26	VT	J'l'avoue, un jour que j'vous portais, Risette	
20	27	VT	Que m'importent la maison	
20bis	28	I	[melodramatic music]	
		I	[melodramatic music: transformation and tableau]	

Act 2				
number in ink	**number in red pencil**	**type**	**description / incipit**	**remarks**
	29	I	Entr'acte	
21	30	VT	Marianne, la femme à Pierre	
	31	I	[ascending scale]	
	32	I	[arpeggio]	
22	33	I	[ascending scale]	
		VS	Quel est ce mystère?	used in *Les deux brigadiers* (1842)
23	34	VT	Tout's les jeunes fill's, pour le r'tnir	after nursery rhyme 'La boulangère a des écus'
		I	[melodramatic music, later repeated during transformation]	
	35	I	[scalar figuration]	
	36	I	[single chord *ff*]	
24	37	VT	De la part de gente fillette	
25	38	VT	Sitôt que je veux faire un pas	
26	39	I	[melodramatic music]	
26bis	40	I	[melodramatic music]	
		I	[descending scale]	
		VT	Ciel! au fonds du puits! malheur nouveau!	after Rossini, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*
27	41	I	[ascending scale]	
		VT	Ciel! monsieur le bailli!	after Auber, *Le philtre* (*petit opéra*, 1831)
27bis	42	VO > VT	Prodige étrange	after Offenbach, *Un mari à la porte* (operetta, 1859), supersedes 'Ah! je possède un talisman!', music by Boucher
	43	I	[trills]	
	44	I	[melodramatic music]	

(*Continued*)

Table 1.1 (Cont.)

number in ink	number in red pencil	type	description / incipit	remarks
27ter	45	VT	Ciel! un instant! — Trêve aux propos!	
28	46	I	[trills]	
		I	[melodramatic music]	
28bis	47	VT	Monsieur, laissez-moi!	after song by Loïsa Puget
29	48	VS	J' trouv' que vos p'tits souliers sont beaux	used in *Les moissonneurs de la Beauce, ou Le soldat laboureur* (1821)
	49	I	[descending scale]	
	50	I	[descending scale]	
30	51	VT?	Ô ciel! quelle surprise!	
31	52	VS	Jetez-vous sur cet homme!	used in *Un monsieur qui ne veut pas s'en aller* (1852)
32	53	VT > VS	Laisse-toi conduire	used in *Un roi malgré lui* (1854), supersedes 'Quand l'amour nous rassemble', after Auber, *Le cheval de bronze* (*opéra comique*, 1835; *grand opéra*, 1857)
33	54	VT	Sur un gai côteau	
34	55	VT	Mais tu pourrais avec raison	
		I	[ascending scale]	
		I	[arpeggio]	
35	56	VS	Ah! qu'c'est joli! qu'c'est joli!	used in *Les jolis soldats* (1826)
36	57	I	[march]	
37	58	VT	Viens, palais magique	after Boieldieu, *La dame blanche* (*opéra comique*, 1825)
37bis	59	VS >?	Gloire, honneur à notre roi	supersedes 'Pour fêter notre [reine]', music used in *Le roi des drôles* (1852) (likely typo in printed play: in order to match the music, text should read 'Pour fêter notre reine, / Pour fêter notre roi', etc.)

		I	Ballet [introduction and seven numbers]	supersedes 1858 ballet (introduction and nine numbers), from which violin 1 and percussion parts survive at F-Pnas fonds Variétés 4-COL-106(1942); excerpts were also published in piano reduction
				in 1858, performance of children violin prodigies Jules and Juliette Depierre (according to review in *Le Ménestrel*: Mayseder, *Air varié*, and *Le carnaval de Venise* [presumably Paganini, op. 10])
		I	[ascending scale]	
		VO?	Singulière aventure!	music matches the words, even though there is an early call for the curtain to drop
Act 3				
number in ink	**number in red pencil**	**type**	**description / incipit**	**remarks**
	61	I	Entr'acte	
		I	[melodramatic music]	
37bis [sic]	62	VT	Ah! puisque dans cette grotte	crossed out, but marked 'bon'
37ter	[63]	I	[melodramatic music: pantomime]	
38	64	VT	Puisqu'on rabaisse	
		I	[melodramatic music]	
		I	[ascending scale]	
		I	[descending scale]	
~~39~~	~~65~~	~~VT~~	~~Quel désespoir!~~	crossed out with remark 'sans chant' (cut in 1862?)
	66	I	[arpeggio]	
40	67	I	[scalar figure]	
		VT	Il a reparu	
40bis	68	I	[melodramatic music]	

(*Continued*)

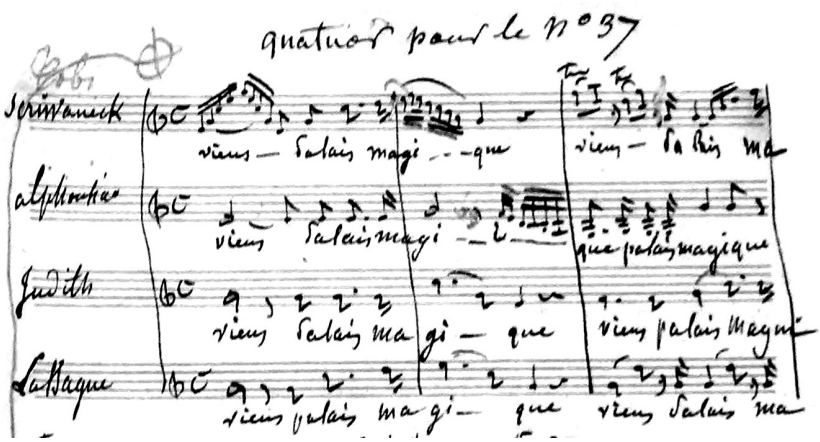
Table 1.1 (Cont.)

number in ink	number in red pencil	type	description / incipit	remarks
~~41~~		~~VT > VT~~	~~J'ai perdu bonheur et richesse~~	after a song by Alexandre Michel, actor at the Variétés, supersedes 'Non, non, je n'ai plus d'espoir', after Massé, *Les chaises à porteur* (*opéra comique*, 1858); crossed out
42	69	VO	Et bien, tout seul, je tenterai l'épreuve	music by Nargeot
		I	[melodramatic music]	crossed out, but marked 'bon'
43	70	VS	Dans un n'harem il faut	used in *Ohé! les p'tits agneaux!* (1857)
43bis	71	I	[melodramatic music]	
44	72	VT	Je suis pacha sous cet attirail	after Poise, *Bonsoir voisin* (*opéra comique*, 1853)
44bis	73	I	[melodramatic music: pantomime]	
44ter	74	VT	Venez, gentilles bayadères	after Isouard, *Aladin* (opera, 1822)
		I	[ballet in four numbers]	
45	75	VT?	Enfer! elle me brave!	
46	76	VT	De vous braver un instant	
46bis	77	I	[instrumental ritornello of following song]	replaced to match new no. 46ter
46ter	78	VT > VT	Connaissez-vous dans la Castille	after Offenbach, *Monsieur Choufleuri restera chez lui le…* (operetta, 1861), supersedes 'Il est dans la vieille Castille'
	[7]9	I	[arpeggio]	
		I	[melodramatic music]	
~~47~~		~~VT~~	~~Vieux marquis, redoute ma vengeance~~	after Donizetti, *Lucie de Lammermoor* (1839); crossed out, text not in printed play (cut before the première?)

~~48~~		~~VT~~	~~Qu'est-ce que j'ai donc?~~	crossed out, text not in printed play (cut before the première?)
48	80	VT	On nous a percé le flanc!	
		I	Changement [i.e., transformation music]	
49	81	VT	Gai, gai, marions-nous	after Massé, *Les noces de Jeannette* (*opéra comique*, 1853)
50	82	I	[arpeggio]	
50bis	83	VT	Petit, tout est petit	after nursery rhyme 'Maman les p'tits bateaux'
51	84	I	[instrumental reprise of no. 49]	
52	85	I	[melodramatic music: combat]	
53	86	VO	Honneur! honneur! à notre auguste reine	music by Nargeot

star composers whose music was borrowed for *Les bibelots* (Gioachino Rossini, Giacomo Meyerbeer, Daniel-François-Esprit Auber, among others) were not consulted, and those who willingly contributed were humble practitioners (Julien Nargeot, Jules Boucher, and Camille Schubert), this set of parts is testimony to how heavily *féerie* relied on music, to the point that the show simply could not have worked without what we call today a soundtrack. It is easy to see, for instance, that to a contemporary observer *féerie* would have been unthinkable without tricks and transformations, and tricks and transformations would have been unthinkable without music. As for the vocal numbers, most of the singers' lines in *Les bibelots du diable* are not technically demanding, but we would be wrong to assume that they were performed perfunctorily or that the audience did not care about the singing. Indeed, at a crucial moment in the plot, four characters launch into a burlesque quartet rendition of 'Viens, gentille dame', the celebrated tenor *cavatine* of Adrien Boieldieu's *La dame blanche*, offering a parody of operatic virtuosity not unlike those concocted by Jacques Offenbach for his operettas (Ex. 1.1). The reviewer for *Le Ménestrel* commented approvingly that the performers produced some 'odd cooing whose like is not found in any human throat'.[6]

[6] '[D]es roucoulements étranges qui n'ont pas d'équivalent dans aucun gosier humain'. 'Semaine théâtrale', *Le Ménestrel*, 29 August 1858, 3. All translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.



Example 1.1 Parody of 'Viens, gentille dame' in *Les bibelots du diable*. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des arts du spectacle.

The score of *Les bibelots* also demonstrates the plasticity of *féerie*. Some items have been replaced with highlights from stage works that had not yet been premièred in 1858, as though the *féerie* had been given rejuvenating injections of new music to keep it fashionable. It is only logical to suppose that the changes were made for the 1862 revival, and it is surely not a coincidence that the new pieces of music were taken from Offenbach operettas: the female lead of the revival, Lise Tautin, had come straight from Offenbach's theatre, the Bouffes-Parisiens, where she had been the first Eurydice in *Orphée aux enfers* (1858). In *Les bibelots du diable*, Tautin reprised two numbers she had premièred and two more from the repertoire of the Bouffes.[7] The music of *Les bibelots* continued to evolve even after 1862. In 1874, composer Alexandre Artus published a waltz that was probably interpolated into (or replaced) the second ballet of the play for that year's revival at the Théâtre de la Renaissance.[8]

This set of parts, then, is likely to raise familiar questions for the music historian. Were *féeries* properly spoken or musical theatre? Can they really be considered spoken plays when they included operetta music performed by operetta artists? Yet how can *féerie*, which has actors singing *timbres*, fit within musical theatre, which normally has singers performing music written by a composer? Is *féerie* a melodrama in which people happen to sing, or a vaudeville with some background music to grease the wheels of stage illusion? Beyond these obvious

[7] She would eventually leave the Variétés but continue her career in *féerie*, starring in *Aladin, ou La lampe merveilleuse* at the Châtelet in 1863.

[8] The set of parts from the Variétés was probably used for this revival too, as an annotation mentions Silly, who took part in the production.

questions about genre, a musicologist grounded in the discipline's tradition of textual criticism might wonder about the alterations made to the score in 1862. Do they constitute a new version of a 'work' or are they just contingent on a particular performance? Is music an integral component of the work, as in opera, or is it an element of a particular production of that work, as in melodrama?[9] And what about the staging? Roger Parker has written that opera production books (*livrets de mise en scène*) illuminate the 'no-man's-land … between "the work" and its "interpretation"',[10] which presupposes the notion that any staging is 'an act of interpretation, an act of reception'.[11] But in a *féerie*, where the plot is largely a function of the visual spectacle and the stage machinery, how can we take for granted that the playwright is an author while the *régisseur*, the *chef machiniste*, and the set and costume designers are simply interpreters?

These are all perfectly legitimate questions. But *féerie* forces us to reconsider some of the assumptions that underlie it, making us realise that our musicological toolbox might not be well suited to 19th-century Parisian theatre. Firstly, we might be preoccupied too much with authors and works, and too little with genres and institutions. Secondly, our distinction between spoken and musical theatre (with its corollary, the distinction between actors and singers) might be misleading. And thirdly, the work/performance binary might not prove equally useful for all genres.

In what follows, I will use a period image as an entry point into 19th-century Parisian theatre in order to make the case for the category of 'theatre with music', encompassing all the genres in which the verbal text is not self-sufficient (as is the case for literary theatre) but rather is inseparable from music and staging. I will then introduce in greater detail the object of this book, fin-de-siècle French *féerie*.

While *féerie* was a conspicuous presence on the 19th-century Parisian stage, only two book-length studies have been devoted to it, neither of them by a music scholar.[12] With roots in the pseudo-folkloric tradition of the French fairytale

[9] According to the terminology proposed by Jens Hesselager, in the former case the score would be a 'work-text', in the latter case it would have the status of a 'performance-text'. Jens Hesselager, '*Musik til Skuespil*: Two Methodological Challenges and a Few Observations Occasioned by an Early Nineteenth-Century Danish Manuscript of Incidental Music', in *Theater mit Musik: 400 Jahre Schauspielmusik im europäischen Theater: Bedingungen — Strategien — Wahrnehmungen*, ed. Ursula Kramer (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2014), 183–201.

[10] Roger Parker, 'Reading the *Livrets*, or The Chimera of "Authentic" Staging', in *Leonora's Last Act: Essays in Verdian Discourse* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 148.

[11] Parker, 'Reading the *Livrets*', 134.

[12] Namely, Martin, *La féerie romantique*, and Stéphane Tralongo, 'Faiseurs de féeries: Mise en scène, machinerie et pratiqus cinématographiques émergentes au tournant du XX^{e} siècle' (PhD diss., Université de Montréal, Université Lumière Lyon 2, 2012), by a theatre scholar and a film scholar, respectively. Martin, though, deserves credit for collecting and making use of musical evidence. Only a late example of the genre (Jean Richepin and Henri Cain's *La Belle au bois dormant*, 1907) has received some musicological attention, with a chapter in Erin Brooks's dissertation on music for plays starring Sarah Bernhardt: Erin M. Brooks, 'Sharing the Stage with the *voix d'or*: Sarah Bernhardt and Music in the Belle Époque' (PhD diss., Washington University in St. Louis, 2010), 421–99.

(exemplified by Charles Perrault and Madame d'Aulnoy) and critical offshoots in film (starting with Georges Méliès in the 1890s), *féerie* accompanied the establishment of a modern popular culture, produced by specialised professionals for the consumption of a large public, which took over the spaces formerly occupied by folklore. At the end of this process, fin-de-siècle *féerie*, inseparable from the theatre industry that made it possible and from a wider landscape of dioramas, World's Fair displays, advertising posters, and other 'spectacular realities',[13] is representative of the incipient phase of mass culture, whose full realisation in the age of film and illustrated magazines has been famously described by Walter Benjamin. As commercial works designed to reach exceedingly large audiences, *féeries* are therefore particularly attractive as repositories of Third Republic hegemonic ideas about progress, capital, the nation, colonialism, and gender.

But the relation of *féeries* to their social context is not just a thematic one. The 'market' and the 'marvellous' of my title are closely intertwined: *féerie*'s embrace of the market had as profound an influence on its poetics as Richard Wagner's rejection of the market had on the poetics of his mature works. If Wagner's ideal was the total artwork of the future, that of *féeries* can be dubbed the 'total artwork of the present'—plurimedial works whose multiple authors had limited agency, and which call into question (to address the last of the points I have raised) the work/performance binary.[14]

Theatre with music

What 'theatre' meant for late 19th-century Parisians can be gleaned through the eyes of a contemporary. Consider a street corner at the intersection of boulevard des Capucines and rue Scribe, in the ninth *arrondissement* of Paris (Fig. 1.2). It is a cloudy afternoon in late April 1879. The trees that line the Haussmannian boulevard are green; the sign 'Grand Café' shines in golden letters. On the *piano nobile* of the Grand Café building—a pastiche of Renaissance architectural elements, not dissimilar from the ones that grace place de l'Opéra one block away—men in top hats lean against an ornate balcony railing observing passers-by in similar attire. The moment has been captured by Jean Béraud, possibly the most famous anecdotal painter of the French Third Republic, in a small oil painting now at the

[13] I am adopting the expression popularised by Vanessa R. Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in Fin-de-Siècle Paris* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

[14] 'Plurimedial' is the preferred term of scholars of intermediality such as Werner Wolf and Irina O. Rajewsky. See, for example, Werner Wolf, 'Intermediality Revisited: Reflections on Word and Music Relations in the Context of a General Typology of Intermediality', in *Word and Music Studies: Essays in Honor of Steven Paul Scher and on Cultural Identity and the Musical Stage*, ed. Suzanne M. Lodato, Suzanne Aspden, and Walter Bernhart (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002), 13–34.

Figure 1.2 Jean Béraud, *Paris Kiosk*. Oil on canvas, 35.5 × 26.5 cm. Baltimore, The Walters Art Museum.

Walters Art Museum in Baltimore.[15] On the left of the composition are two elegant women: one, in black, is crossing the street, the other, in red, has already reached the other side; both are lifting the hems of their dresses, not wanting them to trail on the setts or into the dubious-looking gutter. Standing a couple of metres from the woman in red is a man sporting a top hat and bushy side-whiskers. The two characters do not interact in the least: both are giving their undivided attention to the real protagonist of the painting, an advertising column—or, more precisely, this being Paris, a Morris column (*colonne Morris*). The eponym for the columns is the firm Morris et Compagnie, which was already in charge of theatre posters when it won an 1863 competition for dedicated billposting surfaces (prompted by public outcry at aggressive unauthorised advertising).[16] Ever since, Morris columns have been dispensing information on theatres and other amusements to Parisian strollers, such as our lady in red and side-whiskered gentleman, who are in all likelihood making plans for their evenings.

When we think of French Belle Époque posters,[17] we may picture Toulouse-Lautrec's work for the Moulin Rouge, Sarah Bernhardt's heroines (and heroes) as immortalised by Alphonse Mucha, the sprightly female figures of Jules Chéret, or the evocative atmospheres of Georges Rochegrosse. What is displayed on the Morris column, however, is not the illustrated poster in which these artists excelled, but its older, humbler cousin, the typographic poster. As Jean-Claude Yon writes, 'Even though it can include an illustration starting with the early 1850s, the theatre poster is first and foremost typographic, since it must supply the information that a 21st-century spectator is used to finding in theatre programmes or in news outlets, namely the contents of the performance, start times, cast lists, seat prices, and box-office hours',[18] information that was legally binding for the theatre. Morris columns covered in typographical theatre posters are documented in photographs by Charles Marville and Eugène Atget. But those black-and-white photographs lack an essential component of theatre advertisement: as art historian Ruth E. Iskin has remarked, 'the typographic poster relied not only on words but also, to great effect, on brilliant colours (the coloured paper was mandated by the fact that the use of white paper was preserved for official government posters)'.[19]

[15] *Paris Kiosk*, or *Le kiosque des affiches*. 'Paris Kiosk', https://art.thewalters.org/detail/27564/paris-kiosk (accessed 8 February 2024). See also William R. Johnston, *The Nineteenth Century Paintings in the Walters Art Gallery* (Baltimore, MD: Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery, 1982), 128.

[16] H. Hazel Hahn, *Scenes of Parisian Modernity: Culture and Consumption in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 147–51.

[17] In French usage, the term generally refers to the years 1900–14. Here I am conforming to English-language usage, where the Belle Époque is understood to include the last quarter of the 19th century as well.

[18] Jean-Claude Yon, *Une histoire du théâtre à Paris de la Révolution à la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Aubier, 2012), 230.

[19] Ruth E. Iskin, *The Poster: Art, Advertising, Design, and Collecting, 1860s–1900s* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Press, 2014), 218.

In *Le ventre de Paris* (1873), Émile Zola writes: 'at either end of the foot-path was a billposting pillar covered with theatre posters, alternately green, yellow, red, and blue, like a harlequin's costume';[20] a character in a story by Théodore de Banville raves: 'On the only path that I ever took through Paris … they put up a Morris column, covered in theatre posters. I had never seen posters! They materialised all of a sudden, yellow, blue, green, maize, lilac, grey, red, pansy- and rose-coloured.'[21]

The bright colours of theatre posters were visual markers: ever since the Ancien Régime, every playhouse had been associated with a distinctive shade. In a passage from *Swann's Way* (*Du côté de chez Swann*), the narrator of Marcel Proust's *Recherche*, still a young boy, has not set foot in a theatre yet, but he can recognise 'the green poster of the Opéra-Comique' from the 'wine dregs-coloured poster of the Comédie-Française'.[22] He can fantasise about titles, too, and he has, one might claim, an instinctive grasp of genre from the fact that, unlike *Le testament de César Girodot* (a modern comedy) and *Oedipus the King* (the Greek tragedy), which appear on the wine-coloured posters, *Les diamants de la couronne* and *Le domino noir*, two typical examples of July Monarchy *opéra comique*, appear on the green ones. Proust's narrator, up to this point, does not know the names of the playwrights, translators, and composers behind these titles. But knowing them was simply not necessary to navigate the Parisian theatre landscape. The side-whiskered man in the Béraud painting, who is looking at a poster for *Fatinitza*, might or might not know that the music is by a certain Franz von Suppé and that the work has been successful in Vienna: to be sure, it is the title, in display type, that caught his attention, not the name of the composer. But even before approaching the Morris column to read the smaller type with authors' and performers' names, he has anticipated some kind of light work with music, since he has recognised a poster from the Théâtre des Nouveautés.

If the boy from *Swann's Way* were present at the scene, he would be able to tell the green Opéra-Comique poster from across the street; coming closer, he would be able to read 'La flûte enchantée'. The boy might ignore the fact that the *Magic Flute* advertised is a French adaptation of a revered work by Mozart. But he would be able to guess that it is closer to *Les diamants de la couronne* and *Le domino noir* than *Fatinitza*—which does not appear on a green poster—is. The different colours

[20] '[A]ux deux bouts du trottoir, deux colonnes d'affichage étaient comme vêtues d'un habit d'Arlequin par les carrés verts, jaunes, rouges, bleus, des affiches de théâtre'. Émile Zola, *Le ventre de Paris*, ch. 5. In *Les Rougon-Macquart*, ed. Armand Lanoux and Henri Mitterand (Paris: Gallimard, 1960–7), 1:841. English translation by Brian Nelson as *The Belly of Paris* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 223.

[21] 'Sur le seul chemin que je parcourusse jamais dans Paris … on installa une colonne Morris, couverte d'affiches de théâtre. Je n'avais jamais vu d'affiches! Tout à coup, elles éclatèrent, jaunes, bleues, vertes, maïs, lilas, grises, rouges, couleur de pensée et couleur de rose.' Théodore de Banville, 'Les affiches', in *Les belles poupées* (Paris: Charpentier, 1888), 89–90.

[22] '[L]'affiche verte de l'Opéra-Comique … l'affiche lie-de-vin de la Comédie-Française'. Marcel Proust, *Du côté de Chez Swann*, pt. 1, ch. 2. In *À la recherche du temps perdu*, ed. Jean-Yves Tadié (Paris: Gallimard, 1987–89), 1:72–3.

of their posters would also allow him to predict that *Camille Desmoulins* (at the Théâtre des Nations) and *Salvator Rosa* (at the much larger Théâtre du Châtelet) offer rather different attractions. In both cases he would be right, while a modern observer might be deceived by the fact that *Fatinitza* is billed as an *opéra comique* and that both *Camille Desmoulins* and *Salvator Rosa* are historical melodramas.

Béraud's painting affirms what musicology has come to embrace in recent decades: we should give to genres and institutions at least the same attention we give to authors and works. But this image can also help us to examine and understand the novel ways in which we might want to think about theatre. The organisation of our present-day theatre industry and our academic institutions encourages us to apply to theatre a certain taxonomy. According to the method of successive dichotomous divisions (*diairesis*) that were first illustrated by Plato and are deeply ingrained in our intellectual habits, we distinguish spoken theatre from musical theatre; within musical theatre, we set ballet aside from the genres where words are uttered; and we split the latter, along lines of 'seriousness' and prestige, between opera on the one hand and operetta (together with its cousins the zarzuela and the musical) on the other. This forking-tree scheme (Fig. 1.3) works well for us today: New York's Lincoln Center hosts different companies for opera, ballet, and plays and musicals in different venues; in London, plays, musicals, opera productions, and dance productions compete in dedicated categories for the Olivier Awards; the French Ministry of Culture funds *théâtres nationaux* for spoken theatre, *opéras nationaux* for opera, and *centres chorégraphiques nationaux* for dance; Cambridge University Press publishes the specialised journals *New Theatre Quarterly*, *Cambridge Opera Journal*, and *Dance Research Journal*; and we all know what we mean by 'play', 'opera', and so on. But this taxonomy might seriously misrepresent the reality of 19th-century Paris.

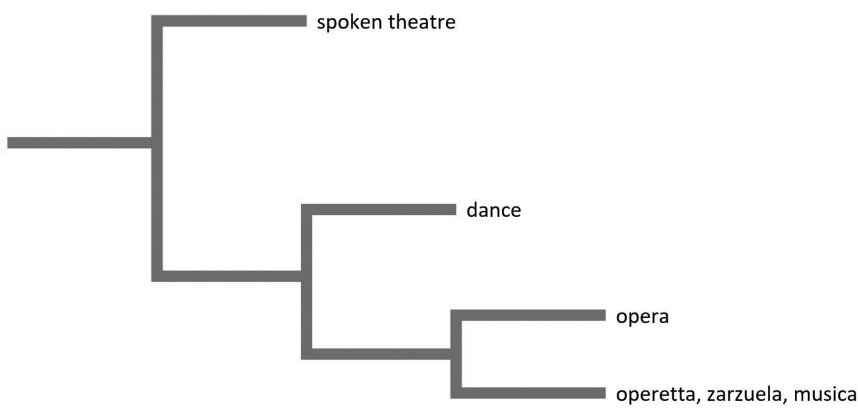


Figure 1.3 Taxonomy implied by most contemporary discourse about theatre.

Looking back at our Morris column, it would make little sense to lump into the category of 'spoken theatre' *Dom Juan*, whose appeal lies in Molière's text, with *Camille Desmoulins*, promising living pictures of famous episodes of the Revolution, or *Salvator Rosa*, which boasts a picturesque ballet.[23] On which side of the spoken versus musical divide should we put *Le grand Casimir*, whose poster can be seen on the side of the Morris column facing the woman in red and which can be considered either as a vaudeville with an entirely original score (by Charles Lecocq) or as an operetta trying to pass for a vaudeville? (Incidentally, the same applies to one of Hervé's best-known works, premièred four years later at the same theatre, *Mam'zelle Nitouche*.) The boundary between operetta and opera was also more permeable than we would assume: the three-act operettas playing in town at the end of April 1879 (in addition to *Fatinitza*, Léon Vasseur's *Le droit du seigneur*, Jacques Offenbach's *Madame Favart*, Hervé's *La marquise des rue*s, and Charles Lecocq's *La petite mademoiselle*) not only called themselves *opéras comiques*, but also all contained roughly as many musical numbers as *The Magic Flute*, and more than the old favourite *Les diamants de la couronne* (which the Opéra-Comique had just revived). On the other hand, the cast for *The Magic Flute* at the Opéra-Comique included two former operetta performers, the baritone Lucien Fugère as Papageno and the *trial* (that is, comic tenor) Barnolt in a speaking role.

The truth is that neither the distinction between opera and operetta nor that between spoken and musical theatre is helpful here. Music (be it vocal numbers, dance numbers, or melodramatic music punctuating the action) was an integral and defining part of melodrama, vaudeville, and *féerie*. It might be worth taking a step back to the Napoleonic system of theatre licensing, adopted in 1806–7 and in effect until 1864, to remember that what differentiates these genres from *opéra comique* is not, as we might think, that they consist of 'plays' and *opéra comique* of 'operas', but that *opéra comique* had entirely original scores while the other genres did not. If we were, as an experiment, to infer a scheme of dichotomous divisions from the 1807 decree,[24] the first bifurcation would probably be between literary theatre (tragedy and comedy, performed at the Comédie-Française and at what would eventually be known as the Odéon), which might not have any music beyond overtures and entr'actes, and theatre with music. The second bifurcation would be between theatre entirely set to music (continuous opera and ballet, performed at the Opéra and by the troupe that would later found the Théâtre-Italien) and theatre mixing spoken dialogue and music. The third bifurcation would be between theatre with spoken dialogue and original vocal numbers (*opéra comique*,

[23] For these details I rely on the entertainment listing magazine *L'Orchestre*, published from 1856 to 1911 and sold in theatres and music venues.

[24] Reproduced in Nicole Wild, *Dictionnaires des théâtres parisiens, 1807–1914* (Lyon: Symétrie, 2012), 449–53.

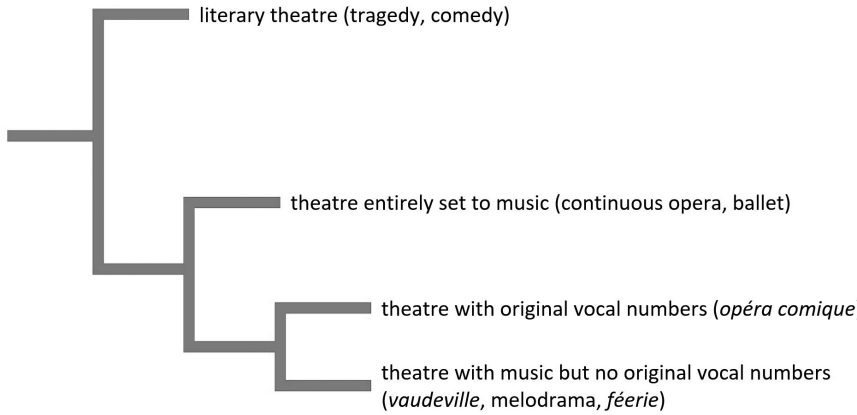


Figure 1.4 Taxonomy of theatre implied by the Napoleonic licensing system, in force 1807–64.

performed, of course, at the Opéra-Comique) and theatre with spoken dialogue and music but no original vocal numbers (vaudeville, melodrama, *féerie*, performed at the commercial playhouses, the so-called *petits théâtres*).[25] (The Opéra-Comique's monopoly on plays with spoken dialogue and original vocal numbers, already threatened during the July Monarchy, was lost with the inception of the Théâtre-Lyrique and the rise of operetta in the 1850s.) Of course, there is some arbitrariness in this conjectural taxonomy (Fig. 1.4), but it is safe to assume that for 19th-century Parisians, vaudeville could not be assimilated to comedy, melodrama could not be assimilated to tragedy, and *opéra comique* could not be assimilated to continuous opera.[26] The distinction between plays with and without original vocal numbers, though, was a casualty of the deregulation of theatres (the *liberté des théâtres*) in 1864. This made possible *La vie parisienne* (1866), composed by Offenbach for a vaudeville theatre, the Palais-Royal, and the original melodrama scores written in the early 1870s by Georges Bizet, Charles Gounod, and Offenbach (for Alphonse Daudet's *L'Arlésienne*, 1872, Jules Barbier's *Jeanne d'Arc*, 1873, and Victorien Sardou's *La haine*, 1874, respectively). Less well known is another product of this development, *féerie* with entirely original scores, or, as I will call it, composerly *féerie*.

Telling plays apart from operas and operetta seems thorny, one might object, but at least audiences would have known the difference between an actor and a

[25] Farce and mime, which in purely taxonomical terms could be considered analogous to comedy and ballet respectively, for reasons of social prestige were also assimilated to the last group.

[26] The complete edition of Eugène Scribe's works placed the vaudevilles in series 2 but the comedies in series 1, the *opéras comiques* in series 4, but the continuous operas in series 3. Eugène Scribe, *Œuvres complètes*, 75 vols (Paris: Dentu, 1874–85).

singer. They certainly did, but apparently they were more eager to stress what the two groups had in common. Opera and operetta performers could very well be referred to as 'actors', and several publications profiled the female performers of the Parisian playhouses without regard to their specialisation: Félix Savard's *Les actrices de Paris*, Paul Mahalin's lewd who's who *Les jolies actrices de Paris*, the illustrated publication with portraits by Ernest de Liphart *Les actrices de Paris*, and two similarly titled poetry collections, one by Eugène Hubert and Christian de Trogoff, the other by Eugène Billard.[27] The Dane Richard Kaufmann reported that the 'rising stars' of the French stage in around 1890 were Aimée Tessandier, Jeanne Granier, Marie Gisier-Montbazon, and Juliette Simon-Girard,[28] placing a *tragédienne* from the Comédie-Française on equal footing with three operetta performers. Careers could also take extravagant turns: Pierre Grivot started as a comic actor in the 1860s, switched to operetta, and was eventually engaged as a *trial* at the Opéra-Comique; Jean Périer is remembered in music histories as the baritone who originated the role of Pelléas in Claude Debussy's iconic Symbolist opera *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1902), but within months of that première he also appeared in a scientific *féerie* at the Châtelet and in a comedy at the Athénée.[29]

It seems striking that music historians have yet to develop a comprehensive picture of 19th-century Parisian theatre with music, the vast field of intrinsically plurimedial genres spanning from vaudeville to *grand opéra*. While continuous opera, and to a lesser extent *opéra comique*, operetta, and ballet, are familiar ground, studies of French melodrama have only flourished since the 1990s. The growing interest in 'incidental music' is very much welcome;[30] however, this very label might obscure the extent of theatre with music. For example, *Les Érinnyes* (1873) and *Le Crocodile* (1886) are often cited in the same breath as 'incidental music' scores by Jules Massenet, but *Les Érinnyes* (Leconte de Lisle's tragedy after Aeschylus) was a literary product, enjoyable in printed form as much as in performance, while *Le Crocodile* (a play by Sardou) was a piece of theatre with music—a truly plurimedial work where the dialogue (which remained unpublished for 60 years) was inseparable from the musical and visual components. Musicological

[27] Félix Savard, *Les actrices de Paris* (Paris: Librairie centrale, 1867); Paul Mahalin, *Les jolies actrices de Paris*, 5 vols (Paris: Tresse, later Tresse & Stock, 1878–89, first volume originally published 1868 by Pache et Deffaux); Eugène Hubert and Christian de Trogoff, *Les actrices de Paris, quatrains* (Paris: Lachaud, 1872); Émile Bergerat *et al.*, *Les actrices de Paris* (Paris: Launette; Decaux, 1882); Eugène Billard, *Nos étoiles: Sonnets-portraits des jolies actrices de Paris* (Paris: Michaud, 1886), first volume of a planned but apparently aborted series.

[28] Richard Kaufmann, *Paris of To-Day*, trans. Olga Flinch (New York: Cassell, 1891), 227–34.

[29] Respectively, *Les aventures du capitaine Corcoran* (which premièred in October, six months after *Pelléas*) and *L'enfant du miracle* (which premièred the folllowing February).

[30] For example, Peter Lamothe, 'Theater Music in France, 1864–1914' (PhD diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2008); Herbert Schneider, 'Französische Schauspielmusik während der Epoche Jules Massenets', in Kramer, *Theater mit Musik*, 263–98; and more recently Sylvie Douche, ed., *Musiques de scène sous la III^e^ République* (Lyon: Microsillon, 2018).

work on the genres that used pre-existing music—vaudeville and revue—is a very recent, if very promising, development: the past few years have witnessed remarkable publications by Clair Rowden and Richard Sherr, and more are likely to follow.[31]

A fortiori, a comprehensive history of 19th-century Parisian theatre at large is still lacking, one accounting for both literary theatre and theatre with music. Until recently, most surveys were conceived essentially as literary histories: they relied on printed verbal texts, took for granted authorial control on the part of the playwright, and established hierarchies of relevance based on stated or inferred individual poetics.[32] But 19th-century Parisian theatre cannot be reduced to a literary activity. Even within the bounds of verbal dramatic texts, a large number of plays, as we have seen with *Les bibelots du diable*, were printed more to serve as a record of a production than to be enjoyed through silent reading—if they were printed at all. People who were hardly literati, such as César Ribié, who could not even write,[33] or the mime Clément-Philippe Laurent, could be credited as dramatists (*Le pied de mouton*, co-authored by Ribié, and *Les pilules du diable*, co-authored by Laurent, were hugely influential *féeries*). In order to have a more complete picture of the dramatic production of the period, we should not only give musical texts the same importance as verbal texts, but also move beyond the canon. Indeed, we have access to what Franco Moretti would call a 'great unread' of printed plays and scores.[34] But there is also a 'great unpublished' ready to be explored—manuscript plays in the censorship files at the Archives nationales and manuscript orchestral parts. And we also have abundant material documenting the 'great unwritten', the physical, ephemeral reality of performances—production books, visual evidence, and accounts. A comprehensive history of Parisian theatre based on this wealth of sources, of course, demands that one admit that stage works and their fortune are the product of contingent circumstances as much as of individual genius.[35]

Indeed, the Béraud painting is a useful reminder of how the life of theatre works was not confined to the sacred space of the stage. For starters, theatre

[31] Clair Rowden, *Opera and Pardoy in Paris, 1860–1900* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020); Sherr, 'Comets, *Calembours*', Sherr, *P'tits agneaux*. Digital Humanities projects on vaudeville and vaudeville tunes are under way as I write, led by Sherr, Mark Everist, and David Day.

[32] So, for example, most of the headings in the table of contents of Michel Autrand's *Le théâtre en France de 1870 à 1914* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2006) bear a person's name. Of the people profiled, the vast majority are playwrights, and the selection concentrates on the literary avant-gardes, excluding prolific practitioners of commercial genres but including poets and writers who had very few plays performed or none at all.

[33] Roxane Martin, *L'émergence de la notion de mise en scène dans le paysage théâtral français, 1789–1914* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2013), 67.

[34] Franco Moretti, 'The Slaughterhouse of Literature', in *Distant Reading* (London: Verso, 2013), 63–89.

[35] This is why professional historians, less inclined than literary or music historians to believe in the autonomy of the work of art, have led the way: see Yon, *Une histoire du théâtre à Paris*, and Christophe Charle, *Théâtres en capitales: Naissance de la société du spectacle à Paris, Berlin, Londres et Vienne, 1860–1914* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2008).

both drew on and spilled over into other media. The poster with an illustration at the top of the column might be that of the social melodrama *L'assommoir*,[36] based on Zola's 1877 novel. Next to the Ambigu where *L'assommoir* is playing, the Porte-Saint-Martin is reviving the dramatisation of Alexandre Dumas's historical novel *La dame de Monsoreau*. In the three years before the moment captured by the painter, no fewer than seven operas based on novels and short stories were premièred in Paris.[37] *La dame de Monsoreau* would also become an opera, in 1888 (music by Gaston Salvayre); likewise, Alphonse Daudet's 1884 novel *Sapho* would see the stage first as a melodrama (1885), with former operetta star Jane Hading in the title role, and then as an opera by Jules Massenet (1897). As the end of the century approached, adaptations also started to go the other way: Adolphe d'Ennery and Eugène Cormon's immensely popular melodrama *Les deux orphelines* (1875), for instance, was made into an even more successful novel (initially published in instalments, which helped it to reach working-class readers).[38] A type of commercial by-product older than the novelisation was sheet music: *Le grand Casimir*, for example, in addition to being published in vocal score (complete and as excerpted numbers), prompted a piano quadrille, a piano waltz suite, a piano polka, and a piece for beginner pianists—all of which were also transcribed for piano duet—as well as selections for solo flute, solo cornet, and military band. Quadrilles, in particular, which have been studied as 'a popular means through which the public became familiar with new operas',[39] to quote Maribeth Clark, were arranged from hit shows in every genre of theatre with music. And literary theatre could inspire them, too. If we were able to see Proust's wine-coloured poster on our Morris column, it would announce that the Comédie-Française was reviving Victor Hugo's *Ruy Blas* with Sarah Bernhardt as the female lead. Until a couple of months earlier, Bernhardt had been playing another Hugo role, Doña Sol of *Hernani*; to capitalise on her success, a composer by the name of Ida Chapelle wrote a quadrille titled *Dona Sol*, whose cover, predictably, is adorned with a medallion of Bernhardt in costume.[40]

The presence of the Tivoli poster also makes it obvious that theatres had to vie for customers in a larger entertainment market. Outside the perimeter of theatre were other kinds of *spectacles*, as they were called in French, such as acrobatics, circus, panoramas, puppet theatre, stage magic, *café-concert*, and music hall.

[36] A typographic poster for *L'assommoir* with a lithographed image is preserved at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, and can be found at http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b9008521p (accessed 8 February 2024).
[37] Tommaso Sabbatini, 'Jerusalem, Machaerus, Carthage: Massenet's *Hérodiade* and Flaubert's Orient', in *Massenet and the Mediterranean World*, ed. Simone Ciolfi (Bologna: Ut Orpheus, 2015), 86, 99.
[38] Adolphe d'Ennery, *Les deux orphelines*, 2 vols (Paris: Rouff, 1887–9).
[39] Maribeth Clark, 'The Quadrille as Embodied Musical Experience in 19th-Century Paris', *The Journal of Musicology* 19, no. 3 (2002): 503.
[40] Ida Chapelle, *Dona* [*sic*] *Sol*, quadrille brillant pour piano (Paris: A. Masclet, [1879]), plate number I.C.1.(6).

'In order to study [19th-century Parisian] theatre one needs to study the entertainments [*spectacles*]', has warned Jean-Claude Yon,[41] and the reason is apparent. Jean-Gaspard Debureau, one of the most momentous figures in the history of pantomime, performed at what technically was a venue for acrobatics; the Théâtre du Châtelet is the heir to the Cirque-Olympique, originally devoted to equestrian shows; French theatre incorporated moving panoramas well in advance of the 1880s cases familiar to opera scholars (Richard Wagner's *Parsifal* and Giuseppe Verdi's *Otello*); *café-concert* stars Thérésa, Anna Judic, and Louise Théo made the leap to theatre; and recently Sarah Gutsche-Miller has made a persuasive case for integrating music hall into the history of French ballet.[42]

Finally, we should not lose sight of the fact that what the painting shows is theatre stepping out of its auditoria to lure buyers in the street through a barrage of colours and display type. Nineteenth-century Parisian theatre was a powerful cultural industry—indeed, probably the most powerful cultural industry in the West before the advent of Hollywood—in a capitalist, consumerist society. If this sounds exaggerated, it is because, in popular culture, Belle Époque Paris is often conflated with a bucolic 'postcard' Paris. But one need only read Georges d'Avenel's *Le mécanisme de la vie moderne* to dispel this illusion. According to d'Avenel, in 1902 Parisians were subject, or had been subject until recently, to all kinds of advertising assault. Posters followed them not just in the streets but in railway stations, railway carriages, omnibuses, Métro stations, and were displayed on newsstands and public urinals. D'Avenel also describes scrolling light signs, human billboards, mobile billboards, slogan chanting, advertising sculptures, as well as advertising theatre curtains and what we would now call product placement in stage plays.[43] The last two examples are only further evidence of what the garish colours of Béraud's Morris column expose: that theatre was no Olympian retreat untarnished by the stench of money. Fredric Jameson has written that '[o]f all the arts, architecture is the closest constitutively to the economic, with which, in the form of commissions and land values, it has a virtually unmediated relationship'.[44] Theatre, however, and particularly theatre with music, can probably claim a similar distinction—only, instead of land, it needs an enormous amount of highly skilled labour. Inevitably, those who can pay in advance for the cost of that labour contribute to shaping the artistic result. Eugène Scribe claimed, in his Académie française induction speech, that theatre was not the mirror of society. Nonetheless, his *grand opéra* librettos are rightly regarded as among the most

[41] Yon, *Une histoire du théâtre à Paris*, 9.
[42] Sarah Gutsche-Miller, *Parisian Music-Hall Ballet, 1871–1913* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2015).
[43] Georges d'Avenel, *Le mécanisme de la vie moderne* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1896–1905), 4:166–70.
[44] Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991), 5.

perfect ideological expressions of the ruling class of the July Monarchy, which funded the Opéra through state subventions and subscriptions.[45] The corollary to this is that the more labour-intensive and therefore expensive the genre, the more theatre reflects the hegemonic world-view: as the July Monarchy is best understood through lavish *grand opéra*, so, perhaps, the most extravagant *féeries* of the *fin de siècle* can tell us more about dominant discourses in the Third Republic than fringe literary plays can.

If Belle Époque Paris can be fodder for escapist fantasies, the public debate of the past decade or two prompts us to look at it with different eyes. Back in 2003, political scientist Suzanne Berger described the Belle Époque as a 'first globalization', stressing the interconnectedness of Western economies, the developments in communication, and mass migration during the period;[46] since the 2010s, the expression has become widespread among economic historians. Conversely, economist Thomas Piketty has spoken of our age as a new Belle Époque, with a return to extreme concentration of wealth.[47] The Béraud street scene suggests another way in which Belle Époque Paris anticipates our present: with a wide-ranging offer of *spectacles* and a flourishing publishing industry helped by near-universal literacy, it was an incubator for modern mass culture. A final development that would lead to mass culture as described by Frankfurt School critical theory lurks in the background of the painting: the Grand Café building, where the idle gentlemen in top hats are enjoying the mild spring weather surrounded by opulent pediments and giant-order pilasters, would be, 15 years later, the place chosen by the Lumière brothers to demonstrate their Cinématographe.

Féerie and the total artwork of the present

The takeaway from our street scene, then, is that theatre-going in 19th-century Paris consisted of manifold experiences; that to account for those experiences, we need to set aside our own categories (including our very notions of spoken and musical theatre, of opera, and of incidental music) and try to adopt those of

[45] See Jane F. Fulcher, *The Nation's Image: French Grand Opera as Politics and Politicized Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Anselm Gerhard, *The Urbanization of Opera: Music Theater in Paris in the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Mary Whittall (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), originally published as *Die Verstädterung der Oper: Paris und das Musiktheater des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 1992); Diana R. Hallman, *Opera, Liberalism, and Antisemitism in Nineteenth-Century France: The Politics of Halévy's 'La Juive'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); and Sarah Hibberd, *French Grand Opera and the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[46] Suzanne Berger, *Notre première mondialisation: Leçons d'un échec oublié*, trans. Richard Robert (Paris: Seuil, 2003).

[47] Thomas Piketty, *Le capital au XXI^e siècle* (Paris: Seuil, 2013), trans. by Arthur Goldhammer as *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).

contemporaries; and that we must therefore give priority to genres and institutions, and, in order to do so, de-emphasise issues of authorial agency and artistic value. We should consider corpora, not single works; we should consider works condemned by the selective tradition alongside canonic ones; we should consider all the aspects of the performance, not just the verbal text (or the score, in operas); we should consider the contribution of a host of agents (performers, management, audiences) to theatre works, not just that of the creators; and we should consider theatre works as the product of an industry and as a part of a media landscape.

I do not claim that this is a radically novel approach.[48] What I do claim is that *féerie*, and late 19th-century *féerie* in particular, is not only a natural candidate for this approach, but also requires it. Indeed, long-held disciplinary habits have prevented music historians from recognising late 19th-century *féerie* as a relevant phenomenon, or actually from recognising it as a phenomenon at all.

It must be acknowledged that *féerie*, as a stage genre, has disappeared from our cultural horizon to the point that we even fail to detect its faint echoes when we encounter them. Possibly the closest approximation to a *féerie* one can witness nowadays is an British Christmas pantomime—or panto, as it is familiarly known. The genre continues to this day across Britain and Ireland, perhaps thanks to the inherently conservative nature of holiday habits. It is currently kept alive by amateur companies as well as by large-scale operations servicing multiple cities. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, one of the latter, Qdos Entertainment, boasted of being 'one of the largest, broad-based entertainment Groups [*sic*] in Europe'.[49] But its Continental counterpart has vanished for good. So countless readers of Flaubert's novels no doubt wonder what a *féerie* is, when the biographical notice informs them that Flaubert wrote one (*Le château des cœurs*), but soon forget the piece of information. The image of a bullet-shaped rocket crashing into the right eye of an anthropomorphic moon instantly evokes the most iconic sequence of Georges Méliès's famed 1902 *Le voyage dans la lune*, known in English as *A Trip to the Moon*. But if many get the Méliès reference, very few realise that *Le voyage dans la lune* is in fact a *féerie*.

Féerie also casts its long shadow over some sound films that cinephiles might be familiar with. One could retrace a lineage from stage *féerie* to Jacques Demy's *Peau d'Âne* (1970) by way of Jean Cocteau's *La Belle et la Bête* (1946): Cocteau

[48] For book-length studies of stage music in 19th-century Paris that concentrate on genres and institutions see, for example, T.J. Walsh, *Second Empire Opera: The Théâtre Lyrique, Paris 1851–1870* (London: J. Calder, 1981); Emilio Sala, *L'opera senza canto: Il* mélo *romantico e l'invenzione della colonna sonora* (Venice: Marsilio, 1995); Olivier Bara, *Le théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique sous la Restauration: Enquête autour d'un genre moyen* (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 2001); Mark Everist, *Music Drama at the Paris Odéon, 1824–1828* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Martin, *La féerie romantique*; Gutsche-Miller, *Music-Hall Ballet*.

[49] 'About Qdos Entertainment', http://www.pantomime.com/about (accessed 9 January 2020). The pantomime division of Qdos Entertainment has now been taken over by Crossroads Pantomimes.

wrote repeatedly about the lasting impressions the *féeries* he saw as a child, in fin-de-siècle Paris, made on him, and he was a major influence for Demy.[50]

In the past few decades, the *féeries* set to music by Offenbach have been occasionally revived by opera houses; for this to be possible, however, they had to be adapted and marketed as operettas: most recently, *Le roi Carotte* (which since 2015 has been staged in Lyon and, in German, in Hanover and Vienna) and *Le voyage dans la lune* (which has received two productions since 2021, one at the Opéra-Comique and one by a consortium of opera houses sponsored by the Palazzetto Bru Zane). André Messager's score for the 1888 *féerie Isoline* is currently available in a recording made in 1947 by the French national radio orchestra and released by the Institut national de l'audiovisuel—a document that is, however, at two removes from an actual *féerie* (by virtue of the concert performance and the recording). In 2022, two more recording of *féerie* scores have been released, although not of French *féerie* scores: the one that Franz von Suppé composed for Jules Verne and Adolphe d'Ennery's *Le tour du monde en 80 jours* (1874, which, I argue, should be considered a *féerie*) and the one that Engelbert Humperdinck composed for Maurice Maeterlinck's literary *féerie L'oiseau bleu* (1908).[51]

If this is the flotsam of *féerie*, what was the ship like? A witty answer comes from poet and playwright Jean Richepin, who penned the following definition in 1883: 'I mean "féerie" in the modern sense, or rather in the Parisian sense, *féerie* being a play built around scenery, tricks, transformations, and allegorical characters, where vegetables speak and sewing machines sing *rondeaux*, the silliest [kind of] play that ever was.'[52]

Perhaps more objectively, we can say that *féeries* were light melodramatic plays with vocal numbers set in a fairytale universe. By 'melodramatic' here I mean plays that, like melodramas, were conceived for the commercial theatres, whose dramaturgy disregarded literary conventions, relying instead on visual spectacle and on instrumental music underscoring the stage business, and that were characterised by sensational devices, rudimentary psychology, and Manichaeism. These features of melodrama are perfectly compatible with a light-hearted subject, as well as with vocal numbers, which were indeed also present in some melodramas.[53]

[50] Hélène Laplace-Claverie, *Modernes féeries: Le théâtre français du XX^e siècle, entre réenchantement et désenchantement* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2007), 81–4.

[51] Franz von Suppé, *Die Reise um die Erde in 80 Tagen*, Janáček Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Dario Salvi, Naxos 8.574396, 2022, CD; Engelbert Humperdinck, *Der Blaue Vogel*, Rundfunkchor Berlin, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin, conducted by Steffen Tast, Capriccio C5506, 2022, CD.

[52] 'J'entends féerie au sens moderne du mot, ou plutôt au sens parisien, féerie signifiant une pièce à décors, à trucs, à transformations, à personnages allégoriques, où les légumes parlent, où les machines à coudre chantent des rondeaux, pièce stupide s'il en fut.' Jean Richepin, 'La féerie de la rue', in *Le pavé* (Paris: Maurice Dreyfous, 1883), 11.

[53] One should not take too literally the idea of melodrama as 'opera without song', as popularised by Emilio Sala in his groundbreaking study of Romantic (i.e., *c.* 1800–30) French melodrama, *L'opera senza canto*. Sala himself acknowledges the existence of *mélodrame-vaudeville* (precisely, melodrama

The two great French fairytale writers of the 17th century, Charles Perrault and Madame d'Aulnoy, were common sources, together with Antoine Galland's version of the *Arabian Nights*. Titles such as *Le Petit Poucet* (Hop-o'-My-Thumb), *La Belle au bois dormant* (Sleeping Beauty), *Le Chat botté* (Puss in Boots), *Riquet à la houppe* (Riquet with the Tuft), *Cendrillon* (Cinderella), *Peau d'Âne* (Donkeyskin), *Le Petit Chaperon rouge* (Little Red Riding Hood), all shared by more than one play, point to Perrault; *La Belle aux cheveux d'or* (Pretty Goldilocks), *L'oiseau bleu* (The Blue Bird), *La biche au bois* (The White Doe), *La chatte blanche* (The White Cat) to d'Aulnoy; and *Aladin, ou La lampe merveilleuse* (Aladdin, or The Wonderful Lamp), *Le mille et une nuits* (The Arabian Nights), *Ali-Baba, ou Les quarante voleurs* (Ali Baba, or The Forty Thieves) to the *Arabian Nights*. Original titles often also convey a pseudo-folkloric flavour by evoking magical objects or devils: *Le pied de mouton* (The Sheep's Foot), *La queue du diable* (The Devil's Tail), *Les pilules du diable* (The Devil's Pills), *Les sept châteaux du diable* (The Devil's Seven Castles), *La poudre de Perlinpinpin* (Perlinpinpin's Powder, a pun on an expression for a quack remedy), and, as we have seen, *Les bibelots du diable*. *Féeries* were totally devoid of psychological subtlety, but rich in incidents and comic gags as well as heavy in music, dance, and virtuosic feats of scenery and theatre machinery. In its mature form, the genre adopted an episodic structure, with a substantial number of changes of scenery fragmenting the action into as many tableaux. If the ideal of much 19th-century French theatre was the *pièce bien faite*, the well-wrought play, with its consistency and economy of means, *féeries* were rather *pièces à tiroirs*—the theatre jargon for those plays in which largely independent episodes are stacked on top of each other like drawers. Their plots were built around some highly spectacular, attention-grabbing moments (or, to use the French word, *clous*), which makes *féerie* somewhat closer in dramaturgy to circus, music hall, lantern shows, or early film than to 'serious' theatre. (In this respect *féerie* also resembles revue, a genre at the edge between theatre and *spectacles*.)

Before *féerie* was a thing, the word 'féerie'—derived from 'fée', fairy—used to mean the art of fairies (one is tempted to translate it as 'fairycraft') and by extension the imaginary universe in which this art was practised, similarly to the English 'fairyland' (or 'faerie'). The meaning of 'fairyland' (and the adjective 'féerique', equivalent to the adjectival use of 'fairy' or 'fairytale' in English) coexisted in the 19th century with the new use of 'féerique' to denote the theatrical genre. This is, of course, confusing for the modern scholar. As Roxane Martin has pointed out, 'Honoré de Balzac, Théodore de Banville, and the Goncourt brothers

with vocal numbers). Moreover, many influential melodramas of the mid-century have vocal numbers: *La grâce de Dieu* (1841), *Don César de Bazan* (1844), *La vie de bohème* (1849), *Manon Lescaut* (1851), *La dame aux camélias* (1852), *Les filles de marbre* (1853), most of which are discussed by Sala in a later book, *Il valzer delle camelie: Echi di Parigi nella 'Traviata'* (Turin: EDT, 2008), trans. by Delia Casadei as *The Sounds of Paris in Verdi's 'La Traviata'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

use this term sometimes to refer to a particular space-time, associated with dream and phantasmagoria, sometimes to designate the dramatic genre that won success on the *boulevard* stage in the 19th century. *Féerie* seems therefore to get lost in its multiple definitions: dramatic genre or aesthetic category?'[54] The slipshod extension from 'fairyland' to 'fairy play' was the result of a gradual process. In the 18th century, 'féerie' was used as a modifier for more established generic designations to indicate supernatural, pseudo-folkloric content. So, for example, the *opéra comique La belle Arsène* (1773, libretto by Charles-Simon Favart, music by Pierre-Alexandre Monsigny) is called, at least in some sources, 'comédie-féerie' ('comédie mêlée d'ariettes' being still the standard way to refer to *opéra comique* at the time) and *Alcindor* (1787, libretto by Marc-Antoine-Jacques Rochon de Chabannes, music by Nicolas Dezède) is an 'opéra-féerie'. In this older usage as a modifier, which continued well into the 19th century, *féerie* is not so much a genre as what some English-speaking literary theory calls a mode:[55] much like the pastoral or the elegiac, the *féerique* operates across genres. The emergence of *féerie* as a genre, alongside the continuation of *féerie* as a mode (or as 'aesthetic category', as she prefers to say), are retraced by Martin in her landmark study. The best accounts in English of the early history of *féerie* prior to her book are the work of film scholar Katherine Singer Kovács:

> The *féerie* was born shortly after the French Revolution … in its earliest form the *féerie* was a type of melodrama in which acrobatics, music, and mime were the main elements. Like melodramas, the plots of most *féeries* pivoted upon a struggle between forces of good and evil. But while these forces remained invisible in melodramas, in *féeries* they were incarnated onstage by gnomes and witches … over the years *opéra-féeries* and *pantomime-féeries* eventually replaced *mélodrame-féeries* in popularity … Plays of this kind remained popular until around the middle of the century when vaudeville intervened and modified the form of the *féerie*.[56]

Martin nuances this picture. *Féerie* is indeed, like melodrama, a product of the French Revolution, more exactly of the 1791 decree that deregulated Parisian theatres and caused 'the emancipation of a part of theatre from the domain of literature'.[57] According to Martin, though, *féerie* is not so much a particular case of melodrama as a product of the same historical circumstances, *féerie*, melodrama,

[54] Martin, *La féerie romantique*, 13.
[55] See Alastair Fowler, *Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 106–11, and John Frow, *Genre* (London: Routledge, 2006), 63–7. Prominent examples of studies devoted to modes across genres and media are Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976) and James Chandler, *An Archaeology of Sympathy: The Sentimental Mode in Literature and Cinema* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).
[56] Katherine Singer Kovács, 'Georges Méliès and the *Féerie*', *Cinema Journal* 16, no. 1 (1976): 1, 3–4. Kovács also communicated her findings to a different audience in 'A History of the *Féerie* in France', *Theatre Quarterly* 8, no. 29 (1978): 29–38.
[57] Martin, *La féerie romantique*, 47.

and vaudeville all having 'emerged from the same field of experimentation and aesthetic intermingling that followed the 1791 decree'.[58] With the re-establishment of the theatre licensing system in 1806, *féerie* (unlike melodrama) was not recognised (and therefore not permitted) as a spectacular form in its own right, yet the *féerique* mode remained very vital. The First Empire and the Restoration, then, saw *opéras-féeries* (or, we should say for the sake of clarity, *féerique* operas) set to music by Nicolas Isouard (*Cendrillon*, 1810, and *Aladin*, 1822), Ferdinand Hérold (*La clochette*, 1817), Adrien Boieldieu (*Le Petit Chaperon rouge*, 1818), and Michele Carafa (*La Belle au bois dormant*, 1825), as well as *féerique* ballets at the Opéra: *Cendrillon* (1823), *Zémire et Azor* (1824), and *La Belle au bois dormant* (1829), the last with a scenario by Scribe and music by Hérold. *Féerie* proper, in order to comply with the licensing system, first disguised itself as pantomime, omitting most of the dialogue, then, in the 1820s, occupied the institutional spaces of vaudeville, helped by the fact that vaudeville was keen on parodying opera, and *féerique* opera was the vogue. Martin distinguishes two types of vaudeville-like *féerie*: 'A *féerie* with a moralising dimension … and a *féerie* that, privileging the burlesque, found inspiration in the writing register of parody';[59] that is, in her terminology, the 'Manichaean *féerie*' and the 'burlesque féerie', corresponding to two types of vaudeville identified by Henri Gidel, the 'anecdotal vaudeville' and the 'farcical vaudeville'.[60] In around 1830, these two strands were unified and superseded by the 'spectacular *féerie*', what I have referred to as the 'mature form' of *féerie*, at which stage *féerie* is unquestionably established as a genre.

Late 19th-century *féerie* has received even less attention than *féerie* in general. The reason for such a lack of interest is to be found in the general opinion that the last third of the 19th century was an age of decadence, or, more precisely, of obsolescence, for *féerie*. This opinion, I believe, must be corrected by two adjustments of perspective.

The first adjustment is that the decline in the number of new *féeries* in the second half of the 19th century does not necessarily mean a decline in the genre's popularity. Rather, it is the consequence of what historian Christophe Charle has called 'a new regime of [theatre] production'.[61] Charle calculated that the number of new plays given in Paris dropped from 322 in 1852 to 91 in 1900; on average, each theatre gave 16.1 new plays in 1852 and 4.5 in 1900—in both cases, a whopping 72 per cent decrease. The expansion of the metropolis and Haussmann's urban renovation meant that Paris had growing suburbs and an increasingly depopulated city centre. This forced theatres, which were located in the centre, either to cater to a wealthy elite of assiduous theatre-goers or to attract more occasional spectators

[58] Martin, *La féerie romantique*, 55.
[59] Martin, *La féerie romantique*, 169.
[60] Martin, *La féerie romantique*, 188.
[61] Charle, *Théâtres en capitales*, 205–20.

from a large geographical area (as well as from the ranks of foreign and provincial visitors). If they chose to widen their appeal, their strategy was to produce fewer but larger shows, with a higher proportion of revivals (since they offered a better guarantee of economic return than new plays) and much longer runs—which is exactly what happened with *féerie*.

The second adjustment is that not all *féeries* were billed as such. Kovács used, for her considerations on genre, Charles Beaumont Wicks's bibliographical compilation;[62] Charle uses the yearbooks by Albert Soubies and by Édouard Noël and Edmond Stoullig;[63] Hélène Laplace-Claverie bases her statement that 'we count 11 *féeries* premièred between 1879 and 1888, 14 between 1889 and 1908', and so forth on the catalogues of the Société des auteurs et compositeurs dramatiques.[64] But, as scholars of French opera know all too well, the genre attributions declared by authors, theatre managers, and publishers in the 19th century are both inconsistent and misleading. To cite just one example, many *grands opéras* were just labelled 'opéra' on title pages, and yet no one could deny that *grand opéra* was very much present as a category in French theatrical practice. Two examples will suffice of how printed genre designations are unreliable for the purposes of this study: the immensely popular *Le voyage de Suzette* (1890) is a 'spectacular play' (*pièce à grand spectacle*) according to the printed text, a 'spectacular operetta' (*opérette à grand spectacle*) according to the vocal score, while the vocal score of *Le pays de l'or* (1892) has 'play' on the title page and 'operetta' in the table of contents.

If we re-examine the picture of the years 1870–1900 with these caveats in mind, we find that *féerie*, rather than waning at the *fin de siècle*, actually thrived and showed an exceptional capacity for adaptation. The first innovation during this period is what I will call the 'composerly *féerie*': instead of having their resident conductors compile patchwork scores, theatres started to commission well-regarded composers (generally those active in operetta) to write entirely original scores. The first example, in 1872, is *Le roi Carotte*, text by Sardou, music by Offenbach—Richepin's quip about plays 'where vegetables speak', quoted earlier, is in all likelihood directed to this work, to its model for speaking vegetables, the Cogniard brothers' *La biche au bois*, or to both. Composers who wrote composerly *féeries* after Offenbach include Gaston Serpette, Edmond Audran, Louis Varney, André Messager, Léon Vasseur, and Xavier Leroux; we might add Massenet to the list if we decide that Sardou's *Le Crocodile*, for which he provided the music, is a *féerie* (and there are grounds to support such a decision). Emmanuel Chabrier also had a 'dream', which never came true, of writing a composerly *féerie* for the

[62] Charles Beaumont Wicks, *The Parisian Stage: Alphabetical Indexes of Plays and Authors* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1950).
[63] Albert Soubies, *Almanach des spectacles* (Paris: Librairie des bibliophiles, 1875–1915); Édouard Noël and Edmond Stoullig, *Les annales du théâtre et de la musique* (Paris: Charpentier et Cie, 1876–1916).
[64] Laplace-Claverie, *Modernes féeries*, 9.

Gaîté ('a big thing of the *Roi Carotte* kind', as he wrote to his publisher).[65] For some 15 composerly *féeries* from the period 1870–1900 both the text and the music are extant, and in another few cases we have either the text or the music.

As I mentioned earlier, composerly operetta is but an aspect of a phenomenon set in motion by the *liberté des théatres*: what I call 'operettisation', where original vocal numbers, a trait that used to set operetta apart among the commercial genres, spread across Parisian theatre with music (Lecocq's *Le grand Casimir*, which we have encountered earlier, is a case of operettised vaudeville). But the last quarter of the 19th century was also witness to a 'féerisation' of Parisian theatre: features of *féerie* (modular articulation, visual attractions, humour, musical numbers, dance) combined with elements from other theatrical traditions (the adventure melodrama, the *vaudeville de mouvement*) to open new paths to *féerie*, although somewhat diluting it (as operettisation, in a way, diluted operetta).

The primary product of this féerisation of theatre was the 'scientific *féerie*', which renounced the traditional fairytale subject matter and turned to what we might call, anachronistically, science fiction and travelogue. Verne and d'Ennery's *Le tour du monde en 80 jours* was greeted as a *féerie* by none other than Émile Zola, who commented perceptively that 'a charming populariser, Mr Verne, had become massively successful with books that were taking the place of Perrault's tales in the hands of children. The *féeries* of 30 years ago were adapted from those tales; it only made sense that today's *féeries* would be adapted from Mr Verne's books.'[66]

Other than Zola's words, we have abundant evidence that these shows of a new kind, often simply labelled 'pièce à grand spectacle' (spectacular play), did not put an end to *féerie*, but instead continued it. For example, Jules Claretie called *Le tour du monde en 80 jours* '[a]n amusing spectacle, where the fantastic is represented by electricity and steam power, and where the talismans of the old *féerie* are replaced by gunshots';[67] man of letters-cum-theatre manager Paul Ginisty included *Le tour du monde* and two more Verne–d'Ennery collaborations (*Michel Strogoff*, 1880, and *Voyage à travers l'impossible*, 1882) in his early 20th-century monograph on *féerie*;[68] and in Italy adaptations of *Le tour du monde* and *Le voyage de Suzette*

[65] 'Mon rêve serait de faire une grande machine dans le genre du *Roi Carotte*, chez Debruyère.' Emmanuel Chabrier to Enoch et Costallat, n.d., in Emmanuel Chabrier, *Correspondance*, ed. Roger Delage and Frans Durif (Paris: Klincksieck, 1994), 191. Ironically, Chabrier wanted Richepin as a librettist.

[66] '[U]n aimable vulgarisateur, M. Verne, obtenait des succès énormes avec des livres qui succédaient aux contes de Perrault, entre les mains des enfants. Les féeries d'il y a trente ans étaient tirées de ces contes; il devenait logique que les féeries d'aujourd'hui fussent tirées des livres de M. Verne.' Émile Zola, 'Adolphe d'Ennery', in *Nos auteurs dramatiques*, in *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Henri Mitterand (Paris: Nouveau Monde éditions, 2002–10), 10:389.

[67] 'Spectacle amusant, où le fantastique c'est l'électricité et la vapeur, où les talismans de l'ancienne féerie sont remplacés par les coups de revolver.' Jules Claretie, *La vie moderne au théâtre: Causeries sur l'art dramatique* (Paris: Georges Barba, 1869–75), 2:366.

[68] Paul Ginisty, *La féerie* (Paris: Louis-Michaud, 1910).

were explicitly advertised as 'féeries'—perhaps because, *féerie* being a loanword in Italian, its etymological connection to 'fairy' was not as apparent to speakers as in French, and it was therefore easier to apply the term to non-supernatural subjects. It is worth noting that Zola's observation that fairytales were being replaced by the books of Jules Verne in society at large and consequently in *féerie* is evidence for a point made by James Smith Allen in his classic study of popular French Romanticism: that in the course of the 19th century, thanks to urbanisation, increased literacy, and the development of a middle class, folklore was displaced by a commercial popular culture designed for large-scale dissemination.[69]

An even more decisive move toward modern mass culture is marked by the final metamorphosis of *féerie*, namely into the film *féerie*, born with the conversion to film of stage magician Georges Méliès. Méliès's trick films on fairytale and science-fiction subjects were marketed as *féeries* and 'pièces à grand spectacle', and indeed they replicate the dramaturgy of the stage *féerie* with their visual wonders and their articulation into tableaux. His very choice of subjects is significant: the first film he billed as a *féerie* ('grande féerie extraordinaire en 20 tableaux'), in 1899, was *Cendrillon*, on the same fairytale that had inspired a frequently revived stage *féerie* by Clairville (1866). His most lasting contribution to the genre is the scientific film *féerie Voyage dans la lune* ('pièce à grand spectacle en 30 tableaux', 1902), heavily indebted to Offenbach's composerly scientific *féerie* of the same title (1875).[70] Another scientific *féerie* by Méliès, *Le voyage à travers l'impossible* ('pièce fantastique à grand spectacle en 40 tableaux', 1904), shares a title with a Verne–d'Ennery play. It is also worth noting that Méliès contributed with film projections to two stage *féeries* by Victor de Cottens and Victor Darlay, *Les 400 coups du diable* (1905) and, as Stéphane Tralongo has discovered, *Pif! Paf! Pouf!, ou Un voyage endiablé* (1906).[71]

In short, *féerie* was so resilient a phenomenon that it was able to retain its identity even as it moved from melodrama into operetta territory, abandoned its previously defining subject matter, or migrated from the stage to the new medium of film. And yet a comprehensive study of *féerie* at the *fin de siècle*, in which the composerly, scientific, and film variants are merely considered as different sides of the same object, still remains to be written. The recent work by film scholars on late *féerie* is helpful for solving the conundrum of a genre that migrates from one medium to another.[72] In particular, André Gaudreault's provocative thesis is

[69] James Smith Allen, *Popular French Romanticism: Authors, Readers, and Books in the 19th Century* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1981).

[70] Thierry Lefebvre, '*A Trip to the Moon*: A Composite Film', trans. Timothy Barnard, in Solomon, *Fantastic Voyages*, 49–63.

[71] Tralongo, 'Faiseurs de féeries', 211–51, and Stéphane Tralongo, 'Rêve d'artiste: La collaboration de Georges Méliès aux spectacles du Châtelet et des Folies-Bergère', in *Méliès, carrefour des attractions*, ed. André Gaudreault and Laurent Le Forestier (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2014), 129–41.

[72] See especially André Gaudreault, *Cinéma et attraction: Pour une nouvelle histoire du cinématographe* (Paris: CNRS éditions, 2008), translated by Tim Barnard as *Film and Attraction: From Kinematography to Cinema* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011); Frank Kessler, 'The Féerie between Stage and

that early cinema (*le cinéma des premiers temps*) is not cinema. What Edison and the Lumières invented in the 1890s was just a technology; cinema, which is an institution, dates only from about 1910. Méliès remained all his life a man of the theatre, who happened to adopt film technology: his merit was 'to have introduced kinematography into the theater (i.e., into stage entertainment), not the reverse'.[73] When he was shooting *féeries* in his studio, then, Méliès was using the camera to make theatre, not unlike when he was collaborating with de Cottens and Darlay. From these premises, Tralongo developed, in his doctoral dissertation,[74] a historical inquiry into the continuity between stage and film *féerie*. If Tralongo's contribution—the only book-length study of late *féerie* and one of two on *féerie* at large—is invaluable, its disciplinary focus means that the musical practices of stage *féerie* (which either did not pass into film *féerie* or did so leaving little evidence behind) are sidelined.

The *fin de siècle*, though, is the period for which *féerie* music is best documented, thanks to the vogue for composerly *féerie*, and late *féerie* makes an ideal starting point to study the music of earlier *féerie*, of other genres of theatre with music, and to formulate hypotheses on early film music. Of course, knowledge—either direct or through conjectural reconstruction—of *féerie* scores is fundamental to a better understanding of a genre so heavily reliant on music. Musicologists, however, have failed to realise that this body of *féerie* music exists: first, because in printed scores, as we have seen, genre designations are most of the time misleading; secondly, because *féerie* scores can look either like melodrama (in manuscript orchestral parts compiled by a theatre's house conductor), hence 'spoken theatre', or like operetta (printed as vocal scores under the name of a well-known composer), hence 'musical theatre', and a genre that straddles the spoken versus musical divide has seemed unthinkable.

Moreover, the study of *féerie* can be a healthy corrective to a scholarly discourse on 19th-century French music that is often skewed toward highbrow genres such as opera or toward the avant-gardes (Wagnerism, the Montmartre scene, Naturalism, Symbolism). A few figures will suffice to illustrate the sheer dimensions of *féerie* as a cultural phenomenon. Among the large commercial playhouses specialising in *féerie*, the Porte-Saint-Martin and the Gaîté seated roughly 1,800 each (fewer than the Opéra but more than the Comédie-Française, the Odéon, or the Opéra-Comique), the Châtelet probably somewhere around 2,600. Verne and d'Ennery's *Le tour du monde en 80 jours* had received, by the end of the century, over 1,500 performances. For comparison, only a handful of works at the Opéra and Opéra-Comique reached the milestone of the *millième*, the thousandth

Screen', in *A Companion to Early Cinema*, ed. André Gaudreault, Nicolas Dulac, and Santiago Hidalgo (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 64–79; and Tralongo, 'Faiseurs de féeries'.

[73] Gaudreault, *Film and Attraction*, 41. In French: *Cinéma et attraction*, 77.

[74] Tralongo, 'Faiseurs de féeries'.

performance. The most popular title of the *grand opéra* canon, '*Les Huguenots* was given regularly [at the Opéra] until 1936, reaching a total of 1,120 performances';[75] by 1900, *Michel Strogoff* had totalled around 1,170 performances in Paris, which is to say that it had more performances in 20 years than *Les Huguenots* received in a century. *Coco* (1878), *Le Petit Poucet* (1885), and *Le voyage de Suzette* (1890) all surpassed 200 performances within the first two calendar years of their stage life, whereas the best that Massenet ever managed with one of his operas in a two-year period was 101 performances, in 1889–90, when the World's Fair gave a boost to *Esclarmonde*.

Opera and operetta scholarship has much to gain from a greater familiarity with *féerie*. Such an endeavour could shed light not only on clearly *féerique* works such as Auber's *Le cheval de bronze* (1835 at the Opéra-Comique, 1857 at the Opéra), Albert Grisar's *Les amours du diable* (1853 at the Théâtre-Lyrique, 1863 at the Opéra-Comique) and *La chatte merveilleuse* (1862), or Massenet's *Cendrillon* (1899), but also on less obvious candidates such as Offenbach's *Les contes d'Hoffmann* (1881), Massenet's *Esclarmonde* (1889), and even Maurice Ravel's *L'Enfant et les sortilèges* (1925). An example of how our ignorance of *féerie* affects our understanding of works in other genres could be Chabrier's beloved operetta *L'étoile* (1877). No one fails to remark that the protagonist's second solo number, the 'romance de l'étoile', alludes, subtly but transparently, to 'O du, mein holder Abendstern' from Wagner's *Tannhäuser*.[76] The preceding number, the 'rondeau du colporteur', gets considerably less discussion, despite being the bravura showpiece by which the character is introduced. But if one realises that the 'rondeau du colporteur' is a nod to the extremely popular 'ronde des colporteurs' from Offenbach's *Roi Carotte*, new questions about *L'étoile* spring to mind. By inviting comparisons between Paola Marié, the creator of the *travesti* role of the pedlar Lazuli, and Zulma Bouffar, who had starred in *Le roi Carotte*—also in a *travesti* role—the intertextual reference must have drawn attention to this number, which, like its model, satirises the cosmetic industry. Knowing *Le roi Carotte*, and the *féerie* tradition of talismans and magical objects into which it tapped, the description of beauty products in *L'étoile* assumes another dimension, establishing a connection between modern marketing and older superstitions. And what must it have meant to have a text ostensibly written from a male point of view delivered by a woman impersonating a man but dressed to satisfy the male gaze? What about the irony of an actor, and a cross-dressing actor at that, mocking an essential tool of her performance, make-up? What peculiar combination of suspension of disbelief and disenchantment did this number require from the audience (a problem that

[75] Gerhard, *The Urbanization of Opera*, 403.
[76] Roger Delage, 'Chabrier et Wagner', *Revue de Musicologie* 82, no. 1 (1996): 175; Steven Huebner, *French Opera at the Fin de Siècle: Wagnerism, Nationalism, and Style* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 283.

is crucial for *féerie*)? These questions could lead us to unexpected places, very far from the issues of Wagnerism and musical language that usually dominate the conversation about Chabrier.

It will have become apparent by this point that *féerie*, unabashedly commercial, highly intertextual, subject to extensive alterations in revivals, cannot be exhausted by close readings of single works and calls for other modes of inquiry. But *féerie* challenges our disciplinary assumptions in an even more fundamental way.

Scholars of 19th-century opera are used to interrogating works that can be isolated from their scenic realisations (no one would argue, for example, that Édouard Lalo's *Fiesque* does not exist because it was never performed: we are in a position to know how Lalo imagined it, and we are more or less content with that). Those works are plurimedial and normally entail artistic collaboration, but the historical trend, exemplified by Meyerbeer, Verdi, and Wagner, to centralise artistic responsibility means that the composer can effectively be given credit for the whole combination of the verbal, musical, and visual components. If Wagner marks a major milestone in this shift, its premises are seen in *grand opéra*, with Meyerbeer's ability to exert strict control on the staging of his operas, thanks to a legal framework that 'enabled [him] to supervise productions in other theatres besides the Opéra, or to refuse individual theatres the right to perform his work': as Anselm Gerhard writes, 'this development represented the decisive step toward the modern conception of an opera as an autonomous work of art' and *grands opéras* 'were among the first [operas] to embody the modern concept of the inviolacy of the work of art',[77] even though such an ideal still had to come to a compromise with the needs of the opera industry. With the composer established as the opera's author, we can attribute the details of the work to a set of individual choices (either intentional or unconscious), and from the composer's choices we can infer his or her poetics and world-view. With *féerie*, however, neither of these conditions—works that can exist outside performance, authors that are accountable for the whole of the work—applies. There is no ultimate author in a *féerie*, where the playwrights—usually in the plural—have their agency limited by the technicians and designers in charge of the visual spectacle and by the compiler or composer of the music. Furthermore, all these creators are constrained by the human and technical limitations of the theatre for which the *féerie* is written, as well as by the mission of *féerie* theatres, which was not to provide an outlet for artistic expression but to score commercial successes. As a result, we cannot look for the mark of a creative personality in a *féerie* the way we would in an opera.

Literary theatre exists outside performance because its verbal component is transmitted and consumed as a literary text, through authoritative sources: there

[77] Gerhard, *The Urbanization of Opera*, 407–8.

is no doubt that the text/performance binary, which is a cornerstone of theatre scholarship,[78] is perfectly suited to literary theatre. But with theatre with music, things get more complicated: its visual component is hard to fix in written form, and music scores might exist primarily to allow a performance to be reproduced, not to transmit an authoritative text. Even with those difficulties, 19th-century opera also exists outside performance, as we are able to approximate the plurimedial work as envisioned by the composer. We normally have reasonably authoritative sources for the verbal text and the music, and we can at least strive to reconstruct what a composer-sanctioned staging would look like. The composer's conception of the staging is of course much less well-documented than his or her conception of the music, but it is a difference in degree, not in kind: the score, after all, is merely a document that imperfectly renders the music the composer had in mind, the same way in which evidence of productions allows us some (much more limited) access to the staging the composer must have had in mind. With *féerie*, instead, as we have seen, the written records are mostly utilitarian, and it is impossible to recover the ideal image of the work in all its dimensions as held in the author's mind, simply because *féeries*, unlike operas, have no ultimate author. The only thing we have access to, with *féerie*, is performances. Unlike opera, *féerie* only existed before its audiences; unobserved phenomena (such as the unperformed *Fiesque*) were simply an impossibility.[79]

Féerie undoubtedly shares some traits with the Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Both channelled the power of music and visual spectacle to offer their audiences a powerful sensory experience and the thrill of being transported to a supernatural universe. Both, in other words, resorted to the marvellous. *Parsifal* (1882) even adopted the same technology, the moving panorama, as the 1878 *Coco* (by Clairville, Eugène Grangé, and Alfred Delacour). Moreover, if we follow Theodor Adorno, the key principle of Wagnerian music drama is phantasmagoria, '[t]he

[78] Especially of theatre semiotics: see Anne Ubersfeld, *Lire le théâtre* (Paris: Belin, 1996, originally published 1977 by Éditions sociales), trans. by Frank Collins as *Reading Theatre* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); Keir Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (London: Routledge, 2002, originally published 1980 by Methuen); Patrice Pavis, *Lanalyse des spectacles: Théâtre, mime, danse, danse-théâtre, cinéma* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2005, originally published 1996 by Nathan), trans. by David Williams as *Analyzing Performance: Theater, Dance, and Film* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003).

[79] *Féerie*'s otherness from the Western theatre genres based on the centrality of a dramatic text invites an analogy with the 20th-century phenomenon known, after an influential book by Hans-Thies Lehmann, as 'postdramatic theatre' (Hans-Thies Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre*, trans. Karen Jürs-Munby [London: Routledge, 2006], originally published as *Postdramatisches Theater* [Frankfurt am Main: Verlag der Autoren, 1999]). *Féerie*, though, would not fit easily in Lehmann's historical narrative, as the very label 'postdramatic' would be undermined by the existence of non-dramatic theatre in the previous century. Moreover, in the light of *féerie* and of the other genres of theatre with music, the theatre of the avant-gardes, starting with Symbolism in the 1880s, should not be read as a 'crisis of drama', but rather as a recuperation of plurimedial theatre by the literati (in other words, not as a retreat of literary drama, but as its expansion).

occultation of production by means of the outward appearance of the product',[80] and likewise *féerie*, with its tricks and transformations, conceals human labour and creates an illusion of spontaneity. Phantasmagoria, argues Adorno, makes the Wagnerian music dramas behave as commodities (according to the Marxist theory of commodity fetishism), and *féeries* are, unapologetically, commodities. The point, however, is precisely that Wagner's works pretend *not* to be commodities. Wagner did everything in his power to make his operas appear not as the product of the theatre industry, but as the creation of individual genius; as Adorno notes, the integration of the arts Wagner pursued protested against the division of labour. Mainstream *féerie*, on the contrary, did not disguise its commercial nature, it placed no emphasis on individual genius, and its mode of production emphatically embraced division of labour. The diametrically opposed attitudes towards the market of Wagner's operas and *féeries* are the fundamental reason why the former exist outside performance and the latter do not.

Wagner aimed at transcending time and space with his works, a vision enshrined in the slogan 'the total artwork of the future' (*das vollendete Kunstwerk der Zukunft*). Meyerbeerian *grand opéra*'s delicate balance between similarly lofty ambitions of autonomy and a pragmatic rooting in contemporary theatrical practice was also framed by a perceptive contemporary, George Sand, as a tension between the 'future' and the 'present'. She wrote in an open letter to Meyerbeer:

> You have not yet entirely freed yourself … from the ignorance of an unsophisticated audience and from the demands of unintelligent singers … But are you not now able to shape your listeners, to impose your will on them, to force them to forgo their limitations, and to show them a purity of taste that they ignore, and that no one has been able yet to openly proclaim? … above popularity and human glory are the cult of art and the artist's creed. You are the man of the present, dear master; be also the man of the future.[81]

Féerie, which lays no claim to autonomy, is solely concerned with the mundane reality of theatrical life, and could therefore be dubbed the total artwork of the present.

Yet as the total artwork of the future, by its very nature, fails in its attempt to escape the market, since it reproduces the mechanism of commodity fetishism, so the total artwork of the present fails in its attempt to emulate the market, precisely

[80] Theodor Adorno, *In Search of Wagner*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London: Verso, 2005), 74.

[81] 'Vous ne vous êtes pas encore tout à fait affranchi … de l'ignorance d'un public grossier et des exigences des chanteurs inintelligents … Mais à présent ne pouvez-vous pas former votre auditoire, lui imposer vos volontés, le contraindre à se passer de lisières, et lui révéler une pureté de goût qu'il ignore, et que nul n'a encore pu proclamer franchement? … au-dessus de la faveur populaire et de la gloire humaine, il y a le culte de l'art et la foi de l'artiste. Vous êtes l'homme du présent, maître, soyez aussi l'homme de l'avenir.' George Sand, *Lettres d'un voyageur*, in *Œuvres autobiographiques*, ed. Georges Lubin (Paris: Gallimard, 1970–1), 2:929. This letter was first published in the *Revue des deux mondes* on 15 November 1836.

because it cannot fully emulate commodity fetishism. *Féerie*'s existence in the present and its lack of an ultimate author inevitably draw attention to the contributions of performers and to the ingenuity of the craftspeople behind its tricks and transformations—in one word, to labour. *Féerie* does not achieve what Adorno calls 'intoxication', or at least this is my hypothesis. The only way to prove it or disprove it is by learning more about audiences, the most obscure category among the participants in the *féerie* industry. Answering the question I asked earlier—how naive *féerie* audiences were—is key to knowing whether *féerie* only promoted acceptance of the status quo or whether it also allowed some room for subversion.

2

Composerly *Féerie* and the Operettisation of *Féerie*

1868: The death of *féerie* that wasn't

In 1868, the prospects for Parisian *féerie* did not look good. No major new play saw the stage that year—*Les voyages de Gulliver*, by Clairville, Albert Monnier, and Ernest Blum, which premièred the previous December, would turn out to be the last important *féerie* of the Second Empire, and one of just two of note of the second half of the 1860s, the other being the same authors' 1866 *Cendrillon*. There was only one large-scale revival, *Ali-Baba ou Les quarante voleurs* (by Théodore and Hippolyte Cogniard, from 1853) at the Prince-Impérial and later at the Châtelet. And that one revival only cast new doubts on the financial viability of the extravagant productions on which the *féerie* business model was now based: Hippolyte Hostein, manager of both theatres, had to sell the Prince-Impérial in September and the Châtelet in October, and was declared bankrupt on 13 October.[1] Hostein's ruin, moreover, followed on the heels of that of Marc Fournier, manager of the Porte-Saint-Martin, who had gone bankrupt in April and who was also famous, as we shall see, for his lavish *féerie* productions. Yet another *féerie* house, the Gaîté, was also in troubled waters: a new manager, Victor Koning, had taken over in the spring, but he, too, would be declared bankrupt the next February. An article by theatre critic Albert Wolff in the 14 October issue of *Le Figaro* mentioned in passing that detractors of *féerie* were slaying the slain, as the genre was dead—had long been dead, even.[2]

But a few days later the same newspaper featured a piece by another writer, Paul Arène, who squarely rejected Wolff's claim:

[1] Adrien Marx, 'La Ville et le Théâtre', *Le Figaro*, 13 September 1868, 1–2; Jules Prével, 'Petit courrier des théâtres', *Le Figaro*, 5 October 1868, 3; Jules Prével, 'Petit courrier des théâtres', *Le Figaro*, 16 October 1868, 3.

[2] Albert Wolff, 'Gazette de Paris', *Le Figaro*, 14 October 1868, 1.

> *Féerie* is not dead, as they have said: she is just fleeing her creditors, disguised as operetta, and I saw her entering the Athénée the other night, at the time streetlights get switched on. The poor thing has been bad-mouthed enough, hasn't she? … She, *féerie*, dying in poverty? Nonsense! And why, if you please? Because she might have bankrupted yet another theatre director and ruined some lovers who wanted to see her too lavishly dressed? But how many do the same thing in Paris all the time, and get naught but richer?[3]

That Arène hypostatised *féerie* as a high-maintenance *cocotte* is revealing. Rather than suggesting, by way of its fairytale subjects, associations with innocence and childhood, *féerie* by this time conjured notions of titillation and ostentation, commodification of women's bodies and consumption. Perhaps it also helped that one of the attractions of the recent *Le voyages de Gulliver* had been Hortense Schneider, the operetta diva par excellence of the 1860s, who had a reputation for venality and sexual availability.

If one looks past the inherent misogyny of this discourse, though, Arène's piece was right, or prescient, on many accounts. Reports of the death of *féerie* were indeed greatly exaggerated. We should keep in mind that in the autumn of 1867 Parisians were treated to as many as three simultaneous large-scale *féerie* productions for months in a row (*Cendrillon* at the Châtelet; *La biche au bois*, about which more later, at the Porte-Saint-Martin; and *Peau d'Âne* at the Gaîté). The *féerie* fatigue of 1868 is therefore understandable, and 1869 would again witness successful *féerie* revivals. Had not the Franco-Prussian War broken out, 1870 could even have boasted a brand new *féerie*: Victorien Sardou and Jacques Offenbach's *Le roi Carotte*, which cleared the censorship board mere days before the onset of the conflict.[4] The *féerie* renaissance that followed the war would eventually validate Arène's prediction that the genre had a bright path ahead.

When he mentions the Théâtre de l'Athénée, Arène is alluding to the recent (8 October 1868) première of Laurent de Rillé's *Le Petit Poucet*, an operetta on a *féerique* subject. The appearance of this work and, apparently, a flair for the trends of the theatre market led Arène to see that the future of *féerie* laid in genre hybridisation. As he writes in keeping with his *cocotte* metaphor,

> *Féerie* will do what everyone else does, and if by way of funny articles and virtuous prefaces you will succeed in making her ashamed of her name, she will change her name, that's all, and you will run again into her somewhere, charming and popular.

[3] 'La féerie n'est pas morte, comme on l'a dit; elle fuit tout simplement ses créanciers, déguisée en opérette, et je l'ai vue entrer à l'Athénée, l'autre soir, à l'heure où les gaz s'allument … Mourir de misère! elle, la féerie!! En vérité, vous voulez rire! Et pourquoi, s'il vous plaît? Parce qu'elle aura conduit à la faillite un directeur de plus, et mis sur la paille des amoureux qui voulaient la voir trop somptueusement vêtue? Mais combien, tous les jours, agissent de même à Paris, qui n'en demeurent que plus riches.' Paul Arène, 'Bagatelles parisiennes', *Le Figaro*, 19 October 1868, 1.

[4] The approval date on the *manuscrit de censure* (F-Pan F^{18} 931) is 15 July 1870; France declared war on Prussia on 19 July.

> You will run again into her, whether she goes by ballet, operetta, or *folie*, and you will recognise her, and the opera glasses will recognise her from her coloured trimmings, her less than virtuous attitudes, and her legs eager to show off their pink stockings.[5]

One could be tempted to say that Arène predicted the advent of what was billed at the time 'opéra-bouffe-féerie' and I call 'composerly *féerie*'—that is, *féerie* with an entirely original score by an established composer, which would become a reality in 1872, when Sardou and Offenbach's *Le roi Carotte* finally reached the stage. But composerly *féerie* is just the most obvious aspect of the wider phenomenon of the operettisation of *féerie*: a *féerie* can have operetta-style music while resorting only in part to newly written music, or not at all. And the move towards operettisation, by 1868, had already been announced by the 1865 revival of *La biche au bois*, when part of the music had been commissioned to Hervé.

Arène's article, though, is probably not a diagnosis of the incipient operettisation of *féerie* any more than it is a prophecy of the composerly *féerie* to come. It is fairer to say that Arène had his finger on the pulse of the Parisian theatre industry and was aware of the conditions that made operettisation possible. One of these conditions was the 1864 deregulation of theatres, the *liberté des théâtres*, which abolished the Napoleonic licensing system and therefore lifted restrictions on the use of original music in vocal numbers. The other was the switch to what Christophe Charle has called a 'new regime of production', with fewer and more expensive productions, with longer runs to recoup costs, and a higher proportion of revivals to minimise risk.[6] These evolutions, however, are inseparable from Haussmannisation, the extensive campaign of urban renovation carried out in Paris by the prefect of the Seine, Georges-Eugène Haussmann, under Napoleon III.

In a pamphlet titled *Comptes fantastiques d'Haussmann*, with a pun on E. T. A. Hoffmann's tales of the fantastic (*contes fantastiques*), then-opposition politician Jules Ferry famously wrote that Haussmann had made Paris into a playground for 'the parasites of the Old World and the New'.[7] Today, we would probably talk about Disneyfication, or transformation into a 'theme park'—an expression that theatre historians Jim Davis and Victor Emeljanow have used for London's West End as it took shape at around the same time, starting in the late 1860s.[8]

[5] 'La féerie fera comme les autres, et si à force d'articles amusants et de préfaces vertueuses vous parvenez à la faire rougir de son nom, elle changera de nom, voilà tout, et vous la retrouverez quelque part, charmante et bien accueillie; vous la retrouverez, qu'elle s'appelle ballet, opérette ou folie, et vous la reconnaîtrez, et les lorgnettes la reconnaîtront à ses franfreluches [*sic*] de couleur, à ses allures peu vertueuses et à ses jambes heureuses de montrer des bas roses.' Paul Arène, 'Bagatelles parisiennes', *Le Figaro*, 19 October 1868, 1.

[6] Christophe Charle, *Théâtres en capitales: Naissance de la société du spectacle à Paris, Berlin, Londres et Vienne, 1860–1914* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2008), 205–20.

[7] Jules Ferry, *Comptes fantastiques d'Haussmann* (Paris: Le Chevalier, 1868).

[8] Jim Davis and Victor Emeljanow, *Reflecting the Audience: London Theatregoing, 1840–1880* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2001), 172–3. 'Disneyfication' as a shorthand for the organisation of cities along the principles of a theme park (in particular, of city centres, for the benefit of tourists) has

Taken together, these urban transformations, the 1864 deregulation, and the 'new regime of production' provide a key to understanding Parisian theatre in the last third of the 19th century. *Féerie*, which among all stage genres had perhaps the most unmediated relationship to its economic infrastructure, was shaped by these forces in a particularly transparent way. Reversing Ferry's pun, one could say that Haussmannisation brought about not just questionable financial practices (the *comptes fantastiques*), but also its own art form, trafficking in the marvellous: late 19th-century *féeries* are, so to speak, Haussmann's *contes fantastiques*.

Haussmann, or the gentrification of Parisian theatre

The best possible mental map for 19th-century Parisian theatre is a map of Paris. At the beginning of the 1860s, the disposition of theatres within the Right Bank largely aligned with generic and social taxonomies (Fig. 2.1). A western cluster stretched within a few blocks of rue de Richelieu, the north–south axis that connects the Louvre to the Grands boulevards. It included four state-sponsored theatres for literary drama, opera, ballet, and *opéra comique*: from south to north, the Comédie-Française, the Théâtre-Italien, the Opéra-Comique, and the Opéra. But the four major vaudeville houses were also part of this cluster: the Vaudeville, the Variétés (both active since the *ancien régime*), the Gymnase (since 1820), and the Palais-Royal (since 1831); so was, since 1855, Offenbach's operetta theatre, the Bouffes-Parisiens. As it happens, the Palais-Royal was (and still is) just a few yards from the Comédie-Française, and the Bouffes-Parisiens a few feet from the Théâtre-Italien. The Vaudeville was until 1868 across the street from the stock exchange building. The Opéra, the Bouffes-Parisiens, and the Variétés were next to *passages couverts*—the glamorous early 19th-century shopping arcades that Walter Benjamin identified as one of the symbols of the 'capital of the nineteenth century' and that are particularly dense in this neighbourhood.[9] The area also saw a disproportionate concentration of fashionable restaurants and cafés (Véfour, Les Frères Provençaux, Maison Dorée, Café de Foy, Café Riche, Tortoni, and so on), as well as gentlemen's clubs, most famously the Jockey Club. This should correct any assumption that vaudeville and operetta were 'popular' genres on account of being light-hearted. On the contrary, their social prestige was enormous. On top of their location, the comparatively small size of the four vaudeville theatres

now entered common parlance as well as academic literature. The idea emerged in the 1990s, thanks to Sharon Zukin, Stacy Warren, and Alan Bryman, among others; for an example of the current, narrower use of 'Disneyfication' in urban studies, see Jorge Sequera and Jordi Nofre, 'Shaken, not Stirred: New Debates on Touristification and the Limits of Gentrification', *City* 22, no. 5–6 (2018): 843–55.

[9] Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

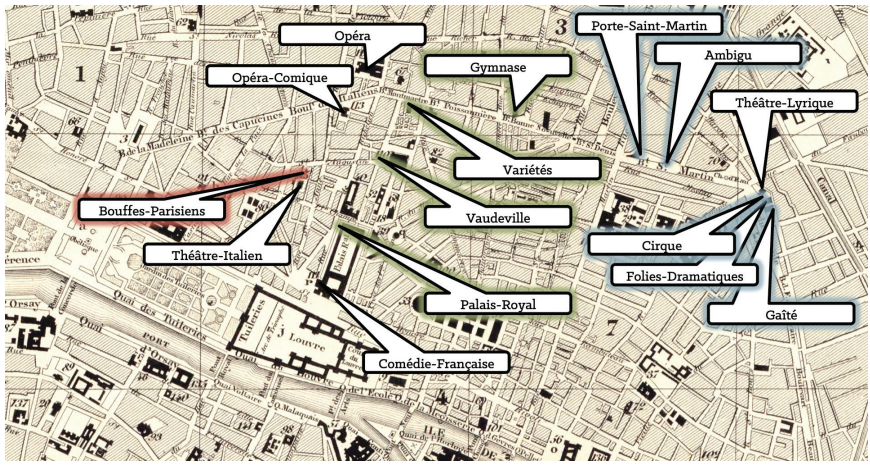


Figure 2.1 Parisian theatres of the Right Bank, *c.* 1860. Vaudeville theatres highlighted in green, melodrama theatres in blue, operetta theatre in red.

and the Bouffes-Parisiens—between 800 and 1,300 seats—made them inherently exclusive. And social prestige might depend on cultural prestige, but it might also simply depend on scarcity: even among young people of the 1960s, as Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron observed, familiarity with French classical drama, which could be acquired in school, was not a marker of class, while familiarity with boulevard drama in the vaudeville tradition was, despite the lower cultural prestige of the repertoire, since it was less easily accessible.[10] The western cluster of theatres has largely survived to this day: the Opéra and the Vaudeville were relocated during the Second Empire but remained in the general vicinity, and the Opéra-Comique and the Comédie-Française have since been rebuilt on their respective sites. With the exceptions of the Théâtre-Italien and the Vaudeville, all of these venues are still active today.

The eastern cluster was located on the north-eastern corner of the medieval city centre, along boulevard Saint-Martin and boulevard du Temple—the infamous *boulevard du crime*, after the sensational plays that drew crowds in the area. It comprised the five major melodrama houses of Paris: the Porte-Saint-Martin, the Ambigu, the Cirque, the Folies-Dramatiques, and the Gaîté, all within a few minutes' walk of each other. Also part of this cluster was the Théâtre-Lyrique, which occupied the premises of Alexandre Dumas's short-lived melodrama

[10] Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, *Les héritiers: Les étudiants et la culture* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1964), trans. by Richard Nice as *The Inheritors: French Students and their Relation to Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 34–6 in the French edition, 19–20 in the English translation.

theatre, the Théâtre-Historique. Close to the working-class neighbourhoods of eastern Paris, these were the truly popular theatres. They tended to be larger than the western commercial theatres: the Porte-Saint-Martin, the Gaîté, the Ambigu, and the Cirque had a capacity between 1,800 and 2,000 seats. They tended to be cheaper too. In 1860, the Gaîté and the Ambigu had seats for 50 centimes, the Porte-Saint-Martin for 40 centimes, the Folies-Dramatiques for as little as 30 centimes. The difference in social prestige with the western theatres was obvious to contemporaries. Depictions (usually patronising) of lower-class melodrama audiences are commonplace in the first half of the century, from artworks such as those by Honoré Daumier and Louis-Léopold Boilly to descriptions such as this one, which playwright Hippolyte Auger penned in 1840:

> This crowd … is not made up of people who have been disabused by egoism and an excess of pleasures, since what they ask from the melodrama [*drame*] is a respite from their misery, what they seek in the spectacle of imaginary evils is a distraction from their troubles: they take pity on someone else's sorrow as though to escape their own.[11]

Reviewing a *féerie* at the Porte-Saint-Martin in 1838, Théophile Gautier ended on this note: '*Peau d'Âne*, which cost a lot of money, will, as usual, make a lot of money. We believe that the Porte-Saint-Martin should persevere with this course of action, and strive to become the Opéra of the petty bourgeoisie [*petite propriété*]'.[12] Even though the last sentence might sound disparaging, it was probably not intended as such. Gautier was highly sympathetic to *féerie*, and the comparison is flattering to the artistic merits of the Porte-Saint-Martin show, since *grand opéra* productions at the Opéra were, in the 1830s, the benchmark for Romantic plurimedial theatre. Gautier was then wishing for the Porte-Saint-Martin to match the artistic standards of the Opéra while playing the same role as a place of sociability for the Parisian middle class that the Opéra (the 'Versailles of the bourgeoisie') played for the elites of Orleanist France.[13] Part of Gautier's wish came true: *féerie* productions did in fact become so sophisticated as to be compared favourably

[11] 'Cette foule … n'est pas formée d'êtres désillusionnés par l'égoïsme et par l'abus de jouissances, car c'est une trêve à ses misères qu'elle demande au drame, c'est l'oubli de ses chagrins qu'elle vient chercher au spectacle de maux imaginaires: elle s'apitoie sur la douleur d'autrui comme pour tromper la sienne.' Hippolyte Auger, *Physiologie du théâtre* (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1839–40), 3:278–9.

[12] '*Peau d'Âne*, qui a couté beaucoup d'argent, fera beaucoup d'argent, selon la coutume. — Nous croyons que la Porte-Saint-Martin ferait bien de persister dans cette voie, et de s'efforcer de devenir l'Opéra de la petite propriété.' Théophile Gautier, *Critique théâtrale*, ed. Patrick Berthier (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2007–), 1:585. Gautier had already used the expression a couple of months earlier, in a review where he approved the fact that the Porte-Saint-Martin had produced a ballet, all while disapproving of the ballet in question (*Capsali, ou La délivrance de la Grèce*): Gautier, *Critique théâtrale*, 1:512–13.

[13] The expression 'Versailles of the bourgeoisie' was famously coined by Opéra manager Louis Véron. See Anselm Gerhard, *The Urbanization of Opera: Music Theater in Paris in the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Mary Whittall (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 30.

with Opéra productions. As for the 'petty bourgeoisie' part, things did not quite play out as Gautier envisaged, as we shall see.

Unlike the western cluster, the eastern cluster of theatres in not easily recognised today, and the main reason is Haussmannisation. In the summer of 1862, the creation of the new place du Château-d'Eau (present-day place de la République) entailed the demolition of the Théâtre-Lyrique, the Cirque, the Folies-Dramatiques, and the Gaîté, in addition to smaller venues. While the Folies-Dramatiques only moved a few steps away, the other theatres were relocated, no longer to occupy the margins of the medieval city, but to be aligned along an axis that cut straight through it—the 30-metre-wide boulevard de Sébastopol, the main north–south thoroughfare of Haussmann's Paris. The new Gaîté (currently the Gaîté-Lyrique) sits on a neat garden square on the eastern side of boulevard de Sébastopol, while the new Théâtre-Lyrique (currently the Théâtre de la Ville–Sarah Bernhardt) and the Théâtre du Châtelet, successor to the Cirque, face each other on place du Châtelet where the boulevard meets the Seine. By contrast, the massive popular theatre that sprang up in 1866 near place du Château-d'Eau where the *boulevard du crime* had stood, the Prince-Impérial (later Théâtre du Château-d'Eau and Théâtre de la République), was never financially successful. Whether cause or consequence, the central location of the Châtelet along the Seine and the proximity of the Châtelet, the Gaîté, and the Porte-Saint-Martin to a major urban axis, the boulevard de Sébastopol, were consistent with the logic of the new regime of production, according to which theatres were not to serve a local community but to attract audiences from far and wide. Haussmann himself writes in his memoirs that he wanted the Châtelet and the Théâtre-Lyrique to be 'easily accessed from everywhere and within reach of the Left Bank *arrondissements*'.[14] One could add that boulevard de Sébastopol opens up the theatres to the world beyond Paris, practically and symbolically, since its focal point is the Gare de l'Est. The Porte-Saint-Martin has been rebuilt after being destroyed during the Commune; the Ambigu, the Prince-Impérial, and the Folies-Dramatiques were razed in the 20th century; and the Théâtre-Lyrique and the Gaîté, while retaining their façades, have lost their original auditoria; but the Châtelet is still intact in its Second Empire splendour, and among the art forms honoured in the frieze that runs around its ceiling one can still read 'féerie' (Fig. 2.2). As it happens, the Châtelet opened its doors with a *féerie*: *Rothomago*, which was playing at the Cirque when it shut down, and was transferred to the new house.[15] Its gargantuan size and central location made it possible for the genre to survive longer there than in any other venue, to the point that to 20th-century writers such as Simone de Beauvoir or Louis Aragon

[14] '[F]acilement accessibles de toutes parts et bien à portée des Arrondissements de la Rive Gauche'. Georges-Eugène Haussmann, *Mémoires du baron Haussmann* (Paris: Victor-Havard, 1890–3), 3:541.

[15] See Jean-Claude Yon, 'La féerie ou le royaume du spectaculaire: L'exemple de *Rothomago*', in *Le spectaculaire dans les arts de la scène du Romantisme à la Belle Époque*, ed. Isabelle Moindrot (Paris: CNRS éditions, 2006), 126–33.

Figure 2.2 The auditorium of the Théâtre du Châtelet. The 'Féerie' cartouche is visible at the top left. Photo © Thomas Amouroux, by kind permission of the author.

'*féerie*' and 'Châtelet' were almost synonymous.[16] All in all, Haussmann's choices had momentous consequences on the performing-arts geography of Paris: to find a public official who had a comparable impact one should probably fast forward to the 1980s and the presidency of François Mitterrand, who brought the Opéra Bastille and the Cité de la musique to eastern Paris.

From Walter Benjamin to David Harvey, writers have generally seen Haussmannisation as a sort of original sin of modern urbanism.[17] The charges brought against Haussmann are essentially two. The first is that he redesigned the city in order to police the Parisian working class. This argument is often epitomised in the observation that Haussmann's wide, rectilinear, and macadamised streets had the advantage of making barricade fighting harder—an observation already made by Friedrich Engels, which Benjamin helped popularise in the early 20th century. The second charge is that, through real-estate speculation, working-class Parisians were displaced from the city centre, being replaced with more affluent new residents and city users. In today's terms, Haussmann would be guilty of gentrification (19th-century French speakers might have preferred the term *embourgeoisement*). Recent scholarship has nuanced the picture, but the charge is

[16] Simone de Beauvoir, *Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée* (Paris: Gallimard, 1958), 55 (part 1); Louis Aragon, *Le roman inachevé* (Paris: Gallimard, 1956), 39 (section 'Le téméraire', poem 'Voilà donc où tu perds malheureux la lumière qui s'achève').
[17] Benjamin, *Arcades Project*; David Harvey, *Paris, Capital of Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

not unfounded. Workers did flee the centre, and the redevelopment brought both high-end housing as well as facilities meant to serve not just local communities but a wider public.[18] This evolution was of course not lost on contemporaries, and was denounced by Jules Ferry (the future minister and prime minister of the Third Republic) in particularly evocative terms: the old Paris was bonded by 'groups, neighbourhoods, districts, traditions', and 'the craftsman, who is now driven away from the centre by a merciless system, used to live next door to the financier', but Haussmann had transformed these vital and diverse neighbourhoods into a playground for the wealthy and tourists—'the nicest inn on earth', meant for 'the parasites of the Old World and the New'.[19] A gag in Offenbach's *La vie parisienne* evokes the perspective of the Grand Hôtel taking over the whole housing stock of the city in a future where 'people will not live in Paris any longer, but, depending on their means, they will come spend some time in Paris to have fine meals [and] go to the theatre'.[20]

Can we see the twin logic of policing and of gentrification at work in the transformation of the theatre landscape as well?[21] With respect to policing, the answer is unquestionably yes. On place du Château-d'Eau Haussmann erected the imposing army barracks of the Caserne du Prince-Eugène (present-day Caserne Vérines), which literally loomed over the audiences of the Folies-Dramatiques and of the Prince-Impérial as they entered the theatre. Haussmann had actually planned to have Gabriel Davioud, the architect of the new Châtelet

[18] See, for example, Alain Faure's contributions, among them 'La ségrégation, ou les métamorphoses historiographiques du baron Haussmann', in *Diversité sociale, ségrégation urbaine, mixité*, ed. Marie-Christine Jaillet, Evelyne Perrin, and François Ménard (La Défense: Plan urbanisme, construction et architecture, 2008), 51–64. On the legacy of Haussmann, also beyond Paris, see also the work of Florence Bourillon, for instance 'La ville contrainte? Haussmann revisité, 1870–1880', in *La ville en ébullition: Sociétés urbaines à l'épreuve*, ed. Pierre Bergel and Vincent Milliot (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2014), 307–22. A helpful reference work is Pierre Pinon, *Atlas du Paris haussmannien: La ville en héritage du Second Empire à nos jours* (Paris: Parigramme, 2002). In English, David P. Jordan is the author of *Transforming Paris: The Life and Labors of Baron Haussmann* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996) and of 'Haussmann and Haussmannisation: The Legacy for Paris', *French Historical Studies* 27, no. 1 (2004): 87–113. A classic study of the Parisian built environment is François Loyer, *Paris XIX^e siècle: l'immeuble et la rue* (Paris: Hazan, 1987), trans. by Charles Lynn Clark as *Paris Nineteenth Century: Architecture and Urbanism* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1988).

[19] '[L]'ancien Paris … où il existait des groupes, des voisinages, des quartiers, des traditions … où l'artisan, qu'un système impitoyable chasse aujourd'hui du centre, habitait côte à côte avec le financier'. Ferry, *Comptes fantastiques*, 8. 'Nous reconnaissons qu'on a fait du nouveau Paris la plus belle auberge de la terre et que les parasites des deux mondes ne trouvent rien de comparable'. Ibid., 7.

[20] '[O]n ne demeurera plus à Paris, mais selon la fortune qu'on aura, on viendra à Paris passer quelque temps pour faire de bons dîners, aller au théâtre…' Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, *La vie parisienne*, pièce en cinq actes … musique de Jacques Offenbach (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1867), 28 (act 2, scene 6).

[21] On the effects of Haussmannisation on theatres, see Juliette Aubrun, 'Le théâtre dans les travaux d'Haussmann', in *Les spectacles sous le Second Empire*, ed. Jean-Claude Yon (Paris: Armand Colin, 2010), 72–83. For a wider view of how Haussmannisation shaped the sound of Paris, both real and fantasised, see Jacek Blaszkiewicz, *Fanfare for a City: Music and the Urban Imagination in Haussmann's Paris* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2023).

and Théâtre-Lyrique, build a performing arts venue right next to the barracks: the Orphéon, a vast hall capable of seating 10,000 people and devoted to popular concerts of choral and orchestral music.[22] The project never came to fruition, but its paternalistic and moralistic intent is evident: providing the masses with a chance to elevate themselves through wholesome music, under the watchful eye of the state, where degenerate melodrama had once reigned supreme. As for the Châtelet and the Théâtre-Lyrique, since the completion of Haussmann's interventions on the nearby Île de la Cité shortly after their opening, they have been essentially in the middle of a judicial and law-enforcement complex. To the north, the Chambre des notaires, an odd neighbour for two entertainment venues, forms the remaining side of place du Châtelet; to the south, two courthouses face the two theatres across the river, the sprawling Palais de Justice opposite the Châtelet and the Tribunal de commerce opposite the Théâtre-Lyrique. The former also housed, under the Second Empire, the police headquarters. South of the Tribunal de commerce Haussmann built another barracks, the Caserne de la Cité (now the Préfecture de police). Moreover, the two theatres were bracketed by the two centres of power of Second Empire Paris, recently connected by the extended rue de Rivoli: the Tuileries (the imperial residence) to the west, the Hôtel de Ville (Haussmann's own headquarters) to the east.

We can also make a case for the gentrification of the theatre landscape of eastern Paris. One should keep in mind that the citywide trend was towards an increase in the price of tickets and a decrease in the number of affordable seats during the last third of the century, so theatre in general became increasingly exclusive.[23] But to the east we witness a threefold transformation in the area's offering of venues, in the venues' offering of genres, and within genres.[24]

Already in 1859, the former *café-concert* of the *boulevard du crime* where Hervé had experimented with operetta during the genre's infancy had been taken over by actor Virginie Déjazet and turned into a vaudeville theatre (called, after its manager and star, Théâtre Déjazet, a name it still bears). A year after moving into its new home, in 1863, the Théâtre-Lyrique dramatically upscaled its

[22] Haussmann, *Mémoires*, 543–7; see also Isabelle Rouge-Ducos, 'Davioud et l'architecture des théâtres parisiens', in *Les spectacles sous le Second Empire*, ed. Jean-Claude Yon (Paris: Armand Colin, 2010), 84–94, at pp. 92–3.

[23] See Charle, *Théâtres en capitales*, 274–6, and Jean-Claude Yon, *Une histoire du théâtre à Paris de la Révolution à la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Aubier, 2012), 353–4.

[24] In the first two cases, theatre is a means of gentrification, in the last one it is an object of gentrification (as a cultural practice that is appropriated by a more privileged segment of the population). Some recent scholarship discusses gentrification *through* music, such as Marianna Ritchey, 'Opera and/as Gentrification', in *Composing Capital: Classical Music in the Neoliberal Era* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2019), 90–113; some focuses on gentrification *of* music, such as Petter Dyndahl, Sidsen Karlsen, and Ruth Wright, eds., *Musical Gentrification: Popular Music, Distinction, and Social Mobility* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2021). I am considering gentrification both through and of theatre, not least because, as I will show, gentrification of *féerie* happened through operetta.

repertoire, which had been essentially limited to *opéra comique*, with Georges Bizet's *Les pêcheurs de perles*, Berlioz's *Les Troyens à Carthage*, and a French version of Verdi's *Rigoletto*. In 1866 another vaudeville theatre opened in a former *café-concert*, this time on boulevard de Strasbourg, which continues boulevard de Sébastopol to the north: the Menus-Plaisirs (also called Théâtre des Arts for a few years in the 1870s, present-day Théâtre Antoine). But the unmistakable sign of the gentrification of the eastern theatres was the spread of operetta, of the full-length, post-*Orphée aux enfers* variety. In October 1867, Hervé's *L'œil crevé* debuted at the Folies-Dramatiques, while in December of the same year, the Menus-Plaisirs gave a new version of Offenbach's *Geneviève de Brabant*. Another theatre devoted, among other genres, to operetta opened after the war, in 1873: the Théâtre de la Renaissance, a small (hence exclusive) venue literally next door to the Porte-Saint-Martin.

In 1874, critic Arnold Mortier wrote that, as operetta made its appearance at the Renaissance the previous year, so did, among male theatre-goers, 'the white tie and the black tailcoat embellished with the mandatory gardenia', as opposed to the less formal frock-coat.[25] In that same piece—a tongue-in-cheek guide to the dress code of Parisian premières—Mortier mentions the stereotypical male garment of the working class, the blouse, only once, when discussing the Folies-Dramatiques (where the tailcoat, the frock-coat, and the 'modest overcoat' are also to be found). We are definitely a far cry from Hippolyte Auger's description of melodrama audiences only a couple of decades earlier. The Délassements-Comiques had been for decades one of the attractions of the *boulevard du crime*; it relocated nearby after Haussmann's demolitions but burned down during the Commune, and by the time of Mortier's writing the name of Délassements-Comiques was borne by a venue one block from the boulevard de Strasbourg that was, allegedly, 'the most elegant theatre in Paris' and 'a true orgy of black tailcoats, of pearl-gray gloves, of camellias, roses, and gardenias'.[26] Mortier also remarks that, since Offenbach became manager of the Gaîté, 'the tailcoat has been fully embraced' at that theatre, too.[27] In the following years, the Gaîté's repertoire would strive towards greater cultural prestige. Between 1875 and 1876, the theatre hosted, in collaboration with the Odéon, performances of Nicolas Dalayrac's 1800 *opéra comique Maison à vendre*, a few Molière-Lully *comédies-ballets* with their original music, and a revival of Leconte de Lisle's *Les Érinnyes* with Jules Massenet's score. In 1876, it became a bona fide opera house, even though the venture was short-lived. But

[25] '[L]'opérette fait son apparition, et, en même temps, la cravate blanche et l'habit noir orné du gardénia oblige.' Un monsieur de l'orchestre [Arnold Mortier], 'Physiologie des premières', in *Les soirées parisiennes [de 1874]* (Paris: Dentu, 1875), 415–20, at p. 418.

[26] '[Le] théâtre le plus élégant de Paris … une véritable orgie d'habits noirs, de gants gris perle, de camélias, de roses et de gardenias.' Mortier, 'Physiologie des premières', 420.

[27] '[D]epuis la direction Offenbach, l'habit est complétement adopté'. Mortier, 'Physiologie des premières', 419.

the gentrification of the Gaîté had begun earlier, in 1872, and would have begun earlier still if not for the war, with that other innovation, composerly *féerie*.

A *féerie* from the July Monarchy to the Second Empire: *La biche au bois*

As a journalist might put it, the *féerie La biche au bois* is probably the most important 19th-century French play you have never heard of. Premièred in 1845, it had four revivals in Paris, in 1865, 1867, 1881, and 1896. It was adapted at least three times for London, as *The Princess Who Was Changed into a Deer* at Drury Lane in 1845, as *The White Fawn* at the Holborn Theatre in 1868, and as *The Black Crook* at the Alhambra in 1872 (with a revival in 1881). It was performed as far away as San Francisco, where it was chosen as the inaugural production of the French-language Union Theatre in 1853.[28] It is even said to be at the origin of *The Black Crook*, the extravagant and wildly successful show produced at Niblo's Garden in New York in 1866, and therefore at the origin of the whole tradition of the American musical, of which *The Black Crook* is seen as a precursor.[29] This claim is exaggerated, and might derive in part from confusion with the 1872 London *Black Crook* or with the actual adaptation of *La biche au bois* staged at Niblo's Garden in 1868 (as *The White Fawn*). But there might be some truth to it as well—it is likely that the impresarios behind the New York *Black Crook*, Henry Jarrett and Harry Palmer, considered the 1865 production of *La biche au bois* the gold standard for spectacular theatre. As I will argue, it is even possible that Hector Berlioz, no less, took a cue from the 1845 *Biche* for *La damnation de Faust*. As for the 1867 production, 19th-century France's most celebrated comic poet, Théodore de Banville, refers to it repeatedly in his second collection of *Odes funambulesques*.[30]

Originally written by the brothers Cogniard, Théodore and Hippolyte, *La biche au bois* is based on Madame d'Aulnoy's fairytale of the same title (literally, The Doe in the Woods, but also known in English as 'The White Doe'). It dramatises the adventures of Princess Désirée, on whom the evil Fée de la Fontaine (the Spring Fairy) has put a spell, and of Prince Souci (Marigold). The cast also includes Desirée's rival, the African Princess Aïka, betrothed to Souci;

[28] Daniel Lévy, *Les Français en Californie* (San Francisco: Grégoire, Tauzy, 1885), 116–17.
[29] See, for example, Gerald Bordman, *American Musical Theatre: A Chronicle*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 19.
[30] Originally published as *Nouvelles odes funambulesques* (Paris: Lemerre, 1869), later retitled 'Occidentales' in editions of the complete *Odes funambulesques*. For a modern edition, see Théodore de Banville, *Œuvres poétiques complètes*, ed. Peter J. Edwards (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1994–2009), vol. 5.

her henchman Mesrour; Désirée's father, King Drelindindin, and his seneschal Pélican; Souci's mother, Queen Jonquille (Daffodil); a second, lower-status couple of lovers formed by Fanfreluche and Giroflée (Wallflower); and a host of minor characters. This partial dramatis personae is telling of what to expect from the play: spectacular excess, one-dimensional characters, a Manichaean division into goodies and baddies, constructive symmetries, exoticism, family-friendly escapism.

On its appearance at the Porte-Saint-Martin *La biche au bois* earned, with good reason, the praise of Théophile Gautier, the most vocal proponent among the Romantic generation of a non-verbal-centric theatre.[31] Among the selling points of the show was the presence of the infamous 'Spanish' dancer Lola Montez, then at the height of her Parisian fame,[32] whose nefarious reputation remained associated with the play even though she ultimately did not take part in the performance.[33]

In addition to being among the most influential *féeries*, *La biche au bois* is one of the best documented throughout its long stage life. The extant sources—published excerpts for 1845 and 1865; Hervé's manuscripts for 1865; editions of the play for 1845, 1867, and 1881; *manuscrits de censure* for 1865, 1867, 1881, and 1896; a printed programme for 1881; and press announcements and reports—allow us to draw a picture of the play's music across its five versions (Table 2.1).[34]

[31] Gautier, who was also one of the creative minds behind the rise of French Romantic ballet (*Giselle*, *La Péri*), famously coined the expression 'spectacles oculaires', ocular entertainment. See Olivier Bara, 'Avant-propos', in Olivier Bara, ed., 'Boulevard du crime: Le temps des spectacles oculaires', special issue, *Orages*, no. 4 (2005), 9–20; Marie-Françoise Christout, 'La féerie romantique au théâtre: de *La sylphide* (1832) à *La biche au bois* (1845), chorégraphies, décors, trucs et machines', *Romantisme*, no. 38 (1982), 77–86; Hassan el Nouty, 'Spectacle oculaire et théâtre populaire chez Théophile Gautier', in *Théâtre et pré-cinéma: Essai sur la problématique du spectacle au XIX^e siècle* (Paris: Nizet, 1978), 65–76. In English, see Kristian Moen, *Film and Fairy Tales* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013), 12.

[32] Montez (generally spelled Montès in French) had just appeared at the Porte-Saint-Martin in the ballet *La dansomanie*. Not Spanish at all (she was born in Ireland), she is best remembered as a cosmopolitan intriguer and as a Svengali to Bavarian king Ludwig I.

[33] See, for example, the entry for *La biche au bois* in the *Larousse du XIX^e siècle*: Pierre Larousse, *Grand dictionnaire universel du XIX^e siècle* (Paris: Administration du Grand dictionnaire universel, 1866–77), 2:705–6. Montez had to put her stage career on hiatus after the controversial death in a duel of her lover, newspaper owner Alexandre Dujarrier, on 11 March 1845. *La biche au bois* premièred on the 29th of the same month.

[34] In addition to the sources listed below the table, I have used *L'Orchestre*, one of the performance-listing periodicals sold in theatres; the programme for the 1881 revival at F-Pnas 4-RF-39697; D.A.D. Saint-Yves [Édouard Déaddé], 'Revue des théâtres', *Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris*, 17 September 1865, 305–6; 'Nouvelles', *Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris*, 24 September 1865, 313–14. I have been wary of the fact that press announcements tend to inflate the number of tableaux, counting transformations or even tricks as separate tableaux.

Table 2.1 Music for Théodore and Hippolyte Cogniard, *La biche au bois*, 1845–96.

PSM: Porte-Saint-Martin. Dashed boxes: entirely new *tableaux*; shading: *tableaux* moved to a different position. Numbers in parentheses in the 1865 column correspond to set-piece/cue numbers in Hervé's score and annotated copy of the play.				
PSM, 1845	**PSM, 1865**	**PSM, 1867**	**PSM, 1881**	**Châtelet, 1896**
music compiled by Pilati	starring and with new music by Hervé, choreography by Justamant	additional music by Debillemont and Artus, published as *La nouvelle 'Biche au bois'*	revised by Blum and Toché	further revisions by Blum and Ferrier, film projections
after printed play, published excerpts	after Hervé's ms scores and annotated copy of the 1845 printed play, 'nouveaux couplets' brochure, *manuscrit de censure*, announcements in *L'Orchestre*, published excerpts, reviews in RGMP	after printed play, *manuscrit de censure*, announcement in *L'Orchestre*	after printed play, *manuscrit de censure*, printed programme	after *manuscrit de censure*, announcement in *L'Orchestre*
Act 1	**Act 1**	**Act 1**	**Act 1**	**Act 1**
1. Le roi Drelindindin Largesse! Largesse! reuse?: Pilati	1. Le roi Drelindindin new setting, original: Hervé (1)	**[cut]**	1. Le roi Drelindindin Drelindindin, Notre cher souverain original?: Donati (*rectius* Lonati?) (at the *manuscrit de censure* stage, parody: Offenbach, *Les contes d'Hoffmann*, 1881)	1. Le royaume des clochettes Sonnez, cloches et clochettes ?

(*Continued*)

Table 2.1 (Cont.)

PSM, 1845	**PSM, 1865**	**PSM, 1867**	**PSM, 1881**	**Châtelet, 1896**
En l'admettant à nos côtés *timbre*: 'Un homme pour faire un tableau', 1802	same as in 1845 (2)		Il eût été trop singulier *timbre*: A.-P.-J. Doche, *vaudeville* of *La famille de l'apothicaire*, 1830	
Quand sa cloche nous invite parody: Auber, *Le cheval de bronze*, 1835	same as in 1845 (3)		Puisque sa cloche nous invite parody: Lecocq, *Le grand Casimir*, 1879	
	2. La tour enchantée			
Ô bonheur! sur de légers nuages parody: Flotow, Burgmüller, and Deldevez, *Lady Henriette*, 1844	new setting, original: Hervé (4)		Déjà sur de légers nuages parody: David, *Lalla-Roukh*, 1862	[melodramatic music]
[*mélodrame*]	Azur, immensité, ciel profond d'où rayonne (5) original: Hervé		Notre filleule en ce beau jour original?: Donati (*rectius* Lonati?) (at the *manuscrit de censure* stage, parody: Cœdès, *Les parfums de Paris*, 1880)	
Allons, vassaux, de ce pas… parody: Flotow, Burgmüller, and Deldevez, *Lady Henriette*, 1844	new setting, parody: Balfe (6)		same as in 1845	

dance: pas des clochettes			Crois-tu donc, pauvre imbécile parody: Serpette, *La petite muette*, 1877	
Comblez nos souhaits! parody: Auber, *Le serment*, 1832	same as in 1845 (7)		Allez! allez! les petits maçons! parody: Offenbach, *Le voyage dans la lune*, 1875	
2. L'empire jaune — Le prince Souci	3. L'empire jaune — Le prince Souci	1. Les jardins jaunes	2. L'empire jaune — Le prince Souci	2. L'empire jaune — Le prince Souci
L'un veut le saigner, l'affaiblir reuse: Bérat, from *La dot de Cécile*, 1837, through *La fille de l'air*, 1837	same as in 1845 (8/13)		Tiens! voilà le roi parody: Gabillaud, 'Tiens! voilà Mathieu', song, 1880	Pour plaire à Son Altesse parody: 'refrain de Lingling'
Au point du jour *timbre*: 'Le point du jour', from Dalayrac, *Gulistan*, 1805 (revived 1844)	same as in 1845, arranged by Hervé; discarded	same as in 1845		
Ne me regarde pas ainsi parody: Grisar, 'La peur', song, early 1840s?	Ces beaux yeux d'où la flamme ruisselle (9/14) original: Hervé		Car déjà je le ressentis parody: Hervé, *Le petit Faust*, 1869	Joli portait aux yeux si doux ?
Oui, ventrebleu! si l'on en vient aux prises parody: Vogel, 'Les trois couleurs', song, 1830	same as in 1845, arranged by Hervé (10/15)	Oui, par ma lance de Tolède ?	same as in 1845	
D'ici que la souffrance parody: Balfe, *Le puits d'amour*, 1843				

(*Continued*)

Table 2.1 (Cont.)

PSM, 1845	PSM, 1865	PSM, 1867	PSM, 1881	Châtelet, 1896
[melodramatic music]	[melodramatic music]	[melodramatic music]	[melodramatic music]	
Honneur! honneur à la princesse parody: Dalayrac, *Gulistan*, 1805	new setting, original: Hervé (11/18)	same as in 1865?	Courtisans chaleureux parody: Delibes, *Le bœuf Apis*, 1865	
[melodramatic music]	[melodramatic music]	[melodramatic music]	[melodramatic music]	[melodramatic music]
À bientôt, à bientôt! parody?, reuse: Flotow, from *Iwan le moujick*, 1844	new setting, original: Hervé (12/21)	Songe, Hildebert, dans quel gâchis ?	C'en est trop prince téméraire parody: Lecocq, *Giroflé-Girofla*, 1874	Il n'fallait pas, mame Aïka parody: Dubost, 'Y avait qu'des muf's à c'tte noc'-là', song, 1882 [melodramatic music]
3. La fée de la Fontaine [melodramatic music] [*mélodrame*]			[melodramatic music]	[melodramatic music]
4. La tour obscure	4. La tour obscure Jeune, charmant, le front superbe (…/25bis) original: Hervé	2. La tour obscure Je suis le roi Drelindindin ?	3. La tour obscure	3. La tour obscure

Oui, je veux voir le ciel de la montagne parody: Monpou, ['Gastibelza', song, early 1840s]	Je voudrais voir fleurir la rose (13/26) original: Hervé		Loin de toute entrave importune parody: Audran, *La mascotte*, 1880	
Du destin subissons la loi! ?: 'Le roi des hirondelles'				
Je dois être sincère reuse: from *Judith et Holopherne*, 1834, through *Le fils de Triboulet*, 1835	Hou, hou, hou, La voici (14/28) original: Hervé		Quand le chant le plus doux parody: Gounod, *Le tribut de Zamora*, 1881	Pardon si je m'emancipe parody: Hervé, *Mam'zelle Gavroche*, 1885
			En écoutant ces mots si doux parody: Audran, *La mascotte*, 1880	
[melodramatic music]	[melodramatic music]			[melodramatic music]
Faites place à Son Altesse! parody, reuse: Donizetti, *Parisina*, 1833 (Paris: 1838), through *Les trois quenouilles*, 1839	new setting, original: Hervé (15/31)	same as 1865, abridged?		
	December: dance: Farandole des sonnettes			

(*Continued*)

Table 2.1 (Cont.)

PSM, 1845	**PSM, 1865**	**PSM, 1867**	**PSM, 1881**	**Châtelet, 1896**
Et maintenant, j'ai rempli mon message parody: Monpou, *Le planteur*, 1839	Que dois-je dire à mon maître? … À celui que j'adore (16/33) original: Hervé	Le ciel profond d'une nuit amoureuse parody: Offenbach, *La grande-duchesse de Gérolstein*, 1867	Il est une demoiselle parody: Gabillaud, 'Guguste et Titine', song, 1881	Ambassadeur d'un prince magnifique parody: Serpette, *Le Capitole*, 1895 Ô Giroflée, ô femme aimée parody: Gounod, *Mireille*, 1864
[*scène mystérieuse*]		Bon voyage ?	[*scène mystérieuse*]	
5. La forêt des sycomores	5. La forêt des sycomores	3. La forêt des sycomores Courons, amis, dans les bois from 6th *tableau* of 1845 version	4. La forêt des sycomores	4. La forêt des sycomores
[procession]	march (17/35, 36) original: Hervé (pubd. as 'Polka-marche') De l'air! de l'air! et des ombrages! (…/35bis) original: Hervé; discarded?	Loin du monde et du bruit *timbre*: Doche, from *Psyché*, 1814, through *Riquet à la houppe*, 1821	[procession]	[procession]

Act 2	**Act 2**	**Act 2**	**Act 2**	**Act 2**
6. La mère l'Oie	6. La mère l'Oie	**[cut]**	5. La lisière d'un bois	5. La lisière d'un bois
Après sa métamorphose reuse?: Pothier (*rectius* Potier)	new setting, original: Hervé (19/38)		La princesse un beau jour parody: Offenbach, *Belle Lurette*, 1880	Écoutez l'aventure parody: 'Marche des Horse-guards' (Tavan, 1882? or song?)
Courons, amis, dans les bois parody: Jullien, 'La Saint-Hubert', quadrille, early 1840s?	new setting, original: Hervé (20/41)		Allons, hâtons-nous parody: Hervé, *L'œil crevé*, 1867	same as in 1881
Dépêchons! Oui, courons! ?: 'air de Paris dans l'eau'				
Oui, pauvre biche, il te reste, du moins parody: Puget, 'Les yeux d'une mère, ou Huit ans d'absence!', song, 1843?	new setting, original: Hervé (21/44)			
[melodramatic music]				
Princesse jeune et belle! reuse: Pilati, from *L'ombre*, 1843	new setting, original: Hervé (…/49); discarded?			D'un vague émoi mon cœur reste saisi parody: Hervé, *Chilpéric*, 1868
7. Le souterrain	7. Le souterrain	4. Les entrailles de la terre	6. Le souterrain	6. Le souterrain

(*Continued*)

Table 2.1 (Cont.)

PSM, 1845	**PSM, 1865**	**PSM, 1867**	**PSM, 1881**	**Châtelet, 1896**
De tous les maux qu'ici-bas on endure *timbre*, reuse: 'De tous les maux qu'ici-bas on endure' = *vaudeville* of Kreutzer, *Jadis et aujourd'hui*, 1808, through *La fille de l'air*, 1837				
Nous t'invoquons, Déesse! reuse?: Pilati	new setting, original: Hervé (22/51)	same as in 1845	Nous t'invoquons, bonne Déesse parody: Poise, *Les absents*, 1864	same as in 1881
	Je suis en effet cette reine (23/52) original: Hervé		Je suis le bon petit génie parody: Offenbach, *La jolie parfumeuse*, 1873	
		5. La mine des diamants ballet: Les Salamandres		
8. Le kiosque indien	8. Le kiosque indien	**[cut]**	7. Le kiosque indien	7. Le kiosque indien
Puissance sans pareille! reuse?: Pilati				
Et le ciel m'a recompensée! *timbre*: Adam, *vaudeville* of *La haine d'une femme*, 1824			J'errais toute seule à travers les bois parody: Hervé, *Panurge*, 1879	

[melodramatic music] Adieu, ma belle parody: Marcailhou, 'Indiana', waltz, early 1840s?, arranged by Pilati [*mélodrame*] Point de retard, allons, plongeons! ?: 'Quel est ce bruit, cette rumeur?'	[melodramatic music] Allez, douce colombe (24/59) original: Hervé [*mélodrame*]		[melodramatic music] Le malheur est fini parody: Cœdès, *La girouette*, 1880 Dors! il faut bien qu'à ma loi parody: Offenbach, *Belle Lurette*, 1880 [*mélodrame*]	[melodramatic music] [*mélodrame*]
		6. Le salon jonquille Après sa métamorphose from 6th *tableau* of 1865 version Il était un clair ruisseau ?	**[cut]**	**[cut]**

(*Continued*)

Table 2.1 (Cont.)

PSM, 1845	PSM, 1865	PSM, 1867	PSM, 1881	Châtelet, 1896
		Oh là là! Que je souffre au bas du dos [parody: Offenbach, *La vie parisienne*, 1866] Ah! que j'aime ces militaires [parody: Offenbach, *La grande-duchesse de Gérolstein*, 1867] Allons, partons vite pour l'Afrique ?		
9. Le royaume des poissons 'Air d'entrée du *Barbier de Séville*': Rossini, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, 1816 (Paris: 1819) [procession] Rendons hommage à sa grandeur! parody, reuse: 'air de la Lucia' (Donizetti, *Lucie de Lammermoor*, 1839), in *Iwan le moujick*, 1844	9. Le royaume des poissons	7. Le royaume des poissons	8. Le royaume des poissons [melodramatic music] Rendons tous hommage à tant de grandeur parody: Hervé, *Panurge*, 1879	14. Le royaume des poissons [melodramatic music] [procession]

Au revoir, bon voyage! parody: Henri Berz (*rectius* Herz), *La violette*, piano variations, 1829, arranged by Pilati	ballet: Ballet des poissons (includes Artus, 'Les poissons', polka-mazurka) **September:** ballet: La friture de goujons	ballet: Les poissons	Sous une coupole en fonte parody: Lecocq, *Les cent vierges*, 1872 ballet: Réjouissances au palais du roi Saumon	same as in 1881, but crossed out Gloire à vous[,] noble roi, grande reine ? ballet: Le monde sous-marin; Les anémones; Les coraux; L'empire de la mer; Les poissons volants; Apothéose 8. L'empire végétal (see below)
10. La chaumière des invisibles Au bon lutin, qui si bien nous régale parody: Bérat, 'La Lisette de Béranger', song, early 1840s? [melodramatic music]	10. La chaumière des invisibles new setting, original: Hervé (25/73) **September:** Lutin de cette chaumière [parody: Semet, *Gil Blas*, 1860] [melodramatic music]	8. La chaumière rustique	9. Un petit boudoir Je t'avais pourtant prévenu *timbre*: 'Mon père était pot', traditional	9. Un petit boudoir Giroflée[,] idole de mon âme parody: Serpette, *Le royaume des femmes*, 1896

(*Continued*)

Table 2.1 (Cont.)

PSM, 1845	**PSM, 1865**	**PSM, 1867**	**PSM, 1881**	**Châtelet, 1896**
Talisman, guide nos pas! reuse?: Pilati	new setting, original: Hervé (26/76) **September:** Au château d'acier je m'élance original?: Hervé **September:** Oui, c'est toi[,] vigne, la maîtresse parody: Massé, *Galathée*, 1852		Allons sans peur et sans faiblesses parody: Gounod, *Le tribut de Zamora*, 1881	
		9. La villa d'une fleur À la voix qui nous appelle ? Sois le bienvenu, cher prince ? Adieu, beau chevalier, bonne chance et courage ?	**[cut]**	**[cut]**
11. La roche terrible Malheur, malheur à l'audacieux original: Pilati	11. La roche terrible new setting, original: Hervé (26, continued/77)	10. La roche terrible same as in 1845	10. Le château d'acier same as in 1867?	10. Le château d'acier same as in 1881?

Act 3			**Act 3**	**Act 3**
12. Le palais d'Aïka	13. Le palais d'Aïka	12. Les cuisines	11. La cuisine du palais d'Aïka	11. La cuisine du palais d'Aïka
Oui, parmi nous la voilà, la voilà! parody: Burgmüller, *La Péri*, 1843, arranged by Pilati	new setting, original: Hervé (…/79)			
ballet: Pilati, 'Pas de sept'				
[melodramatic music]	[melodramatic music]			
		Ah! et dire que c'est elle parody?: 'Tyrolienne'	Nous sommes tous très malheureux parody: Offenbach, *Belle Lurette*, 1880	
			Même en présence du danger parody: Audran, *La mascotte*, 1880	
Par prudence reuse: Pilati, from *Lénore*, 1843	new setting, original: Hervé (…/81)	Quelle ivresse same music as in 1865?	Quel bonheur parody: Offenbach, *Le violoneux*, 1855	
			Ne perdons pas une minute parody: Hervé, *La Roussotte*, 1881	same as in 1881
		Dansez pelles et pincettes ?	Ah! cet insecte carnivore parody: Hervé, 'C'est dans l'nez qu'ça m'chatouille', *tyrolienne*, mid-1860s	

(*Continued*)

Table 2.1 (Cont.)

PSM, 1845	PSM, 1865	PSM, 1867	PSM, 1881	Châtelet, 1896
		dance: Pas des batteries de cuisine	[music for lantern projections]	
		13. Le cachot		
		14. Le palais d'Aïka	12. Un magnifique palais mauresque	12. Un magnifique palais mauresque
		De grâce écoutez ma prière parody: Gounod, *Faust*, 1859	À ma voix et puisqu'il le faut parody: Jonas, *Le canard à trois becs*, 1869	
	September: Vous venez, ô ma bien-aimée original?: Debillemant (*rectius* Debillemont)			Oubliez-moi, princesse Désirée ?
	Vous venez, ô ma bien-aimée … Adieu douce chimère (…/83) original: Hervé			
[melodramatic music]			[melodramatic music]	[melodramatic music]
[ceremonial music]	[ceremonial music]		[ceremonial music]	[ceremonial music]
Espérance, Perséverance parody: Donizetti, *Lucrezia Borgia*, 1833 (Paris: 1840)	new setting, original: Hervé (…/89)			

	ballet: Les Amazones **September:** Je vais partir pour des luttes nouvelles original?: Hervé	ballet: Grand ballet d'Aïka (Les Amazones; Les palmes; Les éventails) Il va partir pour des luttes nouvelles same music as in 1865?	ballet: Fête au palais d'Aïka	13. Un site de rochers au bord de la mer Allons, Fanfrelouche, allons tous les deux parody: Millöcker, *Der Bettelstudent*, 1882 (Paris: 1889) 14. Le royaume des poissons (see above)
Act 4	**Act 3**	**Act 3**	**Act 4**	
13. Le royaume des légumes [melodramatic music]	12. Le royaume des légumes [melodramatic music]	11. Le marché aux légumes	13. Le royaume des légumes [melodramatic music]	8. L'empire végétal [melodramatic music]

(*Continued*)

Table 2.1 (Cont.)

PSM, 1845	PSM, 1865	PSM, 1867	PSM, 1881	Châtelet, 1896
Je ne crains rien, je puis marcher contre eux *timbre*: 'air de Colalto' = 'Vive l'amour pour nous mieux secourir', 1780 or earlier	same as in 1845?		Oui contre moi chacun complote parody: Audran, *La mascotte*, 1880	Courrier politique parody: Offenbach, *La vie parisienne*, 1866
dance: Pilati, 'Polka des légumes'	ballet: Ballet des légumes **September:** ballet: La salade de chicorées; Les amours d'une carotte et d'un navet	ballet: La révolte des légumes	[procession]	[procession]
	[Act 4?]	**[Act 4?]**		
	13. Le palais d'Aïka (see above)	12. Les cuisines; 13. Le cachot; 14. Le palais d'Aïka (see above)		
14. La grotte des Sirènes	14. La grotte des Sirènes Au temps jadis, les Reines de l'ivresse (…/97) original: Hervé; discarded?	15. La grotte féerique	14. La grotte des Sirènes	**[cut]**
		Act 4 [Act 5?]		
	15. Le lac des Sirènes	16. Le palais des Sirènes		

pantomime: Pas de la Sirène (includes or coincides with Pilati, 'Pas de l'ombre')			[pantomime]	
	Ô nuit, ô nuit profonde … Du sein des ondes (…/100) original: Hervé		Sur le lac aux flots d'azur parody: Offenbach, *Les contes d'Hoffmann*, 1881 (cut before the premiere, according to Mortier, but included in printed play)	
	Sois bienvenu dans notre empire original: Hervé			
Je suis la sirène… parody: Burgmüller, *La Péri*, 1843, arranged by Pilati	Voici la sirène (…/102) original: Hervé			
15. L'Île des Plaisirs Habitants de ces lieux divins ?	**[cut]**	**[cut]**	**[cut]**	**[cut]**
Pourquoi ces fleurs? original				
pantomime: La Volupté				
Songez bien à notre exigence parody?: 'Rose Pompon'				
Adieu bonheur! adieu patrie! parody?: 'air du Gondolier'				
[melodramatic music]				

(*Continued*)

Table 2.1 (Cont.)

PSM, 1845	PSM, 1865	PSM, 1867	PSM, 1881	Châtelet, 1896
	[Act 5?]		**Act 5**	**Act 4**
	16. Le boudoir de nacre melodramatic music (cue 104 extant) Monsieur le diable et Madame la fée (…/105) original: Hervé Oui le voilà l'amant fidèle … Viens parmi nous loin des soucis moroses original: Hervé Oui, c'est Musette, la voilà (…/107) original: Hervé Oui, c'est Marco la syrène (ms. score: Qu'elle soit biche ou duchesse) original: Hervé Adieu! adieu! adieu! adieu! (…/110) original: Hervé	**[cut]**	**[cut]**	**[cut]**

	Ô doux sommeil, berce-moi dans un songe (…/111) original: Hervé (presumably supersedes earlier draft of the same number with different text)			15. Au pays des Géants Sans qu'il soit besoin de ficelle parody: Serpette, *Le carnet du diable*, 1895
		17. La cour des lions À cet instant suprème parody: Weyrauch, 'Nach Osten!', 1824, pubd. (1835) as Schubert, 'Adieu'	15. Un vestibule dans le palais d'Aïka Oui c'est assez me désoler parody: Lecocq, *La petite Mademoiselle*, 1879	16. Un vestibule dans le palais d'Aïka Peut-être est-ce un gala parody: 'Ousqu'est la casterole', song?
			16. La forêt des lions	**[cut]**
16. Le royaume des fées [procession]	17. Apothéose Et maintenant, venez génies … Venez de deux cœurs amoureux (…/112) original: Hervé	**[cut]**	17. Apothéose	17. Apothéose

(*Continued*)

Table 2.1 (Cont.)

PSM, 1845	PSM, 1865	PSM, 1867	PSM, 1881	Châtelet, 1896
	September: Au bon vieux pays de France original?: Debillemant (*rectius* Debillemont)			

Sources:

1845 play:

— [Théodore and Hippolyte] Cogniard, *La biche au bois, ou Le royaume des fées*. Paris: Marchant, 1845. For musical sources see Martin, *La féerie romantique*, 600.

Revivals:

— Copy of the 1845 play with Hervé's annotations. F-Po fonds Hervé Liv. 317. (1865 revival.)

— 'Nouveaux couplets chantés dans *La biche au bois*, grande féerie en 4 actes et 16 tableaux'. Eight-page brochure. Paris: J. Barbré, 1866. (1865 with September 1865 alterations.)

— [Théodore and Hippolyte] Cogniard, *La nouvelle 'Biche au bois'*, grande féerie en 5 actes et 17 tableaux. Paris: Barbré, [1867]. (1867.)

— [Théodore and Hippolyte] Cogniard, Ernest Blum, and Raoul Toché, *La biche au bois*, féerie en quatre actes & dix-sept tableaux. Paris: Barbré, [1881]. (1881.)

— *Manuscrits de censure*:

- F-Pan F^{18} 904. (1865.)
- F-Pan F^{18} 905. (1867.)
- F-Pan F^{18} 907 (Acts 1, 2), F-Pan F^{18} 904 (Acts 3, 4). (1881.)
- F-Pan F^{18} 982. (1896.)

— Vocal excerpts:

- Hervé, 'Duo'. Paris: Ph. Feuchot, [1865]. Plate number P.F 571. (1865.)
- Hervé, 'Duo des sirènes'. Paris: Ph. Feuchot, [1865]. Plate number P.F 572. (1865.)
- Hervé, 'Rondeau'. Paris: Ph. Feuchot, [1865]. Plate number P.F 580. (1865.)
- Hervé, 'Romance comique'. Paris: Ph. Feuchot, [1865]. Plate number P.F 582. (1865.)

— Instrumental excerpts:

- Hervé, 'Polka-marche'. Paris: Ph. Feuchot, [1865]. Plate number P.F 569. (1865.)
- Amédée Artus, 'Les poissons', polka-mazurka. Paris: Ph. Feuchot, [1865]. Plate number P.F 579. (1865.)

— Autograph full score of Hervé's newly composed music: F-Po fonds Hervé 19. (1865.)

— Incomplete manuscript vocal score: F-Po fonds Hervé 255. (1865.)

According to custom, it fell to the resident conductor of the Porte-Saint-Martin, Auguste Pilati, to assemble a score for the play's original production.[35] The 1845 *Biche* features all the kinds of music that are expected in a mid-century *féerie*—besides the overture and entr'actes: vocal numbers; dance and pantomime music; diegetic music,[36] such as fanfares, hunting calls, marches, and in general music for the frequent processional scenes, typical of *féerie* as much as they are of *grand opéra*; and melodramatic music, that is, non-diegetic instrumental music.[37] The last category includes *mélodrame* in the narrow sense, where dialogue is spoken over an orchestral background, *scènes mystérieuses* where music confers an ominous aura to words and gestures,[38] as well as combats and music synchronised to open-curtain scene changes, tricks, and transformations.

Because of the legal restrictions that were still in place in 1845, vocal numbers are generally based on pre-existing music. This, however, does not mean that the vocal music of the 1845 *Biche* is an unimaginative compilation of trite materials. On the contrary, it is clearly meant to sound as exciting and fashionable as possible within the boundaries imposed by the licensing system. There is a commonly held view that vaudeville, the main 19th-century genre with non-original vocal music, was limited and lazy in its musical selections. This view is actually supported by very little research, as music scholars have only just begun to investigate vaudeville. In some cases it might prove true: for example, the music for *Jeanne et Jeanneton* by Eugène Scribe and Antoine-François Varner, from the same year as *La biche au bois*, consists mostly of decades-old tunes.[39] But it definitely does not prove true for *féerie*—at least, not for mid-century *féerie*. *La biche au bois* contains parodies of popular hits in all sorts of genres: opera, *opéra comique*, ballet, parlour song, piano piece, dance music. It is evident that *féerie* strives to reflect the current taste by riding the musical zeitgeist. The reasons might be both social and cultural. While vaudeville, with *timbres*, might have tended to reward the insider knowledge of assiduous theatre-goers, *féerie* wanted its music to be relevant beyond a self-referential corpus in order to appeal to audiences that patronised theatres more infrequently: children, who might still have

[35] On how house conductors became responsible for compiling and arranging theatre music during the July Monarchy, see Pauline Girard, 'Les fonds de matériels de musique de scène du XIX^{e} siècle', *Revue d'histoire du théâtre* 63, no. 1 (2011): 7–30, at pp. 12–13. This was a departure from the previous practice of hiring external professionals, best exemplified by the career of melodrama composer Alexandre Piccinni. In Girard's words, this evolution made the composer less of a 'co-author' and more of a 'technician'.

[36] In an opera, this would fall under the category of 'stage music': see Luca Zoppelli, '"Stage Music" in Early Nineteenth-Century Italian Opera', trans. Arthur Groos and Roger Parker, *Cambridge Opera Journal* 2, no. 1 (1990): 29–39.

[37] See Michael V. Pisani, *Music for the Melodramatic Theatre in Nineteenth-Century London and New York* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2014), xix–xxii. Unlike Pisani, I consider music 'assisting a scenic or lighting effect' (xx) as part of this category.

[38] See Emilio Sala, *L'opera senza canto: Il mélo romantico e l'invenzione della colonna sonora* (Venice: Marsilio, 1995), 105–6, 135–41.

[39] Eugène Scribe and Antoine-François Varner, *Jeanne et Jeanneton*, in Eugène Scribe, *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Dentu, 1874–85) series 2, 30:275–353.

known popular tunes from parlour music-making, and lower-middle- or working-class spectators, for whom a *féerie* outing could represent an occasion to catch up with recent musical trends. In the latter case, *féerie* could have worked (at least musically) as a popular digest, in a manner similar to the end-of-the year revue, which was taking shape around the same time.[40] As for the cultural reason, *féerie*, as a genre for an industrial age, valued novelty in both music and stagecraft, much as *grand opéra* did.

Novelty, though, is not the same thing as originality, and tensions between the two arise both in *grand opéra* and in *féerie*. It is a little-remarked fact that *grand opéra* was conspicuously attuned to the latest cultural trends—for example, *Robert le diable* is patently influenced by Goethe's *Faust*, Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz*, and Matthew Gregory Lewis's *The Monk*—yet its librettos were almost never overt adaptations from literary works. Adaptations were common, by contrast, in the less prestigious *opéra comique*.[41] *Grand opéra*, one can surmise, prided itself on offering not just novel subjects, but original ones; not just fashionable works, but works of genius as well. On the contrary, *féerie*, as far as vocal numbers were concerned, was forced to pursue novelty mostly by adapting pre-existing materials. Revivals posed another problem. *Grands opéras* that stayed in the repertoire would lose their novelty while retaining their originality: they would continue to be seen as trailblazing works of genius. In *féerie* revivals, instead, original music was often sacrificed to the need for novelty. As we will see, in the history of *La biche au bois*, too, new non-original music would be preferred to old original music.

We should keep in mind, at any rate, that vocal numbers are just one aspect of *féerie* music. The spectacular tableaux that constituted the main attractions (the *clous*) of *féeries* relied on music for coherence. In the case of *La biche au bois*, evidence suggests that the impressive final tableau of act 2, 'La roche terrible', had what in film parlance one would call wall-to-wall music. The scene was so memorable that Théophile Gautier gave a detailed account of it in his review:

> The set depicting the enchanted castle can compete with the finest; the three-dimensional rocks (*roches praticables*) rise all the way up to the border; a stream of real water shines and spatters on sheets of silver; the pine trees stretch out their ghostly arms over the ravine; the eagle-owl rolls its fiery eyes and whisks the air with its loose-jointed wings; the skeletons of knights that have been transformed into stone reveal their blazing outlines behind their granite shells; blackish, hairy forms slide down the slopes; flabby monsters, crawling on deformed stumps, slip into the way of the prince and his squire, and try to have him desist from his venture, but the prince uproots a pine tree and crosses the stream on that makeshift bridge. The spell is broken.[42]

[40] See Olivier Bara, Romain Piana, and Jean-Claude Yon, eds., 'En revenant à la revue: La revue de fin d'année au XIX^e^ siècle', special issue, *Revue d'histoire du théâtre* 67 no. 2 (2015); Olivier Bara, 'La revue de fin d'année à Paris au XIX^e^ siècle: *chambre d'écho* de la culture musicale', in *Musical Theatre in Europe, 1830–1945*, ed. Michela Niccolai and Clair Rowden (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 3–21.

[41] I make this point in Tommaso Sabbatini, 'Jerusalem, Machaerus, Carthage: Massenet's *Hérodiade* and Flaubert's Orient', in *Massenet and the Mediterranean World*, ed. Simone Ciolfi (Bologna: Ut Orpheus, 2015), 85–100.

[42] 'La décoration représentant le château enchanté peut lutter avec les plus belles; les roches praticables s'élèvent jusqu'aux frises; un torrent d'eau naturelle reluit et grésille sur des lames d'argent; les sapins étendent leurs bras de spectre sur l'abîme; le grand-duc roule ses yeux flamboyants et fouette l'air de

In a very short amount of time, 'La roche terrible' manages to produce a feat of scenery (the stream of real water), a trick (the animation of the owl), a transformation (of the rocks into skeletons), and a combat, all held together by music, which has a far greater cohesive power than the sparse dialogue. The tableau bears some resemblance with the 'ride to the abyss' episode ('La course à l'abîme') of Hector Berlioz's *La damnation de Faust* (1846), which sounds largely like melodramatic music, even though the action is purely imaginary, as *La damnation* is not a stage work. Like 'the prince and his squire' in *La biche au bois*, Faust and Mephistopheles encounter frightening supernatural creatures: a 'hideous monster', mimicked by low brass and woodwinds, 'large nocturnal birds', mimicked by piccolos, flute, and clarinets, and dancing skeletons. These creatures are not found in the diabolical horse ride near the end of Part 1 of Goethe's *Faust* that ostensibly inspired the 'ride to the abyss', but are Berlioz's own addition, and Berlioz could indeed have seen *La biche au bois*, or read Gautier's review, in the spring of 1845, before leaving Paris in the summer for a Central European tour during which he would work on *La damnation*.

The 1845 *Biche au bois* was an extremely expensive production for a non-state-subsidised theatre, which was not lost on critics: both Gautier and an editor at *Le Ménestrel* mention a budget of 100,000 francs,[43] which is probably not an accurate estimate but clearly is a plausible estimation of an order of magnitude (a Fermi estimation, we would say today). It is hard to compare purchasing power at such a long temporal distance, but it might be fair to say that the equivalent might be a million euros or dollars.[44]

Although 100,000 francs was an impressive sum for a private theatre in the first half of the century, by the time of the 1865 revival the paradigm had shifted toward the 'new regime of production'. It seems likely that, if we had accurate figures, those for 1865 would dwarf the ones for 1845. Playwright Marc Fournier, who had become sole manager of the Porte-Saint-Martin in 1851, earned a reputation for inordinately expensive productions, which only long runs of performances could make financially viable. According to Henry Buguet, writing in 1877, the 1853 *féerie Les sept merveilles du monde* 'was the first specimen of those over-the-top productions that have been followed by many an imitation, but that

ses ailes énervées; les squelettes des chevaliers métamorphosés en pierre s'ébauchent en traits de feu sous leur enveloppe de granit; des formes noirâtres et velues se laissent couler le long des rampes; des monstres flasques, rampant sur des moignons estropiés, se glissent dans les jambes du prince et de son écuyer, et tâchent de le faire renoncer à son entreprise, mais le prince déracine un sapin et traverse le torrent sur ce pont improvisé. Le charme est rompu.' Gautier, *Critique théâtrale*, 5:401.

[43] Gautier, *Critique théâtrale*, 5:402; 'Bulletin dramatique', *Le Ménestrel*, 6 April 1845, [2].

[44] According to the *Annuaire statistique de la Ville de Paris*, a kilo of bread cost around 30 centimes in 1845 (in Paris); it presently costs around four euros (across France), according to the INSEE. Similarly, the average weekly wage of a French manual worker is in the hundreds of euros nowadays and was in the tens of francs in the mid-19th century, so assuming a difference of an order of magnitude between mid-19th-century francs and today's euros or dollars seems appropriate. *Annuaire statistique de la ville de Paris*, year 1893 (Paris: Masson, 1895), 304; Émile Chevallier, *Les salaires au XIX^e siècle* (Paris: Rousseau, 1887), 41–8; 'Prix moyens mensuels de vente au détail en métropole: Pain baguette (1 kg)', INSEE, https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/serie/000442423 (accessed 8 February 2024); 'Salaires dans les entreprises', INSEE, https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3676648 (accessed 8 February 2024).

make [Fournier] the leader of that school of scenic lavishness'.[45] Consistently with the logic of the new regime of production, the *féeries* that Fournier chose to stage after *Les sept merveilles du monde* were revivals, thus making the large upfront investment they required less risky. In 1860 Fournier presented a new version of *Le pied de mouton*, the 1850 remake of the foundational Romantic *féerie* from 1806. It was followed in 1863 by *Les pilules du diable*, from 1839, and eventually by the 20-year-old *La biche au bois*. The other large *féerie* houses, meanwhile, were adopting the same strategy: in 1863, the Gaîté revived *Peau d'Âne*, from 1838, and in 1864, the Châtelet revived *Les sept châteaux du diable*, from 1844. In January 1864, a writer in the magazine *La Vie parisienne* explicitly linked the imminent deregulation of theatres to the new regime of production and to the Disneyfication of Paris, and painted a dystopian landscape of long-running *féerie* revivals aimed at tourists: Paris would become 'a transit city, where the passing Chinese, Americans, English, Portuguese, Russians will replace the natives. There will be a theatre playing *Peau d'Âne* forever; another playing *Le pied de mouton*; yet another playing *Les pilules [du diable]*, and so on, and so forth.'[46]

Fournier's *Biche au bois* aspired to be, and was hailed as, the very 'state of the art' (*le dernier mot*) in *féerie* staging. The expression was used both by Henri Moreno (pseudonym of the music publisher Henri Heugel) in *Le Ménestrel* and by Benoît Jouvin in *Le Figaro*.[47] Jouvin goes so far as to write that the Opéra should take lessons from the Porte-Saint-Martin's use of electric lighting (famously employed in Meyerbeer's *Le prophète* in 1849, but still rare on Parisian stages until the 1880s) in ballets, and that the celebrated procession of Halévy's *La Juive*, which had been *le dernier mot* in its day (1835), 'now looks like the basics, compared to the original procession of the Kingdom of Bells'.[48] Édouard Fournier, on *La Patrie*, is of the opinion that Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine*, then forthcoming at the Opéra, would have a hard time matching the exotic divertissement of *La biche au bois*.[49] The set for the final *apothéose*, according to the *Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris*,

[45] '*Les 7 Merveilles du Monde* furent le premier spécimen de ces mises en scène à outrance qui ont été suivies de tant d'imitations mais qui laissent M. Marc Fournier le chef de cette école du faste scénique.' [Henry Buguet], *Porte-Saint-Martin*, no. 10 in the series *Foyers et coulisses: Histoire anecdotique des théâtres de Paris* (Paris: Tresse, 1877), 22.

[46] '[C]e sera une ville de transit, où les Chinois, les Américains, les Anglais, les Portugais, les Russes de passage remplaceront les indigènes; il y aura un théâtre qui jouera éternellement *Peau-d'Âne*, un autre le *Pied de mouton*; un troisième, les *Pilules*, etc., etc.…' Édouard Siebecker, 'Ce qui se dit dans la salon à propos du théâtre', *La Vie parisienne*, 2 January 1864, 16.

[47] Henri Moreno [Henri Heugel], 'Semaine théâtrale', *Le Ménestrel*, 26 March 1865, 131; Benoît Jouvin, 'Théâtres', *Le Figaro*, 30 March 1865, 1–2.

[48] '[C]e dernier mot n'est plus qu'un A, B, C, comparé au défilé original du *Royaume des Sonnettes*'. Jouvin, 'Théâtres', 2.

[49] Édouard Fournier, 'Théâtres', *La Patrie*, 27 March 1865, 1.

had been contracted out to a 'Calcott' from London, in all likelihood the designer Albert Callcott, active in the London popular theatres, which were reputed to be at the forefront of stage illusion.[50]

In 1865, moreover, the *liberté de théâtres* had lifted restrictions on original vocal numbers in plays, and the lucrative potential opened up by the new legislation had been demonstrated by Offenbach's hit *La belle Hélène*, premièred at the Théâtre des Variétés in December 1864. Fournier, then, decided to spend his money not just on the visual spectacle of the revamped *Biche au bois*, but also on the music, and hired Hervé, who had been Offenbach's main competitor in the 1850s and was by then on his way to a successful comeback after a period of disgrace.[51] In addition to providing new music for the play, Hervé also starred as Prince Souci: while the score of the 1865 *Biche au bois* was by no means the coherent work of a single artist, no composer had ever enjoyed such visibility on a *féerie* stage (Figs. 2.3 and 2.4).

The revival of *La biche au bois* is also notable for marking the Parisian debut of Henri Justamant, now remembered as one of the most important choreographers of the second half of the 19th century, and possibly the best documented.[52] The dancing cast included Zina Mérante, formerly of the Opéra, and the Porte-Saint-Martin's own Mariquita, who was destined to a bright career as a performer and choreographer.[53]

The new production of *La biche au bois* proved popular beyond all expectations: premièred on 23 March, it ran without interruption for 14 months. During this mammoth run, the Porte-Saint-Martin, far from resting on its laurels, spared no energy in keeping the play attractive to audiences. According to a report in *Le Ménestrel*, for the hundredth performance in early July, 'the ballets were enhanced, and several sets and a large part of the costumes were replaced'—a claim that may

[50] D.A.D. Saint-Yves [Édouard Déaddé], 'Revue des théâtres', *Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris*, 26 March 1865, 100–1.

[51] Hervé's career had lagged behind that of his rival, surely in part because of a conviction for sexually assaulting a minor: see Jean-Claude Yon, *Offenbach* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 184–5. It would completely recover in the late 1860s with a string of full-length operettas, including *L'œil crevé*, *Chilpéric*, and *Le petit Faust*.

[52] See Claudia Jeschke and Robert Atwood, 'Expanding Horizons: Techniques of Choreo-Graphy in Nineteenth-Century Dance', *Dance Chronicle* 29, no. 2 (2006), 195–214; on Justamant's choreography for the 1877 Alhambra and 1878 Gaîté productions of *Orphée aux enfers*, Stephanie Schroedter, 'Dance in Jacques Offenbach's Musical Theatre: Between Imagination, Improvisation and Choreography', in *Musical Theatre in Europe, 1830–1945*, ed. Michela Niccolai and Clair Rowden (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 91–111; on another Justamant choreography for the commercial stage, Marian Smith, Sarah Gutsche-Miller, and Helena Kopchick Spencer, 'Justamant's *Le Bossu* and Depictions of Indigenous Americans in Nineteenth-Century French Ballet', in Diana R. Hallman and César A. Léal, *America in the French Imaginary, 1789–1914* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2022), 50–99.

[53] See Sarah Gutsche-Miller, *Parisian Music-Hall Ballet, 1871–1913* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2015), 69–73.

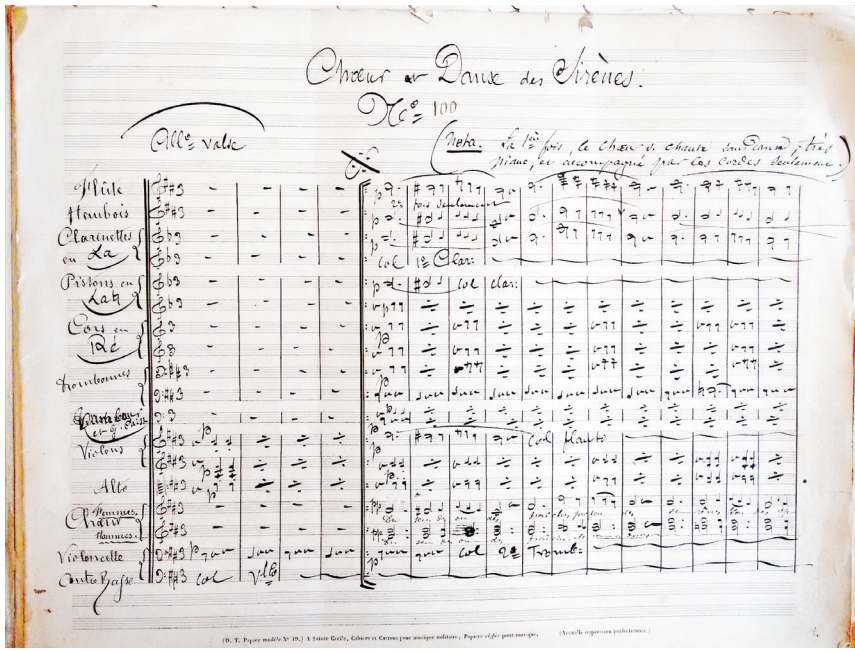


Figure 2.3 Autograph full score of Hervé's music for *La biche au bois*. Paris, Bibliothèque-musée de l'Opéra.

have been exaggerated but must have had some basis in reality.[54] In September, soprano Delphine Ugalde (who throughout her career shuttled between the official and the commercial theatres) took over the part of Prince Souci.[55] Similarly to what had happened in 1862, when Lise Tautin, the first Eurydice of *Orphée aux enfers*, brought her *arie di baule* to the revival of *Les bibelots du diable*, new musical numbers were interpolated to highlight Ugalde's strengths, drawing in part on her repertoire. On the same occasion, two new ballets were introduced; and yet another was added in late December. Sarah Bernhardt relates in her memoirs that early in her career, after her disappointing experiences at the Comédie-Française and the Gymnase and before her engagement at the Odéon, she was called up as a last-minute replacement and played Princess Désirée alongside

[54] '[L]es ballets ont été renforcés, plusieurs décors et une bonne partie des costumes renouvelés'. Gustave Bertrand, 'Semaine théâtrale', *Le Ménestrel*, 9 July 1865, 251.

[55] A prominent but little-studied figure, Ugalde is discussed by Kimberly White, who has consulted her unpublished memoirs, in *Female Singers on the French Stage, 1830–1848* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); her engagement during the Commune is examined in Delphine Mordey, '*Moments musicaux*: High Culture in the Paris Commune', *Cambridge Opera Journal* 22, no. 1 (2010): 1–31.

Figure 2.4 Sheet music for Hervé, 'Romance comique', an excerpt from the 1865 production of *La biche au bois*. Illustration by Gustave Donjean, depicting Prince Souci (Hervé) in front of the moving portrait of Princess Désirée. Source: Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Ugalde for a few nights.[56] Hence, when Bernhardt, in 1907, participated in a nostalgic evocation of the old *féerie*, staging and starring in Jean Richepin's *La Belle au bois dormant*, she was in a way revisiting memories of her early career.[57]

In 1867, Paris hosted its second World's Fair, and its theatres deployed their strongest assets to attract the visitors who flocked to the city. As would continue to be the case during the Third Republic, World Fairs pushed the logic of the new regime of production and of the Disneyfication of the city to the extreme: entertainment venues actually catered to 'the passing Chinese, Americans, English, Portuguese, Russians', to occasional visitors 'of the Old World and the New'. The Opéra presented Verdi's new *Don Carlos* and Meyerbeer's recent *L'Africaine*, the Théâtre-Lyrique capitalised on Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*, the Palais-Royal on Offenbach's *La vie parisienne* from the previous year, the Variétés on Offenbach's *La grande-duchesse de Gérolstein*. *Féerie* was uniquely suited to attract World's Fair audiences, as it offered escapist entertainment and abundant visual and aural stimulation, while being accessible to spectators with a limited grasp of French. The first Parisian World's Fair had already seen *féerie* revivals back in 1855, of *Les pilules du diable* and *Les sept châteaux du diable*. This time around, the Châtelet revived its *féerie* of 1866, *Cendrillon*; the Gaîté fell back on *Peau d'Âne*. As for the Porte-Saint-Martin, it had once more recourse to *La biche au bois*. The new production, which ran from June to November, spared no effort to outdo the already splendid 1865 one, and featured guest dancers from La Scala and even live lions. The extensive rewriting of the play accentuates the characteristics of *féerie* dramaturgy—anti-economic, paratactic, attractional, formulaic, intertextual—also by means of ironic distancing. Roxane Martin, who has compared the 1845 and 1867 versions of *La biche au bois* (as well as the 1806, 1850, and 1860 versions of *Le pied de mouton*), writes that with Second Empire *féerie*, 'Authors undertake, on the one hand, a scaling up [*surenchère*] of the spectacle (recovering and upgrading *clous*), on the other hand develop a parodic writing, playing on the mechanization and the recontextualization of old *clous*.'[58] *Féerie*, in other words, becomes not just more self-conscious, but completely unapologetic. No wonder, then, that its custom of incorporating extraneous acts can now extend to a circus number with lions.

[56] Sarah Bernhardt, *Ma double vie: Mémoires de Sarah Bernhardt* (Paris: Charpentier et Fasquelle, 1907), 157–9. Bernhardt misremembers the actor she was substituting for, but her account is otherwise credible, and corroborated by her 19th-century biographer Clément Clament: Clément Clament, *Sarah Bernhardt* (Paris: Derveaux, 1879), 11.

[57] Furthermore, as Erin Brooks remarks, the choreographer of *La Belle au bois dormant* was Mariquita, whom Bernhardt had met at the time of her appearance in *La biche au bois*. Erin M. Brooks, 'Sharing the Stage with the *voix d'or*: Sarah Bernhardt and Music in the Belle Époque' (PhD diss., Washington University in St. Louis, 2010), 477.

[58] Roxane Martin, *La féerie romantique sur les scènes parisiennes, 1791–1864* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2007), 411–12.

A surprising casualty of the 1867 overhaul of *La biche au bois* was Hervé's music from 1865, most of which was sacrificed. In the tension between originality and novelty already noted, the latter clearly had the upper hand. In retrospect, this suggests that two years earlier, Hervé's original music had been prized for its novelty, not for its originality. It also serves as a warning that there is no teleological path from non-composerly to composerly *féerie*, nor are there grounds for claiming composerly *féerie* as in any way superior or more perfected. Indeed, if narratives of progress are always problematic, it would be particularly absurd to craft one for a genre that pursued novelty as its main goal and embraced contradictory fads in the process. For example, in May 1868, *Le Figaro* was writing that the old, neglected *timbres* were due to be back in fashion and that the upcoming *féerie Le diable à quatre* would be entirely based on *timbres*.[59] But *Le diable à quatre* did not see the stage until after the war, in 1872 (as *Les griffes du diable*, by Clairville and Charles Gabet), and by that time, probably in response to Offenbach's composerly *Roi Carotte*, it had been larded with original vocal numbers by Hervé and other composers, as well as parodies from recent hits.

Offenbach, or the gentrification of *féerie*

The third incarnation of *La biche au bois* and the other *féerie* revivals of 1867 bring us full circle to the time of Arène's opinion piece. As I have mentioned, the year 1869 would confirm his diagnosis that *féerie* was alive and well. On 14 August, a lavish revival of *La chatte blanche* (from 1852) opened at the Gaîté, followed on the 31st of the same month by a new production of *La poudre de Perlinpinpin* (from 1853) at the Châtelet (Fig. 2.5). If one of the assets of the 1867 *Les voyages de Gulliver* had been the star power of Hortense Schneider, the new *Chatte blanche* deployed the most iconic *café-concert* singer of the Second Empire, Thérésa, whose popularity in the mid-1860s had been nothing short of a craze (Fig. 2.6).[60] Starting with *La chatte blanche*, Thérésa embarked on a second career where she would lend her charisma (and her music) to select *féerie* productions. *La chatte blanche* played at the Gaîté until early March 1870, then again from mid-April until theatres were closed in September, shortly before the siege of Paris. As the theatres got back to their regular business after the Commune and its bloody repression, the Gaîté picked up from where it had left off, with another two months' worth of performances of *La chatte blanche*, mid-June to mid-July and mid-August to mid-September 1871. In other words, a production that had opened a year before the fall of Napoleon III ended its run under the presidency of Adolphe Thiers.

[59] Jules Prével, 'Théâtres', *Le Figaro*, 5 May 1868, 3.
[60] On Thérésa and *café-concert* culture, see Blaszkiewicz, *Fanfare for a City*, 99–108.

Figure 2.5 Théophile Thomas, costume design for Alexandre as King Mapata in the 1869 production of *La chatte blanche*. Paris, Bibliothèque-musée de l'Opéra. Source: Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Figure 2.6 Félix Régamey, caricature of Thérésa in the 1869 production of *La chatte blanche*. From *La Parodie*, 25 September 1869. Source: Gallica, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

In the face of such a feat, one is tempted to attribute to *féerie* an instinct for self-preservation, as Arène did with his metaphor of the heartless *cocotte*: apparently *féerie* was indifferent not just to the financial ruin of theatre directors but also to regime change, famine, and urban guerrilla warfare.

Féerie did not just emerge unscathed from the events of 1870–1: it managed, as Arène had predicted, to reinvent itself. After the trial balloon of Hervé's music for the 1865 *Biche*, composerly *féerie* marked the next step in the operettisation of *féerie*. That operettisation was a form of gentrification is evident if one considers from a geographical point of view the career of the two fathers of composerly féerie, Sardou and Offenbach. The latter was, as the Mortier piece quoted earlier shows, essentially synonymous with the glitz of the western theatres. By the end of the 1860s, Offenbach had never ventured east, with two exceptions. In 1855, as he was establishing his own Bouffes-Parisiens, he wrote a one-acter for Hervé's theatre (*Oyayaye, ou La reine des îles*), and in 1864 he composed a song, 'La pêche', for his protégée Zulma Bouffar, who was starring in a *féerie* revival: *La fille de l'air*, from 1837, at the Folies-Dramatiques.[61] Offenbach first set his eyes on the eastern theatres in 1866, when he and his librettists Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, whose careers were similarly western Paris-centric, planned a *féerie* for the Châtelet, a project that did not come to fruition.[62] As for Sardou, as a prolific playwright in disparate genres (vaudeville, comedy, *opéra comique*, and occasionally melodrama), for official and commercial theatres alike, until the late 1860s he closely matched the profile of Scribe, whose facility and versatility are often remarked.[63] Less remarked is the fact that Scribe's career, for all its diversity, took place almost exclusively in the theatres of western Paris. As for Sardou, up to 1869, save for an uncredited collaboration in the adaptation of Paul Féval's novel *Le Bossu* for the Porte-Saint-Martin and a melodrama for the Gaîté that the censors did not approve for performance (*La poudre d'or*), he had written either for the western theatres or for that outpost of theatrical gentrification, the Théâtre Déjazet. Then, in 1869, he began a parallel career as an author of historical melodramas with *Patrie!* at the Porte-Saint-Martin; later that same year newspapers reported that he and Offenbach were working on a *féerie* for the Gaîté. Why did Sardou choose to branch out to the eastern theatres? Of course, we could attribute to him purely artistic reasons—he was just fascinated by melodrama and *féerie* as art forms—or purely cynical ones—there was money to be made with the popular genres. Neither of these hypotheses is probably completely false, but the picture is more complicated. At the western theatres, Sardou had two

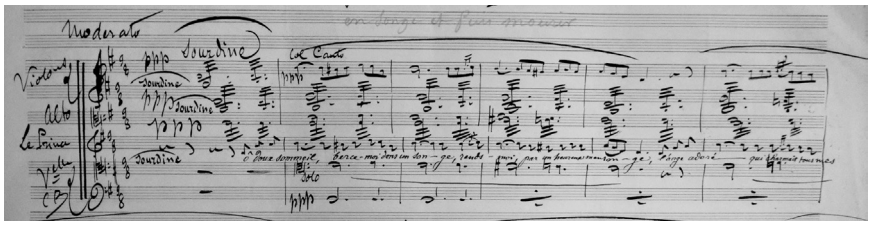
[61] It is quite possible that it was the experiences of his female performers—Tautin, Bouffar, and later Schneider, but also Irma Marié, who left the Bouffes-Parisiens to star in the 1866 *Cendrillon*—that alerted Offenbach to the potential of *féerie*, together with Hervé's example.

[62] Yon, *Offenbach*, 331.

[63] On the Scribe-Sardou parallel, see Aline Marchadier, 'Victorien Sardou, héritier de Scribe?', in *Eugène Scribe: Un maître de la scène théâtrale et lyrique au XIX^e siècle*, ed. Olivier Bara and Jean-Claude Yon (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2016), 301–15.

competitors of his own generation, Alexandre Dumas *fils* and Émile Augier, and he might have wanted to diversify his output to gain an edge on them. Conversely, the melodrama scene seemed ripe for generational change: Alexandre Dumas *père* and Anicet-Bourgeois were in their sixties and nearing the end of their careers (they would die in 1870 and 1871, respectively), while Adolphe d'Ennery, Ferdinand Dugué, and Victor Séjour, who had penned the biggest hits of the Second Empire, were all born in the 1810s. Finally, the ambitious Sardou might have sensed that, after Haussmann's sanitisation of the *boulevard du crime*, association with the eastern theatres did not carry a stigma any more and would not tarnish his literary reputation. Facts would prove him right. Unlike Dumas *père*, who never managed to obtain a seat at the Académie française, Sardou was inducted in 1877, joining his rivals Augier and Dumas *fils*, despite his two historical melodramas and one *féerie* to date.

The plot of the first composerly *féerie*, like that of most *féeries*, is rich in incidents and characters but can be reduced to a simple storyline. *Le roi Carotte* is set in the fictional, vaguely Central European kingdom of Krokodyne. The likable but irresponsible Prince Fridolin (tenor) is set to marry the spoiled-rotten daughter of a neighbouring ruler, Cunégonde, in order to offset with her dowry the budget gap he has created (Cunégonde was played, in 1872, by Anna Judic, *café-concert* star and future operetta diva). But the sorceress Coloquinte installs a usurper on the throne: the titular *roi Carotte* (voice type: *trial*), a carrot that she has magically grown to human proportions and endowed with unlikely charisma. Carotte wins not only the loyalty of most of Fridolin's ministers, but also the love of Cunégonde. In his quest to take his kingdom back, Fridolin is assisted by the good genie Robin-Luron (Zulma Bouffar in one of her many breeches roles) and by Rosée-du-Soir, a princess who has been held captive by Coloquinte and who offers her service to Fridolin under a boy's disguise. Many adventures later, Coloquinte and Carotte are defeated, and Fridolin regains control of Krokodyne and marries, not the airheaded Cunégonde, but the generous Rosée-du-Soir. The obvious advantage of relying on the creativity of a composer, as opposed to working with existing music, is that it allows for more formally complex, hence more dramaturgically complex, vocal numbers, and a more coherent large-scale organisation of music-intensive scenes and of the work as a whole. This is already evident in Hervé's music for the 1865 *Biche au bois*. Prince Souci's *romance* 'Ces beaux yeux d'où la flamme ruisselle' (see Table 2.1) was published for amateur consumption as an ordinary strophic song, but it appears, from Hervé's autographs and the *manuscrit de censure*, to have been in ternary form, with the reprise of the A section vocally embellished and differently orchestrated, featuring harp arpeggios and pianissimo tremolos in the high strings for a stereotypical celestial sound. In other words, Hervé concocted a small (and parodic) operatic *cavatine*. What is more, this number is quoted again at the end of the play (with the words 'Ô doux sommeil, berce-moi dans un songe') (Ex. 2.1). Of course, reminiscence effects can



Example 2.1 Cue 111 of Hervé's score for *La biche au bois*, quoting Prince Souci's earlier *romance*. Paris, Bibliothèque-musée de l'Opéra.

also be achieved with borrowed music, and Emilio Sala has examined several mid-century melodramas where internal cross-references are created with original music.[64] But Sala's examples involve diegetic singing (what Carolyn Abbate would call 'phenomenal singing' and Luca Zoppelli 'stage music'): the characters recall music that has been sung in the fictional universe they inhabit.[65] More specifically, the characters recall songs that exist, in that fictional universe, independently of them—not unlike borrowed music, which *actually* exists independently of the characters. This is not at all the case with Prince Souci's *cavatine* and its recollection, where the singing is not diegetic and the music is presented as originating from the character. As a result, the musical cross-reference is purely intratextual (no external sources, either real or fictional, are in play) and represents a strong authorial statement from the composer. The same can be said about the musical cue that follows the quotation from the *cavatine*: the final *apothéose* of the play, which is based on the original, non-diegetic song of the good fairy ('Je suis en effet cette reine'), heard in a previous tableau. As mentioned earlier, the tableau 'La roche terrible' already had wall-to-wall music in 1845. But Hervé also creates another tableau with wall-to-wall music. 'Le lac des Sirènes' originally consisted, as the *manuscrit de censure* attests, of an invisible chorus accompanying a dance, a scene of spoken dialogue, and another chorus. Hervé did set both choruses to music, the first as a waltz. But he then decided to add a duet for two women's voices, in which the waltz was eventually incorporated, and substituted for the dialogue a connecting musical number, so that the tableau now consisted of three consecutive and tonally related numbers. The autograph full score also shows evidence of another late intervention of Hervé's aimed at enhancing musical continuity. The hunting chorus 'Courons, amis, dans les bois' was sung before and after

[64] Emilio Sala, 'Motivi di reminiscenza e drammaturgia musicale', in *Il valzer delle camelie: Echi di Parigi nella 'Traviata'* (Turin: EDT, 2008), 87–134, trans. by Delia Casadei as 'Motifs of Reminiscence and Musical Dramaturgy', in *The Sounds of Paris in Verdi's 'La Traviata'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 106–63.

[65] Carolyn Abbate, *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991); Zoppelli, 'Stage Music'.

a scene of dialogue; Hervé decided to replace the dialogue with a solo number for Prince Souci. Since the new number is ternary, its combination with the two instances of the chorus creates an ABCBA arch form.

When Hervé composed the music for the 1865 *Biche au bois*, full-length operetta was a little over six years old and still essentially synonymous with Offenbach and his theatre, the Bouffes-Parisiens: *La belle Hélène*, the first full-length operetta to grace another stage, but still by Offenbach, had just opened at the Variétés the previous December and was still playing. By 1870, the year *Le roi Carotte* was supposed to première, the landscape had changed dramatically. Operetta had spread to more venues—in addition to the Bouffes-Parisiens and the Variétés: the Palais-Royal, the Folies-Dramatiques, the Athénée, and the Menus-Plaisirs. Hervé was now the author of half a dozen full-length operettas, some of them hugely popular, and other composers were making their bids for success: Charles Lecocq (*Fleur-de-Thé*, 1868), Laurent de Rillé (*Le Petit Poucet*, 1868, the operetta to which the Paul Arène article alludes), Jean-Jacques Debillemont (*Le grand-duc de Matapa*, 1868), Émile Jonas (*Le canard à trois becs*, 1869), and Léo Delibes, not yet of *Coppélia* and *Lakmé* fame (*La cour du roi Pétaud*, 1869). Full-length operetta had moved from being a cottage industry of Offenbach's to being a cultural institution, from being predicated on eccentricity and parody—that is, the flaunting of conventions—to having conventions of its own, from being negatively defined by the genres it parodied to having an identity strong enough to influence other genres: *La vie parisienne* was an experiment in such hybridisation, as an operettised vaudeville.

Hervé had hinted at what contribution a composer could make to the dramaturgy of a *féerie*, providing subtler articulation of numbers and large-scale structure. Offenbach fully realised that potential. In 1865, Hervé, with his music, had brought to *La biche au bois* his personal brand, which was a selling point but did not ennoble the work. Offenbach brought to *Le roi Carotte* his brand and the recognisable marks of a cultural institution, full-length operetta, which carried the connotations of social prestige that had accrued to it in the past decade.

We find, then, near the beginning of *Le roi Carotte*, two characters introducing themselves with lively numbers in rondeau form.[66] Such numbers were particularly popular in late 1860s operetta (especially for women's voices, as is the case in *Le roi Carotte*): one immediately thinks of *La vie parisienne* ('Je suis Brésilien, j'ai de l'or') and *La grande-duchesse de Gérolstein* ('Ah! que j'aime les militaires'), but in the year 1869 alone they are found in Offenbach's *La diva* and *Les brigands*, Hervé's *Le petit Faust*, and Delibes's *La cour du roi Pétaud*. *Le roi Carotte* also contains a duet that, while very much musically in a playful spirit, is organised according to

[66] The *rondeau* or *rondo*, normally designated as such, should not be confused with the *ronde*, which is normally strophic. *Le roi Carotte* contains two *rondes* as well as the *rondeaux* to which I am referring here.

the *solita forma*: a *tempo d'attacco* where the two characters confront each other ('Vers ce gnôme que j'abhorre'), a lyric, if not outright slow, movement with *a due* singing (the *allegretto* 'Mon cœur de lui même'), a *tempo di mezzo* marked by a dramatic twist in the action, and a cabaletta ('Ah! j'ai bien le droit de rire'). This, too, is consistent with contemporary operetta: *La princesse de Trébizonde* (1869) also has a duet with a slow (or at least slower) movement and a cabaletta, and so does Hervé's *Chilpéric*, from 1868. If Hervé had hinted at how a composer can lend musical consistency to *féerie*, Offenbach fully demonstrates it in the act 1 finale of *Le roi Carotte*, roughly 15 minutes of uninterrupted music. To achieve that consistency, Offenbach deploys the techniques he has developed for his operettas: he incorporates as sections what could be self-contained numbers (in this case, Carotte's strophic song), creates internal reprises, recalls previous numbers (here, the armours' chorus), and relies on the propulsive power of dance rhythms (here, a waltz).

A tangible sign of both the operettisation and the gentrification of *féerie* is the published vocal score of *Le roi Carotte*. For the first time, the (ostensibly) complete musical text of a *féerie* was deemed worth printing, and worth owning at the non-trivial price of a book-length score. The title page proudly proclaims the work an 'opéra-bouffe-féerie', *opéra-bouffe* being the term of choice for full-length operettas (*opérette* was normally reserved for one-acters). To an attentive observer, though, it is clear that the 'féerie' in 'opéra-bouffe-féerie' is not a modifier as it was in the *opéras-féeries* of the beginning of the century, such as Nicolas Isouard's *Cendrillon* and Adrien Boieldieu's *Le Petit Chaperon rouge*, which were operas on a *féerique*, or fairytale, subject. *Le roi Carotte* is a true *féerie*, and it is rather 'opéra-bouffe' that serves as a modifier to 'féerie' in its designation. Browsing the score, one notices that a key character of the play, the sorceress Coloquinte, does not sing in a single number (and is even omitted from the dramatis personae), which would be odd in an operetta. Another prominent character, the court necromancer Truck, does join a few musical numbers, but mostly doubling another singer or the chorus, while in two cases he is on stage but does not sing.[67] This shows that the role is written for a comic actor who does not have to be an accomplished vocalist. The sizable ballet would also be out of place in a Second Empire operetta, and the fact that its last section is labelled *apothéose* betrays the *féerie*. An *apothéose* is a static tableau relying on stage machinery: in this case, Fridolin and his friends take off in a wild cat-shaped flying carriage, while Coloquinte is imprisoned in an outsized beehive. The score also conceals another telltale *féerique* feature of *Le roi Carotte*: two tableaux—the one with the visit to the magician Quiribibi, who regenerates himself after having his limbs disassembled, and the

[67] This happens in the vocal nocturne on the ruins of Pompeii and in the 'ronde des colporteurs'; based on the printed play, one wonders whether the bass part of the 'ronde des chemins de fer', given to Truck in the score, might have been intended for Pipertrunck.

one set on the island of the apes—that have no vocal numbers, but only orchestral music. The former is fundamentally a pretext for elaborate stage tricks, which are, per *féerie* customs, underscored by melodramatic music, while the latter provides a dramatic justification for a pantomime (set to tarantella and polka rhythms). This music is extant, but the 1872 vocal score omits it, probably because it was deemed not interesting enough for amateur musicians who might buy the score, not useful to singers for whom the score was a working tool, or simply not worthy of Offenbach at a time when melodramatic music was still regarded as hackwork (*L'Arlésienne*, the Daudet melodrama with music by Bizet, would only première a few months after *Le roi Carotte*).[68]

That the vocal score looks carefully packaged so as to maximise the work's appeal to operetta lovers confirms the hypothesis that Offenbach's music itself was designed to make *féerie* more palatable to the well-to-do, fashionable audience that consumed operetta. But once this marketing strategy is recognised as such, it is evident that the *féerie*ness of *Le roi Carotte* runs much deeper than its operetta-ness, and informs the core of its dramaturgy. *Le roi Carotte* has a Manichean pair of a good genie and an evil sorceress, whose conflict affects the fate of the human characters; it prominently features talismans; and it is structured as a quest that leads the characters in an initiation journey through different fantastic realms—in *La biche au bois*, it was the realm of fishes, the Oriental setting of Aïka's palace, and the realm of garden vegetables; here, ancient Pompeii, the realm of insects, and that of apes. As each stage of the quest is, to a degree, self-contained, one could easily imagine adding, removing, or changing the order of realms in *Le roi Carotte* as was done in *Le biche au bois*.[69] Indeed, the realm of apes was omitted altogether in an abridged three-act version of the play. One more characteristic of Second Empire *féerie*, demonstrated by Roxane Martin, is that new works build on the most memorable attractions (the *clous*) of earlier successes.[70] *Le roi Carotte* is no exception. Insects were not new to the *féerie* stage, as butterflies and glow-worms had appeared in *La poudre de Perlinpinpin* and *Cendrillon*, respectively, and *Les sept merveilles du monde* already had a *défilé* of insects. The model for anthropomorphic vegetables, instead, is to be found in *La biche au bois*. The trick where Quiribibi has his head and limbs pulled off his body was novel enough to be presented in an 1873 book as the state of the art in stagecraft,[71] but it was not

[68] It is in the manuscript full score at F-Pn (see Appendix 1) and Jean-Christophe Keck includes it in his edition, for which he had access to the autograph full score, held in a private collection: Jacques Offenbach, *Le roi Carotte*, ed. Jean-Christophe Keck (Berlin: Boosey & Hawkes, Bote & Bock, 2015), for rental only. A piano adaptation, by Jean-Baptiste Arban, of the 'marche comique' of the apes was published as sheet music, as 'Polka des singes' (Paris: Choudens, [1872]), plate number A.C. 2379.

[69] In 1865 and 1867, the order was fishes, vegetables, Aïka; for the 1896 revival, it would be vegetables, Aïka, fishes.

[70] Martin, *La féerie romantique*, 412–24.

[71] J[ules] Moynet, *L'envers du théâtre: Machines et décorations* (Paris: Hachette, 1873), 95–9.

unprecedented. In *Les pilules du diable*, a classic *féerie* from 1839, a character came back to life after being torn to pieces by an explosion, while in *Les sept châteaux du diable* the devil Sathaniel had his head and arms cut off and grew new ones, metamorphosing into a genie. As for the collection of talismans that Quiribibi hands down to Truck, it recalls that of *Les bibelots du diable*, which was already a tongue-in-cheek tribute to *féerie* conventions.

If we can argue that Offenbach's music is one element that makes *Le roi Carotte* a gentrified *féerie*, the same can be said of another innovative aspect of the work: Sardou's choice to turn *féerie* into a political fable. Sardou's politics are famously elusive, and can be seen as ambivalent but fundamentally reactionary (especially if *Rabagas* or *Thermidor* are foregrounded); ambivalent but fundamentally progressive (if *Patrie!* or *La Tosca* are foregrounded); or ultimately a form of pessimistic 'right-wing anarchism' (as Aline Marchadier describes it).[72] The political message of *Le roi Carotte*, though, is less confused than might appear at first sight. Since the play's première, commentators have tried to make sense of it within the context of 1872 and the nascent Third Republic. But *Le roi Carotte* is best understood by placing it in the years 1869–70, at the height of the so-called *Empire libéral*. Over the course of the 1860s, the Second Empire had slowly moved away from the authoritarian rule of the previous decade, and the years 1869 and 1870 saw some significant steps toward its transformation into a parliamentary regime. The general election of spring 1869 was freer than the previous ones, as restrictions on the press and on public meetings had been lifted (universal male suffrage had never been abolished), strengthening the oppositions. In September, the constitution was amended to give the lower, elected chamber (the Corps législatif) the power to initiate legislation. The next January, the emperor tasked a figure of the moderate opposition, Émile Ollivier, with forming a government, thus re-establishing de facto the post of prime minister. In May, a new constitution was approved.[73] *Le roi Carotte*, then, was written at a moment when French institutions were in the process of finding a compromise between autocracy and British-style constitutional monarchy—a difficult process that would soon be cut short by war. Sardou seems to call for precisely such a compromise. Carotte, as Jean-Claude Yon has remarked, evokes, as a personified root, the radicals, the hardline republican opposition best embodied by Léon Gambetta.[74] But Carotte is just one of two twin threats that the Ruritanian country of the play faces. The other is represented by the bad tendencies of Prince Fridolin himself, who, though a good-natured young man, is irresponsible and unfit to run a country. As Robin-Luron says, 'This

[72] Aline Marchadier, 'Victorien Sardou et la politique', in *Victorien Sardou: Le théâtre et les arts*, ed. Isabelle Moindrot (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2011), 293–304.
[73] A helpful English-language introduction to the politics of the Second Empire is Roger Price, *The French Second Empire: An Anatomy of Political Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
[74] Yon, *Offenbach*, 442.

unfortunate prince is steeped in false ideas and bad habits! … as a result of the stupid education he has received … It would be impossible to rule more poorly than he does, to surround oneself with more idiots, and to have more preposterous ideas about the duties of one's profession!'[75]

This is the reason why Robin-Luron does not oppose Coloquinte's plan to install a usurper on Fridolin's throne: being forced into exile, he argues, will make Fridolin wiser, and forge him into a better ruler for the moment when he will regain power. The lesson for France is clear: there is nothing inherently wrong with Napoleon III (Fridolin), but having a check on his power will only make him better; on the other hand, the radicals (Carotte) might very well be evil, but they can ultimately serve a greater good. It should be noted that Robin-Luron's diagnosis of Fridolin's failings is carefully worded in order not to offend the emperor if applied to him. (In fact, it raised no red flags with the censors.) The blame is placed not on the prince himself but on bad advisers, and Robin-Luron's idea that 'exile' makes rulers wiser could only be flattering to Napoleon III, who had been in exile under the Restoration and the July Monarchy. Robin-Luron's very expression that exile is 'the school of kings' even resonates with the words of Napoleon III himself, who called the fortress of Ham where he was imprisoned in the 1840s the 'University of Ham'.

It would seem tempting to conclude that Sardou is, once again, a new Scribe, and that the former's *féerie* espouses the same *juste milieu* centrism as the *grands opéras* of the latter, which invariably elicited sympathy toward the oppressed but warned against the dangers of violent rebellion.[76] As the *grands opéras* of yore reflected the consensus of the July Monarchy (that is, the views of its ruling classes), so did *Le roi Carotte* for that of the *Empire libéral*: the pursuit of a happy medium between despotism and populism. There is, though, a fundamental difference when compared with the *grands opéras* of Scribe. These appealed to the viewer's moral sense: audiences were supposed to be appalled at injustice, in the form of religious discrimination (*La Juive*, *Les Huguenots*), feudal power (*Le prophète*), or slavery (*L'Africaine*), but also horrified by the thirst for revenge of some of the victims of such injustice. If these operas made a case for the moderate liberal ideology of the July Monarchy (and they did), it was framed in moral terms. In *Le roi Carotte*, instead, good government and bad government are not so much a matter of ethics as a matter of competence. The problem with Fridolin at the beginning of the play, as the quotation makes clear, is his lack of preparation;

[75] 'Ce malheureux prince est pétri d'idées fausses et de mauvaises habitudes! … fruit de la stupide éducation qu'il a reçue … Il n'est pas possible de gouverner plus mal, de s'entourer de plus d'imbéciles, et d'avoir sur les devoirs de sa profession des idées plus saugrenues que les siennes!' Victorien Sardou, *Le roi Carotte*, opéra-bouffe-féerie en quatre actes, vingt-deux tableaux … musique de Jacques Offenbach (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1872), 28 (act 1, 2nd tableau, scene 4).

[76] See Gerhard, *The Urbanization of Opera*.

Carotte makes, of course, a disastrous ruler because he has the intelligence of a garden vegetable. Competence is also narrowly framed: both Fridolin's and Carotte's most serious offence seems to be financial mismanagement. Fridolin has squandered the government's budget; Carotte's record is: ' "Finances in disarray!" "And the heaviest taxes!" "Money's gone, bankruptcy!" "And government bonds at the lowest price!" '[77]

This narrow vision of what constitutes the 'profession' of a ruler (as Robin-Luron puts it) is consistent with Sardou's utter contempt for the political class. Fridolin's ministers are, precisely, 'idiots', and unprincipled ones at that. In particular, Pipertrunck, the police minister, is an unapologetic turncoat who sets out his credo in a set of *couplets* immediately before defecting from the Carotte to the Fridolin camp. He is agnostic between 'a monarch or a republic' and his personal hero is, of course, the most celebrated *girouette* of all time, Talleyrand. It is hard not to see a disparaging allusion to Ollivier, a former republican who had switched allegiance to the Empire (and who is also the most likely model for the protagonist of Sardou's comedy *Rabagas*). However, this passage, too, was deemed innocuous by Second Empire censors, who probably sensed that Sardou was satirising a figure of the regime without really questioning the regime itself.[78]

Another key moment might shed light on the ideology of *Le roi Carotte*. The play does not elaborate on *how* Fridolin's adventures make him a better ruler, but we can surmise that his visit to the realm of insects represents a crucial moment in his growth. Unlike the society of apes of the following tableau, which is primitive, poorly differentiated, and chaotic (probably reflecting stereotypes about non-Western peoples), that of insects is a modern, highly differentiated, well-organised industrial society. Fridolin first has a 'University of Ham'-like experience among the ants, who do not recognise aristocracy but only technical expertise ('we are asking you if you are a carpenter, a mechanic, an engineer, and architect'). Since he has none, he is forced to dig dirt, as 'in this country, those who do not work do not eat'.[79] Then we witness an impressive *défilé*, that is, one of the long processions (set to music, of course) that reflect the penchant for accumulation of late 19th-century *féerie*. Together with the following ballet and *apothéose*, the *défilé* of insects formed the most spectacular *clou* of *Le roi Carotte*, and featured a stunning number of fanciful costumes designed by Théophile Thomas, of which

[77] 'Les finances en déroute! / Et les impôts les plus lourds! / Plus d'argent! la banqueroute! / Et la rente au plus bas cours!' Sardou, *Le roi Carotte*, 135 (act 4, 1st tableau, scene 1).

[78] It should be said, though, that in the 1870 text that they approved 'Monarque ou république' read 'Royame ou République', which can be taken to leave the Empire, a monarchy but not a kingdom, out of the picture.

[79] '[O]n vous demande si vous êtes charpentier, mécanicien, ingénieur, architecte? … dans ce pays-ci, qui ne travaille pas ne dîne pas!' Sardou, *Le roi Carotte*, 111–12 (act 3, 3rd tableau, scene 3).

several sketches are preserved at the Bibliothèque-musée de l'Opéra and at the Bibliothèque historique de la Ville de Paris.[80] Different species of insects constitute different social groups: beetles are the military brass, wood borers are carpenters marching in their guild costumes, butterflies are dandies and *demi-mondaines*, bumblebees and moths are priests, and so on. The queen bee is, of course, a queen. But in this exemplary, if not necessarily ideal, society, there is ostensibly no political class. Among the fishes and the vegetables of *La biche au bois*, or the gemstones of *La chatte blanche*, rulers had ministers, mistresses, and political enemies, with *ancien régime* monarchy as a clear model for parody (the son of the king of fishes of *La biche au bois* is a dolphin, as in Dauphin, and his former prime minister was a sole, a fish that can be prepared *à la Colbert*). There is nothing of the sort in the modern society of the insects.

The satire of obtuse and disloyal politicians in Pipertrunck and the other ministers of Fridolin's court, the ants' disregard for anything other than technical qualification, and the absence of politicians in the realm of insects all point in the same direction. The spirit of *Le roi Carotte* is obviously not democratic, but it is not necessarily reactionary. Rather, it is perfectly compatible with welcoming technological innovation, rejecting clericalism and religious intolerance, standing for the values of the Enlightenment and the Revolution against obscurantism and the *ancien régime*, and even imagining a fairer society—in short, believing in progress. Sardou sounds precisely like someone who believes in progress but not in democracy (or at least not in democracy as a prerequisite of progress): he seems to prefer an enlightened technocracy where rulers are humane, but also competent and good stewards of taxpayers' money, and where being an engineer or an architect lends more authority than noble birth or (in the case of Carotte-Gambetta) charismatic leadership. Technocracy is, of course, an anachronistic word, but the concept is not foreign to 19th-century France. Saint-Simonism was essentially committed to a similar ideal of progress without democracy and rule by the competent, which explains why Saint-Simonians (or former Saint-Simonians) got along well with the Second Empire: to mention only the most prominent names, economist Michel Chevalier, railway entrepreneurs Émile and Isaac Pereire, and Ferdinand de Lesseps, the man behind the Suez Canal. After all, the constitutional arrangement that Napoleon III (then still President Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte) put in place after his 1851 coup was also justified in technocratic terms: the task of drafting legislation fell not to the elected Corps législatif, but to an appointed body, the Conseil d'État, a 'reunion

[80] F-Po D216 Z-1 and F-Pbh 4-TMD-00309 to 4-TMD-00334, respectively. The Bibliothèque-musée de l'Opéra set of drawings also contains designs that can be attributed to the 1869 Gaîté production of *La chatte blanche*. Alfred Grévin and Eugène Lacoste also designed costumes for *Le roi Carotte*.

of practical-minded men' free from partisan bias and demagoguery; elected representatives, instead, would propose 'the least thought-out, the least thoroughly reasoned draft bills'.[81]

It is worth noting that around the time *Le roi Carotte* appeared, what would become Sciences Po—then the École libre des sciences politiques—was opening its doors in Paris, and that its founder, Émile Boutmy, had explicitly voiced the kind of technocratic ideal towards which *Le roi Carotte* seems to gesture. Boutmy admits in pretty candid terms that he wishes to preserve existent class relations while accepting the equality of citizens before the law, and his words sound both reminiscent of traditional arguments (the medieval debate on how to reconcile the *maior pars* and of the *sanior pars* in ecclesiastical elections) and strikingly modern, with their emphasis on merit and competence:

> Privilege is no more; democracy will not subside. Having to be subjected to rule by the largest number, the classes that call themselves the upper classes will not be able to maintain their political hegemony unless they advocate for rule by the most capable. Beyond the crumbling wall of their prerogatives and tradition, the wave of democracy must crash against a further rampart made of shining and useful merits, of superiorities whose prestige is undeniable, of capabilities that no sane person would want to do without.[82]

To use an even more anachronistic expression, the enlightened technocracy that *Le roi Carotte* seems to champion is not unlike the present-day phenomenon of 'undemocratic liberalism': in both cases we see a coexistence of culturally progressive values and mistrust in majority rule.[83] And in both cases those positions are those of a privileged minority that is happy with the status quo or moderate reform, and that tends to discount the grievances of those who are not, raising

[81] I am using the words of Louis-Napoléon himself in his 14 January 1852 proclamation: 'réunion d'hommes pratiques', 'les projets moins étudiés, les moins approfondis'. 'Proclamation du 14 janvier 1852', in Jacques Godechot, ed., *Les constitutions de la France depuis 1789* (Paris: Garnier Flammarion, 1995), 287–91.

[82] 'Le privilège n'est plus; la démocratie ne reculera point. Contraintes de subir le droit du plus nombreux, les classes qui se nomment elles-mêmes les classes élevées ne peuvent conserver leur hégémonie politique qu'en invoquant le droit du plus capable. Il faut que, derrière l'enceinte croulante de leurs prérogatives et de la tradition, le flot de la démocratie se heurte à un second rempart fait de mérites éclatants et utiles, de supériorités dont le prestige s'impose, de capacités dont on ne puisse pas se priver sans folie.' [Émile Boutmy and Ernest Vinet], *Quelques idées sur la création d'une Faculté libre d'enseignement supérieur* (Paris: Adolphe Lainé, 1871), 14–15. Cited in Dominique Damamme, 'Genèse sociale d'une institution scolaire: l'École libre des sciences politiques', *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, no. 70 (1987), 31–46, at p. 34.

[83] The expression 'undemocratic liberalism' has been recently popularised by Yascha Mounk, *The People vs. Democracy: Why Our Freedom Is in Danger and How to Save It* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018). Undemocratic liberalism is a foil to 'illiberal democracy', which first gained currency around the turn of the millennium thanks to Fareed Zakaria and Pierre Rosanvallon: Fareed Zakaria, 'The Rise of Illiberal Democracy', *Foreign Affairs* 76, no. 6 (1997): 22–43; Pierre Rosanvallon, *La démocratie inachevée: Histoire de la souveraineté du peuple en France* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000). Rosanvallon already used 'undemocratic liberalism' at the time, although he is not credited by Mounk.

the spectre of mob rule (or, today, 'populism'). It is significant that, in the revolt that helps Fridolin regain power at the end of the play, the citizenry with which the audience is supposed to identify is composed of bourgeois and students, while fruit-stand sellers are the enemy, since they are allies of Carotte (as were gardeners in a previous tableau). Of course, it would be preposterous to claim that *Le roi Carotte* incites class hatred against the poor. But it does reek of a certain elitist smugness that one would not expect to find on a 'popular' stage, and that points, again, to operettised *féerie* as a product of the gentrification of the eastern Parisian theatres.

The age of operettocracy (*c.* 1868–98)

Le roi Carotte fared well at the box office: though it did not achieve success on the same momentous scale as the 1865 *Biche au bois* or the 1869 *Chatte blanche*, it played for a respectable six months, from mid-January 1872 to late July, proving more popular than the already pretty popular *féeries* of the previous autumn, *La queue du chat* at the Château-d'Eau and *Le puits qui chante* at the Menus-Plaisirs, both co-written by *féerie* veteran Clairville. Composerly *féerie*, though, did not catch on immediately.

This does not mean that common wisdom is right in considering 'opéra-bouffe-féerie' an extravagant and ultimately failed experiment of Offenbach's. On the contrary, Offenbach found followers right away. In 1874, two more of the large eastern theatres followed the Gaîté's lead and presented *féeries* with an original score by an operetta composer: the Châtelet programmed *La Belle au bois dormant*, with music by Henry Litolff (the cosmopolitan pianist, composer, and publisher, who had embarked on an operetta career right after the war), the Château-d'Eau *Le treizième coup de minuit*, with music by Jean-Jacques Debillemont. In both cases Clairville had contributed to the play. Yet both *La Belle au bois dormant* and *Le treizième coup de minuit* were unsuccessful and folded within a few weeks. Interestingly, reviewers found both works too music-heavy and opera-like, and *La Belle au bois dormant* particularly so. Moreover, according to Arthur Pougin, in *La Belle au bois dormant* 'tricks are remarkable by their absence, and the play bears no trace of humour, which is unfortunate in a *féerie*'.[84]

Meanwhile, at the Gaîté, Offenbach, who seemed to have hit on just the right formula with *Le roi Carotte*, persisted. In his double capacity as composer and, since 1873, manager of the theatre, he opted for the safest and most economical way to manufacture more composerly *féeries*: adapting existing works—namely

[84] '[C]hose fâcheuse dans une féerie, les trucs brillent par leur absence, et la pièce n'a pas trace de gaîté.' Arthur Pougin, 'Semaine théâtrale et musicale', *Le Ménestrel*, 12 April 1874, 148.

his own *Orphée aux enfers* and *Geneviève de Brabant*, as well as Sardou's 1864 *Don Quichotte*, which would receive new music by Offenbach himself. The last project did not come to fruition, but this is how the second version of *Orphée* and the third version of *Geneviève* came to be, in 1874 and 1875, respectively.[85] It is evident why *Orphée*, *Geneviève*, and *Don Quichotte* were chosen: on top of having mythical-legendary subjects (and widely recognised ones at that), their loose, episodic structure, especially in the case of the two Offenbach operettas, could accommodate manifold attractions in the same way that *féeries* based on the quest model could. This kind of dramaturgy, which can be called panoramic, is also key to the new type of play that emerged at the very same time with Verne and d'Ennery's *Le tour du monde en 80 jours*, and it is precisely what differentiates it from melodrama and makes it a new, 'scientific' variant of *féerie*. *Le tour du monde* premièred nine months after the new *Orphée*, in November 1874; Offenbach's next *féerie* for the Gaîté, *Le voyage dans la lune* (1875), was already a response to scientific *féerie*, inspired as it was by scientific vulgarisation and by Verne's fiction.

In reworking them as *féeries*, Offenbach appended to *Orphée* and *Geneviève* ballets, *défilés*, and *apothéoses*, as seen in *Le roi Carotte*. One of the *clous* of the new *Orphée* is precisely an encyclopaedic *défilé* of (caricatures of) ancient Greek gods and mythological creatures, ending on an *apothéose* where the flying chariot of Apollo dominates the immense crowd of performers and supernumeraries that has gathered on stage. As one can see from a comparison of the published scores of the 1858 and 1874 versions, at the end of what used to be the second tableau of act 1, now act 2, Offenbach stretched the instrumental passage that follows the chorus 'Gloire! gloire à Jupiter' from 32 bars to 167 (counting repeats) to make room for the *défilé*, and substituted the brief reprise of the chorus on which the act ended with a different, longer one, marking the *apothéose*. This expansion of the finale does not add in the slightest to its musical interest (if anything, it dilutes it), yet the *défilé* with its *apothéose* arguably proved even more popular with audiences than the four new ballets and the new vocal numbers, for which Offenbach did deploy his creativity (and which are more likely to attract the attention of the modern scholar browsing the score). This moment of the play was reproduced not just in press illustrations, but also in a promotional poster that Jules Chéret designed for the Gaîté (Fig. 2.7).[86] The playbill for the 1877 London

[85] For Offenbach and Sardou's aborted *Don Quichotte* project, see Yon, *Offenbach*, 518, and Martial Ténéo, 'Jacques Offenbach d'après des documents inédits', *S.I.M.: Revue musicale mensuelle* 7, no. 12 (1911): 1–35, at pp. 22–35. A *féerie* version of Sardou's *Don Quichotte* would eventually see the stage in 1895 at the Châtelet, with music by Albert Renaud; for this reworking, see Hélène Laplace-Claverie, 'Sardou en féerie', in *Victorien Sardou, un siècle plus tard*, ed. Guy Ducrey (Strasbourg: Presses universitaires de Strasbourg, 2007), 171–82.

[86] F-Pneph ENT DN-1 (CHERET, Jules/6)-ROUL, digitised and online at https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b90151919 (accessed 8 February 2024).

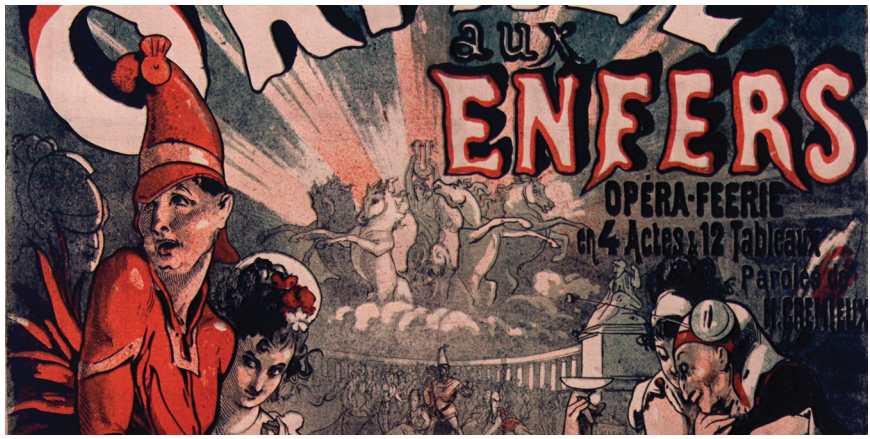


Figure 2.7 Jules Chéret, poster for *Orphée aux enfers*, detail. Source: Gallica, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

revival at the Alhambra used red ink and large type for the 'ORIGINAL GRAND BALLETS', but even larger type for the 'GRAND PROCESSION of 300'.[87] A pamphlet by Arnold Mortier, *Promenade autour d'"Orphée aux enfers"*, described in gossipy but admiring terms the complex behind-the-scenes work needed to shepherd onto the stage the masses taking part in the *défilé*, and ended with a caricature of Offenbach standing on the chariot of Apollo and raising Apollo's lyre with both hands, implicitly confirming the *apothéose* as the most iconic moment of the work (Fig. 2.8).[88] The adoption of a work from the repertory of the Bouffes-Parisiens is in itself part of the pattern of gentrification of the Gaîté. But one can argue that this *défilé*-cum-*apothéose* in particular is also a sign of the colonisation of eastern Paris by the imagination of the western theatres. In 1874, the construction of the Palais Garnier, then known simply as the 'new Opéra', was nearing completion, and one can read the burlesque pantheon of the *défilé* of the new *Orphée* as a parody of the equally encyclopaedic decorative programme of the new Opéra, which gave material reality to a pantheon of mythological characters, allegorical figures, and artists of the past. The case for this reading is made all the more convincing by the fact that the new Opéra culminates in a statue, by Aimé Millet, of Apollo standing and raising his lyre with both hands—the same pose struck by the Apollo of the Gaîté, who similarly dominates the visual

[87] London, Victoria and Albert Museum, Theatre and Performance Collection, S.3-2007, digitised and online at http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O131036/playbill-j-miles-co (accessed 8 February 2024).
[88] Un monsieur de l'orchestre [Arnold Mortier], *Promenade autour d'"Orphée aux enfers"* (Paris: Charles Schiller, 1874), 30. The caricature, like the other illustrations in the pamphlet, is by Bertall.

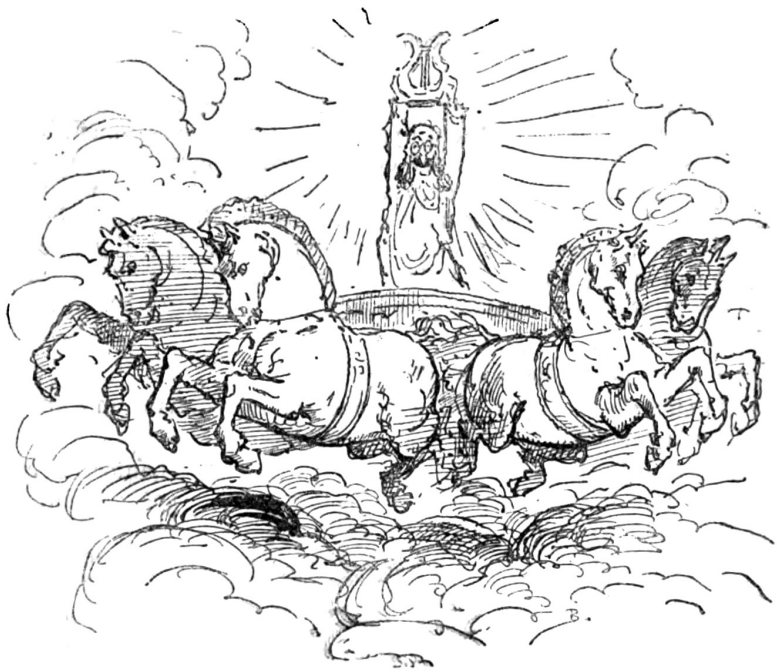


Figure 2.8 Bertall, caricature of Offenbach as Apollo, in Arnold Mortier, *Promenade autour d'"Orphée aux enfers"* (Paris: Charles Schiller, 1874). Courtesy of HathiTrust.

composition (Fig. 2.9). Even the four rearing horses attached to Apollo's chariot at the Gaîté have a parallel in the two groups of Fame holding a rearing Pegasus, by Eugène-Louis Lequesne, that flank Apollo on each side at the bottom corners of the pediment of the Opéra's fly tower. The *apothéose* of the 1874 *Orphée*, then, hypostatised the Gaîté's status not as an alternative 'Opéra of the petty bourgeoisie' as Gautier had dreamed for the Porte-Saint-Martin, but as a continuation by other means of the legitimate Opéra, in the same way as Offenbach's early operettas (including the original *Orphée*) were a continuation by other means of *grand opéra* and Italian opera.

The composerly status of Offenbach's *féeries* for the Gaîté did not mean that their text was set in stone: on the contrary, they were susceptible to the same kind of textual mobility that characterised non-composerly *féeries*. In August 1874, Offenbach scrapped the last tableau of act 3, 'Pluto's gardens', with its ballet of flies, and substituted for it a whole set of new tableaux taking the spectator to the underwater 'Neptune's kingdom'. Save for the first one, the new tableaux contain no dialogue and present a seamless succession of transformation scenes, mime, dance, a new ballet, and an *apothéose*. The purpose of this large-scale alteration—which can be

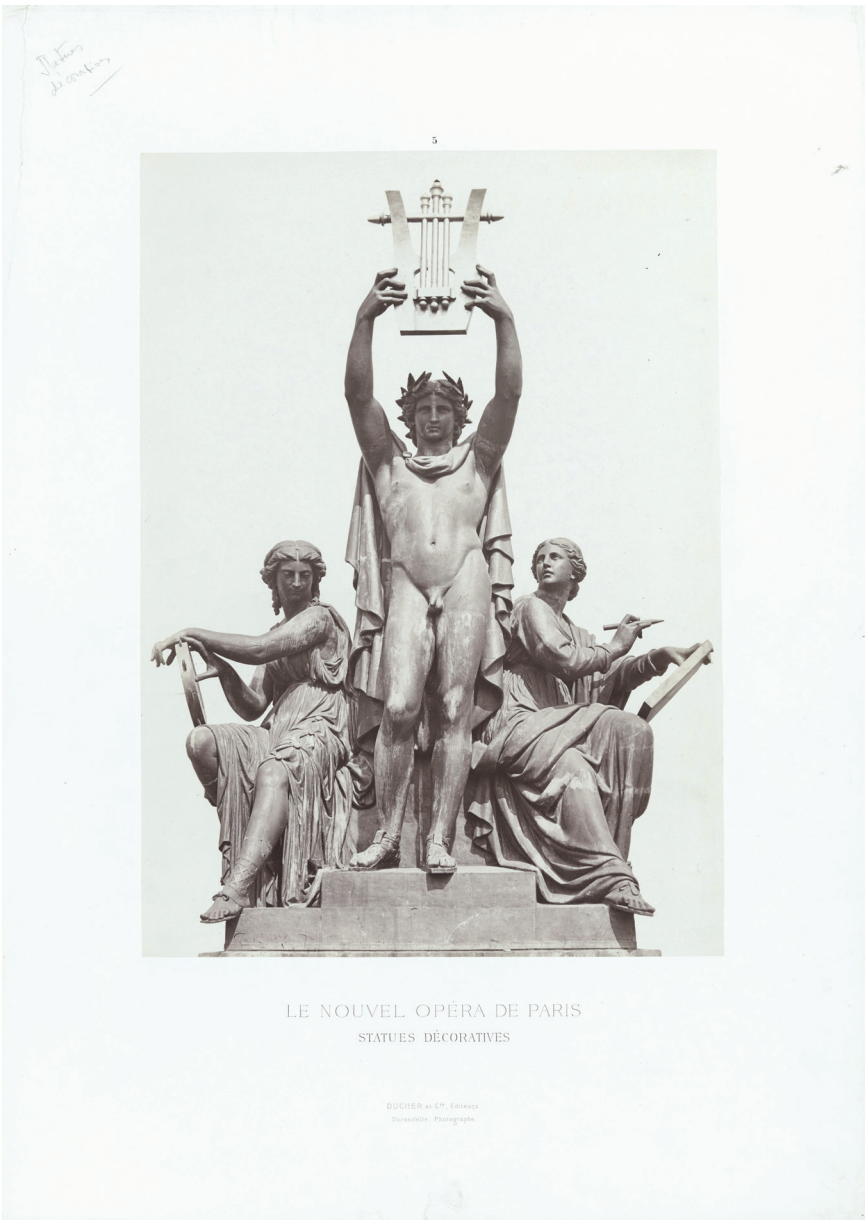


Figure 2.9 Aimé Millet, *Apollo, Poetry, and Music*. Photograph from Charles Garnier, *Le nouvel Opéra de Paris*, deuxième partie, vol. 2, *Statues décoratives, groupes et bas-reliefs* (Paris: Ducher, 1875). Source: Gallica, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

construed as giving rise to a third version, or at least a *second* second version, of *Orphée*—was, of course, to keep interest in the play alive after six months' worth of performances. The strategy seems to have worked, if we are to judge by *Le Ménestrel*'s claim, the following week, that '"Neptune's Kingdom" is so fine an addition to the marvels of *Orphée aux enfers* that everyone in Paris is heading back to the square des Arts-et-Métiers', the address of the Gaîté.[89] It is interesting, with respect to theatrical gentrification, that *Le Ménestrel* presents the latest incarnation of *Orphée* as marketed to audiences that had *already* seen the work earlier that year, hence to those who could afford multiple outings to the theatre—'tout Paris' (everyone in Paris), here, might be close in meaning to 'le Tout-Paris' (the Paris that matters). *Le voyage dans la lune*, too, was the object of mid-run alterations. In February 1876, Thérésa, who after *La chatte blanche* had starred in four *féerie* productions including the new *Geneviève*, joined the cast, and she was duly provided with new vocal numbers, as Delphine Ugalde had been when she joined the 1865 *Biche au bois*.

From February 1874 to April 1876, the Gaîté programmed nothing but *féerie*, mostly composerly, save for a few weeks when it gave Sardou and Offenbach's unsuccessful melodrama *La haine*: *Orphée*, *Geneviève*, yet another revival of *La chatte blanche* (with additional music by Offenbach), and *Le voyage dans la lune*. After the Gaîté became an opera house, *Le voyage dans la lune* found a new home at the Châtelet, where it ran for two months in the spring of 1877. Then, for five years, composerly *féerie* disappeared from the offering of the major Parisian theatres. Offenbach, who died in 1880, did not live to see his latest brainchild, composerly *féerie*, thrive and evolve independently of him, as operetta had done some 15 years earlier. But starting in 1882, a new generation of composers would be drafted to write *féerie* scores, as Chapter 3 will show.

Lest we slip back into the disciplinary biases that have contributed to making *féerie* invisible to music historians, however, we must take care not to privilege composerly plays over plays with pre-existing music, nor new plays over revivals. Between the première of *Le roi Carotte* and the end of the century, some 20 new traditional (that is, non-scientific and non-composerly) *féeries* premièred at the major Parisian theatres. Of these, one surpassed 300 performances, the already mentioned *Le Petit Poucet* (1885, revived 1891); one surpassed 200 performances, *Les mille et une nuits* (1881); and three more surpassed 100 performances, *L'arbre de Noël* (1880), *Les aventures de Monsieur de Crac* (1886), and *Le Petit Chaperon rouge* (1900). All five were presented at the 'big three' theatres of eastern Paris, the Porte-Saint-Martin, the Gaîté, and the Châtelet. They availed themselves of creators and performers from the Offenbach *féeries*, among them the playwriting team of *Le voyage dans la lune* (Arnold Mortier, Eugène Leterrier, Albert Vanloo), singer Zulma Bouffar, comedian Christian, choreographer Henri Justamant, designer

[89] '*Le Royaume de Neptune* est si bien venu ajouter aux merveilles d'*Orphée aux enfers* que tout Paris revient au square des Arts-et-Métiers'. Henri Moreno [Henri Heugel], 'Semaine théâtrale et musicale', *Le Ménestrel*, 23 August 1874, 299. We should keep in mind, though, that *Le Ménestrel* was the house organ of the publisher of the *Orphée* score, Heugel.

Alfred Grévin (see Appendix 2). All five plays, despite their success, remained unpublished, but we have the *manuscrits de censure*, which in three cases (*L'arbre de Noël*, *Le Petit Poucet*, and *Les aventures de Monsieur de Crac*) provide enough information about the music of the vocal numbers. For all of the plays save, apparently, *Le Petit Chaperon rouge*, at least one excerpt from the newly composed music was published in vocal score or, in the case of ballet music, a piano arrangement.

The *féerie* revivals of the 1860s had the effect of establishing a small set of canonical *féeries* dating from the late 1830s through the early 1850s—*Peau d'Âne*, *Les pilules du diable*, *Les sept châteaux du diable*, *La biche au bois*, *La chatte blanche*, *La poudre de Perlinpinpin*. All of these—plus the 1866 *Cendrillon*, which was instantly co-opted into the newly formed canon—went on to be repeatedly revived into the 1890s or even into the new century, which means that the stage life of *Peau d'Âne*, *Les sept châteaux du diable*, *La biche au bois*, and *La chatte blanche* exceeded 50 years, and that of *Les pilules du diable* came close to 70 years. For none of them, though, have we as much evidence as for *La biche au bois*, which had two more revivals during the Third Republic, at the Porte-Saint-Martin in 1881 and at the Châtelet in 1896 (Fig 2.10).

Modifications to the play continued to obey the laws of scaling up and technological improvement. If the 1867 *Biche* had featured lions, the 1881 *Biche* exhibited two elephants and two dromedaries as well, as reported by *L'Art musical*.[90] Moreover, according to Arnold Mortier, the titular doe (Princess Désirée in animal form) was an actual cervid, instead of a dog in disguise as had been customary.[91] The 1881 *Biche* employed a gas-powered magic lantern for an animated projection (eight years before the Opéra-Comique used a similar device in Massenet's *Esclarmonde*); in 1896, the magic lantern was replaced by the latest advance in moving-image technology, the cinematograph, introduced to the world by the Lumière brothers less than a year earlier.[92] As Stéphane Tralongo notes, though, the *clou* of the 1896 version was an acrobatic ballet imported from England

[90] Paul Girod, 'Théâtres', *L'Art musical*, 15 September 1881, 291.

[91] Arnold Mortier, '*La biche au bois*', in *Les soirées parisiennes de 1881* (Paris: Dentu, 1882), 267–74.

[92] The Châtelet, however, did not adopt the Lumière-patented *cinématographe* but a rival technology, Georges Demenÿ's *chronophotographe*. See Frank Kessler, 'The *Féerie* between Stage and Screen', in *A Companion to Early Cinema*, ed. André Gaudreault, Nicolas Dulac, and Santiago Hidalgo (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 64–79; Stéphane Tralongo, 'Remanier les dialogues, rénover les tableaux: Le cinématographe dans la logique de récupération des grandes reprises féeriques', *Intermédialités*, no. 20 (2012), https://doi.org/10.7202/1015088ar (accessed 8 February 2024); Laurent Mannoni, 'Une féerie de 1896: *La biche au bois*', *Cinémathèque* no. 10 (1996), 117–23. On the projections in *Esclarmonde*, see Jean-Christophe Branger, 'Merveilleux païen et merveilleux chrétien dans l'opéra fin-de-siècle: l'exemple de Massenet', in *Le surnaturel sur la scène lyrique du merveilleux baroque au fantastique romantique*, ed. Agnès Terrier and Alexandre Dratwicki (Lyon: Symétrie, 2012), 299–316. A few years prior to the 1896 *Biche*, another Châtelet *féerie* had been at the forefront of the development of optical technologies. The first extant French theatre photographs shot on site (as opposed to in a studio with costumes and prop elements from a performance) are those of the 1887 production of *La chatte blanche*, taken by Georges Balagny. See Arnaud Rykner, 'Les débuts de la photographie de scène', in 'La photographie de scène en France, 1/2', ed. Arnaud Rykner, special issue, *Revue d'histoire du théâtre* 71 no. 3 (2019): 11–82. Balagny's photographs are reproduced at pp. 22–5.

~ sept. 1881

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Tiennette.......... Henriette.
La Carpe.......... Nelly.

TABLEAUX

PREMIER ACTE
1er Terrasses du palais de Derlindindin;
2e Les bonnes marraines;
3e La Fée Furibonde;
4e Les petits architectes;
5e La tour en construction;
6e L'empire jaune;
7e Le portrait parlant;
8e La tour obscure;
9e La forêt des sycomores;
10e Le palanquin brisé;
11e La métamorphose.

DEUXIÈME ACTE
12e La chasse du prince Souci;
13e Les entrailles de la terre;
14e Le kiosque;
15e Le royaume des poissons;
Au 9e tableau grand cortège.
Au 15e *Réjouissances au palais du roi Saumon*, grand ballet.
16e La fée des amoureux;
17e Le pavillon de la pudeur;
18e Roche terrible et Château d'acier

TROISIÈME ACTE
19e Les cuisines du palais d'Aïka;
20e Un bal de mouches;
21e La salle du trône au palais d'Aïka;
22e Un mariage manqué;
Au 21e *Fête au palais d'Aïka*, grand ballet.
23e Les amazones.

QUATRIÈME ACTE
24e Le royaume des légumes;
25e La noce;
26e La grotte;
27e Les sirènes.

CINQUIÈME ACTE
28e Une galerie du palais d'Aïka;
29e La forêt des lions;
30e Apothéose.

Quinze minutes d'entr'acte entre le 27e et 28e tableau.

DEUX GRANDS BALLETS

Composés par M. JUSTAMENT

Mesdemoiselles **MARIA VALAIN**, première danseuse étoile; BRAMBILLA, première danseuse de genre; GAUGAIN, première danseuse.
Secondes danseuses : Mesdemoiselles ELODIE; ALLIAS; PASSANT; MARTHA-VILLA.
Deuxième secondes danseuses : Mesdemoiselles Aida Villa; Éparvier; Angèle Villa; Fouchard.

Au 29e tableau : **LES LIONS D'AIKA**

Le dompteur Sénégalien Ben-Haoussa et ses huit Lions en liberté.

Au 10e tableau : **LES ÉLÉPHANTS SACRÉS DE RANGOR**

Coryphées. — Derouet; Maria-Roy; Maria Bonnet; Pierrat; Georgette; Henriette Dreiber; Marietta; Andrée; Louise Dreiber; Hugon; Adèle Paris; Ducos; Sommers; Rosalie Roy; Nolet; Mivau; Fancy; Fleury; Dumane; Grosjean; Diane; Barbier; Adèle Dreiber; Letourneur; Michelot; Pauline Lecordelay; Andrée Dorsay; Dayo; Berthe Choua; Palmyre Person; Vauzy; Aurélie; Adrienne; Hortense.

Le spectacle finit à onze heures cinquante.

TABLEAU DU PRIX DES PLACES

PREMIER BUREAU
Boulevard Saint-Martin.

	Au bureau	En locat.
Av.-scènes du rez-de-chaussée	8 »	6 pl. 60 »
— des premières....	8 »	6 pl. 60 »
Premières loges de face.....	7 »	6 pl. 48 »
Baignoires................	6 »	4 pl. 28 »
Premières loges de côté....	6 »	4 pl. 28 »
Fauteuils d'orchestre.......	6 »	8 »
— de balcon (1er rang)	7 »	9 »
— — (2e rang)	6 »	7 »

	Au bureau	En locat.
Avant-scènes des secondes..	5 »	6 pl. 36 »
Deuxièmes loges de face....	5 »	4 pl. 24 »
Fauteuils des secondes.....	4 »	5 »
Stalles d'orchestre.........	4 »	5 »
Avant-scènes des troisièmes	3 »	6 pl. 24 »
Stalles des secondes de côté.	2 50	3 »
Fauteuils des troisièmes....	3 »	3 50

DEUXIÈME BUREAU
Rue de Bondy.

	Au bureau	En locat.
Parterre......................	2 »	2 50
Stalles des troisièmes de face...	2 »	2 50
Stalles des troisièmes de côté..	1 25	1 50
Quatrième galerie.............	1 »	» »
Amphithéâtre des quatrièmes...	» 75	» »

Bureau de location ouvert de 11 h. à 5 h. 1/2.
Les enfants payent place entière.
Les dames sont admises à toutes les places.

Figure 2.10 Printed programme for the 1881 production of *La biche au bois*. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des arts du spectacle.

(like the *apothéose* set of 1865), which built on the aerial-dance trick of the 'mouche d'or', first used in the 1880 revival of *Les pilules du diable*.[93] The task of revising the Cogniards' script to supply fresh ideas, fresh humour, and fresh topical allusions fell, in 1881, to Ernest Blum and Raoul Toché. In 1896, further alterations were carried out by Blum and, according to press reports, Paul Ferrier (Toché had died in the meanwhile). Updating a *féerie* text was nothing unusual, but in this case those responsible for the rewriting were well known and received credit, as did Émile Blavet and Jules Prével for the 1887 revival of *La chatte blanche*.

If, from the standpoint of dramaturgy, the 1881 and 1896 versions of *La biche au bois* follow in the path set by the 1867 version, from that of music, they exhibit important differences. In this respect, *La biche au bois* and *féerie* in general can serve as an indicator to understand the changes in the Parisian theatrical landscape, and can provide a useful perspective for the historiography of French opera under the Third Republic.

The 1881 *Biche* is rife with recent favourite tunes from virtually all Parisian theatres: the Opéra (Gounod's *Le tribut de Zamora*, 1881), the Opéra-Comique (Offenbach's *Les contes d'Hoffmann*, 1881),[94] the Bouffes-Parisiens (Hervé's *Panurge*, 1879; Audran's *La mascotte*, 1880), the Variétés (Lecocq's *Le grand Casimir*, 1879), the Renaissance (Lecocq's *La petite mademoiselle*, 1879; Lecocq's *Giroflé-Girofla*, revived there in 1880; Offenbach's *Belle Lurette*, 1880), and the Fantaisies-Parisiennes (Auguste Cœdès's *La girouette*, 1880). By treating its audience to a dizzying panorama of the latest hit shows, the 1881 *Biche* almost does the work that the mid-century *revue de fin d'année* had previously done. But the biggest story here is not the newness of the music: after all, as can be seen in Table 2.2, the original *Biche au bois*, in 1845, had a similar percentage of vocal numbers whose music was five years old or less. More remarkable is that, despite not being a composerly *féerie*, the 1881 *Biche au bois* is thoroughly operettised, with roughly 60 per cent of the vocal numbers drawing on operetta, composerly *féerie* (*Le voyage dans la lune*), or composerly vaudeville (*Le grand Casimir*). Numbers based on opera or *opéra comique* have dropped into the single digits. The picture is the same in the new traditional *féeries* of the same period: as can be seen in Table 2.3, approximately half of the vocal numbers of *L'arbre de Noël* and *Le Petit Poucet*, and two-thirds of the vocal numbers of *Monsieur de Crac*, originate from operetta or operetta-influenced works, while borrowings from opera or *opéra comique* are only a handful and often from old classics.

[93] On the *mouche d'or*, see Stéphane Tralongo, 'Faiseurs de féeries: Mise en scène, machinerie et pratiques cinématographiques émergentes au tournant du XX^{e} siècle' (PhD diss., Université de Montréal, Université Lumière Lyon 2, 2012), 145–51.

[94] Léon Carvalho, then manager of the Opéra-Comique, tried unsuccessfully to have the barcarolle from *Les contes d'Hoffmann* removed from *La biche au bois*; according to Mortier, though, it was eventually cut to tighten the pace of the play. Arnold Mortier, 'Les théâtres lyriques', in *Les soirées parisiennes de 1881* (Paris: Dentu, 1882), 244–5; Mortier, '*La biche au bois*', 273–4; Paul Girod, 'Une question à résoudre', *L'Art musical*, 15 September 1881, 1.

Table 2.2 Vocal numbers in the five versions of *La biche au bois*.

	1845	**1865**	**1867**	**1881**	**1896**
total	43	41	26	38	20
by type:					
timbre	5 (13%)	3 (7%)	2 (13%)	2 (5%)	0
parody	23 (59%)	3 (7%)	7 (44%)	33 (87%)	15 (94%)
original or composed for earlier plays	11 (28%)	35 (85%)	7 (44%)	3 (8%)	1 (6%)
unknown	4 (9%)	—	10 (38%)	—	4 (20%)
by age of the music:					
≤ 5 years	16 (52%)	34 (85%)	8 (62%)	19 (54%)	3 (25%)
$5 < x \leq 10$ years	5 (16%)	0	1 (8%)	4 (11%)	1 (8%)
$10 < x \leq 20$ years	5 (16%)	0	0	7 (20%)	3 (25%)
$20 < x \leq 50$ years	4 (13%)	4 (10%)	2 (15%)	2 (6%)	5 (42%)
> 50 years	1 (3%)	2 (5%)	2 (15%)	3 (9%)	0
unknown	12 (28%)	1 (2%)	13 (50%)	3 (8%)	8 (40%)

Table 2.3 Musical sources of the vocal numbers in four traditional *féeries*, 1880–1905.

Asterisk: operetta, composerly *vaudeville*, composerly *féerie*; dagger: opera, *opéra comique*.	
source	**year**
***L'arbre de Noël* (Porte-Saint-Martin, 1880)**	
original: Lonati	
* Offenbach, *Madame l'Archiduc*	1874
Offenbach, 'Chanson de Fortunio', song (also in *La chanson de Fortunio*, 1861) (cut during rehearsals)	1852
original	
* Lecocq, *La petite mariée*	1875
* Offenbach, *La princesse de Trébizonde*	1869
original: Lecocq	
* Lecocq, *La Marjolaine*	1877
[original: Lecocq]	
original: Lonati	

timbre	
† Semet, *Gil Blas*	1860
* Offenbach, *La fille du tambour-major*	1879
* Lecocq, *Le barbier de Trouville*	1871
* Offenbach, *La belle Hélène*	1864
† Rossini, *Guillaume Tell*	1829
timbre?	
* Offenbach, *La princesse de Trébizonde*	1869
* Vasseur, *La timbale d'argent*	1872
Massé, 'Souvenirs!' or Weckerlin, 'Sylvie', song	1850 or 1853
original	
* Lecocq, *La Marjolaine*	1877
[original: Lecocq]	
* Offenbach, *Le Pont des Soupirs*	1861
† Mozart, *Don Giovanni*	
Brahms, Hungarian Dance no. 4?	1869?
* Offenbach, *La vie parisienne*	1866
* Hervé, *Les chevaliers de la Table Ronde*	1866
Métra, 'Les roses', waltz	1861
timbre?	
* Hervé, *Les chevaliers de la Table Ronde*	1866
* Offenbach, *La jolie parfumeuse*	1873
Rossini, 'La danza', song	1835
* Lecocq, *La petite mademoiselle*	1879
* Lecocq, *Fleur-de-Thé*	1868
† Auber, *La muette de Portici*	1828
***Le Petit Poucet* (Gaîté, 1885, revived 1891)**	
† Auber, *La fiancée*	1829
Fossey, 'Le retour du soldat', from melodrama *Les Cosaques*	1853
* Offenbach, *Mademoiselle Moucheron*	1881
original?	
Gabillaud, 'Il n'a pas d'parapluie', song	1882
* Chabrier, *L'étoile*	1877
* Hervé, *Chilpéric*	1868
* Offenbach, *Le voyage dans la lune*	1875

(*Continued*)

Table 2.3 (Cont.)

source	**year**
* Offenbach, *Madame l'Archiduc*	1874
† Grisar, *Bonsoir Monsieur Pantalon*	1851
* Lacome, *Le beau Nicolas*	1880
* Serpette, *Madame le Diable*	1882
† Offenbach, *Les contes d'Hoffmann*	1881
timbre	
original	
* Lecocq, *Fleur-de-Thé*	1868
original	
* Offenbach, *La grande-duchesse de Gérolstein*	1867
* Lecocq, *Giroflé-Girofla*	1874
* Audran, *La mascotte*	1880
* Offenbach, *Orphée aux Enfers*	1858
timbre	
† David, *Lalla-Roukh*	1862
* Offenbach, *La vie parisienne*	1866
† Méhul, *Joseph*	1807
Gouzien, 'La légende de Saint Nicolas', song	1864
* Offenbach, *La chanson de Fortunio*	1861
* Planquette, *Rip* (pub. and performed in London 1882)	1884
† Boieldieu, *La dame blanche*	1825
[original?]	
* Lecocq, *La fille de Madame Angot*	1872
Métra, 'Les volontaires', march	1870s
?	
***Les aventures de Monsieur de Crac* (Châtelet, 1886)**	
timbre	
* Lecocq, *La Marjolaine*	1877
Abadie, 'Les feuilles mortes', song	1849
* Planquette, *La cantinière*	1880
* Serpette, *Fanfreluche*	1883
* Lecocq, *Le cœur et la main*	1882
* Offenbach, *Les brigands*	1869
* Offenbach, *Les braconniers*	1873

* Serpette, *Le château de Tire-Larigot*	1884
* Serpette, *Le château de Tire-Larigot*	1884
* Audran, *La mascotte*	1880
Robillard, 'L'amant d'Amanda', song	1876
* Offenbach, *Les brigands*	1869
* Offenbach, *La belle Hélène*	1864
* Lecocq, *Les cent vierges*	1872
* Offenbach, *La Périchole*	1868
* Messager, *La fauvette du temple*	1885
from *vaudeville Le voyage en Suisse*	1879
* Messager, *La Béarnaise*	1885
original?	
* Lecocq, *La fille de Madame Angot*	1872
Desormes, 'La grosse caisse', piano piece	1884
* Offenbach, *Orphée aux Enfers*?	1858
* Hervé, *Le trône d'Écosse*	1871
[original: Artus]	
* Offenbach, *Belle Lurette*	1880
Desormes, 'La grosse caisse', piano piece	1884
Métra, 'Les volontaires', march	1870s
* Offenbach, *Les brigands*	1869
* Jonas, *Le canard à trois becs*	1869
Sellenick, 'Marche indienne'	1879
* Offenbach, *La princesse de Trébizonde*	1869
Marenco, *Excelsior* (Paris: 1883)	1881
† Bizet, *Carmen*	1875
* Lecocq, *La vie mondaine*	1885
timbre	
* Offenbach, *Geneviève de Brabant*	1867
* Bernicat, *François les bas-bleus*	1883
* Offenbach, *Le roi Carotte*	1872
timbre	
* Serpette, *Le Petit Chaperon rouge*	1885
* Audran, *Serment d'amour*	1886
* Planquette, *La cantinière*	1880

(*Continued*)

Table 2.3 (Cont.)

source	**year**
***Les 400 coups du diable* (Châtelet, 1905)**	
* Varney, *Les mousquetaires au couvent*	1880
Waldteufel, 'Au revoir', waltz?	1876?
?: 'Big brass band'	
Parlow, 'Amboss-Polka'	1860s
† Meyerbeer, *L'Africaine*	1865
* Offenbach, *Barbe-Bleue*	1866
Soyer, 'Les fantoches', schottische?	1903?
nursery rhyme	
Massenet, 'Les enfants', song	1882
Berger, 'Marche des gamins de Paris'	1900
couplet du jiu-jitsu (*sic*) — ?	
* Lecocq, *Giroflé-Girofla*	1874
* Ganne, *Les saltimbanques*	1899
† *La bohême*, *rectius*: Mascagni, *Cavalleria rusticana* (Paris: 1892)	1890
Borel-Clerc (arr.), 'La matchiche', song	1905
no information for sixteen numbers	

Sources:
Manuscrits de censure:
— *L'arbre de Noël*: F-Pan F^{18} 906.
— *Le Petit Poucet*: F-Pan F^{18} 934. (Both 1885 production and 1891 revival.)
— *Les aventures de Monsieur de Crac*: F-Pan F^{18} 981.
— *Les 400 coups du diable*: F-Pan F^{18} 983A.

Printed play:
— Victor de Cottens and Victor Darlay, *Les 400 coups du diable*, féerie en 3 actes et 34 tableaux. *Mon beau livre*, 15 February 1906.

But if traditional *féerie* now largely sounds like operetta, it is because the Paris of the 1880s and 1890s largely sounds like operetta. An operetta belt now stretches from place de l'Opéra to place de la République, straddling the old east–west divide (Fig. 2.11). It comprises the Théâtre des Nouveautés, which opened in 1878 on boulevard des Italiens, the Bouffes-Parisiens, the Variétés, the Menus-Plaisirs (where operetta makes a comeback in 1886 after a hiatus), the Renaissance, and the Folies-Dramatiques. The Gaîté, too, occasionally stages large-scale operettas, and so does the Eden-Théâtre, just west of the Opéra, during its ephemeral but glamorous existence. The opera scene, by contrast, experiences

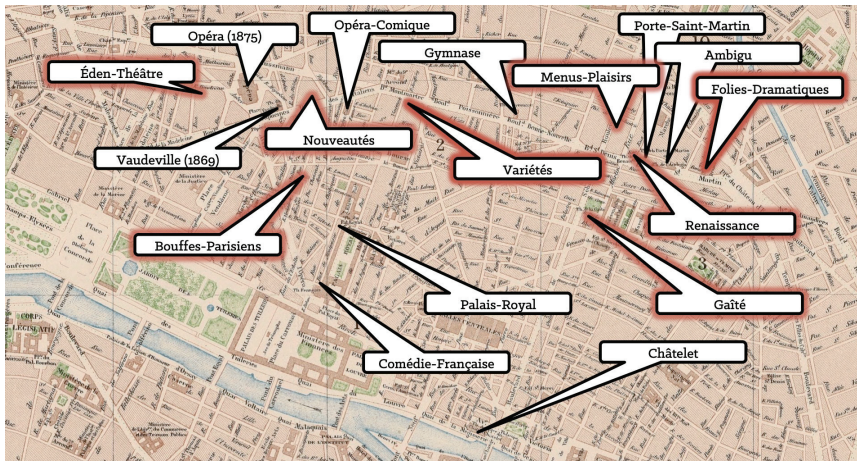


Figure 2.11 Parisian theatres of the Right Bank in the 1880s and 1890s. 'Operetta belt' highlighted in red. ('Opéra-Comique' marks the position of the Salle Favart: between its 1887 fire and its reopening in 1898, the Opéra-Comique was provisionally relocated on place du Châtelet.)

its lowest fortunes: the Théâtre-Lyrique and the Théâtre-Italien have closed, the Opéra and the Opéra-Comique are increasingly conceived as museums for their respective canonised repertoires, and *grand opéra* and *opéra comique* essentially die out as genres in the 1880s.[95] What should surprise us is not the predominance of light music: after all, the *opéras comiques* that the Opéra-Comique churned out at a pace of four or five a year (not counting one-acters) in the 1830s and 1840s were not necessarily that much more serious than fin-de-siècle operetta. Third Republic audiences might or might not have been more frivolous than their July Monarchy counterparts. What matters is that, for musical entertainment, they preferred the commercial theatres to state-subsidised institutions. Historians of opera have observed that during the Third Republic lack of opportunities made it hard for young opera composers to break through. What if the explanation for that lack of opportunities was the simplest of all, that is, a lack of demand for opera? The bourgeoisie of the July Monarchy must have felt a need for cultural legitimation, which the Opéra and the Opéra-Comique, prestigious institutions dating back to the *ancien régime*, could provide. The bourgeoisie of the Third Republic, secure in its power and without an inferiority complex, no longer felt the need for such cultural legitimation. Those who wished to signal their status could do so through cultural practices that were exclusive without coming

[95] One could take as endpoints Massenet's *Le mage* (1891) and André Messager's *La basoche* (1890), respectively.

with a high-art cachet, much as present-day American businesspeople signal their status by securing expensive major league sports tickets.[96] Opera, on the other hand, might have been made less attractive to the upper classes by the Third Republic official rhetoric that saw in it a national treasure to be shared as widely as possible.[97] The several attempts at establishing an Opéra-Populaire (1874 at the Châtelet, 1878–80 at the Gaîté, 1883–4 at the Château-d'Eau, 1900 at the Folies-Dramatiques, 1900–1 at the Château-d'Eau) might have cheapened opera in the eyes of the elite, in the same way as public education, at the time of Bourdieu and Passeron, had cheapened French classical drama.[98]

For about 30 years, starting from the operetta boom of the late 1860s described earlier, operetta reigned supreme. Jean-Claude Yon has used the word 'dramatocracy', borrowed from an American journalist of the 1830s, to describe the central place that theatre occupied in public life for a good part of the 19th century, when audiences were still relatively socially diverse.[99] I propose that the crisis of this state of affairs began in the 1860s with the gentrification of the eastern theatres and the triumph of the aesthetics of operetta, indissolubly associated with high-end commercial theatre: we could call this phase, from about 1868 to about 1898, the era of operettocracy.

But that phase also came to an end. The number of new full-length operettas given at Parisian theatres dropped abruptly, from 11 in 1897 (including composerly vaudevilles; 12 including also a composerly *féerie*) to five in 1899 and just one in 1904. The Bouffes-Parisiens, where it had all begun, closed down in 1903 and reopened the following year programming literary drama. The Menus-Plaisirs had stopped being an operetta theatre in 1897, when André Antoine turned it into a permanent home for the avant-garde. What had happened? It turns out that not just opera, but theatre at large had become culturally marginal. Jean-Claude Yon has demonstrated as much by way of the *droit des pauvres*, the poor rate levied on public entertainments. In 1908, just under half of the revenue, 49.76 per cent, came from the theatres—*cafés-concerts*, music halls, circuses, ballrooms, and cinemas

[96] Katharine Ellis discusses the decreasing appetite of upper-class audiences for cultural cachet in 'Researching Audience Behaviors in Nineteenth-Century Paris: Who Cares if You Listen?', in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Listening in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, ed. Christian Thorau and Hansjakob Ziemer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 37–54.

[97] See Jann Pasler, *Composing the Citizen: Music as Public Utility in Third Republic France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 324–32. On the reframing of the Opéra as a museum see Katharine Ellis, 'Olivier Halanzier and the Operatic Museum in Late Nineteenth-Century France', *Music & Letters* 96 no. 3 (2015): 390–417. On the institutional policy behind the Gluck, Mozart, and Rameau revivals of the period 1896–1912 at the Opéra and (particularly) the Opéra-Comique, see William Gibbons, *Building the Operatic Museum: Eighteenth-Century Opera in Fin-de-Siècle Paris* (Rochester, NY: Rochester University Press, 2013).

[98] On these Third Republic experiments in democratisation, see Emmanuelle Chapin, 'Discriminating Democracy: Theater and Republican Cultural Policy in France, 1878–1893' (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2011) and Sylvain Nicolle, 'La Tribune et la Scène: Les débats parlementaires sur le théâtre en France au XIX^{e} siècle, 1789–1914' (PhD diss., Université Paris-Saclay, 2015), 144–66.

[99] Yon, 'Introduction', in *Une histoire du théâtre à Paris*, 7–20.

making up the rest.[100] Going to the theatre had become just one cultural practice among many. One can speculate that the dynamics that caused the fall of operettocracy was the same that had fuelled its rise: those with money to spend did not feel the need for cultural legitimation. Hence, as they had abandoned the official theatres for operetta, so they abandoned theatres altogether for music halls, sports events, and the like. After all, as Sarah Gutsche-Miller has shown, music halls could be expensive enough to satisfy the desire for conspicuous consumption.[101] As for *cafés-concerts*, in 1900, the Scala rented boxes at more than 8 francs per occupant, a price that could get one good box seats at the Bouffes-Parisiens or the Variétés.[102]

The music for the 1896 *Biche au bois* foreshadows this sea change. Numbers based on either opera or operetta are far less abundant. And less novel, too: among their sources are *Mireille*, *La vie parisienne*, and *Chilpéric*, works that were still performed, but that dated back to the 1860s, and whose composers were dead.[103] On the other hand, if the 1881 *Biche* already included two *café-concert* songs by Louis Gabillaud, now the couple of comic lovers, Fanfreluche and Giroflée, are given numbers 'generally borrowed from the repertoire of cafés-concerts', as the reviewer for *Le Monde artiste* remarks.[104] The first traditional-*féerie* hit of the new century, *Les 400 coups du diable* (Victor de Cottens and Victor Darlay, 1905, over 200 performances), confirms the trend. Although the published play only provides information about the music of roughly half of the vocal numbers (see Table 2.3), we see that opera and operetta have little weight in the score and are largely represented by old, canonised works. The sonic horizon of the play, instead, seems closer to that of the ballroom, with echoes of dance music old and new, including the latest exotic dancing fad: 'La matchiche', the dance song popularised by *café-concert* star Félix Mayol. An article that appeared on *La Vie parisienne* during the run of *Les 400 coups du diable* that denounced the immoral practices of 'industrial theatre' states, of *féerie* music: 'Most often, it is drawn from the repertoire of Gounod, Dranem, or Mayol'—a dead opera composer whose music had become commonplace and two popular *café-concert* singers.[105] A *féerie* like *Les 400 coups du diable* is theatre that acknowledges the loss of relevance of its

[100] Yon, *Une histoire du théâtre à Paris*, 351.
[101] Gutsche-Miller, *Parisian Music-Hall Ballet*.
[102] J. R. Cicerone, *À travers les plaisirs parisiens: Guide intime* (Paris: Édition & Publicité, 1900), 80.
[103] *Mireille* belonged to the repertoire of the Opéra-Comique, *Chilpéric* and *La vie parisienne* had been recently revived at the Variétés.
[104] '[Les] couplets, généralement empruntés au répertoire des cafés-concerts — distribués au joyeux Pougaud, qui fait Fanfreluche, et à M^lle^ Théry, pleine d'entrain, qui fait Giroflée.' Edmond Stoullig, 'La semaine théâtrale', *Le Monde artiste*, 22 November 1896, 742. I am grateful to Catherine Massip, who helped me identify the song 'Y avait qu'des muf's à c'tte noc'-là', lyrics by Villemer and Lucien Delormel, music by Louis-Antoine Dubost. Unfortunately, I was not able to identify any more *café-concert* songs.
[105] 'La musique qui accompagne une féerie ne doit jamais être originale. On la prend le plus souvent dans le répertoire de Gounod, de Dranem ou de Mayol'. Her Trippa, 'Vagues généralités sur le théâtre industriel', *La Vie parisienne*, 20 January 1906, 60.

own medium—one could think, as a comparison, of present-day genre novels that heavily rely on film tropes, as they cater to an audience whose imagination is shaped by film, not literature.

But for an old medium coming to terms with its own loss of relevance, there was a new medium that contained the seeds of a new mass cultural practice. At the time of the 1896 *Biche*, film was still little more than a curiosity, a perfected magic lantern. By 1905, Georges Méliès had been releasing increasingly ambitious film *féeries*: from *Cendrillon* (1899), to *Le voyage dans la lune* (1902), loosely based on the Offenbach composerly *féerie*, to *Le royaume des fées* (1903), to *Le voyage à travers l'impossible* (1904), inspired by the 1882 scientific *féerie* of the same title (minus the article) by Verne and d'Ennery. *Le voyage à travers l'impossible* comprised 40 tableaux and was 374 metres long, resulting in a running time of about 25 minutes.[106] The authors of *Les 400 coups du diable*, eager, like all *féerie* authors, to keep *féerie* up to date, sought the collaboration of Méliès for two tableaux, 'Le voyage dans l'espace' (The Space Trip) and 'Le cyclone' (The Hurricane). The film insert that Méliès devised for 'Le voyage dans l'espace' is extant, as it passed into the 1906 film *féerie Les quat' cents farces du diable* (known in English as *The Merry Frolics of Satan*), which had roughly the same (for the time) impressive proportions as *Le voyage à travers l'impossible*.[107]

We would probably be wrong, though, to think that *Les 400 coups du diable* favoured the emergence of filmmaking as an autonomous art. Cinema was still just a technology that the Châtelet could use to its ends, not yet an established cultural practice, and if the Châtelet helped the rise of cinema as a cultural practice, it was rather by hosting film screenings in its auditorium, starting in February 1907.[108] At any rate, *féerie*, filmic or otherwise, fell out of fashion at around the time cinema was established as a cultural practice, at the end of the first decade of the century. For the purposes of the Châtelet, the film inserts of *Les 400 coups du diable* did not belong to an original art form, but simply to theatre. And Méliès himself was eager to lay claim to theatre for the material from 'Le voyage dans l'espace' and for his film *féerie* output in general. A promotional brochure for *Les quat' cents farces du diable* boasts that the material recycled from *Les 400 coups du diable* had received '500 consecutive performances at the Théâtre du Châtelet' (a figure far removed from reality), and presents the film as 'a true *féerie* featuring a large number of stage tricks', for which 'considerable machinery and scenery work' was needed, instead of showcasing film-specific techniques such as stop tricks or

[106] 'Le voyage à travers l'impossible', promotional brochure, Cinémathèque française, fonds Méliès, MELIES2-B1. On the two *Voyage*s, stage and screen, see Sylvie Roques, 'Du plateau de théâtre au studio de cinéma: le cas de *Voyage à travers l'impossible*', in *Théâtre, destin du cinéma, Théâtre, levain du cinéma*, ed. Agathe Torti-Alcayaga and Christine Kiehl (Paris: Le Manuscrit, 2013), 45–62.

[107] 'Les quat' cents farces du diable', promotional brochure, Cinémathèque française, fonds Méliès, MELIES3-B1.

[108] 'Informations', *Comœdia*, 6 November 1907, 4.

multiple exposures.[109] The description of another tableau in the same film, 'La cuisine' (The Kitchen), starring the celebrated clown troupe 'les Price', even lists a number of stage devices that have been employed, such as different kinds of trapdoors.

Les 400 coups du diable, at any rate, would be the last great success of traditional *féerie*, now confined to the Châtelet. The following year, *Pif! Paf! Pouf!*, by the same playwrights and also featuring film inserts by Méliès, fared less well, and *La princesse Sans-Gêne*, in 1907, fared even worse, barely reaching 100 performances.[110] In 1907 and in 1908, the Châtelet also revived two timeless *féeries*: *Les pilules du diable* and *La chatte blanche*, respectively. Those productions would mark the last appearances of the classic *féerie* repertoire on the Parisian stage. Traditional *féerie* did not end with a bang, since the risk-averse business model of the *féerie* industry made catastrophic flops unlikely, but gracefully bowed out with a production of *La chatte blanche* that closed in January 1909 having failed to meet the 100-performance bar. It had, however, lived for another 40 years after being hastily pronounced dead in 1868.

[109] 'Les quat' cents farces du diable', promotional brochure.

[110] We have even less information about the music of these plays than we do for *Les 400 coups du diable*, since not only did they remain unpublished, but also theatrical censorship was abolished in 1906, so we cannot rely on *manuscrits de censure*.

3

Scientific *Féerie* and the Féerisation of Parisian Theatre

1874–1940: the age of scientific *féerie*

In July 1938, Hollywood film producer and aviator Howard Hughes flew around the world in less than four days. Having departed from New York, his first stopover was at the Parisian airfield of Le Bourget, and his feat received enthusiastic coverage in the French press. Just a month later, only a few miles south of Le Bourget, the Châtelet reopened after the summer hiatus with Jules Verne and Adolphe d'Ennery's *Le tour du monde en 80 jours*, the 1874 adaptation of *Around the World in Eighty Days*, which continued to be a safe bet for the theatre's management, despite the fact that Phileas Fogg's fictional record had just been beaten in real life by a factor of 20.

The following summer, with a decision that looks equally anachronistic to us, the Châtelet brought back the other Verne–d'Ennery blockbuster, *Michel Strogoff*, from 1880. Apparently, the Châtelet assumed that theatre-goers would have no trouble reconciling an almost 60-year-old play glorifying Imperial Russia and its subjugation of non-ethnic Russian peoples in Asia with a reality where the Romanov monarchy was a distant memory and had been replaced by the multinational Soviet Union. They might also have hoped that the ongoing negotiations between France, Britain, and the Soviet Union would be successful and that a new alliance would be soon announced. When the 1897 Franco-Russian alliance was concluded, *Michel Strogoff* had served as a vehicle to celebrate Franco-Russian friendship (or, more cynically put, the geopolitical events had helped the play stay relevant, and profitable). The same could have happened in August 1939, if things had taken a different turn. But, as we know, the talks with the Western powers failed, and the Soviet Union signed the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact instead.

Howard Hughes and 65 years of technological advances did not make *Le tour du monde en 80 jours* a thing of the past, but something else did. On Friday 10 May 1940, Hitler launched his offensive on the Netherlands and Belgium. In Paris, Prime

Minister Paul Reynaud reshuffled his cabinet, in London, Neville Chamberlain resigned and the First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill, formed a new government. The Phoney War was over; what would be known as the Battle of France had begun. On Monday 13 May, *Le tour du monde en 80 jours* was performed for the last time at the Châtelet. It would not be revived again: an optimistic tale of an Englishman (Fogg), a Frenchman (Passepartout), and an American (Archibald Corsican) on a triumphant expedition across the (largely British-ruled) globe, it was unlikely to be authorised by the German occupants, and would have been at odds with the mood of a defeated and inward-looking France.

In November 1941, the performing-arts weekly *Comœdia* published an article on *féerie* by Gaston Baty.[1] A prominent stage director in the interwar period and one of the three surviving members of the celebrated Cartel des Quatre, Baty was among the artists who chose to continue working in Nazi-occupied Paris—unlike fellow Cartel member Louis Jouvet.[2] The article advocates for the revival of the old-fashioned supernatural *féerie*, which had died out as a mainstream phenomenon in the first decade of the century. Baty compares supernatural *féerie* favourably to 'a whole lineage of spectacular plays [*pièces à spectacle*] that had pretensions to modernise the traditional formula'.[3] The 'lineage' in question is scientific *féerie* (though Baty does not use the expression), and its progenitor *Le tour du monde en 80 jours* (as Baty points out). What made scientific *féerie* artistically inferior, according to Baty, was its unwillingness to transcend the present moment and the physical world: 'Instead of escaping out of time, people were content with travelling through space—a space shrunk to the size of Earth. Poor overly sensible *féeries*, whose imagination got weaker with every season, and the best of which could never equal *Les bibelots du diable* or *La poudre de Perlinpinpin*.'[4] The claim that scientific *féerie* had confined itself to Earth is technically incorrect, since some plays did explore other astronomical bodies, but the meaning is clear. This passage is noteworthy as Baty is among the first writers who could legitimately speak of scientific *féerie* in the past tense and among the last who still recognised scientific *féerie* as *féerie*.

Without going as far as seeing in Baty's plans for the restoration of traditional *féerie* a reactionary agenda akin to the 'national revolution' of the Vichy regime,

[1] Gaston Baty, 'Féeries', *Comœdia*, 15 November 1941, 1 and 4. Hélène Laplace-Claverie quotes in part and discusses this article in *Modernes féeries: Le théâtre français du XX^e siècle entre réenchantement et désenchantement* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2007), 51–2.

[2] Formed in 1927, the Cartel was a coalition of four leading directors of the Parisian avant-garde theatre scene: in addition to Baty and Jouvet, Charles Dullin, and Georges Pitoëff.

[3] '[T]oute une lignée de pièces à spectacle qui prétendirent moderniser la formule traditionnelle.' Baty, 'Féeries', 1.

[4] 'Au lieu de s'évader hors du temps, on se contenta de voyager à travers l'espace, un espace rapetissé aux dimensions de la terre. Pauvres féeries trop raisonnable, d'une fantaisie chaque saison plus indigente, dont les meilleures n'égalèrent jamais les "Bibelots du Diable" ou "La Poudre de Perlinpinpin".' Baty, 'Féeries', 1.

we can guess that the longing for the timeless, mythical universe of fairy tales chimed in with a disillusionment with the ideology of progress that had marked the Third Republic. In 1944, Baty would put on a puppet-theatre production of an old-style *féerie*, *La queue de la poêle*, which shares its title with an 1856 play by Paul Siraudin and Alfred Delacour but also credits as inspirations the canonic *féerie* authors Alphonse Martainville (co-author of *Le pied de mouton*), Clairville, and the Cogniard brothers.[5] In hindsight, Baty's 1941 article, with its ideal of a dream world born out of stage tricks and of an oneiric pastiche of early-modern decorative styles, appears to have found its perfect realisation in Jean Cocteau's 1946 film *La Belle et la Bête*. It is surely no coincidence that the best-known sequence of the Cocteau film, where the furniture of the Beast's castle comes to life, recalls a trick-intensive tableau from *La biche au bois*, 'La chaumière des invisibles' (The Cabin of the Invisibles).[6] It is probably no coincidence, either, that Cocteau is another case of an artist who accommodated himself to Nazi occupants during the *années noires*: even though *La Belle et la Bête* was made after the war, its alignment with traditional *féerie* testifies to a climate in which the values reflected by scientific *féerie* had ceased to hold currency.

The stage life of scientific *féerie* broadly coincided with a moment in the political history of France. When *Le tour du monde* premièred on 7 November 1874, the Third Republic was not yet fully established; two months after the play's final Parisian performances, Prime Minister Philippe Pétain would liquidate the regime with a self-coup. But it also coincided with a moment in world history. Among Verne's inspirations was surely an 1871 article by the travel writer Edmond Plauchut titled 'Le tour du monde en cent vingt jours'.[7] Plauchut then went on to write a book about the 'four military campaigns of 1874': the Japanese invasion of Taiwan, the Third Anglo-Ashanti War, the French expedition in Tonkin, and the Aceh War. The following year, to make the point of his book clearer, he reissued it as *Les armées de la civilisation*, the 'armies of civilisation' being those of the newly modernised Meiji Japan, Britain, France, and the Netherlands.[8] By the late 1940s, Plauchut's 'civilising' powers had either lost their imperial possessions (Japan) or were confronted, in those same 1874 theatres of war, with decolonisation movements led by three emerging figures on the world stage—Kwame Nkrumah, Ho Chi Minh, and Sukarno. As for the British Raj so prominently featured in *Le tour*

[5] '*La Queue de la Poêle*, Féerie en 3 actes et 14 tableaux, à la manière du Boulevard du Crime, d'après Martainville, Siraudin, Clairville, les Frères Cogniard et autres Classiques du Genre'. Printed programme in F-Pnas 4-RO-13532 (2).

[6] The same sequence is likely to have suggested in turn the characters of the animated objects in the 1991 Disney film *Beauty and the Beast*.

[7] Edmond Plauchut, 'Le tour du monde en cent vingt jours', *Revue des deux mondes*, 1 September 1871, 105–31, and 15 September 1871, 368–403.

[8] Edmond Plauchut, *Les quatre campagnes militaires de 1874* (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1875). Second edition as *Les armées de la civilisation* (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1876).

du monde, it outlasted the play by a mere seven years. With its technophilia, its anthropocentrism, and its Eurocentrism, scientific *féerie* embodied the ethos of an era marked by the Second Industrial Revolution, the great inventors (Bell, Edison, the Lumières, Marconi), the First Globalisation, but also the apogee of the British and French colonial empires, the conquest of the American West—followed by the codification of the Frontier myth—and the belief in the notion of the civilising mission.

Contemporaries already drew a connection between scientific *féerie* and the ideology of the Third Republic. Twenty years before Baty, playwright Robert de Flers had already voiced nostalgia for traditional *féerie*. In a review of the 1919 scientific *féerie Malikoko, roi nègre*, he wrote that no one could replace fairies, 'neither engineers, nor explorers, nor Negro kings, nor Mr Wilson himself'. 'Negro kings' refers to the eponymous character of the play, the latest in a long series of non-Europeans portrayed in scientific *féerie* according to racist stereotypes. The mention of Woodrow Wilson, who had just received the Nobel Peace Prize for his instrumental role in the founding of the League of Nations, presumably implies that the United States president and the writers who devised scientific *féerie* plots shared an inclination to think on a global scale.[9] Flers summed up his complaint with the words 'Why did they "secularise" *féerie*?', which likened the purging of *féerie* from its supernatural elements to the secularist policies of the Third Republic, most famously the 1905 law on the separation between church and state.[10]

But the awareness that the new *féerie* expressed a new set of values for a new era had been present since the inception of the phenomenon. In Chapter 1, I quoted Émile Zola's remark that 'it only made sense that today's *féeries* would be adapted from Mr Verne's books' since these 'were taking the place of Perrault's tales in the hands of children'. Zola, who was writing after the première of Verne and d'Ennery's *Les enfants du capitaine Grant* in December 1878, was not the first person to suggest a parallel between Perrault (and traditional stage *féerie*) and Verne (and scientific *féerie*). A conservative writer, Gaston de Saint-Valry, had already made the Perrault–Verne comparison in an article titled 'Old Fairies and Modern Fairies', in December 1875. Although the article is ostensibly only concerned with literature and not with the theatre, Saint-Valry's reflections may have

[9] 'Personne ne les remplacera, ni les ingénieurs, ni les explorateurs, ni les rois nègres, ni M. Wilson lui-même.' Robert de Flers, 'La semaine dramatique', *Le Figaro*, 21 December 1919, 1.

[10] 'Ah! pourquoi donc a-t-on 'laïcisé' la féerie?' Flers, 'La semaine dramatique', 21 December 1919, 1. Flers was so proud of his quip on the secularisation of *féerie* that he repeated it in 1921, in a foreword to a fairy tale by Queen Marie of Romania, and again while reviewing the 1923 play *Bouboule*. Robert de Flers, preface to Marie, reine de Roumanie, *Kildine: Histoire d'une méchante petite princesse* (Tours: Mame, 1921), 6; Robert de Flers, 'La semaine dramatique', *Le Figaro*, 14 January 1924, 1.

been prompted by *Le voyage dans la lune*, which had been playing at the Gaîté since October.

> I seem to hear the old fairies saying: 'Child! Be wise, be clever, circumspect, eager to please … be skilful, active and willing to help…'. 'Young man', say the modern fairies, 'learn, study, work, do not be bothered by society and men. Society is harsh and men are selfish. Turn to nature and science, focus on yourself, broaden your mind, strengthen your courage … As a learned person, you will be free, and, if not happy, at least at peace'.[11]

Old fairies speak the language of the *ancien régime*—loyalty, respect for authority, prudence; modern fairies speak the language of capitalism—individualism, industriousness, innovation. The very fact that the former address the reader as 'child' and the latter as 'young man' highlights the contrast between a paternalist ethics and an ethics of personal responsibility. To quote a classic work of social history, Harold Perkin's *The Origins of Modern English Society, 1780–1880*, the modern fairies voice the 'entrepreneurial ideal' that replaced *ancien régime* values by prevailing in a 'battle for the heart' (that is, a struggle for cultural hegemony).[12] The emergence of scientific *féerie* in the mid-1870s coincided with the definitive triumph of the entrepreneurial ideal in France—a triumph arguably marked by the 1876 election and the constitutional crisis of the following year, which put an end to the reactionary *ordre moral* cabinets and consolidated the young Third Republic as a parliamentary regime.

If the magnitude and influence of scientific *féerie* as a cultural phenomenon are beyond doubt, my labelling this phenomenon 'scientific *féerie*' is not innocent. Fin-de-siècle critics did not settle on a term, after the initial popularity of 'scientific *féerie*', and often referred to *Le tour du monde* to define the genre by way of synecdoche. Most theatre historians refer to this repertoire using the expression *pièce à grand spectacle*—a common as well as frustratingly vague contemporary designation that appends the qualifier 'highly spectacular', used throughout the century, to the neutral term 'play', which became widespread after the 1864 deregulation had ended the policing of theatrical genres. Modern scholarship has failed to fully acknowledge these works as part and parcel of the *féerie* tradition. John McCormick's *Popular Theatres of Nineteenth-Century France* discusses them in a chapter devoted to melodrama, despite also having a chapter on *féerie*; in his survey of 19th-century Parisian theatre, Jean-Claude Yon groups them with military

[11] 'Il me semble entendre dire aux anciennes fées: — Enfant! sois avisé, sois spirituel, circonspect, étudie-toi à plaire … sois habile, actif et serviable … — Jeune homme, disent les fées modernes, apprends, étudie, travaille, ne t'inquiète pas de la société et des hommes; la société est dure et les hommes égoïstes; tournes-toi [*sic*] vers la nature et la science, confine-toi en toi-même, agrandis ton esprit, fortifie ton courage … savant, tu seras libre, et, sinon heureux, au moins paisible.' Gaston de Saint-Valry, 'Critique politique et littéraire', *La Patrie*, 14 December 1875, [2].

[12] Harold Perkin, *The Origins of Modern English Society, 1780–1880* (London: Routledge, 2002). First published 1969.

plays, while, again, dealing with *féeries* in a separate section; Sylvie Roques, in her recent monograph, emphasises the originality of the Verne plays; Anne-Simone Dufief considers *Le tour du monde* a hybrid of melodrama, comedy, and *féerie*.[13] In choosing to use 'scientific *féerie*' for this corpus, I am striking a compromise between an emic and an etic position. On the one hand, the expression 'scientific *féerie*' seems to have fallen out of use after the 1870s.[14] On the other hand, there is ample evidence that these plays continued to be considered, and called, *féeries*.

When, in 1886, the Châtelet revived *Le tour du monde*, critic Edmond Stoullig greeted it as 'the masterpiece of [its] genre', and though he did not advance a label for that genre, he described *Le tour du monde* as 'this *féerie* that wanders from Suez to the Indies, and from Indies to San Francisco'.[15] In 1890, the *Revue d'art dramatique* published a satirical piece by playwright Auguste Germain based on the old trope of writing for the stage as cookery. 'Recipes' for different kinds of melodramas (roasted meats, in the culinary metaphor) are followed by a single recipe for *féeries* (desserts). While military plays are treated as a variant of melodrama, plays in the vein of *Le tour du monde* are included among *féeries*. In fact, Germain writes that

> One can distinguish between two kinds of *féerie*: the old and the modern. The old one consisted in taking a fairy tale, generally by Perrault, and dividing it up into tableaux where one could see in order a poor cabin, a palace room, a forest, a cave, then the palace of the fairies, the palace of diamonds, the palace of mirrors, and any number of other palaces.—The modern one has harnessed the latest discoveries of science. Instead of taking us to impossible lands, it makes us travel to actual places, to Persia, to the Indies, to Patagonia, to Lapland, and we see real Persians, real Indians, real Patagonians, and authentic Lapps.[16]

[13] John McCormick, *Popular Theatres of Nineteenth-Century France* (London: Routledge, 1993); Jean-Claude Yon, *Une histoire du théâtre à Paris de la Révolution à la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Aubier, 2012); Sylvie Roques, *Jules Verne et l'invention d'un théâtre-monde* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2018); Anne-Simone Dufief, '*Le tour du monde en quatre-vingt jours*, une féerie scientifique', in *Jules Verne cent ans après*, ed. Jean-Pierre Picot and Christian Robin (Rennes: Terre de Brume, 2005), 139–58.

[14] Which does not mean that there are no later occurrences: see, for example, Georges Cain, *Anciens théâtres de Paris: Le boulevard du crime, les théâtres de boulevard* (Paris: Charpentier et Fasquelle, 1920), 238.

[15] '[C]ette féerie qui se promène de Suez aux Indes et es Indes à San Francisco … C'est le chef-d'œuvre du genre, enfin'. Edmond Stoullig, 'Premières représentations', *Le National*, 22 November 1886, 4. Also in Édouard Noël and Edmond Stoullig, *Les annales du théâtre et de la musique*, year 1886 (Paris: Charpentier, 1887), 320.

[16] 'On peut distinguer deux sortes de féerie: l'ancienne et la moderne. L'ancienne consistait à prendre un conte de fées généralement de Perrault, et à le découper en tableaux où l'on voyait successivement une pauvre cabane, une chambre d'un palais, une forêt, une caverne, puis le palais des fées, les palais des diamants, le palais de glaces et une infinité d'autres palais. — La moderne a mis à contribution les dernières découvertes de la science. Au lieu de nous emmener dans des pays impossibles, elle nous fait voyager dans des contrées réelles, en Perse, dans les Indes, en Patagonie, en Laponie, et nous voyons de vrais Persans, de vrais Indiens, de vrais Patagons et d'authentiques Lapons.' Auguste Germain, 'Les recettes de cuisine théâtrale de M. Sésosthène Rabichon', third and final instalment, *Revue d'art dramatique*, vol. 18 (April–June 1890): 34. *Les recettes de cuisine théâtrale de M. Sésosthène Rabichon* was also published as a slim volume (Paris: Kolb, n.d.).

Germain goes on to recommend that the author include a shipwreck scene or 'A Train Attacked by Savages'.[17] In the summer of 1896, *Le Gaulois* reported: 'Tonight the Châtelet will revive *Le tour du monde*, which has been called the queen of *féeries*'.[18] Though I have not found another instance of 'the queen of *féeries*' referring to *Le tour du monde*, at least the article-writer was applying to the Verne play an epithet that seems to have been mostly used for two canonical supernatural *féeries*, *Les pilules du diable* and *La biche au bois*. Later that year, when the Châtelet revived that other queen of *féeries*, *La biche au bois*, d'Ennery was spotted in the audience by prominent critic Francisque Sarcey, and, according to the latter's review, they had the following exchange:

> 'We should find', [d'Ennery] told me, 'a new form for *féerie*.'
>
> 'That is what you attempted', I replied to him, 'when you wrote *Le tour du monde en 80 jours* with Jules Verne. That trip around the world, if you figure it out, is the ancient *féerie* in a scientific form.'[19]

If anything, after the disappearance of supernatural *féerie* from the Parisian stage in 1909, the term 'féerie' could be applied to the new kind of plays without need for the 'scientific' or 'modern' qualifier. A 1909 book about stage technology that describes the shipwreck and the airplane seen in a play from that same year, *Les aventures de Gavroche*, repeatedly calls the play a *féerie*.[20] When Simone de Beauvoir, born in 1908, mentions the *féeries* she has seen as a child at the Châtelet, she is referring to this non-supernatural variety of *féerie*, to which the titles she cites belong (*La course au bonheur*, from 1917, and, unsurprisingly, *Le tour du monde*) and which was the only one practised at the time (with the lone exception of a throwback in 1921, *Jean-qui-rit* by Hugues Delorme).[21]

All this suggests that there are ample grounds to consider this repertoire a subclass of *féerie*, which I will call 'scientific *féerie*'. In fact, what needs to be justified is rather its exclusion from discussions of *féerie*. The main culprit for the erasure of scientific *féerie* as *féerie* is probably to be found in Paul Ginisty's 1910 volume on *féerie*, which accepts as *féerie* Verne and d'Ennery's *Voyage à travers l'impossible*, but disapproves of non-supernatural subjects and pits the *Tour du monde*-style

[17] 'L'attaque d'un train par les sauvages.' Germain, 'Les recettes de cuisine théâtrale', 34. Germain sets the phrase apart from what precedes it with a mid-sentence capital, as if he were quoting a title of a tableau or the wording of a playbill.

[18] 'Le Châtelet repred ce soir *Le tour du monde*, qu'on a appelé la reine des féeries'. Tout-Paris, 'Bloc-notes parisien', *Le Gaulois*, 11 July 1896, 1.

[19] 'Il faudrait, me disait-il, trouver à la féerie une forme nouvelle. — C'est ce que vous avez essayé de faire, lui répondis-je, quand vous avez écrit, avec Jules Verne, le *Tour du monde en 80 jours*. Ce tour du monde n'était, à le bien prendre, que l'antique féerie sous une forme scientifique.' Francisque Sarcey, 'Chronique théâtrale', *Le Temps*, 23 November 1896, [1].

[20] Max de Nansouty, *Les trucs du théâtre, du cirque et de la foire* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1909), 53–8.

[21] Simone de Beauvoir, *Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée* (Paris: Gallimard, 1958), 55 (part 1).

'spectacular play' (*pièce à spectacle*) against '"classic" *féerie*'.[22] Ginisty clearly shared the nostalgia for the waning *féerie* of old that was common among the literati of the time and that produced Maurice Maeterlinck's *L'oiseau bleu*, among other works. But the fact that Ginisty's remained for decades the only available book-length study of *féerie* has meant that it has too often been taken at face value, without questioning the agenda of its author.

Introducing (or rather reintroducing) the category of 'scientific *féerie*' has at least three advantages: it allows for new readings of *Le tour du mond*e and its progeny; it adds to our understanding of traditional *féerie*, as traditional plays often borrowed ideas from the scientific ones; and it provides us with a conceptual tool for mapping the confusing generic landscape of Parisian theatre after the 1864 liberalisation. That tool is what I call 'féerisation'. If operettisation consisted in exporting the practice of original vocal numbers outside operetta, féerisation consisted in exporting the dramaturgy of *féerie*—a paratactic organisation into tableau-sized episodes and an emphasis on visual attractions—outside traditional *féerie*. The earlier quotation from Auguste Germain makes explicit how the new *féerie* adopted this model, lifting it from the old. While the old *féerie* had a certain thematic consistency, though, scientific *féerie* is more diverse, and ranges from melodrama-like plays such as *Michel Strogoff* to vaudeville-like ones such as *Le voyage de Suzette* (1890). But *féerie* dramaturgy is an essential component of féerised plays, arguably less of an accessory (because more structural) than the musical numbers that characterise operettised plays. This is why seeing a corpus of féerised plays as 'scientific *féerie*' is useful.

On the surface, operettisation is a means to split up a traditional category—recognising the vaudeville in operettised vaudeville, or the *féerie* in operettised féerie, instead of filing them together under the operetta label—and féerisation a means to lump disparate works into a new category, scientific *féerie*. The point, however, is neither splitting nor lumping, but to develop flexible tools that will allow us make sense of a vast, un- or under-explored portion of fin-de-siècle Parisian commercial theatre.

I will start my survey from *Le tour du monde en 80 jours*, the prototype of the féerised play as *Le roi Carotte* was that of the operettised *féerie*. I will then try to map the different paths that *féerie* dramaturgy took in the following decades. We will encounter not only divergent branches and dead ends, as in evolutionary trees, but also points where separate branches coalesce, as in Alfred Kroeber's tree of culture.[23] The *féeries* of Gaston Serpette, with which I will end this chapter, represent one such moment of synthesis.

[22] Paul Ginisty, *La féerie* (Paris: Louis-Michaud, 1910), 214–15.
[23] I borrow the analogy from Franco Moretti, 'Trees', in *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for Literary History* (London: Verso, 2007), 78–81.

Le tour du monde en 80 jours, féerie

Verne and d'Ennery did not invent scientific *féerie* out of thin air, and one could trace possible precedents in *féerie* literature or dramatic literature in general. An affinity with both technology and travel had long been an inbuilt feature of spectacular theatre. The 'queen of *féeries*' *Les pilules du diable* (1839, by Ferdinand Laloue, Anicet-Bourgeois, and Laurent) already had an exploding train coach; *Rothomago* (1862, by d'Ennery, Clairville, and Albert Monnier) built a slapstick gag around a telescope; and in Offenbach's *Le roi Carotte* Fridolin and his friends sang a number to explain rail travel to the incredulous denizens of ancient Pompeii. The 1853 *féerie Les sept merveilles du monde*, by d'Ennery and Eugène Grangé, treated the spectator to an excursion through the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, as promised by the title; it had been preceded by the less influential *Les quatre parties du monde* (1851, by Anicet-Bourgeois, Clairville, and Laurent), set, again as advertised by the title, across four continents. The occasion for Théophile Gautier's impassioned advocacy for 'ocular entertainment' (*spectacles oculaires*) was an 1841 military play, *Murat*, which he praised for affording the viewer the opportunity to travel through space, from Egypt, to Russia, to Southern Italy.[24] When reviewing *La biche au bois* in 1845, Gautier again mentioned as a strength of ocular entertainment its ability to transport the spectator 'from Hell to Heaven, *from Switzerland to China*, from the palace to the cabin'.[25] In 1848, Gérard de Nerval and Joseph Méry collaborated with Hervé on a play with music, variously titled *De Paris à Pékin* or *Les Parisiens en voyage* and sometimes referred to as a *féerie*, that took its characters around the world—to Haiti, Panama, Borneo, and China.[26] Combining travel and technological wonders, a play from 1851 celebrated, and literally recreated on stage, the London Great Exhibition of that year: *Le Palais de Cristal, ou Les Parisiens à Londres*, by Clairville and Jules Cordier, which was revived in an updated version in 1866, as Paris geared up for another World's Fair.

Despite this prehistory, though, the obligatory starting point of an investigation into scientific *féerie* is *Le tour du monde en 80 jours*, and the first question that needs to be answered is: in what respects is *Le tour du monde* a *féerie*?

The plot of *Le tour du monde*, which premièred at the Porte-Saint-Martin in November 1874, is largely the same as the 1873 novel of the same title (but

[24] Théophile Gautier, *Critique théâtrale*, ed. Patrick Berthier (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2007–), 3:257–8. For Gautier and 'ocular entertainment', see Chapter 2, footnote 31.

[25] 'Vous sautez de l'enfer au ciel, de la Suisse à la Chine, du palais à la chaumiere, sans bouger de place.' Gautier, *Critique théâtrale*, 5:399. Emphasis mine.

[26] Unfortunately, only the Haiti episode was performed (in 1850, as *Une nuit blanche*), and the text of the play is lost. See Michel Rosenfeld, '*De Paris à Pékin* ou *La Nuit Blanche*? Une lettre inédite de Gérard de Nerval à Paul Bocage', *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France* 84, no. 4 (1984): 570–6; Gérard de Nerval, *Théâtre*, ed. Jean Richer, vol. 1, no. 3 in the series *Œuvres complémentaires de Gérard de Nerval* (Paris: Minard, 1965), 421–30.

written with the number spelled out: *Le tour du monde en quatre-vingts jours*; to avoid confusion, I use for the novel the customary English title, *Around the World in Eighty Days*). Yet it would be wrong to assume that the astute man of the theatre d'Ennery had taken the initiative to adapt *Around the World in Eighty Days* and that Verne only signed the play in order to collect royalties. Writing a play was very much Verne's idea: he had initially conceived the work for the stage and penned a draft with a different collaborator, Édouard Cadol. Afterwards, he reworked by himself the draft play into the novel, and then, with d'Ennery, the novel into the performed play. It is worth keeping in mind that in his thirties and early forties, before turning to the novel, Verne had tried to succeed as a playwright. He was close to the Dumas family as Alexandre *père* was running his Théâtre-Historique and later worked for the Théâtre-Lyrique. Between 1850 and 1861, he had six works performed, all but one in one act; among those were four librettos for his composer friend Aristide Hignard, which testify to Verne's early interest in plurimedial art forms.[27] If d'Ennery brought his extensive *féerie* experience to *Le tour du monde*, the Verne–Cadol draft already exhibits the characteristics of scientific *féerie*: a light-hearted tone, an episodic structure with a large number of tableaux, and several spectacular attractions—a *défilé* and ballet, a disaster (the Great Chicago Fire), and, in the Yokohama episode, a performance from a troupe of acrobats (which would pass into the novel).[28] In this version Passepartout even sang a vocal number. There is no evidence that Verne regarded the work as a *féerie*, but it is perhaps telling that Cadol apparently thought of 'offering it to Offenbach', that is, of submitting it for performance at the Gaîté, of which Offenbach had become manager in 1873 and which was heavily invested in *féerie*.[29]

[27] Verne's librettos for Hignard are, in chronological order, *Colin-maillard* (1853), *Les compagnons de la marjolaine* (1855), *Monsieur de Chimpanzé* (1858), and *L'auberge des Ardennes* (1860). *Monsieur de Chimpanzé* was signed by Verne alone and performed at the Bouffes-Parisiens, the others were performed at the Théâtre-Lyrique and written in collaboration with Michel Carré. For a primer on Verne's stage works, see Jean-Michel Margot, 'Jules Verne, Playwright', *Science Fiction Studies* 32, no. 1 (2005): 150–62. Musicologists have interrogated the place of music and opera in Verne's fiction, with particular attention to the short story *Une fantaisie du docteur Ox*, which pokes fun at Giacomo Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots* (and would inspire an Offenbach operetta), and to the novel *Le château des Carpathes*, which features sound reproduction: see, for instance, Cormac Newark, 'Knowing What Happens Next: Opera in Verne', in *Opera in the Novel from Balzac to Proust* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 110–35, and Nicolò Palazzetti, 'Opera, Audio Technologies, and Audience Practices in the Late Nineteenth Century: The Case of Jules Verne', *Sound Stage Screen* 2, no. 2 (2022): 33–59.

[28] Verne and Cadol's early *Tour du monde* has been published as an issue of the *Bulletin de la Société Jules Verne*: no. 152 (2004).

[29] Gustave Lafargue, 'Courrier des théâtres', *Le Figaro*, 20 November 1873, 4, quoted in Roques, *L'invention d'un théâtre-monde*, 117. The closest that Verne got to acknowledging his debt to *féerie* is, to my knowledge, an 1872 letter in which he pitches an idea for an adaptation of *Voyages et aventures du capitaine Hatteras* (1866) to his publisher, reminding him that 'newspapers have been so kind as to say that Mr Verne should write a *féerie*'. Olivier Dumas, Piero Gondolo della Riva, and Volker Dehs, eds., *Correspondance inédite de Jules Verne et de Pierre-Jules Hetzel, 1863–1886* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1999–2002), 1:165.

The very number of tableaux in *Le tour du monde*—15 in the performed version, 16 in the surviving manuscript of the Verne–Cadol version, and apparently even more at an earlier stage—is telling. Melodramas other than military plays rarely had more than a dozen tableaux at the time; only military plays, revues, and, of course, *féeries* had that many.

Le tour du monde en 80 jours, as the title implies, follows the eccentric upper-class Englishman Phileas Fogg, who has bet a million francs with members of his gentlemen's club that he will travel across the globe (eastwards, starting and finishing in London) in 80 days by train and steamship. His planned itinerary reflects developments that were extremely recent in the early 1870s, something that is easy to miss for modern observers. If the play mentions that the Indian railway network has just joined Bombay to Calcutta (the connection between the Great Indian Peninsula Railway and the East Indian Railway having been established in 1870), it is the case too that the Suez Canal had only been opened in 1869, that the First Transcontinental Railroad in the United States had been completed only a few months before that, also in 1869, and that regular passenger service across the Pacific, operated by the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, had only started in 1867. Not only was Fogg's route—by train to the Mediterranean, then by sea to Bombay across the Suez Canal, across India by train, across the Pacific, across the United States by train, and across the Atlantic—the only possible one in a world in which the Trans-Siberian Railway and the Panama Canal did not exist yet, but it was also newly possible. In the play, Fogg travels with his French valet Passepartout and is pursued by a competitor, the American Archibald Corsican, and by the detective Fix, who suspects Fogg of having stolen 2 million francs from the Bank of England. In India they are joined by Aouda, the young widow of a rajah, who would be burned on her husband's pyre if it were not for the intervention of Fogg, Passepartout, and Corsican. The play, here, rehashes the trope of the Indian practice of *sati* as a justification for a 'civilising' Western intervention, a trope that has a famous precedent in French letters in Antoine-Marin Le Mierre's 1770 tragedy *La veuve du Malabar*. The thwarted immolation ceremony also provides an occasion for an impressive *défilé* featuring a live elephant. In Calcutta, Aouda's sister Néméa also joins the party of travellers. The tableau that follows contains another *clou*: the travellers have landed in Borneo after a shipwreck and found themselves in a snake-infested cave, but they are saved by the Malay queen Nakahira, a former slave of Aouda's, who charms the snakes. (Unlike the elephant, those were not live animals, but mechanical contraptions.) A ballet ensues in the next tableau. In America, the travellers' train is attacked by the Pawnee: the 'Train Attacked by Savages' scene that Germain mentions as part of the secret sauce for a modern *féerie*. Here we see what was likely an echo of the most influential French stage work on cross-cultural encounter from the previous decade, Giacomo Meyerbeer's posthumous *grand opéra L'Africaine* (1865). In what amounts to the

spectacular *clou* of the opera, Vasco da Gama's ship, after crashing on a reef, is stormed by Hindu 'savages'; *Le tour du monde* offers a contemporary equivalent and at the same time challenges the supremacy of *grand opéra* on the terrain of stage illusion, as spectacular theatre loved to do. The theme of the exotic slave who, reinstated as a queen in her native country, helps her Western friends, seen in the Nakahira character, might also derive from *L'Africaine*. *Le tour du monde* then takes us to a bizarrely Boreal-looking natural site supposedly in Nebraska, with a dramatic geological formation (the 'Giants' Staircase') and a coniferous forest, for a showdown between the Pawnee, who have kidnapped Aouda and Néméa, and the United States Army. If Indigenous Americans are portrayed as barbarous and bloodthirsty, they are also presented, through the words of the Pawnee chief, as victims of the settlers. On the last leg of the journey, from New York back to England, Passepartout is reunited with Margaret, the English maid who had proposed to him in London. After another shipwreck, this time shown on stage, the characters make it to England. Once the confusion arising from time differences is lifted (by travelling eastwards, Fogg has experienced 80 days in the space of 79), Fogg realises he has won his bet. He is also cleared of the accusation of stealing the 2 million francs from the Bank of England. At last he claims his prize at the club, and the three couples formed by Fogg and Aouda, Corsican and Néméa, and Passepartout and Margaret announce their marriages.

The music of the play was by the resident conductor of the Porte-Saint-Martin, Jean-Jacques Debillemont, who in that same year had composed the score of the early composerly *féerie Le treizième coup de minuit*. No scholar has examined the music of *Le tour du monde*, but we can have a fairly good idea of how it sounded: a few excerpts were published in piano reduction, and in the collections of the Association de la Régie théâtrale (ART) a violin 1 part survives, which, though incomplete, contains the first three acts (the first 10 tableaux) (Fig. 3.1).[30] There is no guarantee that the part reflects the 1874 Porte-Saint-Martin production exactly: it could have been copied for a revival or for a production in the provinces. But it does not conflict with the published excerpts and the printed play, and the numbering of the tableaux is the original one, as opposed to that inaugurated by the 1901 Châtelet revival (for which new music was written by Marius Baggers).

In what sense, then, is *Le tour du monde* a *féerie*? By this point it should be clear what Germain meant when he wrote that '[i]nstead of taking us to impossible lands, [modern *féerie*] makes us travel to actual places'. If a traditional *féerie* consisted in a journey through a number of fantastic realms—in *La biche au bois*, for example, the realm of fishes, Aïka's kingdom, and the realm of garden vegetables—so *Le tour du monde* consists of a journey through a number of

[30] F-Pbh fonds ART 2-TMS-00107.

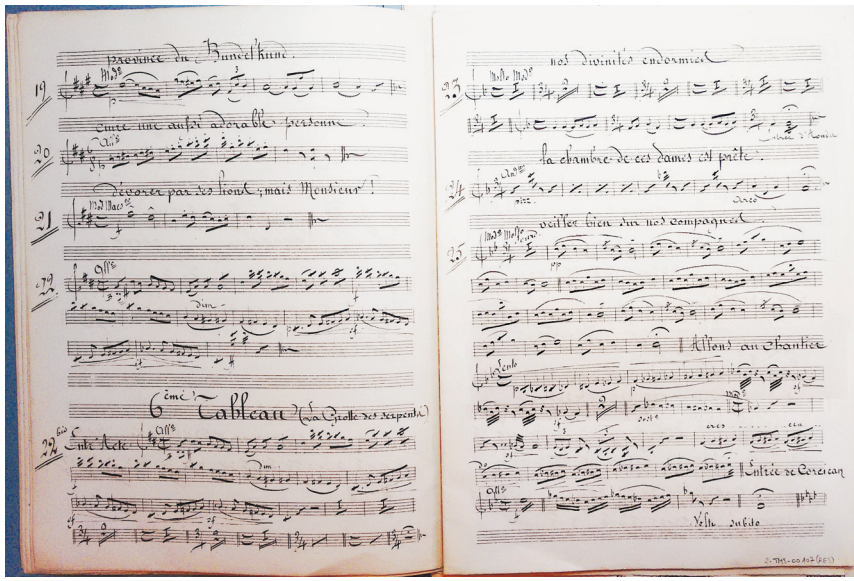


Figure 3.1 Violin 1 part for *Le tour du monde en 80 jours*. Paris, Bibliothèque historique de la ville de Paris, fonds ART.

real-life locales: Suez, India, Borneo, the American West. As in traditional *féerie*, the rationale for the journey is a quest. As in traditional *féerie*, *Le tour du monde* comprises relatively self-contained episodes—in French stage jargon, it is a *pièce a tiroirs*—so that one could easily think of adding or substituting new episodes. As in traditional *féerie*, *Le tour du monde* is a melodramatic play, meaning that the orchestra underscores the stage business, as attested by the ART part. Yet, as in traditional *féerie*, the overall tone is comical. This sets *Le tour du monde* apart from melodrama—at least late 19th-century melodrama—where the pathetic register dominates instead. Indeed, a comparison with d'Ennery's successful melodramas of the same period, written in collaboration with Eugène Cormon—*Les deux orphelines* (1874) and *Une cause célèbre* (1877)—suggests that *Le tour du monde* belongs to a different genre. And it is not just a matter of register. *Féerie*, like melodrama, stages a Manichaean conflict between goodies and baddies, but there is little or nothing at stake in the conflict. Melodramas are about innocence avenged, virtue rewarded, vice punished; *féeries* are about accomplishing a mission. There is no moral lesson to a *féerie* (at least not for *féerie* of this period). In this respect, *Le tour du monde* is without doubt a *féerie*, not a melodrama: there is no moral dimension to Fogg's pursuit, which is, on the contrary, completely gratuitous, with no justification other than a bet. By contrast, in *Les pirates de la savane* (1859, by Anicet-Bourgeois and Fernand Dugué), set in Mexico and generally considered the most representative specimen of adventure melodrama (*melodrame d'aventures*),

the positive characters are on an eminently moral mission: reuniting a young girl with her mother.[31] The absence of such a moral mission in *Le tour du monde* means that the plot does not really have a moral interest. The interest lies instead in the exotic locales, which were merely a backdrop of the story in adventure melodramas and instead *are* the story here—exactly as the fantastic realms of traditional *féerie* were the substance of *féerie*, not an accident.[32]

My initial definition of *féerie* was a light melodramatic play set in a fairytale universe. If *Le tour du monde* is light-hearted and has melodramatic music, it is undeniably set in our universe. In *féeries*, it is understood that the laws of magic are as natural in the staged world as the laws of physics in the offstage world. While this is not the case for *Le tour du monde,* its characters—specifically, Fogg and Corsican—do operate according to a logic that is different from usual human logic. They are eccentrics, and explicitly recognised as such: the gentlemen's club of which Fogg is a member and that Corsican hopes to join is called the Eccentrics' Club. Fogg has no interest in visiting the countries he crosses on his journey, while Corsican has travelled around the Red Sea on foot walking backwards. The laws of physics apply to them, but they defy social norms. The characters of later plays by Verne, although ostensibly human beings, are similarly alien. In the 1883 *Kéraban le Têtu*, which he wrote without d'Ennery, Verne put a twist on the idea behind *Le tour du monde*: the eponymous protagonist is a mirror image of Fogg, a technophobe obsessive instead of a technophile obsessive. The only rationale behind the trip around the Black Sea that forms the subject matter of the play is Kéraban's stubborn refusal to pay a small fee to cross the Bosphorus in Constantinople, where he lives. Similarly, the protagonist of *Michel Strogoff*, the courier of the czar who travels from Moscow to Irkutsk in the middle of an armed conflict to deliver a message, at first sight looks like a traditional melodrama hero placing devotion to his country above all else. But on closer inspection, Strogoff is forced to repress his natural feelings—pride, filial love, even patriotism: precisely the feelings that would make him a traditional melodrama hero—in order to accomplish his mission. The sense of duty that drives him, like the eccentricity that drove Fogg, is at odds with normal human behaviour. Furthermore, if Fogg was at one with the technology he relies on, Michel Strogoff is at one with the technology he replaces: his mission is made necessary by the failure of telegraph lines, which have been sabotaged by the

[31] On the adventure melodrama of the Second Empire, see Jean-Marie Thomasseau, 'Les traversées exploratoires des mélos du Second Empire. *Les Pirates de la savane* (1859)', in *Les spectacles sous le Second Empire*, ed. Jean-Claude Yon (Paris: Armand Colin, 2010), 339–48.

[32] I am inclined not to consider a *féerie* the last Verne play of the century, the 1887 *Mathias Sandorf*, by William Busnach and Georges Maurens, after Verne's novel of the same title, precisely because the moral motive of the eponymous protagonist (seeking revenge) makes the play more akin to a classic melodrama.

Tatar rebels. Both characters are, in a way, living machines, hence, again, somewhat other than human.[33] The two remaining Verne–d'Ennery collaborations, the adaptation of *Les enfants du capitaine Grant* (1878) and the previously mentioned *Voyage à travers l'impossible* (1882), feature another type of character that is somehow not bound by ordinary human logic, that is, the scientist: Paganel in *Les enfants du capitaine Grant*, Dr Ox in *Voyage à travers l'impossible*. *Voyage à travers l'impossible*, the most ambitious, but also the most puzzling and the least successful of the Verne–d'Ennery collaborations, is also the only one that implies that a character genuinely has supernatural powers (which is probably why Ginisty did not object to considering it a *féerie*). The organist Volsius is best understood as an angel who takes on the appearance of characters from Verne novels in order to win over to faith the science-obsessed, and apparently Verne-obsessed, protagonist. The paradox is that the modus operandi of the angel Volsius, consisting of transformations and ruses, is the one traditionally attributed to devils, from *Les sept châteaux du diable*—the old d'Ennery *féerie*—to *Les contes d'Hoffmann*—the 1851 play and the then very recent (1881) Offenbach opera. Even though Volsius, this bizarre tempting angel or redeeming devil, comes out as the winner, it is significant that in *Voyage à travers l'impossible* faith seems to be at a structural disadvantage against science, as devils were once portrayed as disadvantaged against God.

Another structural element betrays *Le tour du monde* as a *féerie*. Its system of characters seems to have been based on that of two of the most popular *féeries* of the mid-century, namely *La biche au bois* and *La chatte blanche*. Both *La biche au bois* and *La chatte blanche* have a prince (Prince Souci and Prince Pimpondor, respectively) and a princess (Désirée and Blanchette); *Le tour du monde* has Fogg and Aouda, duplicated by Corsican and Néméa, and both 'princes', Fogg and Corsican, rescue, *féerie*-style, their 'princesses'. As neither Corsican nor Néméa are in the novel, the idea of duplicating the hero and the heroine must be ascribed to d'Ennery, whose *Les sept châteaux du diable* already had two heroes and two heroines (in that case, too, a pair of sisters). *Le tour du monde* has a couple of lower-class lovers (Passepartout and Margaret), as did *La biche au bois* (Fanfreluche and Giroflée) and *La chatte blanche* (Petitpatapon and Pierrette). The two classic *féeries* had each a good fairy (Fée Topaze, Fée des Bruyères) and an evil fairy (Fée de la Fontaine, Fée Violente). When she intervenes to protect the other characters from the snakes in the cave, Nakahira reveals herself as a good fairy. It is worth

[33] *Kéraban le Têtu* hit the shelves as a novel and the stage as a play in the same year. So it seems likely that Verne had conceived the work for the two media at the same time, as appears to be the case for *Le tour du monde*. It is possible that *Michel Strogoff* also had a similar genesis: see Roques, *L'invention d'un théâtre-monde*, 129–30. At any rate, the dramaturgy of these plays cannot be explained away with the fact that they also exist in the form of novels.

noting that the Fée Topaze also appeared in a cave in *La biche au bois*; the Fée des Bruyères, like Nakahira, first presented herself under an unassuming guise (namely, as an old woman). As for the evil fairy, it is obvious that in *Le tour du monde* Fix performs the duties of an evil genie, persecuting the travellers all along their journey. And, despite having no magical powers, Fix, like supernatural *féerie* characters (and notably like Satan in *Les sept châteaux du diable*), is a shapeshifter. He is disguised as an old Brahman in Calcutta, as an 'American pioneer' in San Francisco, as a Black passenger on the train, as a Black cook on the steamship from New York. In French theatre jargon, this is known as a *rôle à tiroirs* (analogous to the *pièce à tiroirs*).

The role of Passepartout, clearly intended for a very physical comedian (the character is supposedly a former acrobat), seems to be the one for which the association with supernatural *féerie* was most tangible, at least judging from casting choices. The first three great Passepartouts all performed in at least one production of supernatural *féerie*. Indeed, they all performed *Le tour du monde* and supernatural *féerie* back to back: in 1874, Alexandre had just taken part in a revival of the 1860 *Le pied de mouton*; after taking possession of the role in 1896, Désiré Pougaud went straight from Passepartout to Passepartout's counterpart in *La biche au bois*, Fanfreluche; right after taking over the role in 1908, Gustave Hamilton played the equivalent part in *La chatte blanche*, Petitpatapon. Taken together, the careers of the three actors illustrate the historical continuity between supernatural and scientific *féerie*. Alexandre had more than a decade of experience in supernatural *féerie* at the time of *Le tour du monde* and continued to be seen in supernatural *féeries* until his retirement. Around the turn of the century, Pougaud performed in both scientific and traditional *féeries* at the Châtelet, and became known as 'the kids' Coquelin' (*le Coquelin des gosses*) for his popularity with young audiences, who apparently recognised his acting style across subgenres.[34] Hamilton, who succeeded Pougaud as the *féerie* star of the Châtelet, came too late to appear in any non-scientific *féerie* other than *La chatte blanche*.

A blatant *féerique* trait of the dramaturgy of *Le tour du monde* is its reliance on spectacular attractions. Like *Le roi Carotte* from two years earlier or the revamped *Orphée aux enfers* from nine months earlier, *Le tour du monde* boasts an extravagant *défilé* in the Indian episode. The stage direction calls for fakirs, priests, a crowd of men, women, and children, 'fanatics' (*sic*, for sadhus), musicians, temple dancers (*bayadères*), a statue of the goddess Kali, and the elephant. In the ART part, the march that accompanies the procession is, counting repeats, almost 200 bars

[34] The reference was to Constant Coquelin, star of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, who was at the peak of his fame during the same period. See Pougaud's obituary in *Comœdia*: 'Pougaud est mort', *Comœdia*, 1 November 1928, 3.

long, or roughly the same length as the processional scene (the *marche indienne*) in *L'Africaine*, which clocks in at around 10 minutes. For comparison, the processional scene (march and *ballabile*) of Verdi's *Aida* took roughly a third of that time in the Cairo version (which would not be performed in Paris until 1876), and even in the now familiar version devised for the 1880 Opéra production it lasts only about six and a half minutes. Unfortunately, the ART part does not indicate the entrance of the several groups that compose the *défilé*; the lyric section marked 'Sos[tenu]to Cantabile', though, may have coincided with the appearance of the *bayadères*.

Like all spectacular *féeries*, *Le tour du monde* contains a ballet divertissement in several numbers. In the printed play, the tableau in question only consists of a few lines of dialogue, a stage direction that ends 'The queen [Nakahira] climbs onto her throne', and the indication 'ballet'. If the ART part can be trusted, someone (surely Nakahira after taking place on her throne) uttered the words '[Q]ue la fête commence', a stock phrase to cue in divertissements in boulevard theatre (*fête* being an old-fashioned synonym for divertissement). At some point the phrase came to be seen as both *féerie*-marked and antiquated. Probably, since *féerie* embraced metatextuality and was not preoccupied with verisimilitude, it was not bothered by an ossified, stereotyped expression and kept using it for longer. Moreover, military plays, another genre that traditionally employed the phrase, had virtually disappeared in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War. Whatever the case, by the early 1870s, 'Que la fête commence' had already acquired this reputation. In 1873, Francisque Sarcey called it 'the well-known *féerie* phrase'; in January 1874, Arnold Mortier wrote in his column 'as they say in *féeries*: "Que la fête commence!" '[35] When, in Georges Bizet's *Carmen*, which premièred four months after *Le tour du monde*, Carmen announces in a mock-grandiose tone 'je commence' before launching into her seduction dance, Bizet and his librettists probably expected listeners to be familiar with the 'Que la fête commence' convention and used that familiarity for comic effect: the contrast between Carmen's pompous recitative (in an *opéra comique* setting) and her surroundings is already amusing, but it becomes more so if one compares her makeshift solo show to the splendid divertissements of *féerie*. In short, it seems hard to imagine that a play from the 1870s would use the phrase 'Que la fête commence' other than to make fun of it or to pledge (in tongue-in-cheek fashion) allegiance to *féerie*.

According to the ART part, the divertissement comprises nine numbers: again, this might or might not exactly reflect the 1874 layout (there is a number '5 bis' and number 4 is missing), but it should not be too far off. Its music sounds

[35] Francisque Sarcey, 'Chronique théâtrale', *Le Temps*, 17 February 1873, [1] ('[L]a fameuse phrase des féeries: Et maintenant que la fête commence'); Un monsieur de l'orchestre [Arnold Mortier], 'La soirée théâtrale', *Le Figaro*, 29 January 1874, 3 ('Et maintenant, comme on dit dans les féeries, que la fête commence!').

only blandly exotic to our ears, accustomed to the exuberant, modally inflected Orientalism of *Aida* or of Camille Saint-Saëns's *Samson et Dalila*, infamously peppered with augmented seconds. If anything, it is reminiscent of the older Orientalist style of Félicien David and Ernest Reyer, mostly relying on rhythmic ostinatos and pedal points.[36] But in 1874 *Aida* had not yet been heard in Paris and *Samson et Dalila* had not been heard anywhere; a model for Debillemont could have been the Orientalist ballet *La source* (1866, but revived after the war), which oscillates between a more conservative musical language, in the portions composed by Ludwig Minkus, and a more modern one, in those by Léo Delibes. The most interesting among the divertissement numbers in *Le tour du monde* are the two that were excerpted for publication in piano reduction. The one that bears the title 'Danse des mulâtresses' (Dance of the Mulatto Women) in the ART part was published both as 'La Malaisienne' and as 'Mariquita-polka'. The cover art for the 'Mariquita-polka' sheet music shows, indeed, Mariquita, the star dancer of the Porte-Saint-Martin whom we have encountered in the 1865 *Biche au bois*, in brownface (and brown body stocking, under a revealing costume) (Fig. 3.2). 'Malaisienne'—that is, a woman from maritime South-East Asia, then known in French as *Malaisie*, though not necessarily an ethnic Malay—seems a more appropriate descriptor than 'mulatto', which is probably used here loosely as a synonym for 'brown-skinned'. And while Léon Dufils, who arranged the version marketed as 'Mariquita-polka', emphasised the polka rhythm in the accompaniment to cater to consumers of parlour-dance music, the number is unquestionably a slow polka, as attested by its 2/4 time signature, its insistence on the rhythmic motives quaver-quaver-crotchet (at the level of the bar) and semiquaver-semiquaver-quaver (at the level of the beat), and its runs of semiquavers in the trio section. The presence of a polka in an exotic setting should not surprise us: *La source* contained a polka, too, and so did the divertissement of Ambroise Thomas's *grand opéra Hamlet* (1868), despite the absurdity of placing a quintessentially 19th-century dance in medieval Denmark. Standards of historical and geographical verisimilitude are always selectively enforced, and at the time dance types, like corsets for women actors, still fell among the things to which such standards did not necessarily apply.

This is also true for the other published number, a sensuous 'Valse indienne', which actually sounds more like a mazurka, with its accented weak beats (Ex. 3.1).[37]

[36] On the emergence of a then new, and now familiar, Orientalist musical idiom in late 19th-century France, see Jean-Pierre Bartoli, 'L'orientalisme dans la musique française du XIX[e] siècle: La *ponctuation*, la seconde augmentée et l'apparition de la modalité dans les procedures exotiques', *Revue belge de musicologie* 51 (1997): 137–70. Of course, as Ralph Locke has extensively argued, 'exoticism' can also exist in the absence of 'exotic style': see, for example, Ralph P. Locke, *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[37] Jann Pasler, in her *Composing the Citizen*, ascribes the 'Valse indienne' to the North American episode of *Le tour du monde*. She has been understandably misled by the illustrations of the published excerpts, which also, inexplicably, pair 'La Malaisienne' with the attack on the train. Jann Pasler, *Composing the Citizen: Music as Public Utility in Third Republic France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 414.

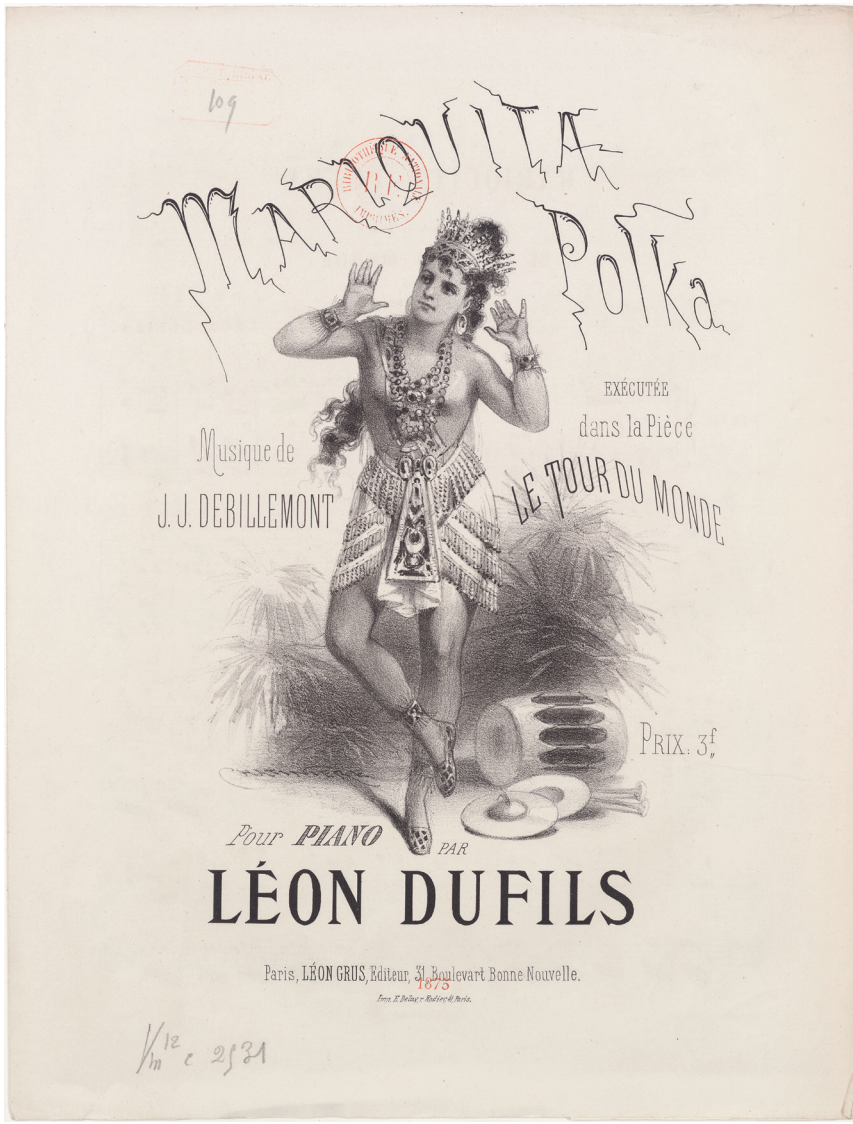
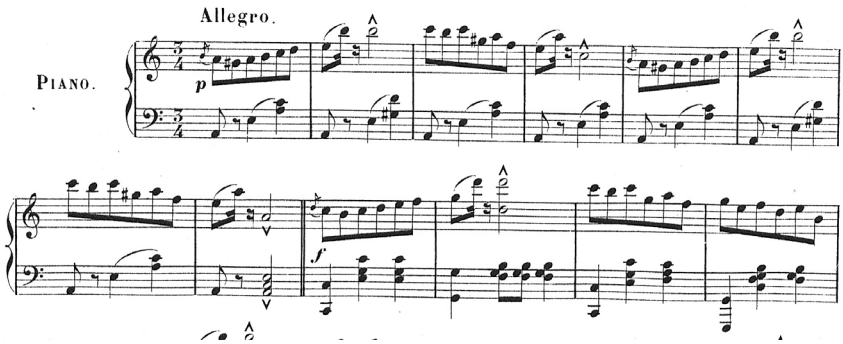
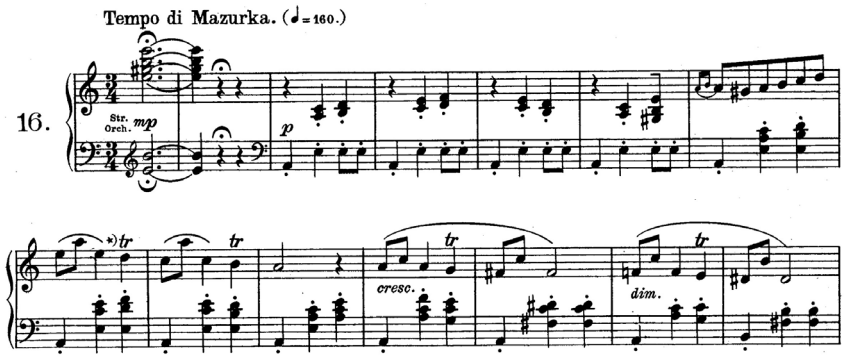


Figure 3.2 Sheet music for Jean-Jacques Debillemont, 'Mariquita-polka', an excerpt from *Le tour du monde en 80 jours*. Illustration by Jules Marre. Source: Bibliothèque nationale de France.



Example 3.1 Jean-Jacques Debillemont, 'Valse indienne', in *Le tour du monde* (Paris: Léon Grus, 1875).



Example 3.2 Edvard Grieg, 'Anitra's Dance', in *Peer Gynt*, piano reduction by Gustav F. Kogel (Leipzig: Peters, n.d.).

It also sounds uncannily familiar: the first bar of the melody is virtually identical (minus the anacrusis) to that of 'Anitra's Dance' in Edvard Grieg's score for Henrik Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* (Ex. 3.2). The key is the same (A minor), and so is the Orientalist effect of an arpeggiated double pedal point created by the regular repetition of tonic and dominant for the first seven bars of the melody. The accented weak beats are the same, too, and Grieg uses the word 'mazurka' in the tempo marking. The contrasting major section of the Debillemont number has a run of quavers and (at least in one bar) a hemiola figure that seem to anticipate the second half of Grieg's main theme.

It is highly implausible that these similarities are fortuitous. Since *Peer Gynt* premièred in 1876 and Grieg started composing the music in 1874, he may very well have come across the excerpt from *Le tour du monde*. The questions are rather whether he actively sought a model for an exotic dance number or if he randomly found one, and whether he unconsciously drew on a memory of Debillemont's

music (which can be quite effective as an earworm) or rather intentionally plagiarised his French colleague. If the last, less charitable hypothesis were true, that would be proof of the fact that Grieg regarded the commission of the *Peer Gynt* score as hackwork. This would not be surprising, given that such was still the reputation of melodrama scores, that *Peer Gynt*, although written for a literary monument, is a melodrama score, and that composerly melodrama scores were a new phenomenon in the 1870s. Grieg's biographer John Horton, writing in 1945, found 'Anitra's Dance' lacking in exotic colour and compared it instead to Grieg's Baroque-style pastiches.[38] I would contend that he failed to acknowledge the older, pre-*Aida* and Saint-Saëns, more subdued kind of musical Orientalism present in the piece. Nineteenth-century stage dance also shared a musical vocabulary with parlour dance and probably sounded old-timey and domestic to Horton as a result: by comparing 'Anitra's Dance' to the 'lyric piece' op. 86 no. 2, 'Grandmother's minuet', which is meant by the composer to sound old-timey and domestic, Horton was projecting his own perception of 19th-century dance music onto Grieg.

Another indispensable ingredient of a *féerie* are tricks and transformation scenes. *Le tour du monde* similarly makes liberal use of stage technology to emulate, not magic, but the forces of nature and technology: the train, the steamer, the shipwreck. Perhaps the most *féerie*-like effect of *Le tour de monde* is the transformation of an innocuous-looking cave into a nest of snakes: the mechanical snakes of *Le tour du monde* are an evolution of the mechanical owl that we saw in a similarly ominous scene in *La biche au bois*. From the ART part we know that the trick of the snakes coming to life was supported by an increasingly menacing chromatic accompaniment, and that the arrival of the train was synchronised to mimetic music. To be sure, ships and shipwrecks are not exclusive to *féerie*.[39] But *Le tour du monde* cannot be assimilated to melodrama and opera's long-standing fascination with disasters. In opera and melodrama, extreme events are presented as exceptional, and characters as relatively powerless against them. By contrast, in *Le tour du monde* they are to an extent normalised. Both disasters and technology seem to be, for the characters and especially for Fogg, just part of the fabric of life, as magic was part of the fabric of life for the characters of supernatural *féeries*. If a first-time spectator might initially wonder if the goodies of the play are going to overcome the obstacles with which they are faced, it soon becomes clear that the interest of the play lies instead in watching them overcome the obstacles, since it seems inevitable that they will—again, as in *féeries*. In *Voyage à travers*

[38] John Horton, 'Ibsen, Grieg, and *Peer Gynt*', *Music & Letters* 26, no. 2 (1945): 66–77.

[39] Besides *L'Africaine*, a very famous stage ship was that of Victor Séjour's hit melodrama *Le fils de la nuit* (1856), which had been recently revived at the Gaîté (in 1872). D'Ennery himself had to his name no fewer than three melodramas with the word 'shipwreck' or 'shipwrecked' in the title: *La prière des naufragés*, 1853, and *Le naufrage de La Pérouse*, 1858, as well as the celebrated *Le naufrage de la Méduse,* solely credited to Charles Desnoyer when it premièred in 1839, but frequently revived from 1857 onwards with d'Ennery listed as co-author.

l'impossible, the characters would be made invulnerable by a potion that allows them to resist any temperature and to breathe underwater or in the absence of air; in *Le tour de monde* there is no such plot device, but the characters already seem invulnerable, albeit to a lesser degree. If in opera and melodrama the spectacle of disasters could be sublime, as it could remind the audience of how nature can overpower humans, what *Le tour du monde* offers is just the marvellous (as in *féerie*) rather than the sublime.[40] Reviewing the première of *Le tour du monde*, Francisque Sarcey lamented that the actor who played Aouda was forced to waste her talent in a role that required her to 'walk through scene changes from eight o' clock through midnight'.[41] Perhaps Sarcey, too, felt that the characters of the play are set on an inevitable trajectory, and that they seem largely impermeable to the extraordinary circumstances in which they evolve—or, more exactly, it seems that such circumstances are to them what water is to fish. This sense that the characters move along a predetermined trajectory also gives the impression that they have limited agency, like the human characters in a supernatural *féerie*, who are at least in part the pawns of higher forces.

One of the *clous* of *Michel Strogoff* can serve not only as a perfect illustration, but also almost as a metaphor of this aspect of the dramaturgy of scientific *féerie*. For two consecutive tableaux, which do not contain a single line of dialogue, the goodies glide down the Angara river on a raft. The actors, behind whom a panorama shows the banks of the river passing by, do not utter a word. The moving panorama becomes even more enthralling when the surface of the water, which is covered in a layer of naphtha, is set ablaze. In this scene, the characters physically follow a predetermined path and physically seem insulated from their environment, as their raft does not burn. They do not seem to have agency at all, and they do not do anything to hold the viewer's interest, which is instead directed towards the visual spectacle in the background. It is tempting, of course, to draw a comparison between the moving panorama of *Michel Strogoff* and the most famous moving panorama of music history, that of Wagner's *Parsifal*, which premièred 20 months after *Michel Strogoff*.[42] In the case of *Parsifal*, too, setting a silent—and

[40] On the sublime in Romantic stage music, see Sarah Hibberd, 'Cherubini and the Revolutionary Sublime', *Cambridge Opera Journal* 24, no. 3 (2012): 293–318, and Sarah Hibberd and Miranda Stanyon, eds., *Music and the Sonorous Sublime in European Culture, 1660–1880* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020). With roots in Enlightenment responses to natural disasters and in the philosophy of Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant, the Romantic tradition of the sublime is predicated on the awareness of human frailty, which *Le tour du monde* fundamentally negates.

[41] '[C]e rôle consiste à se promener de huit heures du soir à minuit à travers des changements de décors.' Francisque Sarcey, 'Chronique théâtrale', *Le Temps*, 16 November 1874, [1].

[42] On the *Parsifal* panorama, see Patrick Carnegy, *Wagner and the Art of Theatre: The Operas in Stage Performance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 104–14, and Evan Baker, 'Richard Wagner and His Search for the Ideal Theatrical Space', in *Opera in Context: Essays on Historical Staging from the Late Renaissance to the Time of Puccini*, ed. Mark A. Radice (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1998), 241–78. For more information on the *Michel Strogoff* panorama, see Jules Verne and Adolphe d'Ennery, *Michel Strogoff*, ed. Louis Bilodeau (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1994), 139–40, nn150–2.

still, despite the appearance of walking—actor against a moving background can be seen as a way of conveying the passivity and acceptance of one's mission on the part of the titular character, at least for the act 1 transformation scene; the parallel with the protagonist of *Michel Strogoff* is not so far-fetched. Of course, we should not jump to the conclusion that Wagner was inspired by the Verne–d'Ennery play, also because there were earlier instances of moving panoramas on the stage that Wagner might have had in mind. But—by parallel evolution if not by filiation—affinities in dramaturgy prompted similar choices in stage technology for *Michel Strogoff* and *Parsifal*. And those affinities make sense if we acknowledge the *féerie* nature of *Michel Strogoff*: *féeries* follow the pattern of a quest, that is, an initiation journey, and *Parsifal* depicts an initiation journey; in *féeries* humans' agency is subordinated to higher powers, and that is obviously the case in *Parsifal*.

There is a final, subtle but crucial, analogy between *Le tour du monde* and traditional *féerie*. A typical motif of *féerie* is that of the talisman: a magical object that makes otherwise impossible things happen. In *Voyage à travers l'impossible*, the potion that grants, to use an anachronistic word, superpowers is patently a scientific stand-in for the talisman. *Le tour du monde* is not so explicit. Fogg has 2 million francs in the bank at the beginning of the play: he bets 1 million, while the other million is his budget for the journey. This way, if he succeeds, he will break even; if he loses, he will have lost all his fortune. He has Passepartout carry around the million francs in cash in a bag, and uses the money to overcome the obstacles he encounters along the way. That means bribing the mechanics on the steamship to Bombay, buying the elephant, bailing himself to avoid prison, and buying the steamship from New York to lawfully hijack it. It might not be obvious to us, but anyone versed in *féerie* would have recognised that the bag of cash acts like a talisman. And, as with an old-fashioned *féerie* talisman, characters fight over the bag. In San Francisco, Fix takes it from Passepartout with a ruse, but Passepartout manages to recover it during the Atlantic crossing.

Money in *Le tour du monde* is thus the equivalent of magic in supernatural *féerie*. And the characters seem to implicitly recognise the power of money as they did for that of magic. Not only is Fogg motivated by his bet, but also Fix is motivated by the reward promised to the agent who will find the Bank of England thief. Money creates bonds between characters too: Passepartout has literally invested in Fogg, as he has bribed Fogg's previous valet in order to get hired in his place, and Margaret wins Passepartout's love by saving him from the financial consequence of a blunder (leaving a gas lamp on in Fogg's house).

As a *féerie*, *Le tour du monde* seems to lack one essential element, namely the final *apothéose* (indeed all Verne plays save *Voyage à travers l'impossible* lack an *apothéose* proper). Yet the parallel between money and magic might suggest that the final tableau works as a substitute for an *apothéose*. In most *apothéoses*, we have a glimpse of the supernatural abode of fairies and genies. In *La chatte blanche*

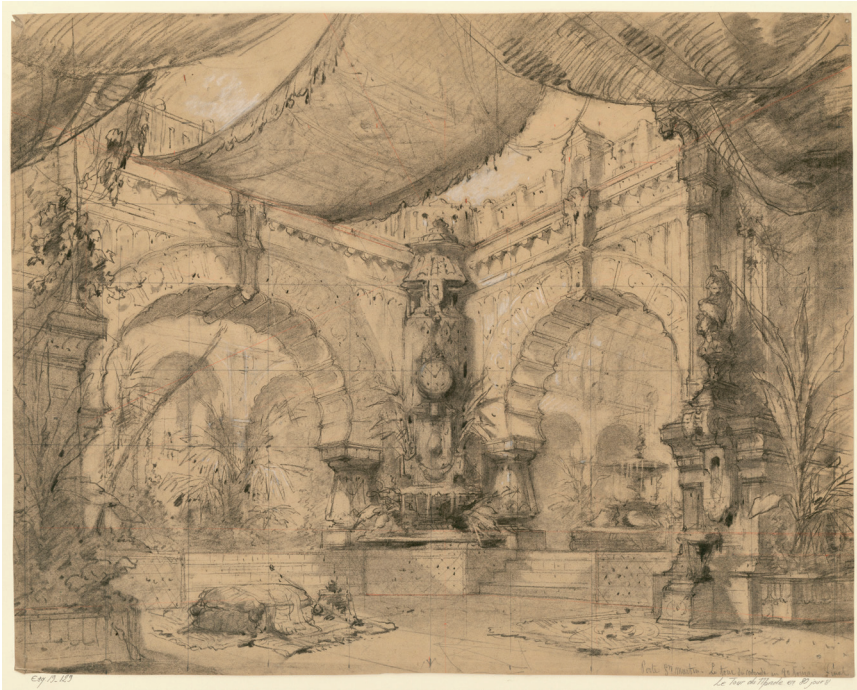


Figure 3.3 Jean-Louis Chéret, set design for the final tableau of *Le tour du monde en 80 jours*. Paris, Bibliothèque-musée de l'Opéra. Source: Gallica, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

we see Titania, Queen of Fairies. In the original *Biche au bois* and in *Les bibelots du diable* (1858) we see the Queen of Genies. In *La poudre de Perlinpinpin* (1852) and *Peau d'Âne* (1863) a 'fairy palace' and the 'palace of fairies' appear respectively, and so on. The final setting of *Le tour du monde* is the new headquarters of the Eccentrics' Club—not a supernatural location, but in a way an otherworldly one. '[O]ne would not believe we are in London', comments a character, the architecture is an Orientalist pastiche, and the place is adorned with exotic plants (Fig. 3.3).[43] Indeed, the Club does look like a fairy palace, but the only magic at work is that of the 10 million francs the members have spent on the building, plus 1 million (which they expected to getting back from Fogg) on the opening reception, which we witness. As the fairy palaces of *féerie* were populated with fairies and genies, this palace is populated by the Eccentrics—not only, as we have seen, somewhat

[43] 'Vraiment, on ne se croirait pas à Londres ici, mais dans le plus beau pays du monde!…' Adolphe d'Ennery and Jules Verne, *Le tour du monde en 80 jours*, in *Les voyages au théâtre* (Paris: Hetzel, 1881), 140 (act 5, 15th tableau, scene 1).

removed from human conventions, but also, like supernatural creatures, characterised by a predictable appearance (evening dress) and endowed with extraordinary powers (money). And the newly formed couples are introduced to this gathering as newly formed couples were introduced to the supernatural beings in traditional *féeries*. It is interesting that the secular fairy palace, so to speak, of *Le tour du monde* should look not only splendid, but also exotic. The simplest explanation is that the authors and set designers went for a modern twist on an *Arabian Nights* aesthetic that had long been a source of inspiration for *féerie*. But another reading is also possible: as the rest of the play showed how the magic of money could open the whole world for one man, the final tableau shows how that same magic of money can bring the whole world to one place—especially if the place happens to be London, arguably the financial capital of the world and for sure the capital of a vast colonial empire. The Eccentrics, after all, do not need to travel around the world, as the world is already at their feet.

We should not forget, at any rate, that gentlemen's clubs did exist in real life, and so did Orientalist architecture, like the Moorish-revival extravaganza concocted by the set designer of the final tableau. An Orientalist architectural vocabulary could function as a signal of exclusivity, since it tended to be associated with facilities that promised hedonistic, escapist experiences to those who could afford them—coffee houses, Turkish baths, entertainment venues, and of course World's Fair pavilions. Within the Western metropolis, the distance between a cosmopolitan Orientalist style and the local vernacular style visually translated the distance between elite (or aspirational) taste and the everyday existence of the lower classes. By implying that exclusive venues such as the Eccentrics' Club are to the modern city what fairy palaces are to the universe of traditional *féerie*, *Le tour du monde* equates this class distance to the distance between human and supernatural beings. And as supernatural beings are usually gendered, fairies being female, genies male, and so on, so are their modern-day counterparts: the Eccentrics are an all-male crowd, and so, it is understood, are those wielding similar power in real life.

Only one important component of *féerie* is missing from *Le tour du monde*: vocal numbers. There is one instance of singing, though: the incantation with which Nakahira charms the snakes. As we shall see, though, the vast constellation of féerised theatre that scientific *féerie* brought about would contain no shortage of vocal music, or composerly music, for that matter.

After *Le tour du monde*: a landscape of féerised plays

It is fair to say that *Le tour du monde en 80 jours* became an instant classic, with a 13-month run (November 1874 to December 1875) that almost matched that of the 1865 *Biche au bois*. Taking into account the six months' worth of performances

that it received at the Châtelet in 1876, *Le tour du monde* reached almost 600 performances in under two years, an astounding feat. After that, only 20 months passed before it was revived again, in 1878. The *millième*—the thousandth performance—took place on 13 January 1887, 12 years and 2 months after the première. Even for Edmond Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*, that other monumental hit of the Third Republic, over 15 years had to pass between the première and the *millième*. By the time of its demise in 1940, *Le tour du monde* had surpassed 3,500 performances.[44]

The first impulse when considering the legacy of *Le tour du monde* is, of course, to start from Verne and d'Ennery's subsequent plays (*Les enfants du capitaine Grant*, *Michel Strogoff*, *Voyage à travers l'impossible*, all joint, plus *Kéraban le Têtu*, by Verne alone). I have just given in to this impulse myself. But the first to react to *Le tour du monde* were not Verne and d'Ennery themselves, but other creators. As a consequence, the story of scientific *féerie* is, from the very beginning, a story of hybridisation with traditional *féerie*.

An early response to *Le tour du monde* can perhaps be found in Offenbach's *féerie* reworking of *Geneviève de Brabant*, which saw the stage mere months after the Verne–d'Ennery play. The scene of the departure for Palestine (the act 2, previously act 1, finale) now included an encyclopaedic *défilé*, on the theme of means of transportation. A crowd of children demonstrated, in the words of Arnold Mortier,

> means of locomotion past and present, from Noah's Ark through the railway, including the cart, the ancient chariot, the ostrich, the camel, the Chinese palanquin, the canoe, the gondola, the steamboat, the frigate, the gilded carriage, the sedan chair, the basket carriage that the *cocottes* hold dear, the stagecoach, the balloon, the sleigh, everything that moves, powered by steam or electricity, everything that rolls, everything that floats, everything that supports us and transports us, over land, over sea, and in the skies.[45]

It was the following autumn, though, that Offenbach launched a grand counter-offensive with *Le voyage dans la lune*, his last composerly *féerie* for the Gaîté, with Arnold Mortier, Eugène Leterrier, and Albert Vanloo as playwrights.[46] *Le voyage dans la lune* has all the trappings of a traditional *féerie*: a prince

[44] Roques, *L'invention d'un théâtre-monde*, 8.

[45] 'Ce sont des enfants qui nous présentent les moyens de locomotion passés et présents, depuis l'arche de Noé jusqu'au chemin de fer, en comprenant la brouette, le char antique, l'autruche, le chameau, le palanquin chinois, le canot, la gondole, le vapeur, la frégate, le carrosse doré, la chaise à porteurs, le petit panier cher aux cocottes, la diligence, le ballon, le traîneau, tout ce qui se meut, par la vapéur ou par la mécanique, tout ce qui roule, tout ce qui flotte, tout ce qui nous porte et nous transporte, sur terre, sur mer, et dans les cieux.' Arnold Mortier, 'Geneviève de Brabant', in *Les soirées parisiennes de 1875* (Paris: Dentu, 1876), 80–4, at p. 83. A possible inspiration for this *défilé* could be a science-popularisation book from 1874: Ernest Deharme, *Les merveilles de la locomotion* (Paris: Hachette, 1874).

[46] On *Le voyage dans la lune*, see Jean-Claude Yon, *Jacques Offenbach* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 527–33.

(the earthling Caprice, a breeches role), a princess (the Selenite Fantasia), their respective families (two kings and a queen, as in *La chatte blanche*), the kings' right-hand men (in this case court scientists—Microscope on Earth and Cactus on the Moon). It is peppered with visual gags and puns, features supernatural creatures, and in general is not preoccupied with verisimilitude or plausibility. Its treatment of the Moon as a topsy-turvy world where love is unknown is more akin to a fable than to science fiction. Offenbach was also clearly building on his other completely original *féerie* for the Gaîté, the utterly non-scientific *Le roi Carotte*: the industrial, militaristic setting of the tableau of the forge recalls the realm of insects in the older work, and the 'ronde des charlatans' shared both the dramatic situation and a performer, Zulma Bouffar, with the 'ronde des colporteurs', possibly the most popular number from *Le roi Carotte* (Fig. 3.4). If *Le roi Carotte* had a vocal number on rail travel (the 'ronde des chemins de fer'), *Le voyage dans la lune* had a vocal number extolling the superiority of space travel over rail travel (the 'rondeau de l'obus').

And yet, despite the absolute continuity between traditional *féerie* and *Le voyage dans la lune*, science is an essential inspiration for the play. The plan to reach the Moon on a giant bullet shot by an outsized cannon is lifted from Verne's *De la terre à la lune* (From the Earth to the Moon, 1865).[47] As for the characters' descent into a volcano, it is clearly indebted to Verne's *Voyage au centre de la Terre* (Journey to the Center of the Earth, 1864). The presence of volcanoes on the Moon was deemed plausible at the time—even though the volcano of the play is active, which would have been more controversial.

The *apothéose* of *Le voyage dans la lune* would prove to be its most enduring legacy: the image of Earth seen from the moon, poetically described as *clair de terre*, 'Earthlight', would make its way into 20th-century pop culture, thanks to George Méliès's film *Le voyage dans la lune* (1902). Since neither in *De la terre à la lune* nor in its sequel *Autour de la lune* (Around the Moon, 1870) do the characters manage to land on the Moon, the inspiration for the *clair de terre* in Méliès could not have been

[47] A good summary of the available information on the Offenbach–Verne connection—with an Offenbach work containing nods to Verne, *Le voyage dans la lune*, and an outright Verne adaptation, the 1877 operetta *Le docteur Ox*—is Jean-Claude Yon, 'Jacques Offenbach et Jules Verne: rendez-vous manqués', in Jacques Offenbach, *Le voyage dans la lune*, Chœur et Orchestre national Montpellier Occitanie, conducted by Pierre Dumoussaud, Palazzetto Bru Zane BZ1048, 2022, CD, liner notes, 33–8 (English trans. 59–64), also available at https://www.bruzanemediabase.com/mediabase/parutions-scientifiques/jacques-offenbach-jules-verne-rendez-vous-manques (accessed 8 February 2024). Scholars, including Yon, often cite the 1871 revue *Qui veut voir la lune?* as the original inspiration for *Le voyage dans la lune* (via a review by Théophile Gautier), accepting a contemporary narrative about the genesis of the play. The giant bullet, however, is conspicuously absent from *Qui veut voir la lune?*, and this narrative, while not necessarily untruthful, likely originated from the playwrights, who were keen to avoid accusations of plagiarism from Verne. It can be found in Georges Duval, *L'année théâtrale: Nouvelles, bruits de coulisses, indiscrétions, comptes rendus, racontars, etc.*, 2nd year [December 1874–November 1875] (Paris: Tresse, 1876), 375–6; Vanloo's own version is in Albert Vanloo, *Sur le plateau: Souvenirs d'un librettiste* (Paris: Ollendorf, 1917), 94–7.

Figure 3.4 Christian and Zulma Bouffar recreating the 'ronde des charlatans' scene from *Le voyage dans la lune* (1875). Nadar photograph. Source: Gallica, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Verne. And Méliès could have seen the Offenbach *féerie* both as a teenager in the 1870s and as an adult in 1892, when it was revived in Paris for the last time.[48] The *clair de terre* iconography originated by the 1875 *féerie* took liberties with science: some details are either implausible or outright impossible (the disc of the Earth rising from the horizon, displaying the continents of the Old World, the North Pole on top, and no clouds) (Fig. 3.5). But it might very well have taken a cue from science popularisation: Amédée Guillemin's general-public book *La lune* (1866) already contained an illustration of a *clair de terre*.[49]

The setting for the second of the two divertissements of *Le voyage dans la lune* is explicitly described as a 'moonscape after Flammarion', that is, based on the works of Camille Flammarion, the celebrated astronomer and popular-science writer.[50] As it happens, Flammarion's *Les mondes imaginaires et les mondes réels*, first published in 1865, resonates with many aspects of *Le voyage dans la lune*. Flammarion, who united modern science with a philosophical belief in the plurality of worlds, did not rule out that the far side of the Moon could have an atmosphere and that it could be inhabited. (More prudently, Verne, in *Autour de la lune*, only conceded that the Moon might have been inhabited in the past.) In *Le voyage dans la lune*, the earthlings mistakenly believe that the Moon has no atmosphere and no life, and so do the Selenites, the inhabitants of the Moon, for Earth. This witty dramatic justification, which makes for great comedic effect, echoes *Les mondes imaginaires et les mondes réels*: Flammarion argues that a Selenite, observing the ever-changing appearance of Earth, would logically conclude that our planet is inhabitable.[51] Flammarion also remarks that one could send a telegraphic message to the Moon and back in a few minutes (omitting to say that that would require laying a telegraphic cable between the Earth and the Moon).[52] In *Le voyage dans la lune*, Microscope sends and receives messages while on the Moon thanks to a pocket telegraph (*a fortiori*, no mention of a cable here either). Moreover, Flammarion muses at length on how the Earth must be to the Selenites what the Moon is to earthlings, 'the star of mystery, the source of poetry'.[53] This sentiment is perfectly captured, and conveyed to the audience, in

[48] On the relation of the film *Le voyage dans la lune* to its stage counterpart, see Thierry Lefebvre, 'A Trip to the Moon: A Composite Film', trans. Timothy Barnard, in *Fantastic Voyages of the Cinematic Imagination: Georges Méliès's Trip to the Moon*, ed. Matthew Solomon (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2011), 49–63, and Robert Pourvoyeur, 'Exclusivités lunaires: Un opéra pirate?', *Bulletin de la Société Jules Verne*, no. 136 (2000), 33–43.

[49] Amédée Guillemin, *La lune* (Paris: Hachette, 1866), illustration at p. 147.

[50] The model for the 'moonscape', in particular, could be an illustration of a 'paysage lunaire' in *Les merveilles célestes*, first published in 1865, which proved extremely popular, going through numerous editions (as well as being translated into English as *The Wonders of the Heavens*). Camille Flammarion, *Les merveilles célestes: Lectures du soir*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Hachette, 1867), illustration at p. 337.

[51] Camille Flammarion, *Les mondes imaginaires et les mondes réels: Voyage astronomique pittoresque dans le ciel* (Paris: Didier, 1865), 20–1.

[52] Flammarion, *Les mondes imaginaires et les mondes réels*, 10.

[53] 'Elle est pour eux ce que la Lune est pour nous, l'astre du mystère, la source de la poésie.' Flammarion, *Les mondes imaginaires et les mondes réels*, 21.

Figure 3.5 Poster advertising the music of *Le voyage dans la lune*, flipped. Source: Gallica, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

the *clair de terre apothéose*. The play embraces Flammarion's radical relativism as well, as the *apothéose* must be read against the two numbers about the Moon—a *romance* and a *valse chantée*—sung by Caprice in act 1, before leaving the Earth. The *apothéose* even shares with the *romance* a word: the adjective 'argenté' (silver), reminiscent of clichéd treatments of the moon in Romantic lyric poetry, which in the *apothéose* is instead applied to the Earth.

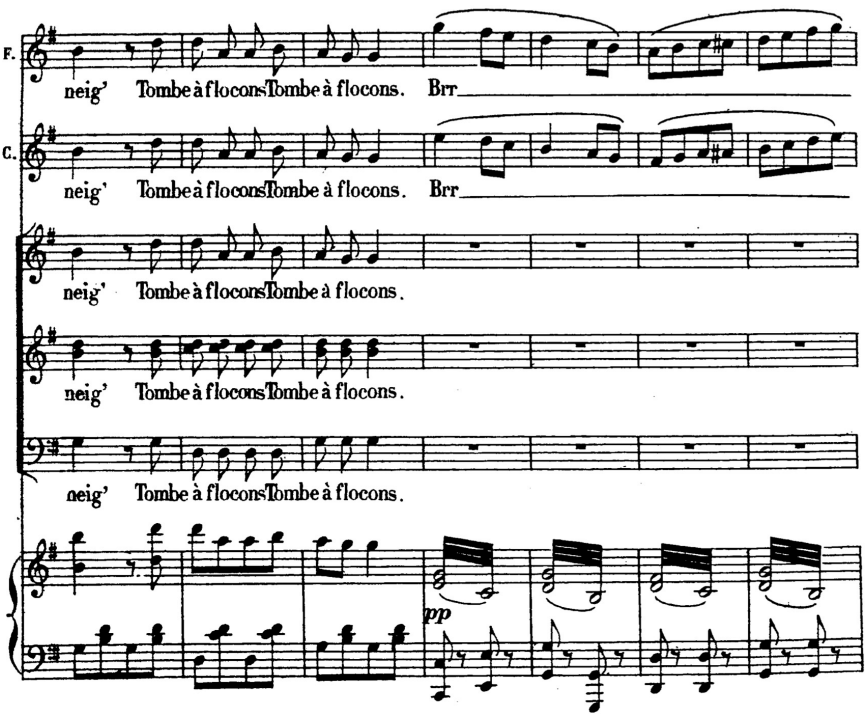
The second divertissement seems at first very unscientific, save for the 'moonscape after Flammarion' setting: its subject is the sudden arrival of winter, and the ballerinas personify swallows (which are caught by surprise) and snowflakes, ostensibly in keeping with the dainty imagery of Romantic ballet. But the idea that the Moon should experience extreme temperature variation is a scientific one. Since the lunar 'day' coincides with the lunar cycle as observed from Earth, each point of the Moon gets roughly 15 days of light followed by roughly 15 days of darkness, and, owing to the absence of atmosphere, the surface temperature instantly gets extremely hot at sunrise and extremely cold at sunset. This fact had already made its way into fiction with Edgar Allan Poe, who was known in France through Charles Baudelaire's translations and who was admired and held as a model by Verne: 'I have much to say of the climate of the [Moon]; of its wonderful alternations of heat and cold; of unmitigated and burning sunshine for one fortnight, and more than polar frigidity for the next[.]'[54] Verne himself had reiterated it in *Autour de la lune*: 'No twilight on [the Moon's] surface; night following day and day following night with the suddenness of a lamp which is extinguished or lighted amid profound darkness,—no transition from cold to heat, the temperature falling in an instant from boiling point to the cold of space.'[55]

The librettists of *Le voyage dans la lune* have divorced the idea of drastic changes in temperature both from the cycle of light and darkness and from the absence of atmosphere—in fact, snow, which contributes to the on-stage spectacle, is predicated on the presence of an atmosphere. But there is no doubt that they were thinking of this scientific phenomenon. As the characters sing in the ensemble with chorus that precedes the divertissement (and is quoted in the final *galop*), 'What a surprising country! We were in the Tropics, now we find ourselves in Norway!'[56] The astronomy fact also prompted a purely musical invention of Offenbach's. Part of the ensemble with chorus is sung on the shivering onomatopoeia 'brr',

[54] Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Pfaall', in *The Imaginary Voyages*, ed. Burton R. Pollin (Boston, MA: Twaine, 1981), 425. See John Tresch, 'Extra! Extra! Poe invents science fiction!', in *The Cambridge Companion to Edgar Allan Poe*, ed. Kevin J. Hayes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 113–32.

[55] Jules Verne, *Autour de la lune*, ch. 13, here in a contemporary English translation: 'Round the Moon', in *From the Earth to the Moon Direct in Ninety-Seven Hours and Twenty Minutes, and a Trip round It*, trans. Louis Mercier and Eleanor E. King (New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Company, 1874), 249.

[56] 'Quel pays étonnant! / On était au tropique, on se trouve en Norwège!', Albert Vanloo, Eugène Leterrier, and Arnold Mortier, *Le voyage dans la lune* (Paris: Tresse, 1877), 26 (act 3, 14th tableau, scene 10).

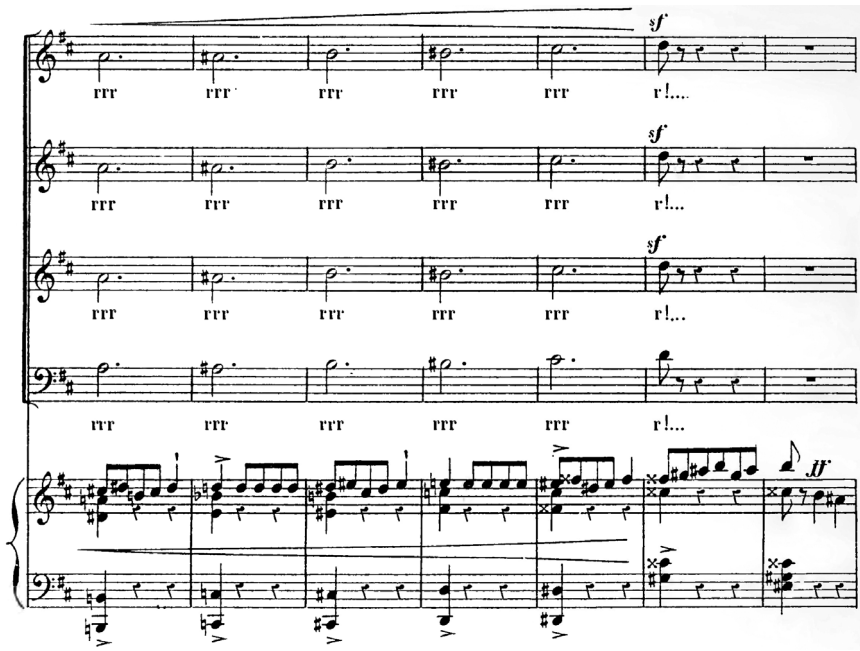


Example 3.3 Tongue trill in Jacques Offenbach, *Le voyage dans la lune* (Paris: Choudens, 1876). Act 3, number 26, 'Finale de la neige'.

producing a tongue trill, the vocal equivalent of flutter-tonguing in wind instruments (Ex. 3.3). Emmanuel Chabrier, who by his own admission would have loved to write a composerly *féerie*, would use the same effect, in all likelihood inspired by *Le voyage dans la lune*, in the orgiastic choral waltz (the 'fête polonaise') that opens act 2 of the 1887 *opéra comique Le roi malgré lui* (Ex. 3.4).[57] What was a form of musical humour in Offenbach, dictated by the dramatic situation, would become a deliberate timbral choice—and an impressive one at that—in Chabrier, with no justification other than an artistic one.

If *Le tour du monde* is more *féerique* than one might suppose, *Le voyage dans la lune* is more scientific than one would expect. Especially if one considers their temporal proximity, mentioning them in the same breath is only logical—in spite of the historiography that has grouped the former with melodrama and the latter

[57] As remarked in Chapter 1, the 'rondeau du colporteur' from Chabrier's 1877 operetta *L'étoile* is, like the 'ronde des charlatans' in *Le voyage dans la lune*, reminiscent of the 'ronde des colporteurs' in *Le roi Carotte*. It is worth noting that the librettists of *L'étoile* are two co-authors of *Le voyage dans la lune*, Leterrier and Vanloo.



Example 3.4 Tongue trill in Emmanuel Chabrier, *Le roi malgré lui* (Paris: Enoch frères & Costallat, 1887). Act 2, number 9, 'Introduction et chœur dansé'.

with operetta. With a cookery analogy *à la* Auguste Germain, we could say that *Le tour du monde* and *Le voyage dans la lune* were concocted by different chefs using different ingredients, but belong to the same type of dish: scientific *féerie*. There are, however, plays that, like the 1875 *Geneviève*, incorporate scientific themes while remaining true to their nature as traditional *féeries*. *Les aventures de Monsieur de Crac* (1886) is one such. The titular hero, created by playwright Jean-François Collin d'Harleville in the 1790s, is a sort of French Baron Munchausen, so the work (in which the German baron also appears) is inscribed in a pseudo-folkloric tradition. With a good fairy, implausible events, a tableau set in the realm of birds, and an *apothéose* in the kingdom of fairies, it has impeccable traditional-*féerie* credentials. And yet it featured an Indian episode clearly reminiscent of *Le tour du monde*: judging from the published excerpts, a march and a waltz from a divertissement, the music, by the Châtelet's resident conductor, Alexandre Artus, was also very much in the vein of Debillemont's 'Indian' music for *Le tour du monde*.[58]

[58] The 1877 and 1878 revivals of the traditional *féerie Rothomago* had similarly incorporated Indian-themed attractions. On Artus's Orientalist music for the Châtelet, see Gesa zur Nieden, *Vom* Grand Spectacle *zur* Great Season*: Das Pariser Théâtre du Châtelet als Raum musikalischer Produktion und Rezeption, 1862–1914* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2010), 152–7.

The star of the divertissement, as well as dedicatee of the waltz—but also, this time, the choreographer—was none other than Mariquita. Among the attractions of *Les aventures de Monsieur de Crac* were also a hot-air balloon, as in *Kéraban le Têtu*, and a whale, as in *Les enfants du capitaine Grant*. As we have seen in Chapter 2, *Les 400 coups du diable* (1905), at the tail end of supernatural *féerie*, contained the film segment 'Le voyage dans l'espace', despite the very conservative plot based on the Manichaean conflict between Satan and a good genie. Moreover, *Les 400 coups du diable* had a depiction of a Paris of the future where everybody gets around by air, a 'Carpathian castle' whose designation was a transparent nod to Verne (*Le château des Carpathes* is a novel from 1892), and, at the *manuscrit de censure* stage, even a submarine. Contamination also happened in the opposite direction. In *L'oncle d'Amérique*, a *Tour du monde*-style play from 1903, anthropomorphic garden vegetables appear as costumes in a carnival procession in Venice, a clear homage to *La biche au bois*.[59] The same play also featured a 'Dance of Geese and Turkeys', reminiscent of the giant turkeys that were among the attractions of *Rothomago*.

Comic travelogues

The creation of scientific *féerie*, with the consequent exchanges between supernatural and scientific *féerie*, is just one aspect of the phenomenon of generic cross-pollination that I describe as the féerisation of Parisian theatre. It was quickly followed by a hybridisation of *féerie* and vaudeville, and by a resurgence of composerly *féerie* in the 1880s and 1890s. Of course, these three trends are not mutually exclusive, and the *féeries* of Gaston Serpette, which will be discussed in the last section of this chapter, are arguably at the crossroads of all three.

But let us proceed with order. In 1878, actor Brasseur opened a new playhouse, the Théâtre des Nouveautés, on boulevard des Italiens, in close proximity to the Opéra, the Vaudeville, and the Opéra-Comique. The first play he produced was *Coco*, a vaudeville by Clairville, Eugène Grangé, and Alfred Delacour. Significantly, the cast reunited Offenbach alumni: Christian, Silly, plus Brasseur himself and Céline Montaland, vaudeville actors who had taken part in *La vie parisienne*. It is therefore not surprising that *Coco* was an operettised vaudeville, with many vocal numbers, many of which had original music. Among the musicians who contributed to the score was a successful operetta composer, Auguste Cœdès, and the non-original vocal numbers tended to use music from recent operettas. What is more surprising is that *Coco* looks not just operettised but féerised as well. With five acts, the play is on a grander scale than most vaudevilles. Several of the vocal numbers are presented not as instances of characters casually

[59] André Charlot, 'Théâtre du Châtelet: *L'oncle d'Amérique*', *L'Art du théâtre*, January 1904, illustration at p. 11.

breaking into song, but as diegetic performances, and in some cases they also call for dance: the contrast with another popular vaudeville from the same year, Alfred Hennequin and Albert Millaud's *Niniche*, is remarkable.[60] What is more, act 4 ends on a moving panorama observed from the deck of a ship, evoking both scientific *féerie*'s obsession with travel and means of transportation and the penchant for spectacle of *féerie* in general. While *Coco*, in typical vaudeville fashion, is a well-wrought play with a carefully orchestrated plot, as opposed to the loose plots of *féerie*, it contains moments that work as attractions, as in a *féerie*. There are even a quest of sorts—the characters are on the pursuit of a parrot on the run, the titular Coco—and a hint at a *défilé*: when the peasants present the birds they have captured in the hope of getting the reward promised for Coco, the scene brings to mind a procession of women gathered to try on Cinderella's slipper. The dramaturgy of the late 19th-century *vaudeville de mouvement* is, so to speak, at the opposite of that of *féerie*: the interest of the former lay in the machinations of the plot, that of the latter in visual spectacle; one is guided by the principle of economy of means, the other relies on gratuitous effects. Even though the vaudeville element is prevalent, *Coco* points toward a paradoxical conciliation between the two dramaturgies.

If the operettisation of *féerie*, as discussed in Chapter 2, brought the taste of the western theatres of Paris to the eastern theatres, the féerisation of vaudeville did the opposite, importing back into the western part of the theatre landscape a dramaturgy that had become associated with the large theatres of the eastern part. But that was the completion of a process, not a reversal of it—a logical next step in the erasure of the boundary between the west and the now gentrified east. That *Coco*, 10 years later, was revived at the Folies-Dramatiques, at the opposite end of the Grands boulevards, is further proof of the erasure of that boundary.

Furthermore, since the Nouveautés was a brand-new theatre, *Coco* can be read as a manifesto play of sorts, outlining the generic horizon of the new venture. Such manifesto plays were common in 19th-century Parisian theatre, from Eugène Scribe's *Les trois genres* for the Odéon (1824, the three genres being tragedy, comedy, and *opéra comique*), to Théodore Cogniard and Clairville's *La liberté des théâtres* for the Variétés, right after the Second Empire deregulation (1864). As late as 1891, a new manager at the Porte-Saint-Martin inaugurated his tenure (and a refurbished auditorium) with a manifesto play that combined vaudeville, melodrama, and ballet, *Voyages dans Paris*, by Ernest Blum and Raoul Toché. If we are to infer that *Coco* promised a combination of vaudeville, operetta, and *féerie*, Brasseur would deliver, staging, as we shall see, three *féeries* during his tenure at the Nouveautés.

The moving panorama of *Coco* might very well have inspired that of *Michel Strogoff* in 1880, and the example of the Nouveautés might have encouraged the Variétés to produce, in 1879, *Le voyage en Suisse*, another hybrid between

[60] Alfred Hennequin and Albert Millaud, *Niniche* (Paris: Allouard, 1878). *Niniche* was a composerly vaudeville, having an original score by Marius Boullard.

vaudeville and attractional entertainment, in this case built around the talents of an English acrobatic troupe, the Hanlon-Lees.[61] But the true successors to the experiment of *Coco* are to be found in a string of plays given at the Gaîté between the late 1880s and the early 1890s, one of which proved hugely successful. *Dix jours aux Pyrénées* (1887, by Paul Ferrier), *Le voyage de Suzette* (1890, by Henri Chivot and Alfred Duru), and *Le pays de l'or* (1892, by Chivot and Vanloo) all surpassed 100 performances. A hit on its appearance, *Le voyage de Suzette* went on to have a decades-long stage career, being revived into the interwar period (Fig. 3.6). All three plays are operettised, having vocal numbers with operetta-style music. *Dix jours aux Pyrénées* and *Le pays de l'or* are also composerly, as all the music is by Louis Varney and by Léon Vasseur, respectively, both popular operetta composers, the former best known for *Les mousquetaires au couvent* (1880), the latter for *La timbale d'argent* (1872). When it was first performed, *Le voyage de Suzette* had instead non-original music, with some additions by Vasseur, who conducted the première (probably the melodramatic music and perhaps a couple of vocal numbers). An alternative composerly setting exists, though, entirely by Vasseur: this seems to have been performed only in the provinces, while Paris apparently stuck to the non-original setting until 1910, when the Vasseur version was performed at a minor theatre, the Trianon-Lyrique.[62] The choice may have been made by the publisher Choudens for legal or financial reasons: a later, less successful play from the Gaîté, the 1893 *Les bicyclistes en voyage*, was also performed in Paris with non-original music, but Choudens issued a composerly score by Marius Carman, who had provided some dance music for the Gaîté production. At any rate, it is apparent that *Le voyage de Suzette* was written to accommodate borrowed music. Offenbach's 'ronde des colporteurs' from *Le roi Carotte*—'Nous venons du fin fond de la Perse', We come from deepest Persia—is parodied as 'Nous venons du fin fond de l'Espagne' (We come from deepest Spain), which is made particularly funny by the fact that some characters come from Spain while others come, indeed, from Persia: one is even tempted to think that the whole plot was conceived as a set-up for this musical joke.

All three plays have a high number of tableaux, *Dix jours aux Pyrénées* 10, *Le voyage de Suzette* 11, *Le pays de l'or* 14. All adopt the travelogue model of *Le tour du monde* and the other Verne plays, with a plot characterised by constant geographic displacement. But unlike the Verne plays, the rationale for geographic displacement is not some abstract aspiration to accomplish a more or less arbitrary mission or to test the boundaries of the possible. The characters, here, have more mundane reasons for travelling—not necessarily ones frequently encountered in everyday life,

[61] On *Le voyage en Suisse*, see Mark Cosdon, '*Le voyage en Suisse* in Europe, 1879–1881', in *The Hanlon Brothers: From Daredevil Acrobatics to Spectacle Pantomime, 1833–1931* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2009), 50–76.

[62] To further complicate matters, the score of *Le voyage de Suzette* is sometimes credited to Edmond Audran, presumably in error.

Figure 3.6 Juliette Simon-Girard as Suzette in *Le voyage de Suzette* (1890). Nadar photograph. Source: Gallica, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

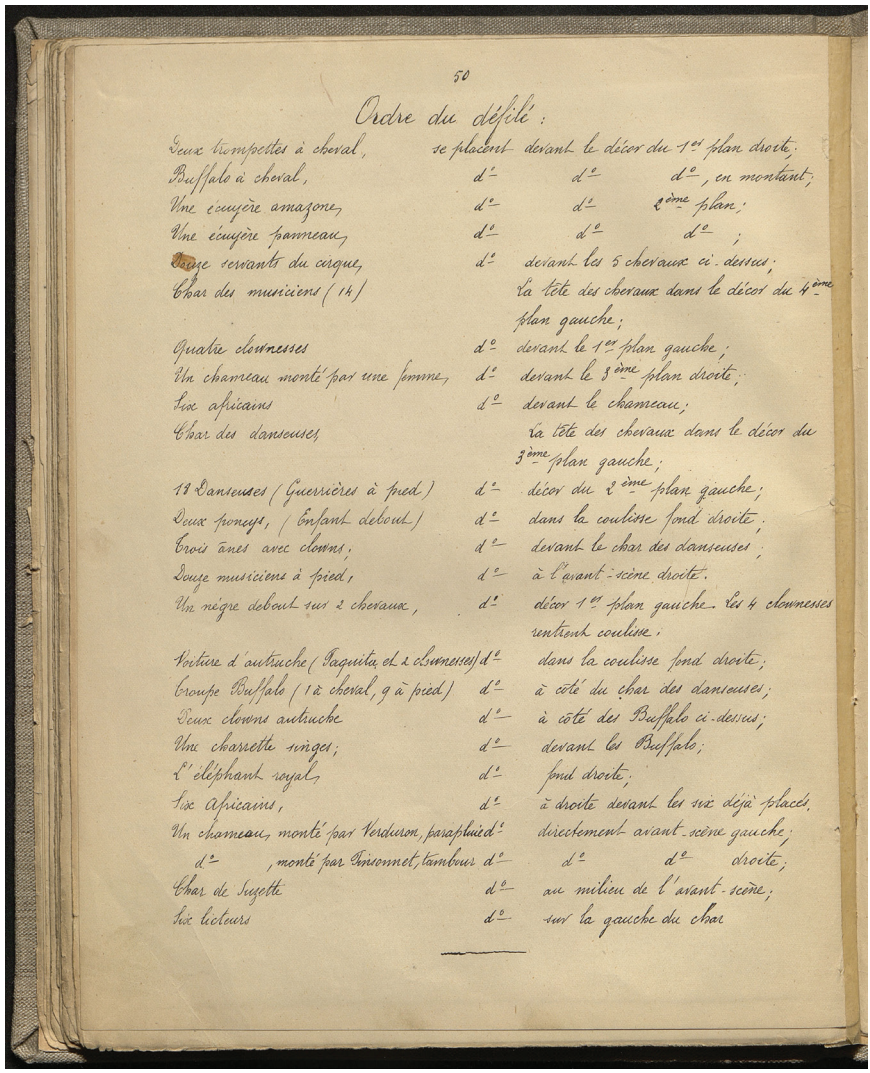
perhaps, but ones that resonate with the reality of the First Globalisation. In *Dix jours aux Pyrénées*, the characters are on a package tour organised by a travel agency; the very subtitle of the play, in lieu of a generic designation, is 'round trip' (*voyage circulaire*), so that the playbill (or the title page) reads like an advertisement for the fictional travel agency. The premise of *Le voyage de Suzette* is that two childhood friends from France have ended up in Persia and Spain: one is a businessman who has made a fortune in Asia; the other is the creator of a universal language (spectators would have thought of either Volapük or Esperanto, though the former was still better known at the time). In *Le pays de l'or*, the incentives to geographical mobility are an operetta touring company and the idea that hard-working immigrants can succeed in the United States—an idea that was not called the American Dream yet but was very much present, in an era of mass migration to the New World. These plays, therefore, reconciled the extraordinariness of *féerie* with the ordinariness of vaudeville. They were, like *féerie*, a source of the marvellous, but they also provided the sort of relatability that vaudeville offered: the feeling that the on-stage characters belonged to the same society in which the audience lived. Together with the presence of vocal numbers, this set them apart from the Verne plays, populated by more-than-human or other-than-human characters.

These comic travelogues—together with Serpette's *féeries*, discussed later—can therefore be seen as cases of féerised vaudeville. But there is no underestimating their *féerie*ness: they are conceived as a vehicle for a series of feats of scenery and of spectacular *clous*, and they contain the same ingredients that we have found in other *féeries*, scientific and non-scientific alike. All three contain ballets: *Dix jours aux Pyrénées* has a Spanish divertissement and a farandole, *Le voyage de Suzette* two divertissements (one Spanish, one presumably a *ballet blanc*), *Le pays de l'or* a horse race-themed divertissement and two isolated dance numbers (of sailors and of Indigenous Americans). All have a *défilé*, whether a relatively modest *paseíllo* in a bullring (*Dix jours aux Pyrénées*), a civic procession in San Francisco with local authorities and miners (*Le pays de l'or*), or a massive circus parade (*Le voyage de Suzette*), which according to the correspondent for the Italian musical periodical *Il teatro illustrato* ran for 20 minutes.[63] As seen with the 1867 and 1881 productions of *La biche au bois* and with *Le tour du monde*, displays of live exotic animals had their place in *féerie*.[64] The circus parade of *Le voyage de Suzette* pushed the envelope with a whole menagerie including a camel, an ostrich, an elephant, and two dromedaries (Fig. 3.7).[65] Child performers, featured in traditional *féerie*, in the

[63] 'Il viaggio di Susetta', *Il teatro illustrato*, May 1890, 67.

[64] *Le voyage dans la lune* also included a dromedary, and elephants took part in a *défilé* in the 1881 *Les mille et une nuits*. Lions were seen in the 1874 revival of *Les pilules du diable*, snakes in the 1878 revival of *Rothomago*.

[65] Georges Boyer, 'Courrier des théâtres', *Le Figaro*, 19 February 1890, 6. This is consistent with the Choudens production book (see Appendix 1), except that the production book does not make the difference between camel and dromedary.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Ordre du défilé :

Deux trompettes à cheval, se placent devant le décor du 1er plan droite;
Buffalo à cheval, d° d° d°, en montant;
Une écuyère amazone, d° d° 2ème plan;
Une écuyère panneau, d° d° d° ;
Deux servants du cirque, d° devant les 8 chevaux ci-dessus;
Char des musiciens (14) la tête des chevaux dans le décor du 4ème plan gauche;
Quatre clownesses d° devant le 1er plan gauche;
Un chameau monté par une femme, d° devant le 3ème plan droite;
Six africains d° devant le chameau;
Char des danseuses la tête des chevaux dans le décor du 3ème plan gauche;
18 Danseuses (Guerrières à pied) d° décor du 2ème plan gauche;
Deux poneys, (Enfant debout) d° dans la coulisse fond droite;
Trois ânes avec clowns, d° devant le char des danseuses;
Douze musiciens à pied, d° à l'avant-scène droite.
Un nègre debout sur 2 chevaux, d° décor 1er plan gauche. Les 4 clownesses rentrent coulisse;
Voiture d'autruche (Paquita et 2 clownesses) d° dans la coulisse fond droite;
Groupe Buffalo (1 à cheval, 9 à pied) d° à côté du char des danseuses;
Deux clowns autruche d° à côté des Buffalo ci-dessus;
Une charrette singes; d° devant les Buffalo;
L'éléphant royal, d° fond droite;
Six Africains, d° à droite devant les six déjà placés.
Un chameau, monté par Verdurion, parapluie d° directement avant-scène gauche;
d° , monté par Prinsonnet, tambour d° d° d° droite;
Char de Suzette d° au milieu de l'avant-scène;
Six licteurs d° sur la gauche du char

Figure 3.7 Choudens production book for *Le voyage de Suzette*. Paris, Bibliothèque historique de la Ville de Paris, fonds ART. Source: Ville de Paris / Bibliothèque historique.

Offenbach *féeries*, and, at least as supernumeraries, in *Le tour du monde*,[66] appear in *Dix jours aux Pyrénées* and *Le voyage de Suzette*. These plays also exhibit the typical *féerie* propensity to incorporate extraneous acts as performances within the performance: *Dix jours aux Pyrénées* includes a bullfight, *Le voyage de Suzette*

[66] See Roques, *L'invention d'un théâtre-monde*, 289–91 for the use of child performers in revivals of *Le tour du monde* and *Michel Strogoff*.

a stage-magic act and a pantomime, *Le pays de l'or* a minstrel show and a recreation of Charles Blondin's tightrope walk over Niagara Falls. In all three cases the cast included a clown troupe, the Oriel's Brothers [*sic*] for *Dix jours aux Pyrénées* and 'les Price', already seen in *Le Petit Poucet* (1885), for the other two plays. The penchant of *féerie* for the display of female bodies is reflected in the last tableau of *Dix jours aux Pyrénées*, set on the beach at Biarritz, and in the first tableau of *Le pays de l'or*, where the residents of a boarding school for girls demonstrate their gymnastics skills.

That *Le tour du monde* was a model for these comic travelogues is made explicit by a duet near the beginning of *Dix jours aux Pyrénées*, where the male lead sings that he will follow his loved one 'to Cochinchina, to Kamchatka! … on land or sea, by rail coach, by steamship … even if that meant circling the globe where we live'.[67] A minor character in *Le pays de l'or* in the form of a robber baron used to getting his own way by throwing money around echoes Phileas Fogg's modus operandi. But reminiscences of traditional *féerie* are also very much present. *Dix jours aux Pyrénées* manages to include anthropomorphic animals by means of an astonishing dream tableau. The character who is having the dream, by way of subconscious word play, makes the leap from the vocal cracks (*chats*) of a tenor who is travelling with the organised tour to cats (*chats*). As the music quotes from the finale of Charles Gounod's *Faust*, the vocal cracks materialise as cats; a pantomime by the Oriel's Brothers segues into a love duet between two cats sung by the same actors who play the dreamer's unfaithful wife and her lover. The system of characters of *Le voyage de Suzette* strongly recalls that of traditional *féerie*: the two childhood friends mentioned earlier, fathers to the titular Suzette and to the male lead, are the equivalent of *féerie* kings; the two leads are the equivalent of a princess and a prince; and the maid of the 'princess' and the valet of the 'prince' form a lower-status second couple. As for *Le pays de l'or*, the tableau titled 'L'Electric-Hotel' depicts, precisely, a futuristic New York hotel where all services are requested through electric call buttons, minimising human interaction. This sounds like a real-world, modern technology-driven transposition of the 'Cabin of the Invisibles' from *La biche au bois* mentioned at the beginning of this chapter—where, as the title suggests, invisible beings satisfied every need of the cabin's guests. (The quartet sung in the 'Electric-Hotel' tableau also contains the same tongue trill effect found in *Le voyage dans la lune* and *Le roi malgré lui*, this time used to mimic electric bells.) The kinship between these comic travelogues, traditional *féerie*, and the Verne plays seems undeniable, and the statement with which Sarcey began his review of *Le voyage de Suzette* is blunt but fundamentally correct: '*Le voyage de Suzette* is the ancient

[67] 'Je vous suivrais au bout du monde, / En Cochinchine, au Kamtchatka! / Je vous suivrai sur la terre et sur l'onde, / En wagon, en steamer et même en troïka! … Partout où vous irez, j'irai sur votre trace, / Du globe où nous vivons dût-on faire le tour.' Paul Ferrier, *Dix jours aux Pyrénées* (Paris: Librairie théâtrale, 1888), 9–10 (act 1, 1st tableau, scene 5).

féerie in modern garb: *Le tour du monde en 80 jours* is the prototype of this kind of spectacular plays'.[68]

Composerly *féerie* after Offenbach

Composerly *féerie* disappeared from the Parisian stage between 1875 and 1882, save for performances of *Le voyage dans la lune* and a revival of *Orphée aux enfers*. No musician other than Offenbach achieved success with a composerly *féerie* until 1882. But composerly *féerie* did make a comeback in the 1880s and 1890s, before fading out again at the end of the century. Of the composerly *féeries* that I have identified for this period, two are the comic travelogues *Dix jours aux Pyrénées* and *Le pays de l'or* just discussed, and five are by Serpette. One is the reworking of Victorien Sardou's *Don Quichotte*, a joint project of Sardou and Offenbach from the 1870s that came to fruition in 1895 with music by Albert Renaud. *Le chat du diable*, given in 1893, is a posthumous French adaptation of a *féerie* that Offenbach wrote for London, *Whittington* (1874).[69]

Among the other plays in the category, five stand out as a consistent subset: *Les pommes d'or*, music by Edmond Audran, given at the Menus-Plaisirs in 1883; *Le puits qui parle*, also set by Audran, given at the Nouveautés in 1888; *Isoline*, music by André Messager, given at the Renaissance in 1888; *Riquet à la houppe*, music by Varney, given at the Folies-Dramatiques in 1889; and *La fille de l'air*, music by Paul Lacome, given at the Folies-Dramatiques in 1890. All were produced at theatres that did not have the means for spectacle that the Porte-Saint-Martin, the Gaîté, or the Châtelet had. And none was commercially successful, despite good reviews for some. The Nouveautés was, as we have seen, a recently opened fashionable theatre; as discussed in Chapter 2, the Menus-Plaisirs and the Renaissance were drivers of the gentrification of the theatre landscape of eastern Paris, and the Folies-Dramatiques—a former melodrama house—a victim of the same gentrification process. None of these theatres was a stranger to operetta, and the Nouveautés and the Folies-Dramatiques, at the end of the 1880s, specialised in operetta and composerly vaudeville. Perhaps, in a way, these composerly *féeries* were not so much operettised *féerie* as féerised operetta, as customers expected operetta and were served *féerie*, so to speak. Contrary to *Le roi Carotte* back in its time, the element of novelty, in a landscape saturated with operetta music, was not to be found in the operetta-style vocal numbers but in

[68] 'Le *Voyage de Suzette* c'est l'antique féerie habillée à la moderne: le *Tour du monde en 80 jours* est le prototype de ce genre de pièces à spectacles.' Francisque Sarcey, 'Chronique théâtrale', *Le Temps*, 27 January 1890, [2].

[69] Jean-Claude Yon, '*Whittington* d'Offenbach: féerie anglaise ou française?', in *La traduction des livrets: Aspects théoriques, historiques et pragmatiques*, ed. Gottfried R. Marschall (Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2004), 359–67.

the *féerie* plots. Except that those were not that novel either: *Les pommes d'or* had already been performed as a non-composerly *féerie* in 1873; *La fille de l'air* was the adaptation of an often-revived *féerie* from 1837; *Le puits qui parle* and *Riquet à la houppe* rehashed classic *féerie* material. For *Isoline*, noted Wagnerian (but also noted hack) Catulle Mendès had concocted a more interesting play, with nods to Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and to Watteau's *Embarkation for Cythera*, anticipating the intellectual *féeries* of the early 20th century. It was not enough to ensure the success of the work, though. What preserved it from oblivion was the fame of Messager, boosted by his subsequent works (particularly *Véronique*, 1898). *Isoline*, unique among non-Offenbach *féeries*, was recorded after the Second World War and even revived at the Opéra-Comique in 1958.

The disappointing business record of composerly supernatural *féerie* at the *fin de siècle*, at any rate, seems to suggest that *féerie*, to succeed, needed either an original take on the genre (which was delivered by Serpette) or the kind of spectacular resources only available to the largest theatres in town. And if, among the three largest theatres, the Gaîté found a winning formula with the comic travelogues, the other two—the Porte-Saint-Martin and the Châtelet—did not produce a similar trend, but came up with interesting experiments in composerly *féerie*. *Le Crocodile*, the 1886 play by Sardou with a score by Jules Massenet, has been rightfully likened to *féerie* by Guy Ducrey, who also cites a contemporary review in support of the comparison.[70] Though stopping short of calling *Le tour du monde* a *féerie*, Ducrey acknowledges that Sardou's model was *Le tour du monde* and that *féerie* was a precedent for a theatre that eschewed the dramaturgy of the well-wrought play. If we are to believe Sarcey, Sardou himself admitted that he wanted to try his hand at the genre practised by Verne and d'Ennery.[71] And indeed, *Le Crocodile* is strongly reminiscent of *Le tour du monde*: there is a shipwreck, that of the steamship *Le Crocodile*; it is set in maritime South-East Asia, as was part of *Le tour du monde*; the protagonist is constantly under threat of arrest; an attack by Malay pirates recalls the attack on the train by the Pawnee; and the play ends with a magnificent reception during which the couples that have formed in the course of the action are publicly announced. What *Le Crocodile* lacks, though, is not just vocal numbers but a divertissement and a *défilé*. The work was not a failure, but it was not influential either. In hindsight, it is easy to blame its modest success on its *féerie*-like nature. But it is equally possible that it would have fared better if Sardou, on the contrary, had fully embraced *féerie* and asked Massenet to compose ballet music and a march

[70] Guy Ducrey, 'La Pièce mal faite: Victorien Sardou et le modèle kaléidoscopique du théâtre', in *Victorien Sardou, un siècle plus tard*, ed. Guy Ducrey (Strasbourg: Presses universitaires de Strasbourg, 2007), 183–94.

[71] Francisque Sarcey, '*Le Crocodile*', in *Quarante ans de théâtre* (Paris: Bibliothèque des *Annales politiques et littéraires*, 1900–2), 6:132–3.

for a *défilé*.[72] If *Le Crocodile* has seemed perplexing to scholars, it is because it is a *féerie*, but it does not completely fit into a history of *féerie* either. Rather, it stands isolated between the Verne plays (1874–83) and the comic travelogues of the Gaîté (1887–93), and essentially represents a dead end of scientific *féerie*.

Another composerly experiment with a score by Vasseur, *Le prince Soleil* was once again a *Tour du monde*-style play, taking the spectator from Sweden to India via Portugal, Gibraltar, the Chagos Islands, and Japan, and like the comic travelogues it had vocal numbers. Unlike the comic travelogues, though, it did not seek to bring the plot down to a more human dimension than the Verne plays. Instead, a portion of the work ventures into supernatural *féerie* territory, with a lengthy excursion to the fantastic kingdom of the Sun (albeit justified as a hallucination). The date of the première in the summer of 1889, at the height of the World's Fair, is revealing. *Féerie*, with its emphasis on non-verbal elements, was an ideal programming choice to lure into a theatre the international visitors to a World's Fair, as we have seen for *La biche au bois* in 1867. *Le prince Soleil* looks explicitly designed to appeal to the World's Fair crowd. Gibraltar is presented as a microcosm of different nationalities and ethnicities, and the protagonist has six sidekicks from all around the world who only communicate through gestures, lacking a shared language.[73] These sidekicks were played by the Lauri-Lauris, a pantomime troupe from England that included members of the Lauri, d'Auban, and Evans theatrical families. A writer for the newspaper *La Lanterne* attributed to the managers of the Châtelet the following consideration: '[M]ost of our spectators will not know a single word of French, and they will only come to see the dancers, the *mouche d'or*, the Lauri-Lauris, and the pretty scenery'.[74] Vasseur's music, one imagines, was equally supposed to bridge the language barrier.

If *Le prince Soleil* was a success, the same cannot be said of the last composerly *féerie* of the century, *La montagne enchantée*, music by Messager and Xavier

[72] Massenet is often given credit (or partial credit) for another scientific-*féerie* score, that of *Michel Strogoff*. I believe this rests on a misunderstanding: Massenet did, in fact, supply music for *Michel Strogoff*—'supply' as in 'help find', though, not as in 'write'. According to a press report, Massenet acted as an intermediary between the Châtelet and Nikolay Rubinshteyn, who provided a transcription of a Russian military tune: Jules Prével, 'Courrier des théâtres', *Le Figaro*, 15 September 1880, 4 ('Le compositeur N. Rubinstein, directeur du Conservatoire de Moscou, vient d'envoyer à M. Jules Massenet, qui l'a immédiatement transmis à M. Duquesnel, le motif annoté de la Retraite de la garde impériale russe, destiné au *Michel Strogoff* de d'Ennery et Jules Verne, qu'on répète au théâtre du Châtelet'). As Louis Bilodeau has shown, Massenet had initially been considered to compose the score of *Michel Strogoff*, but the collaboration did not materialise: Louis Bilodeau, introduction to *Michel Strogoff*, ed. Bilodeau, xli–xliii.

[73] For the portrayal of Gibraltar I am relying on a printed programme: Georges Bertal, *Le prince Soleil: Analyse et programme de la pièce* (Paris: Kugelmann, 1889), 16.

[74] 'Songez que la plupart de nos spectateurs ne sauront pas un mot de français et ne viendront que pour voir les danseuses, la mouche d'or, les Lauri'Lauris [*sic*] et les beaux décors.' 'Au Châtelet', *La Lanterne*, 14 July 1889, 2. For the *mouche d'or*, see Chapter 2, footnote 93. Kristian Moen discusses *Le prince Soleil* in the context of the World's Fair in *Film and Fairy Tales* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013), 35–7, and in '"Never Has One Seen Reality Enveloped in Such a Phantasmagoria": Watching Spectacular Transformations, 1860–89', in *Cinematicity in Media History*, ed. Jeffrey Geiger and Karin Littau (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 35–45.

Leroux, which folded after a month at the Porte-Saint-Martin in 1897. The text, by Émile Moreau, best known as a collaborator of Sardou, and Albert Carré, soon to become the manager of the Opéra-Comique, appears to be lost, but the play was a supernatural *féerie* with some literary pretensions and a Middle Eastern setting. It had very elaborate scenery, two ballets, and pantomime by 'les Price', who impersonated genies and monsters in a climactic tableau that bore a resemblance to 'La roche invisible' in *La biche au bois*. It had, moreover, a rich and sophisticated score, which also included vocal music, although its star, the former operetta performer Jane Hading, used her singing voice sparingly, as she had done in the title role of Alphonse Daudet's *Sapho* (1885)—in this case, she played a Turandot-like icy princess who does not sing until her conversion to love. It is hard to say whether the flop of *La montagne enchantée* had to do with the merits of the work or was just a symptom that the tide was turning against what I have called 'operettocracy'. A decade would pass before another supernatural *féerie* with an original score would see the stage; but *La Belle au bois dormant* (1907), by Jean Richepin and Henri Cain, music by Francis Thomé, is already a retrospective work, inaugurating the nostalgic appropriation of the old *féerie* by literary theatre.[75]

The *féeries* of Gaston Serpette

Gaston Serpette, a rough contemporary of Massenet, Varney, and Vasseur, was a composer with impeccable academic credentials (a Prix de Rome laureate, no less) who chose to specialise in light stage music. It is fair, then, to describe him as an operetta composer—except that, on closer inspection, some of his operettas reveal themselves as composerly vaudevilles, such as the relatively popular *La demoiselle du téléphone* (1891). The 1887 *La lycéenne* is now remembered as an early vaudeville by Georges Feydeau; had posterity, for some reason, been kinder to the composer and less kind to the playwright, we would now probably think of it as an 'operetta' by Serpette—in the same way *Mam'zelle Nitouche*, another composerly vaudeville, is considered an operetta by Hervé. Some of Serpette's other works are actually *féeries*: *Madame le Diable* (1882), *Le château de Tire-Larigot* (1884), *Adam et Ève* (1886), *Le carnet du diable* (1895), and *Le carillon* (1896).[76]

[75] On Thomé and *La Belle au bois dormant*, see Erin M. Brooks, 'Sharing the Stage with the *voix d'or*: Sarah Bernhardt and Music in the Belle Époque' (PhD diss., Washington University in St. Louis, 2010), 421–99.

[76] Serpette also provided music for *Le mirliton enchanté*, a *féerie* that received a private performance at the Cercle de l'Union artistique (the gentlemen's club also known as Cercle des Mirlitons) in 1883. Serpette's *Le Petit Chaperon rouge*, from 1885, is an operetta, not a *féerie*. Translations and adaptations of French *féeries* across Europe are numerous, and a German-language adaptation of *Madame le Diable* (as *Des Teufels Weib*) would be unremarkable were it not for its authors: the composer of the new score is Adolf Müller junior, who would later arrange music by Johann Strauss for *Wiener Blut*, and the librettist is none other than Theodor Herzl.

As was the case for Offenbach and Verne, I am not interested in a 'great man' but in a set of plays that happen to share, among other things, a creator. Indeed, they share more than a creator. All of Serpette's *féeries* except *Madame le Diable* are credited to the team of playwrights formed by Ernest Blum and Raoul Toché, then, after Toché's death in 1895, by Blum and Paul Ferrier. These five *féeries* were all performed at comparatively small, hence exclusive, theatres: the Renaissance (*Madame le Diable*), the Nouveautés (*Le château de Tire-Larigot* and *Adam et Ève*), and the Variétés (*Le carnet du diable* and *Le carillon*). *Adam et Ève* was relatively unsuccessful, *Le carillon* completely so, possibly another casualty of the late 1890s crisis of operettocracy. Moreover, the text of the former and the music of the latter are, to my knowledge, lost. I will then focus solely on the three most successful plays. Of those, *Le carnet du diable* proved particularly popular, with two revivals in 1897 and 1900. *Le carnet du diable* is also the best-documented one, since both the production book and orchestral parts survive.

Serpette's *féeries* can look baffling to a modern observer, but they start making sense once they are understood as products of the generic crucible of féerised Parisian theatre. They would have been unthinkable without the experimentations of *Le roi Carotte*, *Le tour du monde*, and *Coco* in the 1870s—although they do not resemble any of the three. The trends described in the previous section converge in these works. They tend to blur the boundaries between the supernatural marvellous and the technological marvellous, between the wonders of the imagination and those of the increasingly interconnected world of the First Globalisation. Like the comic travelogues of the Gaîté, they strike a compromise between the extraordinariness of *féerie* and the ordinariness of vaudeville. But, like the composerly supernatural *féeries* of the same years (from *Les pommes d'or* through *La fille de l'air*), they are written for smaller theatres—and take advantage of that, with risqué plots and humour that would be out of place at the family-friendly larger theatres.

Both *Madame le Diable* and *Le château de Tire-Larigot* combine the Manichean conflict of *féerie* with the emphasis on adultery of vaudeville. As a result, in both plays there are two supernatural characters, incessantly changing appearance (they are *rôles à tiroirs*), trying respectively to make adultery happen and to stop it in its tracks. In *Madame le Diable* these two characters are a couple, a he-devil and a she-devil; in *Le château de Tire-Larigot* they are rivals, two 18th-century gentlemen whose portraits have come to life. In both cases, of course, the *rôles à tiroirs* were designed to showcase the talents of the performers: the she-devil was operetta star Jeanne Granier; one of the two 18th-century gentlemen was Brasseur, whose role in *La vie parisienne* was already a *rôle à tiroirs* (Figs 3.8 and 3.9).

Nods to traditional *féerie* abound: in *Le château de Tire-Larigot* some talismans have been sold off at an auction, as in *Les bibelots du diable*; in *Madame le Diable*, a barber's lotion has the power to instantly regrow hair, as in *Les pilules du diable*. Portraits coming to life had already been seen in *Les pilules du diable*

Figure 3.8 Jeanne Granier, in Italian folk dress, dances the tarantella alongside a creature made from found objects in *Madame le Diable* (1882). Drawing by Paul Destez, engraving by Désiré Quesnel, from *Il teatro illustrato*, June 1882. Source: Gallica, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

and in *La biche au bois*. But modern technology is also present. Characters travel from a supernatural realm to the world of humans by means of a lift in *Madame le Diable*, of a motor car in *Le carnet du diable*. Serving as an interface between the two universes are electric meters in the former play and a bank in the latter. One of the *clous* of *Le château de Tire-Larigot* is a lift that magically morphs into a hot-air balloon. *Le château de Tire-Larigot* also contains musical numbers inspired by the lift and the telephone—respectively suggesting an analogy between a lift ride and female erotic arousal and comparing love and the telephone as means to connect human beings. *Madame le Diable* exploits the ambiguity of automata, presenting them in turn as a feat of engineering (when crafted by a 'van Vaucanson *fils*',

Figure 3.9 Scenes from *Le château de Tire-Larigot* in a press illustration by Adrien Marie. Top middle, the hot-air balloon transformation; centre and bottom right, Albert Brasseur (centre, in the recreation of *Une noce chez le photographe*); in the other vignettes, Brasseur and his co-star Jean Berthelier in their *rôles à tiroirs*. From *Le Monde illustré*, 8 November 1884. Source: Gallica, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

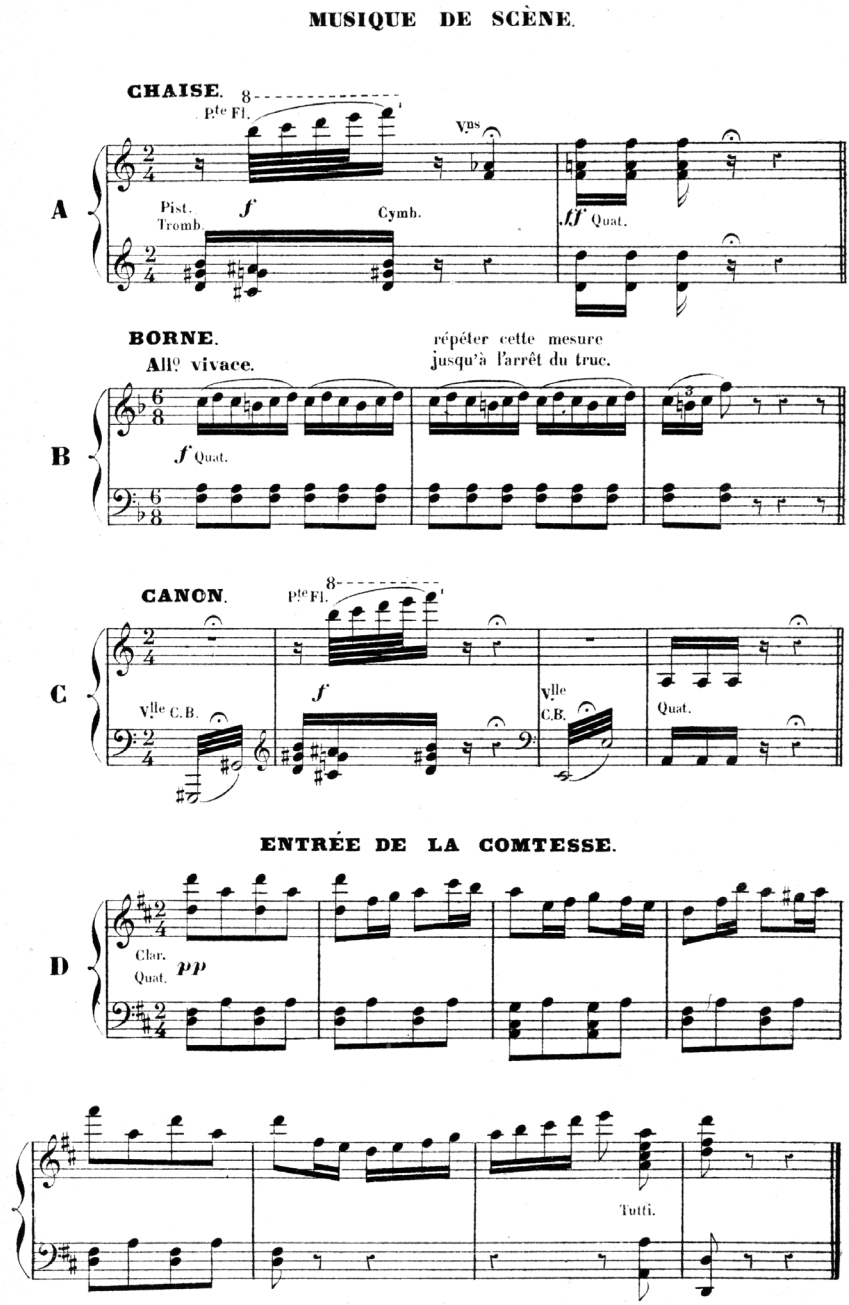
presumably a descendant of Jacques Vaucanson) and as the product of the dark arts of the she-devil. Explorers, travellers, tourists, and foreign oligarchs are present across these plays; *Le carnet du diable*, in particular, satirises the glitzy lifestyle of privileged South American expats in Paris, the so-called *rastaquouères*.[77]

The scores reveal that the frequent tricks (appearances, disappearances, transformations) are synchronised to short musical cues, which are often mimetic (for instance, an ascending musical gesture for a character emerging from a trap). This is further attested by the production book for *Le carnet du diable* and consistent with the composerly supernatural *féeries* of the same period (*Le puits qui parle*, *Riquet à la houppe*, *La fille de l'air*). We have observed this practice of synchronising tricks to musical cues for the 1858 *Les bibelots du diable*; we can now say with certitude that it carried on into the 1890s (Ex. 3.5). The Serpette *féeries* likewise have musical cues to accompany the many scene changes (*Madame le Diable* has 12 tableaux, *Le château de Tire-Larigot* 10, *Le carnet du diable* 8). They also have dance music, if not necessarily ballets proper. Both *Madame le Diable* and *Le carnet du diable* end on an *apothéose*. *Madame le Diable* also had a *défilé* of hells from different traditions (Norse, Japanese, classical) that reflected the encyclopaedic approach to *défilés* of fin-de-siècle traditional *féeries*.

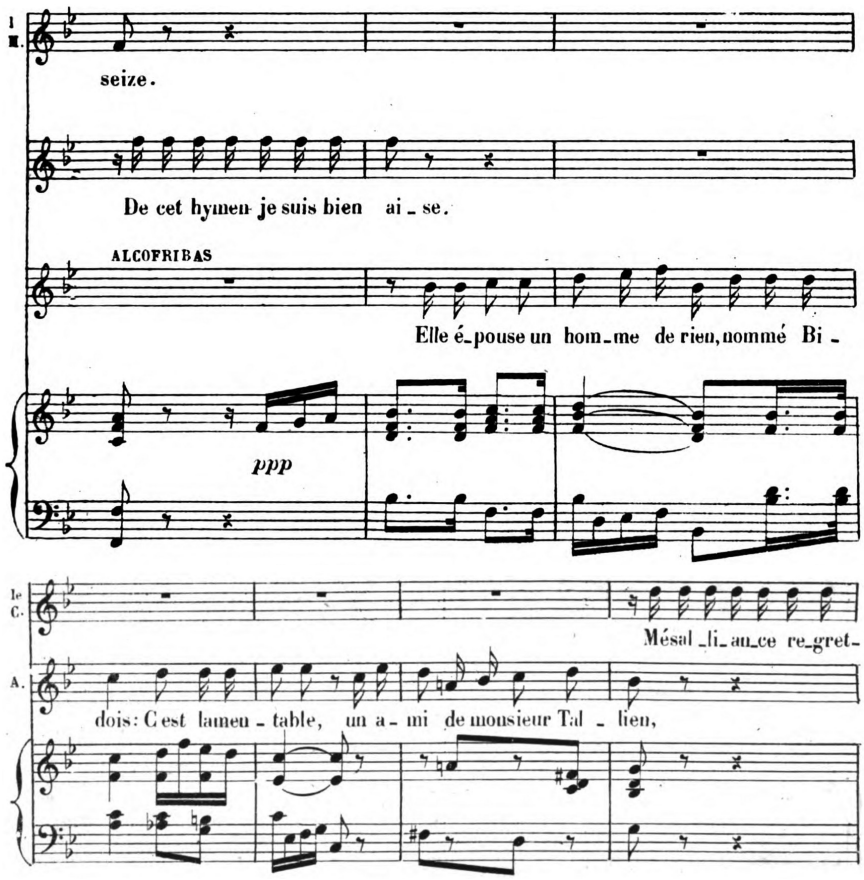
Serpette's original scores indulge in the kind of musical humour that characterised *féerie* and vaudeville with non-original music—the kind that presupposes that a complicit, in-the-know audience will recognise familiar tunes. So in *Madame le Diable* a pianist who rents his services for family soirées peppers his number with impressions of an amateur baritone singing an excerpt from Gaetano Donizetti's *La favorite* and a child singing a *romance* by Léopold Amat, 'Où vas-tu, petit oiseau?', as well as a quotation from the *café-concert* song 'La chaussée Clignancourt', by Paulus and Aristide Bruant.[78] In *Le château de Tire-Larigot*, the story of a family that runs from the 18th century through the present is told through quotations of tunes associated with different political regimes: 'Vive Henri IV' for the *ancien régime*, 'Le chant du départ' for the Revolution, 'Veillons au salut de l'Empire' for the First Empire, 'La Parisienne' for the July Monarchy, 'Partant pour la Syrie' for the Second Empire, ending with Olivier Métra's 'Les volontaires' for the present of 1884 (Ex. 3.6). This does not mean that Serpette does not avail himself of the potential that an original score affords: *Le château de Tire-Larigot* has a through-composed seduction scene, as well as a central finale that parodies

[77] For the *rastaquouères*, see Jean-Pierre Ricard, 'Le Paris-rasta et le rejet du cosmopolitanisme', in *La vie parisienne*, proceedings of the third meeting of the Société des études romantiques et dix-neuviémistes, ed. Aude Déruelle and José-Luis Diaz (online, 2008), available at https://serd.hypotheses.org/files/2018/08/Ricard.pdf (accessed 8 February 2024). The Brazilian played by Brasseur in Offenbach's *La vie parisienne* comes to mind as a precedent for Serpette, although the term *rastaquouère* was not in use at the time and did not became current until the 1880s.

[78] The pianist being the she-devil in disguise, the impressions are third-degree performances, and they added to the already impressive range of skills that Jeanne Granier demonstrated in this role.



Example 3.5 A series of brief melodramatic cues in Gaston Serpette's *Madame le Diable* (Paris: Enoch frères & Costallat, 1882), in the first three cases synchronised to stage tricks.



Example 3.6 Quotation of 'Le chant du départ' in Gaston Serpette, *Le château de Tire-Larigot* (Paris: E. Gérard, 1884). Act 1, number 5, 'Trio de l'arbre généalogique'.

Italianate conventions, as in vintage Offenbach, with an over-emphatic *quadro di stupore* and an equally over-emphatic *stretta*.

Le carnet du diable serves as a convenient endpoint to this exploration of féerised Parisian theatre. Its last revival in 1900 not only coincided with the end of the century but also marked one of the last appearances of composerly *féerie* on the Parisian stage.[79] While traditional *féerie* would linger for another few years and scientific *féerie* would survive for several decades, the great experiment in generic

[79] The 1905 *L'Âge d'or*—by Feydeau and Maurice Desvallières, with a score by Varney—can be seen as an attempt to recapture the spirit of the *féeries* of Serpette, who had died the previous year. It even had the same leading man as all of Serpette's *féeries* save the first, Albert Brasseur. The play, however, failed to achieve the success of Serpette's three hits.

cross-pollination that had lasted for a quarter of a century had come to an end. But *Le carnet du diable* can also serve as a starting point for a reflection on the ideology and the poetics of *féerie*. A somewhat contradictory work, it raises questions that only a deeper investigation into the *féerie* industry can answer—an investigation that will be carried on in Chapter 4.

The play revolves around Belphégor, the titular devil, and two romantic leads of different backgrounds, the student Arsène and the South American heiress Mimosa. The plot is set in motion by a bargain in which Belphégor agrees to help Arsène win the heart of Mimosa and Arsène agrees to cede to Belphégor part of his potency. Instrumental in the bargain is a resolutely modern incarnation of Cupid, the banker Cupido; other significant characters are Belphégor's cheated-on wife Sataniella, Arsène's cousin Casimir, Mimosa's uncle Rodrigo, and Rodrigo's love interest Jacqueline. Similarly to what we have observed for *Le roi Carotte*, Serpette's vocal writing is clearly adapted to each performer in a cast of varying musical abilities. So, for example, the role of Cupido, written for the 67-year-old comedian Lassouche, only requires him to sing in a single number, almost exclusively in unison with two other performers. Belphégor has mostly stepwise melodies, and his act 3 *couplets* are, according to a footnote in the vocal score, to be recited instead of sung, possibly because their sung rendition was disappointing. The *couplets* Hervé composed for the same actor—Baron—in *Mam'zelle Nitouche* were also ludicrously simple, as they only used three pitches. By comparison, Mimosa, played by Juliette Méaly, who could shoulder the *tyrolienne* of *La vie parisienne*, is given a long and demanding role, complete with a high C.

After a *pot-pourri* overture, the work opens with a tongue-in-cheek chorus of devils that sets the stage for a trial in Satan's infernal court. Sataniella, Satan's niece, has sued Belphégor for infidelity, and manages to have him condemned to be impotent for three years (in the manuscript; apparently reduced to one year in the play as performed). After the verdict, melodramatic music based on the preceding chorus plays in the orchestra while the shallow scene of the courtroom gives way to a deep scene. We are now in a Parisian *brasserie à femmes*, the kind of late 19th-century establishment that, as Andrew Israel Ross explains, 'used [its] female employees to deploy strategies of sexual titillation that would encourage men to consume'.[80] This one has medieval decor and a theme whereby all servers are dressed in the costume of a royal favourite, loosely defined—Aspasia, Cleopatra, Agnès Sorel, Diane de Poitiers, Gabrielle d'Estrées, Madame de Maintenon, Madame de Pompadour, Mademoiselle Lange. This array of historical figures accommodates in a realistic setting the encyclopaedic penchant of late 19th-century *féerie* and compensates for the lack of a *défilé*. The tableau of the *brasserie à femmes* opens with a chorus of servers and clients, possibly reminiscent of the opening of *Le roi Carotte*,

[80] Andrew Israel Ross, 'Serving Sex: Playing with Prostitution in the *Brasseries à femmes* of Late Nineteenth-Century Paris', *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 24, no. 2 (2015): 289.

also set in a brasserie. We are then introduced to a pair of cousins, Casimir and Arsène Marjavel—the former impossibly lucky, the latter impossibly dogged by bad luck—and to an uncle and niece duo of extravagant and obscenely wealthy South Americans, Rodrigo and Mimosa. Both the two cousins and the two South Americans sing strophic numbers; the following ensemble with chorus where Mimosa humiliates Arsène, who is in love with her, is also strophic.

The brasserie owner closes for the night, not realising that Arsène has drunk himself to sleep. In his dreams, Arsène involuntarily summons Belphégor, who materialises in the room haloed with red light, emerging from a vampire trap (*trappe anglaise*) concealed in a wine barrel. The production book prescribes that Belphégor execute three 'mesmeric gestures' (*passes magnétiques*) at Arsène: 'at the first one, Arsène stands up; at the second, he stretches his arms; at the third, half waking up, he makes a step downstage'. This wordless sequence is supported by diminished-seventh chords in the orchestra. At each of the three gestures, the chord is raised by a semitone, with the kind of fine synchronisation that would be referred to as 'Mickey Mousing' in film music. The scene that follows, is, predictably, a variation on the trope of the pact with the Devil. Less predictable are the terms of this pact. Belphégor explains to Arsène that every human is allotted a certain amount of sexual activity, which takes the form of cheques deposited at the Banque des Amours: every time one has intercourse, a cheque is exchanged and one's account balance drops. Belphégor asks for a bank transfer from Arsène in return for unlimited luck. Arsène accepts and the two are swallowed by a trap, which lets out a flame: another change of scenery accompanied by music, and we are transported, for the third and final tableau of the act, to the Banque des Amours, where the two finalise their deal in front of the bank's manager, Cupido. This tableau, again, fuses the supernatural and the technological marvellous: the architecture is rococo in style, pink is the dominant colour (at least according to the production book), and the bank clerks are cupids (played by women *en travesti*), yet the clerks' chorus depicts a frenzied atmosphere dominated by the sound of electric bells and makes reference to the telephone, the telegraph, and the stock market. Belphégor appears once again (this time followed by Arsène) through a vampire trap and on an orchestral signal; at the end of the act, a diabolic motor car, which literally fires sparks, emerges from a trap (announced by a flame and a diminished-seventh arpeggio) to carry away Belphégor and Arsène.

Act 2 is set in Rodrigo and Mimosa's outrageously luxurious suburban residence, a replica of Versailles in the Bois de Boulogne. We are treated to two musical numbers that parody sentimental *topoi*: the *couplets* in which Mimosa agonises over her missing cockatoo and a duet in which Rodrigo lavishes gifts on Jacqueline, one of the servers of the brasserie. Picturesque members of the foreign colony arrive, to the accompaniment of melodramatic music, to attend the party that Rodrigo and Mimosa are giving. Belphégor and Sataniella also show up and sing a comic duet. Arsène enters having found Mimosa's cockatoo, and Mimosa

starts to fall for him. The culmination of the party, after a chorus celebrating the *rastaquouères*, is a show of *tableaux vivants* to which Arsène is admitted as a performer. The four *tableaux vivants*, which are of course accompanied by music, are, according to the production book, 'Les deux boulonnaises' (The Two Women from Boulogne-sur-Mer, also announced in the press as 'Les pêcheuses de crevettes', The Prawn Fishers, possibly because the Opéra-Comique was reviving Bizet's *Les pêcheurs de perles*), 'Jupiter et Danaë', 'Le bûcheron mondain' (The Worldly Lumberjack), and 'Roméo et Juliette'. This is, of course, yet another instance of *féerie* co-opting acts from other performing arts (as well as playing to the male gaze, with women in body stockings). *Madame le Diable* and *Le château de Tire-Larigot* had done the same thing, including clowns. *Le château de Tire-Larigot* already featured a recreation of a painting, Pascal Dagnan-Bouveret's *Une noce chez le photographe*—technically a *tableau vivant* too, although framed as a quotation and not as a performance within the performance.[81] However, the *tableaux vivants* of *Le carnet du diable* also functioned, not unlike a revue number, as a commentary on current affairs, at least in the case of 'Jupiter et Danaë'—where Jupiter apparently personifies French finance and Danaë the Boer republic of Transvaal, literally showered with French money—and 'Le bûcheron mondain'—which probably alludes to the deforestation of a portion of the Bois de Boulogne to build what is now known as the Jardin des serres d'Auteuil. This hypothesis is reinforced by the fact that in the music for 'Le bûcheron mondain' Serpette quotes the nursery rhyme 'Nous n'irons plus au bois, les lauriers sont coupés' (we will not go to the *bois* any more, the laurels have been cut). The decision to embed a quotation in the melodramatic music, instead of the vocal numbers, should not surprise us, as it was a common practice in 19th-century Parisian theatre with music. To cite but two examples from fin-de-siècle *féerie*, the boot-themed *défilé* of *Le Petit Poucet* (1885) was accompanied by a medley of tunes suggesting different social settings; in the tableau 'La Ville charmante' from *L'arbre de Noël* (1880), the soldiers of a city devoted to sensual pleasures marched, fittingly, to the tune of the invocation to Venus from Offenbach's *La belle Hélène*. The *tableaux vivants* are also consistent with the diegetic universe of *Le carnet du diable*: it makes perfect sense that the personification of finance as Jupiter has the face of the banker Cupido, that the lecherous fawn of 'Le bûcheron mondain' is Belphégor, who has been reaping the benefits of his arrangement with Arsène, and that Romeo and Juliet are played by Arsène and Mimosa. In fact, the *tableau vivant* becomes the pretext for Arsène to kiss Mimosa, disrupting the second-level performance and causing the *mise en abyme* to collapse. After a moment of general confusion, Mimosa declares in a set

[81] For a discussion on the staging of photographs and theatre photography that mentions *Une noce chez le photographe* (though not *Le château de Tire-Larigot*), see Renzo Guardenti, 'Photographie de scène: Fiabilité et théâtralité des images', in 'La photographie de scène en France, 1/2', ed. Arnaud Rykner, special issue, *Revue d'histoire du théâtre* 71, no. 3 (2019): 83–96.

of *couplets* that she wants to marry Arsène, and the act ends on a reprise of the *rastaquouère* chorus.

If the *tableaux vivants* of *Le carnet du diable* were part of an opera, we would probably laud the balance they strike between spectacle for the sake of spectacle, topical references, and *Hamlet*-style metatheatre as a major strength of the work, from which we would consider them indissociable. But in the world of *féerie*, *clous* can always be improved upon. *Le carnet du diable* was therefore subjected to the same treatment that we have witnessed for *La biche au bois*, albeit on a less brutal scale and within a shorter time span. For the 1897 revival, the *tableaux vivants* were scrapped. In their place was a pantomime based on the characters from a series of books by Richard O'Monroy, the Manchaballe family, whose three daughters are or aspire to be ballerinas.[82] Not only did the pantomime belong to two fictional universes at once, that of *Le carnet du diable* and of O'Monroy's books (the characters of the former supposedly impersonating those of the latter), but it reproduced the *foyer de la danse* at the Opéra as seen in the wax figure reconstruction of the Musée Grévin, thereby collapsing three Parisian locations into one another: the Opéra, the Musée Grévin, and the Variétés. Neither the topical allusions nor the connection with the plot of *Le carnet du diable* is lost in the substitution of the pantomime for the *tableaux vivants*: the character played by the now lucky Arsène has picked the winning ticket in a lottery, and the youngest of the sisters, who impresses a foreign monarch with her dancing, is clearly modelled on Cléo de Mérode, then on the roster of the Opéra, whose relationship with Leopold II of the Belgians was well known.

The 1900 revival, though, aimed at surpassing that of 1897. A new set of *tableaux vivants* was introduced in lieu of the pantomime: this time there were no fewer than 11 of them. Again, they made reference to current affairs, among them the visit of the Shah of Persia to the Paris World's Fair, the North American tour of Sarah Bernhardt and Constant Coquelin, and the newly opened Métro. And yet another kind of non-dramatic spectacle was incorporated into theatre, with Albert Brasseur emulating the stunts of quick-change artist Leopoldo Fregoli, who had just enjoyed a sensational success at the Olympia.[83]

Act 3 opens in the bedroom where Mimosa and Arsène are to spend their wedding night: their chambermaids sing a duet with chorus while they give the finishing touches to the room. In the rather risqué scene between the newlyweds that ensues, Arsène realises that he is unable to have sex. As Mimosa leaves for a moment, Cupido emerges from a trap door and tells Arsène that his account has

[82] Richard O'Monroy, *Madame Manchaballe* (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1892); O'Monroy, *Les petites Manchaballe* (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1893); O'Monroy, *Les propos de Madame Manchaballe* (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1896).

[83] In 1900 two ballets were also added to acts 1 and 3 of *Le carnet du diable*, and cuts were made to compensate for the additions.

been drained by the bank transfer to Belphégor. After Cupido's exit, Arsène and Mimosa sing a strophic comic duet (the fourth such number in the play), at the end of which he flees the room. Next comes a change of scenery, where the transformation music, by quoting from the first tableau of act 1, leads us to believe that we are being transported back to hell. Instead we end up in a sort of annexe of hell, the holiday villa of Sataniella and Belphégor (possibly located on the Riviera, or at any rate on the Mediterranean coast, since the sirocco is mentioned). As the couple conforms to the manners and tastes of wealthy earthlings, the room looks like any respectable parlour, with a fireplace, a piano, a cylinder desk, and an academic sculpture (a statue of Venus). Sataniella receives her neighbours Rodrigo and Jacqueline, with whom she shares a comic trio, then Belphégor, alone, confesses in a set of *couplets* that he has already squandered all of Arsène's cheques. He also demonstrates his diabolic desk, whose drawer opens and closes on command, while the orchestra accompanies the movement with a musical gesture, consistent with *féerie* practice. Mimosa first, then Arsène show up at the villa, but their conversation with Rodrigo is not helpful. Finally, Mimosa is left alone in the room, and we are treated to another *clou*. Following an invocation in the form of a waltz (the erotic dance par excellence), the statue of Venus comes to life (that is, a woman in a body stocking is swiftly substituted to the cutout) and mimes the answer to Mimosa's questions. Venus, the good fairy of this *féerie*, invites Mimosa to a musical game of hunt-the-thimble, in which the clues are given both by objects in the room, animated through tricks, and by the orchestra: the fireplace tongs jingle, the piano plays on its own, and the music swells until Mimosa finds the contract between Arsène and Belphégor, at which point Venus turns back into a statue. Belphégor arrives, and Mimosa, undaunted, confronts him. By threatening to expose him to Sataniella, she manages to have him sign a promissory note to the order of Arsène, for 1,500 cheques (50 per cent more than he has received). The tricks by which Belphégor turns a spoon into a quill, produces a piece of paper, and makes ink out of sugar are, again, synchronised to chords in the orchestra, like his mesmeric gestures in act 1. As Cupido happens to walk in, Mimosa redeems the promissory note, replenishing Arsène's account at the Banque des Amours. Belphégor has been outsmarted, but it is hinted that he might lure Casimir, who is sad at being single, into a pact of the same nature as the one with Arsène. The final *apothéose* depicts Venus as she ascends in her chariot through the sky, confirming the goddess as the good fairy in the universe of *Le carnet du diable* and titillating the audience with five women in body stockings.

Le carnet du diable is a perplexing work in many respects. It features an independent heroine who chooses whom to marry and is not intimidated even by the Devil, yet it condones and practises the objectification of female bodies. (Furthermore, Mimosa displays no female solidarity towards Sataniella or the brasserie servers.) The equivalence between sex and money that is the premise of the work is, of course, particularly troubling. On the one hand, the play seems to

assume that people are, by accident of birth, allotted widely varying amounts of sexual activity in their lifetimes, which is only a logical step away from assuming that economic inequality is inevitable. On the other hand, the impossible case of a man selling potential sex could be a metaphor for the very real case of women selling actual sex. The fact that Arsène's sex power can be purchased by Belphégor also makes it analogous to labour power, which can be purchased by the employer, especially since in *Le carnet du diable* sex power, like labour power, is finite. Is there a parallel between labour and prostitution to be seen here—the worker and the prostitute both having nothing to sell but their physical capabilities? And if there is, can it be extended to intellectual labour? After all, the authors of the play must have been acutely aware they were selling their finite mental capabilities, and that with raunchy plays like this one they were making a living by catering to the sexual appetites of buyers.

Belphégor can apparently create cheques out of thin air by getting into debt, while Arsène cannot: shall we see that as an allusion to finance? The forces of the First Globalisation are also on full display, in the ostentatious consumption habits of the *rastaquouères* and in the *tableau vivant* visualising the flow of French money into Transvaal. It is worth noticing that the sources of wealth of the *rastaquouères* are as invisible as the forces behind Belphégor's magic tricks, and Rodrigo seems virtually as able as Belphégor to make things happen at his will: the analogy between money and magic that was implicit in *Le tour du monde* is suggested even more strongly here.

And yet spectators must have known that the stage illusion was the result of hidden labour, much like the wealth of the *rastaquouères*—or, for that matter, that of Phileas Fogg or of the robber baron of *Le pays de l'or*. Serpette's *féeries* seem even to direct attention to the unacknowledged labour on which the performing arts rely. The pianist of *Madame le Diable*, after all, sings about his condition as a proletarianised artist. *Le château de Tire-Larigot* has a duet for two *ouvreuses*, the female ushers of Parisian theatres. Considering the bad reputation that surrounded the category, the duet sounds fairly sympathetic. Moreover, the two fictional *ouvreuses* (the latest incarnation of the two shapeshifting gentlemen) work at the Variétés, the same theatre where the performance of *Le château de Tire-Larigot* is taking place in real life. The 'Electric-Hotel' of *Le pays de l'or* is also about hidden labour and similarly invites a parallel with stage illusion; its precedent in *La biche au bois*, the 'Cabin of the Invisibles', can be read the same way.

In sum, questions about the ideology of *féerie* cannot be answered without addressing the relationship between consumers of illusion and manufacturers of illusion that lies at the heart of the genre. To what degree the consumers were willing to acknowledge or ignore—or perhaps both—the manufacturers, of course, depended on their age, class, and patterns of cultural practices. In Chapter 4, therefore, I will turn my attention to the *féerie* industry in both its component parts: the 'makers' of *féerie* and *féerie* audiences.

4

The People of *Féerie*

A phenomenon without a noumenon

In the previous chapters, I have touched on the politics of *Le roi Carotte* and of *Le carnet du diable*. I will now try to broaden the scope to the politics—class politics, sexual politics, imperial politics—of *féerie* at large. But in order to find answers, we must move beyond the corpus of extant plays and focus instead on the *féerie* industry and the sociability of *féerie*. The reason lies in the very nature of *féerie*, which was, so to speak, a phenomenon without a noumenon, or, to paraphrase Antisthenes instead of Kant, a genre where one could see the horse (the performance), but not the horseness (the work). Language provides, I believe, a good demonstration of this point.

One day, perhaps, readers of English-language texts from the early 21st century will need explanatory footnotes to clarify now-current, by then obscure sport idioms. Some of the stagecraft metaphors found in 19th- and early 20th-century French prose may be equally puzzling to the modern reader. In around 1880, for example, an advertisement for a cosmetic skin treatment, 'la Georgine Champbaron', ended with this pitch: 'Like the fairy in a *féerie* of the Châtelet, you will peel off the old woman!'[1] In a popular novel from the July Monarchy, a woman changes behind a screen and 'reappear[s] instantly, as though the wand of a fairy or the string of a stage machinist had replaced her men's clothes with a loose dressing gown'.[2] A posthumous metasonnet by Théophile Gautier resorts to a curious analogy to describe the twist that the transition from the octave to the sestet marks in a sonnet: a woman is wearing a dark hood under which one can vaguely make

[1] 'Comme la fée dans une féerie du Châtelet, vous dépouillez la vieille femme.' 'Petite chronique', *La Vie parisienne*, 2 October 1880, 580.

[2] '[E]n reparaissant immédiatement, comme si la baguette d'une fée ou la ficelle d'un machiniste de théâtre eût remplacé ses vêtements d'homme par une ample robe de chambre.' Frédéric Soulié, *La comtesse de Monrion*, in *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Librairie théâtrale, 1852–5), 3:61 (part 1, ch. 32).

out the sparkle of jewels, 'as in *féeries*'; she then removes it and reveals herself in all her beauty.[3]

These are all allusions to the quick costume changes that were one of the stock tricks of *féerie*. An actor would wear two costumes one on top of the other. The outer, looser costume would be designed so as to split into two halves and would conceal some gut strings; by pulling on the rings at the end of those strings, a stagehand could make it fall apart and instantly disappear into the trap room, revealing the second costume (Fig. 4.1).[4] In *Les pilules du diable*, the play from which we started this journey through *féerie*, the old Micheline turns back into her 20-year-old self and the shepherd Toby suddenly finds himself dressed in aristocratic garb. In both cases the transformation was surely achieved by this trick, and in both cases the orchestra played a descending scale, mimicking the downward motion of the disappearing outer costume (see Table 1.1, at cues 15/22 and 16/23). In *La chatte blanche*, as already noted, the good fairy also appeared in the form of an old woman, only to shed her disguise. *Féerie* fairies, then, actually did 'peel off the old woman', bizarre as it might sound to us.

Féerie metaphors were not confined to this trick. The 1882 financial collapse of the Union générale was described by one writer with a poignant analogy: 'Now, the flares have faded and a rancid smell of burnt paper is spreading through the streets of Paris, as in the *féerie* theatres after the final tableau.'[5] Reviewing the Finnish pavilion at the 1900 Paris World's fair, architect Frantz Jourdain congratulated his colleague Eliel Saarinen (father of modernist icon Eero Saarinen) for not indulging in 'Châtelet- or Gaîté-style *cartonnage*'.[6] In *Les misérables*, Victor Hugo compared the vague aspiration for change that can fuel a revolt to the excitement triggered in an audience member by 'the machinist's whistle'.[7]

The flares (*feux de Bengale*, *flammes de Bengale*) mentioned in connection with the Union générale were a standard component of *féerie apothéoses*.[8] Although

[3] 'Sous son capuchon brun, comme dans les féeries, / On voit confusément luire les pierreries.' Théophile Gautier, '[Le sonnet: À maître Claudius Popelin, émailleur et poète. Sonnet III]' (first line: 'Les quatrains du sonnet sont de bons chevaliers'), in *Œuvres complètes*, section 2, vol. 2, *Poésies, 2*, ed. Peter Whyte and Thierry Savatier (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2022), 441–2.

[4] The trick is described in J[ules] Moynet, *L'envers du théâtre: Machines et décorations* (Paris: Hachette, 1873), 188–91.

[5] 'Maintenant, les flammes du Bengale sont éteintes et il se répand une odeur rance de papier brûlé sur le pavé de Paris, comme dans les théâtres de féerie après le dernier tableau.' Albert Wolff, *La haute-noce* (Paris: Victor-Havard, 1885), 258.

[6] 'Pas de fla-fla, … pas de rodomontades, pas de cartonnage du Châtelet ou de la Gaîté.' Frantz Jourdain, 'L'architecture à l'Exposition universelle: Promenade à bâtons rompus', *Revue des arts décoratifs*, August 1900, 250.

[7] '[L]e sentiment qui fait … qu'on aime au théâtre le coup de sifflet du machinist.' Victor Hugo, *Les misérables*, ed. Yves Gohin (Paris: Gallimard, 1995), 2:395 (part 4, bk 10, ch. 1).

[8] See Moynet, *Envers du théâtre*, 102: '[l]es flammes de Bengale, de tous temps complément obligé d'une apothéose'.

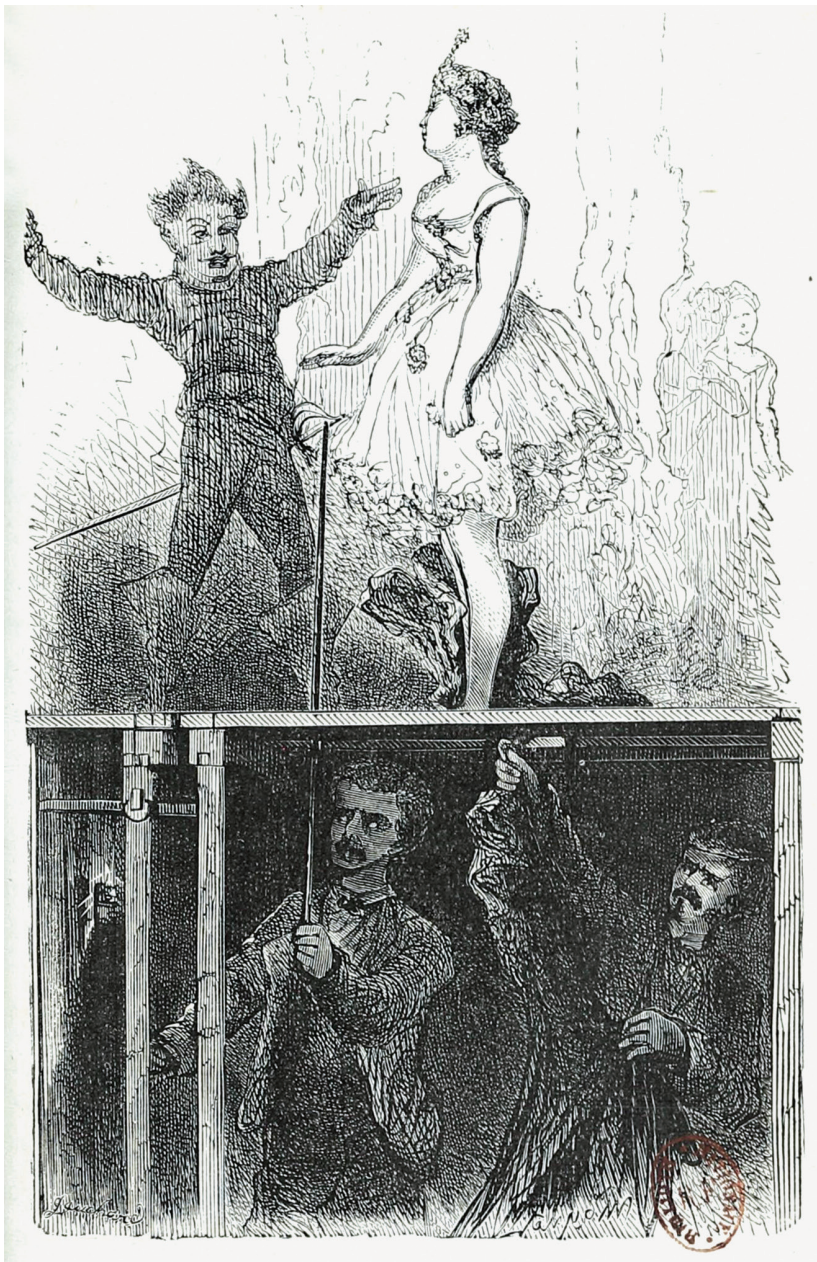


Figure 4.1 Quick costume change, a common *féerie* trick. From Jules Moynet, *L'envers du théâtre: Machines et décorations* (Paris: Hachette, 1873). Source: Gallica, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

their use in the 19th century was not confined to *féerie*—the production book for Arrigo Boito's opera *Mefistofele* prescribes them, for instance—at least in Paris their pungent smell seems to have been intimately associated with the sensory experience of the commercial theatres and of *féerie* in particular.[9] If we are to believe Camille Saint-Saëns, when smoke bombs releasing 'a dreadful smell, similar to that of flares' were used at the Opéra première of Charles Gounod's *Faust* in 1869, they deeply annoyed young ladies, who sought refuge in their 'lace handkerchiefs'.[10] Even accounting for the obvious misogyny, the anecdote is telling of how the smell of flares, so characteristic of *féerie*, was still deemed socially inappropriate for the Opéra at the end of the Second Empire. *Cartonnage*, a cognate to Mexican *cartonería*, was the art of making papier-mâché sculptures (known, too, as *cartonnages*); in Frantz Jourdain's remark, the Châtelet and the Gaîté are clearly code for *féerie*, which made heavy use of such sculptures, both as props and as part of costumes. Of course, the *cartonnages* of *féeries* are, for Jourdain, shorthand for garish, unsubtle taste. A present-day architectural critic might express the same thought using Disney, instead of *féerie*, as a bogeyman, and indeed both the Disney aesthetic and the aesthetic of *féerie* exhibit a propensity for ahistorical architectural pastiche, while the 'fur character' performer of Disney theme parks can be seen as the modern equivalent of the *cartonnage*-wearing supernumeraries of *féerie défilés*. Victor Hugo was, in all likelihood, also thinking of *féerie*: the 'machinist's whistle', later replaced by a bell, was the signal for a scene change, of which *féerie* had plenty—hence the anticipation that hearing it caused in the viewer. Beyond these examples, *féerie* was a relatively common term of comparison for people seeming to suddenly materialise or disappear, as if through a trap; for sudden changes in one's surroundings, as in the scene changes of *féerie*; for edifices (both in the physical and the metaphorical sense) collapsing or springing up, like the enchanted palaces of *féerie*.

Such anecdotal evidence gives the impression that references to stagecraft in non-specialist discourse were often references to *féerie*, and that references to *féerie* were predominantly references to stagecraft. In the minds of writers, opera and operetta seem to have been chiefly associated with their performers. Melodrama was indissolubly linked to a musico-dramatic technique, the infamous melodrama tremolo, as well as a stock character, the melodrama villain.[11] For *féerie*, what left the greatest mark on the imagination was apparently not so much the dramaturgy

[9] *Disposizione scenica per l'opera* Mefistofele *di Arrigo Boito*, ed. Giulio Ricordi (Milan: Ricordi, n.d.); see also Alessandra Campana, 'The "Fleeting Moment": Arrigo Boito's *Mefistofele*', in *Opera and Modern Spectatorship in Late Nineteenth-Century Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 15–47.

[10] '[U]ne affreuse odeur, analogue à celle des feux de Bengale, se répandit rapidement jusqu'aux loges de fond, et les jolies spectatrices, tout effarouchées, durent chercher dans leurs mouchoirs de dentelle un rempart protecteur contre cette désagréable invasion.' Camille Saint-Saëns, 'Charles Gounod', in *Portraits et souvenirs* (Paris: Société d'édition artistique, 1900), 63.

[11] *Traître*, traitor, or *tyran*, tyrant, in French, though the neutral, technical term was *troisième rôle*.

or the individuality of the performers as the complex of technology and human agents that enabled the spectacle.

This can be explained with the status of *féerie* as what I have called 'total artwork of the present', which does not exist in the abstract realm of works, separate from their scenic realisation, but only in the here and now of performance. For example, there is no such thing as an ideal form of *La biche au bois* that can be accessed in the same way a literary play can be accessed through a text, or an opera through a text, a score, and a production book: there are only the instantiations of *La biche au bois* in its five productions and the evidence they left behind. If *féerie* inevitably brought stagecraft to mind, it is because there is no talking of *féerie* without talking of the people who made—and those who consumed—*féerie*. After his conversion to social justice, Victor Hugo was famously fond of formulations that personified the people as a trinity of man, woman, and child—man being largely a synonym for worker, as Hugo was advocating for labour rights alongside women's and children's rights. Our exploration of the social microcosm of *féerie* will revolve around four figures: the worker—specifically, the machinist—the child, the woman, and the foreigner.

The machinist

On 27 March 1884, the Porte-Saint-Martin hosted a charity matinée to raise money for the stage machinists' benevolent fund (*caisse de secours*). The programme, as usual for this kind of event, was a hodgepodge of different acts. Sarah Bernhardt lent her support to the cause by performing act 2 of Jean Racine's *Phèdre*; so did Thérésa. The celebrated trio for male voices from Gioachino Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* ('Quand l'Helvétie est un champ de supplices') was sung in what, judging by the names of the performers, must have been a parodic rendition. More to the point, Louis Dumaine—seen in two Verne plays, *Le tour du monde* as Corsican and *Kéraban le Têtu* as the protagonist—read a poem written for the occasion by Jean Richepin. The five stanzas of this 'Ode en l'honneur des machinistes' celebrate stagehands by comparing them to a warship's crew. If Richepin's intention is clearly a noble one—to sing the unsung heroes of theatre and raise awareness of the hazards they are exposed to—the possibility of a machinist dying on the job is at once normalised, aestheticised (with a juxtaposition between stage pigments and 'real blood'), and brushed off ('Bah! Qu'emporte!').[12]

At one point during the matinée, the curtain rose on comedian Saint-Germain standing alone on an empty stage, in character as 'Jean Gouju', the theatre's

[12] Jean Richepin, 'Ode en l'honneur des machinistes', in *Interludes* (Paris: Ernest Flammarion, 1923), 119–22.

blacksmith. In a short monologue, Jean Gouju presents himself as a spokesperson for the machinists. He, too, addresses accidents in the workplace, his working-class eloquence (that is, working-class eloquence as imagined by the author of the monologue) proving more relatable than Richepin's verse. But on top of that, he presides over a demonstration of stagecraft, a sort of behind-the-scenes tour: the title of the monologue is, for this reason, 'L'envers du théâtre expliqué par Jean Gouju'.[13] The demonstration culminates in an open-curtain scene change and is cut short by the machinists mischievously opening a trap under Jean Gouju—two staples, the scene change and the trap, of the visual vocabulary of *féerie*. Two machinists are called by name: a 'Charlot', who fetches the equipment to simulate thunder, lightning, and rain, and François Courbois, the stage carpenter of the Porte-Saint-Martin, who remains unseen, but gives the signal for the scene change. The French *machiniste* covers both ordinary stagehands and their supervisor, the master carpenter (*chef machiniste* or *machiniste en chef*), which is why I am privileging the English cognate of the word.

It is remarkable that, in order to make the work of the machinists visible, the monologue had to show an empty stage—a sight that was otherwise inconceivable in 19th-century theatre. A quarter-century later, the audience of a *féerie* house would again be greeted by the shocking sight of an empty stage, and again, that would suddenly make visible the hidden labour of the machinists. It was 8 September 1910, and the audience who had come to the Châtelet for the scientific *féerie Les aventures de Gavroche* had to be told that the performance was cancelled, as the machinists had gone on strike. The theatre's *régisseur*, who made the announcement, commented that while normally in *féeries* 'there were no such things as insurmountable obstacles', the machinists' strike had proven to be one—an implicit admission that the illusion of 'no insurmountable obstacles' was only made possible by the cooperation of the machinists.[14] Many things had of course changed since 'Jean Gouju'. If in 1884 the machinists only had a benevolent fund, in 1910 they had a union, established the previous year. Furthermore, if the audience of 1884 was encouraged to paternalistically sympathise both with the stagehand 'Charlot' (a diminutive) and with 'mon vieux Courbois', the *chef machiniste*, in 1910 the stagehands and the *chef machiniste* found themselves on opposite sides of the industrial action: Eugène Colombier *fils*, the *chef machiniste*, could be seen standing next to the manager and to the police commissioner. This time, not only the stage illusion was shattered, but also the master of illusion himself was revealed as the equivalent of a plant foreman. Another difference is

[13] [Louis Péricaud], *L'envers du théâtre: Expliqué par Jean Gouju, serrurier, manuscrit de censure*, F-Pan F^{18} 907.

[14] 'Mesdames, messieurs, vous pouviez croire qu'au théâtre du Châtelet — royaume de la féerie, comme on se plaît à l'appeler — il n'y avait pas d'obstacles insurmontables!' 'Les Machinistes du Châtelet déclarent la grève', *Comœdia*, 9 September 1910, 1.

that by 1910 traditional *féerie* had died out and scientific *féerie* was confined to the Châtelet. The machinists of 1910 might very well have been more politicised than those of the 1880s, but it is also seems quite likely that their profession was in a more precarious position, threatened by the decline of spectacular theatre and *féerie* in particular. In 1908, *Comœdia* had interviewed several *chefs machinistes*, who deplored both working conditions (fewer people on staff, shorter rehearsal periods) and changing tastes (the disappearance of *féeries*, the preference for a naturalistic staging style).[15]

If machinists were by definition invisible and unsung throughout the 19th century, there was, however, a genre where their work was acknowledged to some degree, and that genre was, of course, *féerie*. When the first milestone of *féerie*, the 1806 *Le pied de mouton*, was published, the *chef machiniste*, Camus, was credited on the title page. The names of later star machinists are often encountered in editions of *féeries*: Auguste Marie in the 1840s and 1850s, Riotton in the 1860s. Eugène Godin, the *chef machiniste* behind Offenbach's *féeries* and Serpette's *Madame le Diable*, is usually not credited in printed plays, but was the object of an extensive profile.[16] On a programme for *Les 400 coups du diable* (1905), almost a century after *Le pied de mouton*, all members of the creative team behind the play get not only their names, but also their photographs in print. And two of them stand out. One is the choreographer, Louise Stichel, the only woman pictured. The other is Eugène Colombier *fils*, the machinist, who is the only man sporting a *casquette*—the flat cap seen as the quintessential working-class headwear.[17] By reproducing all portraits in the same size (next to Colombier and Stichel are the costume designer and the two playwrights; on the facing page are the theatre's management and the conductor, Marius Baggers), the programme gives equal dignity to people whose life experience outside the theatre must have been pretty different. From the *Bottin* directory for 1898, the year Colombier became *chef machiniste* at the Châtelet, we know that he lived on rue de la Grange-aux-Belles, in the working-class 10th *arrondissement*.[18] Also according to the *Bottin*, the street had a butcher selling horse meat (the poor man's meat) and several small factories.[19] One of these, at house number 33, would become, in 1906, the headquarters of the Confédération générale du travail union. The area's traditional association with the labour movement and the Left is still obvious today: two nearby streets

[15] Sombreuil, 'Chez les machinistes', *Comœdia*, 9 January 1908, 3.
[16] Un pompier [Paul Devaux], 'Eugène Godin', in *Un coin de l'Éden* (Paris: Librairie théâtrale, 1885), 17–31. Godin is acknowledged in the edition of *Le Chat botté* (1878).
[17] The programme is reproduced in Hélène Marquié, 'Enquête en cours sur Madame Stichel (1856–ap. 1933): Quelques pistes de réflexion', *Recherches en danse* no. 3 (2015), https://doi.org/10.4000/danse.974 (accessed 8 February 2024).
[18] *Annuaire-almanach du commerce, de l'industrie, de la magistrature et de l'administration … Didot-Bottin*, year 1898 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1898), 334.
[19] *Bottin*, year 1898, 2760.

were named after socialist figures Louis Blanc and Eugène Varlin in 1885 and 1910, respectively, and since 1971 the architectural highlight of the neighbourhood has been the headquarters of the Communist Party, designed by Oscar Niemeyer. By contrast, the composers we have encountered tended to live in the affluent western *arrondissements*: Messager in the 8th, Serpette and Varney in the 9th, Leroux in the 16th, Audran in the 17th; Vasseur lived in the western suburb of Asnières.[20] The recognition of the machinists' work, or at least the *chef machiniste*'s, extended beyond printed plays and promotional material, and was part of the culture surrounding *féerie*. Mentioning the fairy and the machinist in the same breath, as in the novel quoted earlier, must have seemed only logical: Amélie Calderone has quoted in an article an 1847 revue by Clairville and Dumanoir in which *féerie* tricks are defined as 'transformations effected by the fairy and the machinist'.[21]

But it is not just machinists who are, if not necessarily more visible, more talked about in *féerie*. The public seems to have taken a deeper interest in the nuts and bolts of *féerie* than they did for any other stage genre, even for the equally technologically demanding *grand opéra*. As we have seen, disparate writers drew on *féerie* for their theatre metaphors. *Féerie* is over-represented in fin-de-siècle and early 20th-century books on stagecraft. We have extensive 'behind the scenes' accounts of *féerie* productions, such as the one Arnold Mortier offered of the 1874 *Orphée aux enfers*. Press illustrations of the backstage of *féeries* are almost a subgenre of their own, and one wonders whether theatre managers granted backstage access to artists as a deliberate publicity strategy. These kinds of images probably shaped expectations, and perceptions, of *féerie* spectators as much as illustrated posters, but in the opposite direction. If illustrated posters encouraged spectators to focus on the illusion—and ignore, say, the ropes from which 'flying' performers were hanging or the body stockings that stood in for bare skin—the backstage images encouraged them to fantasise on the reality behind the illusion. Of course, the two modes of spectatorship need not be mutually exclusive. At any rate, contrary to the proverbial sausage, seeing how *féerie* was made did not diminish people's appetite for it. It actually seems to have added to the genre's appeal, at least for a portion of the audience.

There are several reasons, I believe, for such disproportionate contemporary interest in the material reality of *féerie* staging. The first is self-evident: *féerie* productions reached a level of technological sophistication only matched by Opéra productions. The second is that a total artwork of the present lacks not only a stable

[20] [Félix] de Rochegude, *Promenades dans toutes les rues de Paris*, 20 vols (Paris: Hachette, 1910); obituaries for Vasseur (who died in 1917) give Asnières as his place of residence.

[21] 'Des changements opérés par la fée et le machiniste'. Amélie Calderone, 'Au croisement du Vaudeville anecdotique et de la féerie: codification du genre de la revue de fin d'année sous la Monarchie de Juillet', in 'En revenant à la revue: La revue de fin d'année au XIX^{e} siècle', ed. Olivier Bara, Romain Piana, and Jean-Claude Yon, special issue, *Revue d'histoire du théâtre* 67 no. 2 (2015): 209.

text, but also centralised authorship. This, of course, sets *féerie* apart from *grand opéra*. The third reason is that, traditionally at least, *féerie* was not an exclusive cultural practice, and was intended for children and adults alike. While attending *grand opéra* was in itself a status symbol, at a *féerie* theatre adult bourgeois Parisians would find themselves sharing the auditorium with children, lower-class people, and foreigners they perceived as uncultured. They might therefore have felt the need to differentiate themselves from those supposedly less discerning spectators. Exhibiting a disenchanted, in-the-know attitude to stage illusion would provide them with a way to achieve just that (all while enjoying the illusion like anyone else).

A fourth reason, perhaps, has to do not so much with what sets *féerie* apart from *grand opéra* as with what sets it apart from melodrama. As I have remarked, *féeries* tend to lack moral interest as opposed to melodramas, and they do not traffic in the sublime, but only in the marvellous, as the audience does not really feel apprehension for the characters. This means that *féerie* is, in a way, sensorially immersive without being emotionally immersive—a feature that can make it conducive to a culture of incredulity.[22] It also means that the interest of *féerie* lies in the illusion itself, which becomes an end rather than a means. It is therefore not inappropriate to say that *féerie* is to melodrama what early, attractional film is to narrative film. Film scholar Ian Christie has argued that, in the transition from attractional film to narrative film, film 'tricks' became 'effects', and the contribution of those who devised them ceased to be recognised and valued in discourse around film.[23] The same seems to apply, not diachronically but synchronically, for 19th-century theatre, with the artisans of *féerie* illusion receiving more attention that those working in other genres at the same time. It is also remarkable that the crisis both of *féerie* and of the machinist as a profession at the end of the first decade of the 20th century coincided with the narrativisation of film, as if the same trend away from illusion for illusion's sake had marginalised both the creators of stage tricks and those of film tricks.

I should expand on what I gave as the second reason, *féerie's* lack of centralised authorship. The best way to do so is to indulge in the very curiosity that surrounded *féerie* in the 19th century and ask ourselves, too, how the sausage was made.

'To make' (*faire*) and 'makers' (*faiseurs*) were, as it happens, the terms of choice for the creative process and the creators of *féerie*. In French as in English, these words belong to the semantic field of craftsmanship rather than art, and they come in handy for modern scholars too: Jean-Claude Yon has referred to *féerie*

[22] In other words, *féerie* is not conducive to what Theodor Adorno calls 'intoxication'. For examples of cultures of incredulity in film history, see Lisa Bode, '"It's a Fake!": Early and Late Incredulous Viewers, Trick Effects, and CGI', *Film History* 30, no. 4 (2018): 1–21.

[23] Ian Christie, 'The Visible and the Invisible: From "Tricks" to "Effects"', *Early Popular Visual Culture* 13, no. 2 (2015): 106–12.

playwrights as ' "makers" with a steady grasp of their "craft" [*métier*]' and Stéphane Tralongo has titled his dissertation '*Féerie* Makers'.[24] The language of craftsmanship, of course, does not have to be pejorative: talk of 'filmmaking' and 'filmmakers' does not necessarily do less justice to film than auteur theory does. As for *féerie*, according to his obituary in *Le Figaro*, Adolphe d'Ennery not only did not resent, but even welcomed being called a 'maker'.[25]

The initial impulse for the making of a *féerie*, though, at least in the second half of the century, did not really come from the playwright or playwrights, but from a theatre manager. In 1853, the daily *Le Nouvelliste* imagined a playwright pitching a *féerie* to a manager—implying that the playwright at hand was d'Ennery, the manager Marc Fournier, the theatre the Porte-Saint-Martin, and the *féerie Les sept merveilles du monde*, but also that the situation was generalisable. At this point in the narrative, the playwright clearly has not written a single word and his idea for a play consists of little more than a title, but he persuades the manager to commission a new *féerie* by reciting box-office figures for the three *féeries* premièred at the Porte-Saint-Martin in the previous 10 years (among them *La biche au bois*).[26] In 1882, a writer joked that as one could not make jugged hare (*civet de lièvre*) without a hare, so one could not make a *féerie* without a theatre manager willing to invest a large sum of money. A playwright, therefore, would only put pen to paper after a manager told him: 'make a *féerie* in 20 tableaux for me, and I will bet 200,000 francs on it'.[27] In 1845, the 100,000 francs allegedly spent on *La biche au bois* was regarded as an extravagant sum; that in 1882, 200,000 francs only seemed routine is telling of how much the budgets of *féeries* had skyrocketed, even though these are obviously not accurate figures.

The large upfront investment that *féeries* needed meant that they were huge gambles for theatre managers. As another fin-de-siècle writer, Georges Moynet, put it, 'The manager, by producing one of those expensive plays, is betting formidable stakes on a game of heads and tails.'[28] In an 1876 article on *féerie*, Émile Zola wrote that a successful *féerie* might make between 200,000 and 300,000 francs,

[24] Jean-Claude Yon, 'La féerie ou le royaume du spectaculaire: L'exemple de *Rothomago*', in *Le spectaculaire dans les arts de la scène du Romantisme à la Belle Époque*, ed. Isabelle Moindrot (Paris: CNRS éditions, 2006), 127; Stéphane Tralongo, 'Faiseurs de féeries: Mise en scène, machinerie et pratiques cinématographiques émergentes au tournant du XX^{e} siècle' (PhD diss., Université de Montréal, Université Lumière Lyon 2, 2012).

[25] Charles Chincholle, 'Adolphe d'Ennery: Sa famille, sa vie, ses œuvres', *Le Figaro*, 26 January 1899, 4–5.

[26] Charles de Matharel de Fiennes, 'L'intérieur du théâtre', *Le Nouvelliste*, 28 October 1853, [1–2]. The article was serialised over four issues (28–31 October).

[27] '[F]aites-moi une féerie en vingt tableaux, je risquerai dessus 200,000 francs'. Edmond Benjamin and Henry Buguet, 'Comment on fait les pièces', in *Coulisses de bourse et de théâtre* (Paris: Ollendorf, 1882), 230. My supposition is that Benjamin wrote the *bourse*-related texts in the collection and Buguet the *théâtre*-related ones.

[28] 'Le directeur, en montant une de ces pièces coûteuses, joue à pile ou face un enjeu formidable.' Georges Moynet, *Trucs et décors: Explication raisonnée de tous les moyens employés pour produire les illusions théâtrales* (Paris: Librairie illustrée, 1893), 122.

but two *féerie* flops would be enough for a manager to go bust: 'It is a game where by the end of the year one is either penniless or keeps a private carriage.'[29] The logical propensity of managers to minimise risk explains the safe choices of late 19th-century *féerie*: a high proportion of revivals, adaptations of older plays as *féeries*, adaptations of novels, original plays based on tried-and-true models. To make once again a comparison with film history, late 19th-century *féerie* was not an 'industry of prototypes'—an expression often used in Romance languages (less so in English) to describe the 20th-century film industry, stressing the point that unlike manufacturers of mass-produced goods, film studios could not replicate their products. It was instead closer to the present-day business model of Hollywood franchise films. Film producer and academic Rod Stoneman has lamented the risk aversion of a film industry where 'across time, [market research] works as a self-fulfilling prophecy' and leads the audience to ask for more of the same; recently, Martin Scorsese has decried 'market-researched, audience-tested, vetted, modified, revetted and remodified' film franchises as a result of 'the gradual but steady elimination of risk'.[30] *Féerie* did not have modern market research, but theatres and audiences were arguably locked into a similar pattern, with theatres not daring to offer anything beyond what they thought audiences expected and audiences not daring to expect anything beyond what theatres were offering: what Stoneman calls 'a closed loop, replicating learned forms and received formulas', and Scorsese, in more demotic terms, 'a chicken-and-egg issue'. As a result, new *féeries* never strayed far from the model set by their predecessors: as a critic wrote in 1883, 'There is a mould for plays of this kind, as invariable as that of Savoy sponge cakes [*gâteaux de Savoie*].'[31]

Once they had secured a commission from a theatre, then, the playwrights—usually in the plural—would draft the play, pouring their ideas into the metaphorical cake mould of *féerie*. They would then bring their draft back to the theatre, where, to quote yet another source, 'the machinist [i.e., the *chef machiniste*], the stage designers, the builder of props and *cartonnages* [would] rack their brains to come up with sensational tricks'.[32] The 1853 contributor of *Le Nouvelliste* imagines

[29] 'C'est un jeu à se trouver sur la paille ou à avoir voiture dans l'année.' Émile Zola, 'La féerie et l'opérette', in *Œuvres complètes*, no vol. number, *Le Naturalisme au théâtre: Les théories et les exemples*, ed. Marianne Bouchardon (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2020), 327.

[30] Rod Stoneman, 'Chance and Change', in *Film and Risk*, ed. Mette Hjort (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2012), 262; Martin Scorsese, 'The Dying Art of Filmmaking', *New York Times*, 5 November 2019, A27, available online as 'Martin Scorsese: I Said Marvel Movies Aren't Cinema. Let Me Explain', https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/04/opinion/martin-scorsese-marvel.html (accessed 8 February 2024).

[31] 'Il y a un moule pour ce genre de pièces, aussi invariable que celui des gâteaux de Savoie.' Édouard Noël and Edmond Stoullig, *Les annales du théâtre et de la musique*, year 1883 (Paris: Charpentier, 1884), 272.

[32] 'Le machiniste, les décorateurs, le fabriquant d'accessoires et de cartonnages, se creusent la cervelle pour trouver des trucs à sensation.' Moynet, *Envers du théâtre*, 92. The passage to which this sentence belongs is also found, with minor alterations, in [Henry Buguet], *Gaîté*, no. 7 in the series *Foyers et*

a dialogue between Fournier and his *chef machiniste* Caron, who agree on alterations to the moments, in the draft play, where the effects the playwrights have imagined would prove too expensive or simply impossible to realise. According to this account, for example, in addition to having an elephant become a café, d'Ennery and his collaborator also wished to have a camel become a pool table. While the elephant makes its way into the final play, the camel has to be sacrificed for technical reasons. In the dialogue—which probably stems from humorous conjecture rather than insider knowledge, but is nonetheless plausible on some level—Fournier explains that the camel is essential to a pun, one of the endearingly weak *calembours* that are a constant of *féerie* humour.[33] Despite this, it is not clear how much of the dialogue would have actually been written by this stage: I suspect little to nothing, in order to maximise efficiency.

In fact, although it dates from half a century later, a rare—and unexamined—document of this phase of the *féerie*-making process survives at the fonds Méliès of the Cinémathèque française.[34] *Pace* the inventory, it is not a scenario for *Les quat' cents farces du diable*, the Méliès film that outgrew from his collaboration to the stage *féerie Les 400 coups du diable*, but a scenario for the stage *féerie* itself (Fig. 4.2). It is a fair copy prepared by one of the agencies that specialised in theatre manuscripts.[35] A detailed prose description of the action of each tableau is copied in the right-hand pages. In the otherwise blank left-hand pages are indications for the effects demanded by the action on the facing page: tricks ('The hat changed into a [chamber] pot'), transformations ('The pharmacy becomes the pastry shop'), appearances and disappearances of characters through traps ('Appearance of the King of Genies'), lighting effects ('Green light'), pyrotechnics ('Lycopodium'), sound effects ('The bell'), scenery ('Gauze curtain', 'Panorama'), costumes ('Satan as an old lady'), and of course film projections 'to be arranged with Mr Méliès'. The resulting document is not unlike a two-column film script, with the visual events on the left and the dialogue on the right, except that a prose description is standing in for the dialogue. We can, I believe, assume that this scenario was circulated among the team described earlier as 'the machinist, the stage designers, the builders of props and *cartonnages*', which in this case also included Méliès, whose copy has been preserved. We can also assume that the *chef machiniste* Colombier had reservations on this draft, much as his predecessor Caron had reservations on the first draft of *Les sept merveilles du monde*. We do know for

coulisses: Histoire anecdotique des théâtres de Paris (Paris: Tresse, 1875), 1:44, where 'machiniste' reads 'chef machiniste'. The Moynet version is quoted in Yon, 'La féerie ou le royaume du spectaculaire', 128.

[33] Matharel de Fiennes, 'L'intérieur du théâtre', 30 October, [1–2].

[34] Cinémathèque française, fonds Méliès, MELIES76-B11.

[35] For a grim picture of the practices of these agencies, see Benjamin and Buguet, 'Les copistes dramatiques', in *Coulisses*, 218–20; Georges Grison, 'Un bureau de copistes', in *Paris horrible et Paris original* (Paris: Dentu, 1882), 89–97; Paul Ginisty, 'Le copiste', in *Choses et gens de théâtre* (Paris: Perrin, 1892), 255–70; Paul Ginisty, *La vie d'un théâtre* (Paris: Schleicher frères, 1898), 8–9.

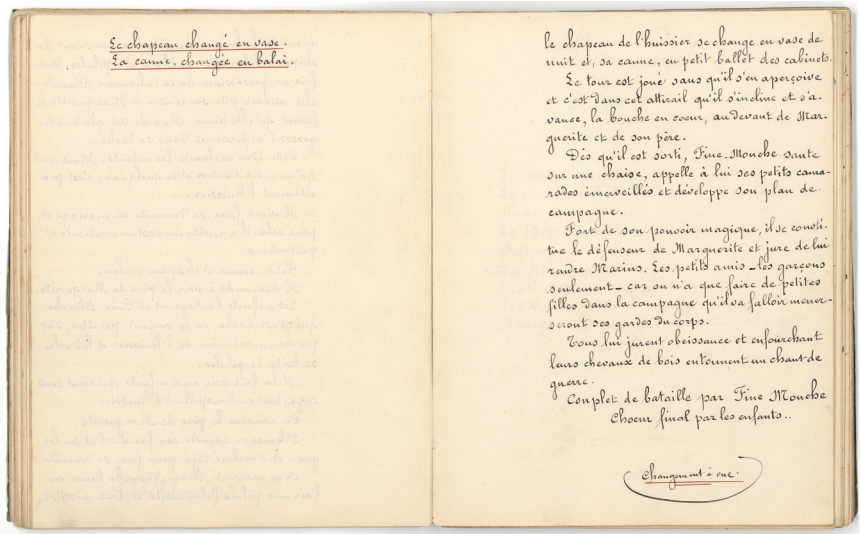


Figure 4.2 Manuscript scenario for *Les 400 coups du diable*. Paris, Cinémathèque française, fonds Méliès. Source: La Cinémathèque française.

sure—from the *manuscrit de censure* and the printed play—that *Les 400 coups du diable* underwent significant alterations between the stage reflected in the scenario and the performed version.

It seems logical, therefore, that the playwrights would not start writing the dialogue of a *féerie* until they had heard from the *chef machiniste* and the other members of the theatre's creative team. These would not have limited themselves to vetoing the playwrights' ideas, but would have offered positive input. In an 1898 article, playwright Ernest Blum is quoted reminiscing about his experience with an unnamed *féerie*—easily identifiable as the 1866 hit *Cendrillon*. A stage designer, the celebrated Jean-Louis Chéret, allegedly came to him with an idea for a set representing 'the land of fire, which will become a blue lake'. Blum obliged and wrote a fiery mountain and a lake into the play, with no justification other than to accommodate Chéret's set.[36]

Féerie, then, inverts the priorities of literary theatre twice: by putting funding ahead of the work and by putting stagecraft ahead of the verbal text. If dialogue came relatively late in the creative process, though, music presumably came even later, at least in the case of non-composerly *féerie*. It is not uncommon, in

[36] '[L]e pays du feu, qui deviendra un lac d'azur'. Adolphe Aderer, 'Comment on fait une féerie', *Le Temps*, 24 November 1898, [3].

manuscrits de censure, to find a blank space where the text of a musical number should be, or to find a text written in at a later moment in a hand other than the copyist's.

As we have seen, for non-composerly *féeries*, it was normally the theatre's resident conductor who was responsible for piecing together a score (as was the case for melodramas). For *Les sept merveilles du monde*, that would have been Hippolyte Gondois, the conductor of the Porte-Saint-Martin, who was praised by *Le Nouvelliste* for providing '[a] host of pieces of his own composition, a happy selection of songs, duets, choruses, dance tunes; flute, violin, cornet solos, and clever orchestral effects' (the wording implies that most of the new pieces are instrumental and most of the vocal pieces are not new).[37] In 1858, the original music for *Les bibelots du diable* was credited to three composers, but it seems likely that, while two vocal numbers and the ballet music had been outsourced to Jules Boucher and Camille Schubert, respectively, it was Julien Nargeot, the conductor of the Variétés, who shouldered the bulk of the work. Richard Sherr has profiled Nargeot and given an insight into the process of compiling a score for the Variétés in his edition of *Ohé! les p'tits agneaux!*, the *revue de fin d'année* that premièred eight months before *Les bibelots du diable*.[38] Much of what can be gleaned about the making of the revue score must also apply to the *féerie* score.

Manuscript full scores of *féeries* are rare, probably because non-original music was copied from existing sets of parts, as seems to have been the case for *Les bibelots du diable* (and *Ohé! les p'tits agneaux!*). One exception is the full score for *Les mille et une nuits*, a 1843 *féerie* for which the Porte-Saint-Martin conductor Auguste Pilati provided a significant amount of music—both new and composed for earlier plays, including at other theatres. To my knowledge, only the first volume of Pilati's full score survives, covering approximately the first half of the play.[39] A press report informs us that a first draft of *Les mille et une nuits* was 'submitted to the machinists' of the Porte-Saint-Martin in June, another that rehearsals had started in late September, by which point the play must have been fully written.[40] Pilati must have assembled the music as rehearsals were under way, since the surviving portion of the full score bears dates between 13 November and 20 November 1842. We can surmise that by the end of November Pilati had finished copying his full score, so that it could serve as the basis for the orchestral parts. Orchestral rehearsals could

[37] 'Une foule de morceaux de la composition de cet artiste[,] un heureux choix d'airs, de duos, de chœurs; des solos de flûte, de violon, de piston, d'ingénieux effets d'orchestre.' Jules Lovy, 'Chronique', *Le Nouvelliste*, 4 October 1853, [1–2].

[38] Richard Sherr, introduction to *Ohé! les p'tits agneaux!: A Parisian* revue de fin d'année *for 1857* (Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2021), xi–xxxvii. A potted biography of Nargeot is at p. xxix.

[39] F-Pnas fonds Variétés 4-COL-106(1061). A set of orchestral parts is extant, and Roxane Martin makes use of it to recover a global picture of the play in *La féerie romantique*, 303–24.

[40] 'Coulisses théâtrales', *Les Coulisses*, 23 June 1842, [4] ('Les auteurs ont livré le poème aux machinistes'); 'Mosaïque', *L'Indépendant*, 29 September 1842, 3.

then take place during the final few weeks of rehearsals (the play premièred on 25 January). A systematic study of the orchestras of Parisian commercial theatres is badly needed, but based on *Les mille et une nuits*, *Le roi Carotte*, *Le voyage dans la lune*, and the scores for revivals of *La poule aux œufs d'or* and *Les pilules du diable*, we can say that the typical orchestra at a large *féerie* house between the 1840s and the 1870s had two flutes, one or two oboes, two clarinets, one or two bassoons, two horns, two cornets, two or three trombones, plus timpani, percussion, and strings; Hervé's music for *La biche au bois* has a smaller woodwind section, with a single flute, a single oboe, and no bassoon. An administrative document from the Gaîté puts the number of string players for *Le roi Carotte* at 26.[41] This would place the Gaîté in the same league as the Théâtre-Italien, which, according to Alessandro Di Profio, had 28 string players on its rolls in 1861.[42] Smaller theatres had of course more modest means. The Variétés still had single woodwinds and no trombones at the time of the première of *Les bibelots du diable*, but the ballet parts, dating from the 1862 revival, do include trombones. By the time of *Le carnet du diable*, however, the Variétés had reverted to being a vaudeville theatre, and the orchestra had shrunk to almost chamber proportions: if we assume that no orchestral part has been lost or discarded, the string section only stood at six desks, that is, between seven and twelve players.

Four months of rehearsals for the 1843 *Les mille et une nuits* (from late September to late January) was probably longer than expected, but putting together a new *féerie* production was a time-consuming affair. In the second half of the century, the financial pressure that led theatres to increase the number of performances must also have led them to compress rehearsal schedules. *Le voyage dans la lune*, which was readied in two months as the Gaîté was struggling in 1875, is arguably a case in point.[43] Yet in 1870, a magazine estimated that three months of rehearsals would not have been enough for *Le roi Carotte*; in 1881, *Les mille et une nuits* (which only shared a title with its 1843 predecessor) apparently took three months of rehearsals, and so did the 1887 revival of *La chatte blanche*.[44] The 1908 *Comœdia* article mentioned earlier quotes the *chef machiniste* of the Folies-Dramatiques, Robert, as saying: 'Ten years ago, staging a play took four months', which is probably an exaggeration, but not by much.[45]

[41] Administrative records in Albert Vizentini's hand in F-Pnas collection Rondel MRt boîte 72 Gaîté. I am grateful to Katherine Hambridge for alerting me to the still uncatalogued Gaîté records.

[42] Hervé Audéon, Damien Colas, and Alessandro Di Profio, 'The Orchestras of the Paris Opera Houses in the Nineteenth Century', in *The Opera Orchestra in 18th- and 19th-Century Europe*, ed. Niels Martin Jensen and Franco Piperno, vol. 1, *The Orchestra in Society* (Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 2008), 217–58.

[43] Rehearsals started on 23 August, according to Gustave Lafargue, 'Courrier des théâtres', *Le Figaro*, 22 August 1875, 4; the première took place on 26 October.

[44] 'Théâtres', *Journal des modes*, 25 June 1870, 7; Un monsieur de l'orchestre [Arnold Mortier], 'Courrier des théâtres', *Le Figaro*, 2 March 1882, 3; Dom Blasius, 'Théâtres', *L'Intransigeant*, 9 January 1887, 3 (announcing the beginning of rehearsals for 10 January, three months ahead of the 2 April première).

[45] 'Il y a dix ans, on mettait quatre mois pour monter une pièce.' Sombreuil, 'Chez les machinistes'.

This overview of how *féeries* were made should have made clear the outsized role played by the 'machinist'—a term that conflated the manual, though highly skilled, labour of the stagehands and the intellectual labour of the *chef machiniste*. That such an outsized role raised questions of authorship was already clear to contemporaries. Influential critic Francisque Sarcey loved to insist, in his column on *Le Temps*, on an analogy: the machinist is to *féerie* what the composer is to opera or *opéra-comique*. In both cases, 'the writer [i.e., the playwright] is but a librettist' who should serve his collaborator, he wrote in 1869, reviewing the revival of *La poudre de Perlinpinpin*.[46] He would use the same comparison in 1872, reviewing *La reine Carotte* and *Le roi Carotte*, and as late as 1897, reviewing *La montagne enchantée*: in a *féerie* 'The play [*drame*] … must be subservient to the trick, as much as in an opera it must be the humble servant of music.'[47]

Reviewing the 1869 revival of *La chatte blanche*, Sarcey went as far as to argue half-jokingly that the playwrights were not deserving of the 10 per cent share of box-office revenue they received, as 'féeries are actually made by the machinist, in partnership with the manager and the *metteur en scène*'.[48] As it happened, from a legal standpoint, the machinist of a *féerie* had already been recognised as an author entitled to collect royalties. In 1859, Raygnard, the machinist who had come up with the tricks of the *féerie Cri-Cri*, sued the playwrights who had penned the play in order to be recognised as a collaborator, and the judge ruled in his favour, finding that, while in the case of literary plays 'sets can only be considered a very marginal accessory', in the case at hand 'the play virtually as a whole consists in the machine or trick, that words and scenes are justified by it, that without it they would not make any sense or be of any worth'.[49] At first sight, this recognition of the work of the machinist as intellectual property seems to anticipate the fight for the recognition of the work of the *metteur en scène* as intellectual property at the end of the century, which Roxane Martin discusses in her study on the emergence of modern *mise en scène* in France. But, to rephrase Martin's argument in perhaps a cruder fashion, while the work of the *metteur en scène*—like the work of the stage director today—was construed as pertaining to the performance of

[46] 'L'écrivain n'est qu'un librettiste à qui l'on ne demande … qu'un talent de préparer au metteur en scènes [*sic*] des occasions de trucs ou de décors.' Francisque Sarcey, 'Chronique théâtrale', *Le Temps*, 13 September 1869, [2].

[47] Francisque Sarcey, 'Chronique théâtrale', *Le Temps*, 22 January 1872, [1]; Francisque Sarcey, 'Chronique théâtrale', *Le Temps*, 19 April 1897, [1] ('Le drame … doit s'asservir au truc, comme, dans un opéra, il doit être l'humble serviteur de la musique').

[48] '[L]es féeries sont faites en réalité par le machiniste, en compte à demi avec le directeur et le metteur en scène'. Francisque Sarcey, 'Chronique théâtrale', *Le Temps*, 23 August 1869, [2].

[49] '[S]i, dans les ouvrages purement littéraires, la décoration ne peut être considérée que comme un accessoire très-secondaire … ici, au contraire, la pièce presque tout entière consiste dans la machine ou le truc; que les paroles et les scènes sont motivées par lui; que, sans lui, elles n'auraient aucune signification ni valeur.' 'Jurisprudence en matière d'œuvres dramatiques', *Annuaire de la Société des auteurs et compositeurs dramatiques*, vol. 1 (1866–9): 587n. Cited in Roxane Martin, *L'émergence de la notion de mise en scène dans le paysage théâtral français, 1789–1914* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2013), 163.

a work, the work of the *féerie* machinist was construed as pertaining to the work itself, collapsing performance and work, staging and play. If a non-logocentric, 'postdramatic' vision of theatre sounds more progressive to us than one based on a text–performance dichotomy, viewing the staging as separate from the play was the progressive position in the 19th century; Sarcey, who was, after all, a conservative critic, was being premodern, not postmodern, when he claimed that the machinist should be considered as an author. He can, perhaps, be seen as holding to a paradigm that Martin traces back to the early 19th-century playwright Jean-Baptiste Hapdé. A rival of René-Charles Guilbert de Pixerécourt, Hapdé practised and theorised a 'highly spectacular melodrama' in which the staging, not the verbal text, was deemed to be the essential component of the work, hence the one deserving of protection under intellectual property laws.[50]

And yet the collapsing of performance and work is the only way to make sense of the ontology of *féerie*, including the issue posed by *féerie* revivals. Only if a production of a *féerie is* the *féerie*—not one practical realisation of an ideal *féerie*—can one conceive a *féerie* that changes with every production, as *La biche au bois* did, and yet is treated as one and the same object. The proverbial image to which contemporary writers resorted when describing *féeries* such as *La biche au bois* is that of the 'couteau à Jeannot', a knife that is passed down as a family heirloom and that keeps being treated as the original knife even when both the blade and the handle have been replaced.[51] English has 'my grandfather's axe' or 'George Washington's axe' with the same meaning, but these seem to be both less frequent and more recent. The 'couteau à Jeannot' is the French equivalent of the ship of Theseus in ancient Greek philosophy or the Ise Grand Shrine in Japanese culture: a permanent object made of impermanent materials. If the 'couteau à Jeannot' and 'my grandfather's axe' belong to the domestic sphere, it is perhaps significant that the ship of Theseus, the Ise Grand Shrine, and even George Washington's axe—supposedly the axe he used to cut down the fabled cherry tree—are connected to the shared cultural heritage of a civic or national community. In the case of *féerie*, too, the 'couteau à Jeannot' status of works is functional to a process of transmission of cultural heritage across generations. In hindsight, we can see Sarcey's words in 1869 as functional, precisely, to a process of canon formation that had been taking place over the previous decade—an anomalous canon formation, without either a strong work concept or strong authorship. *Grand opéra* is the logical term of comparison: a small number of works premièred within a relatively short time frame was immediately established as a core canon, grounded (especially in the case of Meyerbeer) in the stability of texts and the authority of composers: *La muette*

[50] Martin, *Émergence*, 76–8.

[51] See, for example, this review of the 1896 revival of *La biche au bois*: F.D. [Félix Duquesnel], 'Les premières', *Le Gaulois*, 15 November 1896, 3. The expression is also found in the variant 'couteau de Jeannot', or with alternative spellings for the name (Janot, Jannot, Jeanot).

de Portici, *Robert le diable*, *La Juive*, *Les Huguenots*, *La favorite*, first performed between 1828 and 1840. Between 1863 and 1869, the Porte-Saint-Martin, the Gaîté, and the Châtelet revived a similarly small set of *féeries* from a similarly short time period: *Peau d'Âne*, *Les pilules du diable*, *Les sept châteaux du diable*, *La biche au bois*, *La chatte blanche*, *La poudre de Perlinpinpin*, all dating from between 1838 and 1853. They would all remain in the repertoire and comprise, to all intents and purposes, a core canon of *féerie*, which, however, was not predicated on the intangibility of the works—if anything, on its opposite. *Cendrillon* (1866), *Le tour du monde en 80 jours* (1874) and *Michel Strogoff* (1880) were co-opted into this core canon on their appearance more or less as *Le prophète* (1849), *L'Africaine* (1865), *Hamlet* (1868), and the 1869 version of *Faust* were co-opted on their appearance into the Opéra core canon.

This is to say that, as canon formation at the Opéra during the July Monarchy went hand in hand with the codification of the ontology of *grand opéra* as a set of stable works for which ultimate artistic responsibility rested with the composer—an evolution that had repercussions for the whole of 19th-century European opera—so the formation of something resembling a canon at the three major *féerie* houses during the Second Empire went hand in hand with the codification of *féeries* as total artworks of the present. And as the Opéra of the 1830s, aspiring to be the 'Versailles of the bourgeoisie' after the July Revolution, was the product of its historical context, so were the theatres that shaped the *féerie* canon in the 1860s driven by the economic forces of the new regime of production and of gentrification. If these forces incentivised theatres to revive old *féeries*, which *féeries* to revive—and which *féeries* were admitted into the canon as a consequence—might have depended on another consideration. By reviving, between 1863 and 1865, *féeries* that were between 20 and 25 years old (*Peau d'Âne*, *Les pilules du diable*, *Les sept châteaux du diable*, and *La biche au bois*), theatres might have bet on parents bringing their children to see the plays they had enjoyed as children themselves.[52] This is similar to the recent proliferation, since the late 2000s, of family films that implicitly or explicitly appeal to the nostalgia of Generation X and Millennial parents, while ostensibly catering to their children: Disney and Pixar 'princess' films (starting with *The Princess and the Frog*, 2009) harking back to those of the so-called Disney renaissance (starting with *The Little Mermaid*, 1989); *Wreck-It Ralph* (2012) with its evocation of the world of 1980s and 1990s arcade games; sequels or reboots—or both—of the *Indiana Jones* films (1981–9), *TRON* (1982), *Ghostbusters* (1984), *Jurassic Park* (1993), *Jumanji* (1995), and *Space Jam* (1996).[53]

[52] In 1864, the Folies-Dramatiques also revived a 27-year-old *féerie*, *La fille de l'air*.

[53] For *TRON* and nostalgia, see Jason Sperb, 'TRON Legacies: Disney and Nostalgia Blockbusters in the Age of Transmedia Storytelling', in *Flickers of Film: Nostalgia in the Time of Digital Cinema* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2016), 114–38.

This brings us to the next fundamental question about *féerie*: who were the primary audience of these plays, adults or children?

The child

The text of *Les 400 coups du diable* was not published as a volume, nor, as was frequently the case for plays, as an issue in a collection—*Le magasin théatral* in the 19th century, *L'illustration théâtrale* in the early 20th century. It appeared instead in *Mon beau livre*, a monthly magazine for children, offering age-appropriate articles 'on current affairs, travels, sports, science, and history', as well as novels and short stories.[54] The *féerie* that followed it at the Châtelet, *Pif! Paf! Pouf!* (1906), which opened in December, was greeted as a Christmas gift for 'children old and young'.[55] Back in 1858, a review of *Les bibelots du diable*, which instead opened in August, read: 'The *féerie* of the Variétés … will please the schoolchildren [*collégiens*] on summer break; it will delight children young and old.'[56] Both the critics' language and the theatres' timing of the production (and on both counts these are not isolated examples) make clear that *féerie* was not just suitable, but meant for school-age children.

'Old children' are, of course, young-at-heart adults, but how young were the 'young children' that attended the performances? The term *collégien* is of no help: while today *collège* and *lycée* denote two different educational stages (lower and upper secondary education, or, in lay terms, primary school and secondary school), in the 19th century they both covered the entirety of primary and secondary education, the difference being one of prestige of the institution. The last quarter of the century saw a rise in matinée performances, and some matinées were explicitly marketed to families, as *matinées enfantines*. In an 1887 article, man of letters Charles Bigot related—or imagined—an encounter with a grouchy old reactionary at a performance of that year's revival of *La chatte blanche*. The production, in that case, was timed to coincide with the Easter school break, and the grouchy old reactionary is probably thinking of a matinée when he says: 'All the parents will bring here their children: *collégiens*, girls and little girls, even six- and seven-year-old children.'[57] In 1886, the great illustrator Albert Robida published a cartoon depicting bourgeois families at a *féerie* matinée—the play must

[54] '[N]os articles habituels d'actualités, de voyages, de sports, des sciences et d'histoire'. 'La grande innovation de Mon beau livre', *Mon beau livre*, 15 February 1906, 182.
[55] '[C]ette amusante féerie que M. Fontanes offre, pour leurs étrennes, aux grands et petits enfants de Paris'. Edmond Stoullig, *Les annales du théâtre et de la musique*, year 1906 (Paris: Paul Ollendorff, 1907), 338.
[56] 'La féerie des Variétés … fera la joie des collégiens en vacances; elle délectera les petits et les grands enfants.' 'Semaine théâtrale', *Le Ménestrel*, 29 August 1858, 3.
[57] 'Tous les parents vont amener là leurs enfants; collégiens, filles et fillettes, jusqu'aux enfants de six et sept ans.' Charles Bigot, 'Les rois de féerie', *Revue d'art dramatique*, vol. 6 (April–June 1887): 187.

Figure 4.3 Albert Robida, 'Une matinée de féerie'. From *La Caricature*, 23 January 1886. Source: Gallica, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

have been *Le Petit Poucet* at the Gaîté (Fig. 4.3).[58] According to the caption, nurses with babies were also in attendance. In 1880, Jules Claretie penned an account of a matinée performance of *L'arbre de Noël*, whose spectators sound very young, as Claretie puts their adulthood at 15 years in the future.[59] Both *L'arbre de Noël* and *Le Petit Poucet* premièred in October and played into the next year, and needless to say, in the case of *L'arbre de Noël*, the very subject of the play was chosen to resonate with the winter holiday season.[60]

Outside matinées, though, *féerie* audiences would not have been that young. Victorien Sardou apparently claimed to have written *Le Crocodile* with his daughter and her friends in mind; Geneviève Sardou, born in 1875, was 11 when the play premièred.[61] According to Sarcey, Sardou had written *Le Crocodile* 'for children aged 12 to 15, boys and girls'.[62] Sardou also allegedly said that 16, the age of Sarcey's daughter, was 'already a bit too old' to enjoy the play.[63] In 1904, critic

[58] A[lbert] Robida, 'Une matinée de féerie', *La Caricature*, 23 January 1886, 27.
[59] Jules Claretie, *La vie à Paris*, year 1880 (Paris: Victor-Havard, 1881), 453–6.
[60] Another *féerie* where Christmas is thematised is the 1899 *Robinson Crusoé*, where Robinson's fantasy of a London Christmas takes the form of a ballet stretching over multiple tableaux.
[61] Jerome A. Hart, *Sardou and the Sardou Plays* (Philadelphia, PA: J.B. Lippincott, 1913), 96–7.
[62] 'Il ne s'était proposé qu'un but: écrire pour les enfants de douze à quinze ans, garçons et filles'. Francisque Sarcey, '*Le Crocodile*', in *Quarante ans de théâtre* (Paris: Bibliothèque des *Annales politiques et littéraires*, 1900–2), 6:132.
[63] 'C'est déjà peut-être un peu tard.' Sarcey, '*Le Crocodile*', 6:139.

Adolphe Brisson recommended the scientific *féerie Monsieur Polichinelle* for the same age range: 'one [cannot help but] say to boys and girls aged 12 to 15: "Go, sweeties, have fun!" '[64] An 1898 column in *Le Gaulois*, instead, painted a picture of boys and girls in their late teens at a *féerie* performance (the girls are said to be 16), affecting disinterest and 'displaying that occasion- and protest-specific scepticism with which they will punish their families for taking them to such a puerile entertainment'.[65] On the other hand, *féeries*, alongside operettas and revues, were said to attract teenage boys awakening to sex: Arnold Mortier, in 1874, lists among the destinations for this category of theatre-goer the Châtelet (which was performing *Les pilules du diable* at the time) and 'all the theatres … with ballets and *apothéoses*'.[66] The reason lies in the paradox, to which we will return, that *féeries* catered both to children and to the gaze of heterosexual men.

We have seen how the emergence of scientific *féerie* next to the old supernatural *féerie* in the 1870s can be interpreted as reflecting the shift from the *ancien régime* values enshrined in traditional fairytales to a bourgeois entrepreneurial ideal. This, of course, makes all the more sense if we think of *féeries* as vehicles of the transmission of values to the next generation. With scientific *féerie*, the pedagogical role of *féerie* changed: from a generic (and perfunctory) ethical message about good triumphing over evil and challenges leading to living happily ever after, *féerie* went on to incorporate educational material. Children could learn about technology and especially geography, experiencing vicariously places as diverse as Russia (*Michel Strogoff*), India (*Le tour du monde*, *Le prince Soleil*), present-day Indonesia (*Le tour du monde*, *Le Crocodile*), Japan (*Le prince Soleil*), the United States (*Le tour du monde*, *Le pays de l'or*), Chile (*Les enfants du capitaine Grant*), Australia (also *Les enfants du capitaine Grant*). An early scientific *féerie* that I have not discussed yet, *La Vénus noire* (1879), was a tale of African exploration, adapted from a successful novel. In order to stress the educational element of the play, a small Africa-themed exhibition was arranged in the foyer of the theatre.[67] Moreover, according to a disapproving American contemporary writer, 'Between the acts a drop curtain is lowered, on which is painted a huge map of Africa, with the route of the heroes of the piece distinctly marked. One might as well go to a meeting of the Geographical Society at once.'[68]

[64] 'On est vaincu d'avance et l'on dit aux garçons et aux fillettes de douze à quinze ans: — Allez, chers petits, amusez-vous.' Adolphe Brisson, 'Chronique théâtrale', *Le Temps*, 24 October 1904, [2].

[65] '[E]n affichant ce scepticisme d'occasion et de protestation, par quoi ils ou elles puniront leurs familles de les avoir amenés à ce spectacle si puéril'. Tout-Paris, 'Bloc-notes parisien', *Le Gaulois*, 5 December 1898, 1.

[66] 'Aux Folies, à la Renaissance, au Châtelet, dans tous les théâtres à revues, à jupes écourtées, à tableaux vivants, à ballets et à apothéoses.' Un monsieur de l'orchestre [Arnold Mortier], *Les soirées parisiennes [de 1874]* (Paris: Dentu, 1875), 30.

[67] For an overview of the exhibits, see Émile Desbeaux, 'Le théâtre illustré', *Le Monde illustré*, 13 September 1879, 166.

[68] J. Brander Matthews, *The Theatres of Paris* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1880), 178–9.

Needless to say, the education children—and adults—could receive from the *Tour du monde*-style plays postulated Eurocentrism and the belief in the civilising mission of the West. As Jann Pasler has noted, these plays 'did much to give the illusion that foreign cultures were accessible and comprehensible, wherever the Westerner's gaze might wander'; while not insisting on children as the intended audience of this repertoire, Pasler also aptly establishes a parallel between *Le tour du monde* and 'the *Journal de[s] voyages*, oriented to a public of adolescents'.[69] *Féerie* was ideally suited to serve as an educational vehicle of sorts because, to a certain degree, it could present the attractions within a play as autonomous from the work as a whole, hence supposedly more authentic. For example, the minstrel show in *Le pays de l'or* was a recreation of a minstrel show—a minstrel show as performed by fictional characters within the play to music written by the composer of the rest of the score, Léon Vasseur. But a Parisian audience, and especially an audience of children, would have felt that they were witnessing a minstrel show, not a recreation. In a genre with stronger textual stability and authorial control, this illusion of immediacy would have been harder to achieve. Sylvie Chalaye remarks that *La Vénus noire* is chronologically situated between the *grand opéra* fantasy of Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine* and the human zoos of the end of the century.[70] I would add that, as a scientific *féerie*, it is also ontologically in between the two: neither a vision entirely filtered through a strong creative personality, nor a purportedly unmediated and documentary display.

Traditional *féerie*, as we have seen, was permeable to trends in scientific *féerie*, and one might argue that its penchant for encyclopaedic *défilés* represent an extension of the educational impulse of scientific *féerie*. The celebrated Greek mythology-themed *défilé* of the 1874 *Orphée aux enfers* had already been followed, in *Geneviève de Brabant*, by two *défilés* of means of transportation and of famous lovers from opera and operetta. And over the following decades, traditional *féerie* seems to have looked increasingly didactic, with encyclopaedic *défilés* of lamps in *Les mille et une nuits*, of boots in *Le Petit Poucet*, of porcelain in the 1898 revival of *La poudre de Perlinpinpin*, of fans in *Le Petit Chaperon rouge*. This reading is supported by a polemical text by playwright Émile Bergerat, first published in 1886 and clearly taking aim at *Le Petit Poucet*. Children, Bergerat writes, 'will duly hallucinate in front of strictly chronological *défilés* of braces and learned *apothéoses* of vegetables, by means of which they will learn that the cauliflower is not the flower of the cabbage and that the Choubersky is a stove.[71] … French

[69] Jann Pasler, *Composing the Citizen: Music as Public Utility in Third Republic France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 416, 414.
[70] Sylvie Chalaye, 'L'invention théâtrale de la "Vénus noire": De Saartjie Baartman à Joséphine Baker', in *L'altérité en spectacle, 1789–1918* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2015), 55–66.
[71] Pun between *chou*, cabbage, and the name of Russian-born engineer Charles de Choubersky, inventor of a patented stove.

children are mad about these clumsy attempts at popularisation illuminated by flares.'[72] Bergerat also imagines a *défilé* consisting in 'an ethnographic procession of all the undergarments worn by mankind until the invention of the flannel undershirt'.[73]

It was evident for contemporaries that scientific *féerie* was part of a wider industrial complex targeting the children of the bourgeoisie: not just Verne, but also Paul d'Ivoi and Alfred Assollant, from whose novels the scientific *féeries* *Les cinq sous de Lavarède* and *Les aventures du capitaine Corcoran*, respectively, would be adapted in 1902; not just the *Journal des voyages*, but also its competitor *Magasin d'éducation et de recréation*, or, later, *Mon beau livre*. Jules Claretie, in 1883, established a connection between scientific *féerie* (an expression that he himself used) and educational toys. French children, according to Claretie, asked for 'a mineralogy set, or a chemistry set, or an electric machine' as presents; they found military-themed toys less attractive than 'the Ruhmkorff coil or the Bunsen cell'; 'Judging from the toys they like best, all of today's children will be scientists in 15 or 20 years.'[74] In an 1896 cartoon, Robida, imagining 'Christmas in the 20th century', captioned chemistry and mineralogy kits, a model aircraft, and a sextant as 'Little Christmas gifts for children who have been good'.[75] These observations, naturally, are not telling of the preferences of children as much as of the parenting strategies of adults. We probably should see in this phenomenon the triumph of the entrepreneurial ideal and the preoccupation of the bourgeoisie to build what we would now call the human capital of their children.

There is a reason I have been talking of bourgeois children. Although evidence is somewhat elusive, there are grounds to think that lower- or lower-middle-class people would be found in the auditorium at a *féerie* performance, but children would have been less likely to be among them, since a family outing to the theatre would have been costly on a low budget. On the other hand, lower-class children would be found at a *féerie* performance, only not in the auditorium.

[72] 'Les enfants pour qui ces choses sont composées, y auront les hallucinations requises devant des défilés de bretelles rigoureusement chronologiques et des apothéoses de légumes savantes par lesquelles ils apprendront que le choufleur n'est pas la fleur du chou et que le chouberski est un poêle.… L'enfance française est folle de ces à-peu-près vulgarisateurs qu'illuminent les feux de Bengale.' Émile Bergerat, preface to *La clé des songes*, in *Ours et fours: Théâtre en chambre* (Paris: Dentu, 1886), 2:493.

[73] 'C'est une procession ethnographique de tous les "vêtements de dessous" portés par l'humanité jusqu'à l'invention du gilet de flanelle.' Bergerat, preface to *La clé des songes*, 2:497.

[74] 'Tous les enfants, aujourd'hui, demanderaient ou une boîte de minéralogie, ou une boîte de chimie, ou une machine électrique … [Military-themed toys] ont bien encore leur séduction, mais beaucoup moindre que la bobine de Rumkorf ou la pile de Bunsen … À en juger par les jouets qu'ils préfèrent, les enfants d'aujourd'hui seront tous des savants dans quinze ou vingt ans.' Jules Claretie, *La vie à Paris*, year 1883 (Paris: Victor-Havard, 1884), 499–500.

[75] 'Petits cadeaux de Noël aux enfants sages.' [Albert] Robida, 'Noël au XX^{e} siècle', *Le Rire*, 26 December 1896, [19].

Children had been appearing on the *féerie* stage for a long time: the original *Biche au bois* featured them as miniature architects and builders, *Les bibelots du diable* as miniature soldiers. But with the Third Republic, the phenomenon took on a new dimension, and outrage over the use of children in *féerie* productions seems to have played a large part in the demand that theatres be subject to stricter child-labour regulations (a law was passed in 1892, but apparently to little effect).[76] *Le roi Carotte* made use of child performers (as illustrations that magically jumped out of the pages of an outsized book in the Quiribibi tableau); so did the 1874 *Orphée*, where a chorus of children and women personified Orpheus's young violin pupils. It is not always easy to tell from the surviving evidence whether children were played on stage by actual children or women *travestis*, but we know that in the mid-1870s the Gaîté had both child choristers and child dancers on its payroll (a 1874 publication, whose numbers might be inflated for publicity purposes, reckons 10 child choristers and 16 child dancers; an internal document from 1875, which might reflect budget cuts, has six and eight, respectively), and that is without counting ad hoc hires and supernumeraries such as those taking part in the *défilé* of *Geneviève*.[77] In 1885, advertisements for *Le Petit Poucet*, also at the Gaîté, promised 'military exercises' by an 'army' of 150 children, and the titular hero, Hop-o'-My-Thumb, was played by a teenage girl, the future operetta star Biana Duhamel (Fig. 4.4).[78] The following year, *Les aventures de Monsieur de Crac* contained a ballet for 20 child dancers. The 1905 *féerie Les 400 coups du diable*, where children were featured in a mimed scene—as diminutive firemen—as well as in a *défilé*, got the Châtelet into trouble for flouting regulations on child performers.[79]

The press offers a few glimpses into the lives of these under-age workers. We can read about a (probably real) 'Henri' who fell asleep in a bunny costume during an exhausting late-night rehearsal of the 1876 revival of *Les sept châteaux du diable* and about a (probably fictional) 'Nini' who had passed a dance audition with Mariquita; we can read about the boys who wore the boot-shaped *cartonnages* of

[76] Sylvain Nicolle, 'La Tribune et la Scène: Les débats parlementaires sur le théâtre en France au XIX^{e} siècle, 1789–1914' (PhD diss., Université Paris-Saclay, 2015), 755–62. A familiar name found in the early 20th-century debate on child performers is that of future minister Anatole de Monzie.

[77] [Henry Buguet], *Gaîté*, no. 7 in the series *Foyers et coulisses: Histoire anecdotique des théâtres de Paris* (Paris: Tresse, 1875), 2:113; administrative records in Albert Vizentini's hand in F-Pnas collection Rondel MRt boîte 72 Gaîté.

[78] In a previous *féerie* based on the same fairytale, in 1845, the protagonist was played instead by a dwarf performer: the American Charles Sherwood Stratton, better known under his stage name of General Tom Thumb.

[79] Jean-Claude Yon, *Une histoire du théâtre à Paris de la Révolution à la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Aubier, 2012), 204–5.

Figure 4.4 Child performers in *Le Petit Poucet* (1885). Nadar photograph. Source: Gallica, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Le Petit Poucet and about the youngest performer in the same production, aged three and a half (Fig. 4.5).[80]

If children on stage were workers themselves, children in the audience, in some ways, could be assimilated to workers. Over the course of the second half of the 19th century, theatre became increasingly exclusive: not only did ticket prices rise, but also the proportion of affordable seats decreased. Among *féerie* theatres, the Gaîté, the Porte-Saint-Martin, and the Châtelet all underwent renovations, in 1881, 1891, and 1898, respectively. Based on seating plans from the *Bottin* directory and on the plans of the original architect, Gabriel Davioud, I estimate that, with the 1898 renovation, affordable seats at the Châtelet (3 francs or less, in the *parterre* and the *amphithéâtre*) went from over

[80] Arnold Mortier, '*Les sept châteaux du diable*', in *Les soirées parisiennes de 1876* (Paris: Dentu, 1877), 324–31, at pp. 328–9; François Thiébault-Sisson, 'Le petit monde des théâtres', *Figaro illustré*, July 1890, 65–8, reprinted in *Le Petit Parisien*, supplément littéraire illustré, 29 January 1893, 37–8; C., 'Les coulisses d'une féerie: *Le Petit Poucet* à la Gaîté', illustrated by Cab, *La Vie parisienne*, 5 December 1885, 685–9.

Figure 4.5 A child supernumerary next to his *cartonnage* costume for the boot-themed *défilé* of *Le Petit Poucet*. Illustration by Cab. From *La Vie parisienne*, 5 December 1885. Source: Gallica, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

a half of the total (52 per cent) to 44 per cent.[81] Similar calculations for the other two houses would probably yield similar results. Yet the author of an 1889 book could still write that at these three theatres 'Melodramas, historical dramas, and *féeries* in 25 tableaux have a knack for attracting the bourgeois, the shopkeeper, and the worker.'[82] It is not far-fetched to think that adult bourgeois spectators who found themselves sharing the theatre with both children and lower-class

[81] *Bottin* 1898, 12; *Annuaire-almanach … Didot-Bottin*, year 1900 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1900), 22; César Daly and Gabriel Davioud, *Les théâtres de la place du Châtelet: Théâtre du Châtelet, Théâtre-Lyrique* (Paris: Ducher, 1865).

[82] 'Les *mélos*, les drames historiques, les féeries en vingt-cinq tableaux ont le don d'attirer le bourgeois, le commerçant et l'ouvrier.' Maurice du Seigneur, *Paris, voici Paris* (Paris: Bourloton, 1889), 301.

adults would have had a similar attitude toward the two groups, given a long-standing tendency to infantilise the working class. Charles Bigot's grouchy old reactionary is explicit on this point: *féerie* is a sensitive genre because it reaches two impressionable populations—children and the lower classes 'who fill up the upper levels of those vast auditoria'.[83]

I believe that a certain set of *féerie* spectators wanted to signal their superiority from both children and lower-class spectators, and did so through a deliberate strategy of selective attention. Children, one supposes, were engrossed by the performance, both because of its sheer visual magnificence and because going to the theatre to see a *féerie*, when they were not yet of age for more adult genres, was a rare treat. As Christophe Charle has observed, lower-class families who could afford to go to the theatre only sporadically would have treated a performance as a special occasion, a self-indulgent splurge, and were probably attracted by highly spectacular genres such as *féerie* precisely because of the sensation of getting a bigger bang for their buck.[84] They would, therefore, also have savoured every moment of the play. By contrast, Sarcey informs us that, at performances of *La reine Carotte* (1872), some would only come to the theatre to see Thérésa in a dance number: 'It is known that at 10 in the evening is the moment of the Spanish dance. The auditorium fills up 15 minutes prior to that, and empties 15 minutes after that; a part of the auditorium, of course.'[85] This would explain why, for example, the announcement of the 1875 revival of *La chatte blanche* in *L'Orchestre* gives the time (10 o'clock) for the most hyped *clou* of the play, 'Le pays des oiseaux'. Press illustrations, as I have argued, were directed at the section of the audience that wished to exhibit this kind of superior, in-the-know attitude. It is probably no coincidence, then, that the illustrations that Alfred Grévin drew for *Le Journal amusant* in 1872 with some of the attractions of *Le roi Carotte* are captioned with the approximate time of each attraction (the insects 'Between 10 and 11 o'clock', the apes 'Between 11 o'clock and midnight').[86] The sheet music for the 'Chanson des animaux', from the 1872 *féerie Les griffes du diable*, which contains impressions of animal sounds, has a footnote that reads: 'For the impressions, listen to Mademoiselle Silly at the

[83] '[C]'est lui [le peuple] qui remplit les étages supérieurs de ces vastes salles.' Bigot, 'Les rois de féerie', 187.

[84] Christophe Charle, *Théâtres en capitales: Naissance de la société du spectacle à Paris, Berlin, Londres et Vienne, 1860–1914* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2008), 284.

[85] 'On sait qu'à dix heures du soir, c'est le moment du pas espagnol. La salle s'emplit un quart d'heure auparavant et se vide un quart d'heure après; une partie de la salle, bien entendu.' Sarcey, 'Chronique théâtrale', 22 January 1872, [1].

[86] *Le Journal amusant*, 3 February 1872, 4.

Menus-Plaisirs every night at half past 10.' That all these examples are from the 1870s, though, suggests that the habit of selectively attending a *féerie* performance might later have declined. Perhaps that had to do with *féeries* becoming ever richer in not-to-be-missed *clous*, or with *féeries* naturally becoming more exclusive as the attendance of less affluent audiences fell. But the desire for a socially selective, adult-only *féerie* experience could explain the success of Serpette's *féeries* in the 1880s and 1890s, given at small, exclusive theatres and utterly unsuitable for children.

The woman

If the 'children of all ages' trope is consistent in *féerie* discourse from the Second Empire through the early 20th century, so is another trope. A writer from 1868 laments that the previous year's *Les voyages de Gulliver* distinguished itself by 'reaching and surpassing every limit with respect to the state of undress of its female supernumeraries'; one from 1906 claims that the primary goal of *féerie* is to display 'the highest number possible of shoulders, napes of the neck, arms, armpits, bottoms, thighs, and calves in the most varied positions' (Fig. 4.6).[87] And this was only the kind of language that was deemed fit for publication. In their journal, the Goncourt brothers give an account of a rehearsal for the 1863 revival of *Les pilules du diable* at the Porte-Saint-Martin, then under the management of Fournier, with Mariquita among the leading dancers. A representative from the censorship board is present, and the Goncourts crudely comment that his role is 'to ascertain if, in this brothel we call a *féerie* house, they make men too hard'.[88]

Some female performers associated with *féerie* were spoken of in starkly objectifying terms. Delval, who played the African princess Aïka in the 1865 and 1867 productions of *La biche au bois*, is mentioned in two poems from

[87] G[ustave] Vapereau, *L'année littéraire et dramatique*, year 1867 (Paris: Hachette, 1868), 140 ('Cette pièce … a été surtout signalée pour avoir atteint et dépassé toutes les limites, sous le rapport du déshabillé de ses figurantes'); Her Trippa, 'Vagues généralités sur le théâtre industriel', *La Vie parisienne*, 20 January 1906, 60 ('[L]e principal but de toute pièce à grand spectacle est de montrer … le plus grand nombre possible d'épaules, de nuques, de bras, d'aisselles, de croupes, de cuisses et de mollets dans les attitudes les plus variées').

[88] 'C'est la voix du préposé à la Pudeur publique, chargé d'examiner si, dans ce bordel qu'on appelle un théâtre de féerie, on ne fait point trop bander les personnes.' Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, *Journal des Goncourt*, ed. Jean-Louis Cabanès (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2005–), 3:570.

LE MONDE ILLUSTRÉ

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LE THÉATRE ILLUSTRÉ. — *LES PILULES DU DIABLE*, féerie en trente tableaux, représentée au théâtre du Châtelet. Miss Ænea, la danseuse aérienne, dans le ballet de la « Mouche d'or. » — (Dessin de M. Adrien Marie.)

Figure 4.6 The act 2 ballet from the 1880 production of *Les pilules du diable* in a press illustration by Adrien Marie. The aerialist Miss Ænea is pictured performing her *mouche d'or* routine; costumes (as pigeons and bees, among others) are by Alfred Grévin. From *Le Monde illustré*, 8 November 1884. Source: Gallica, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

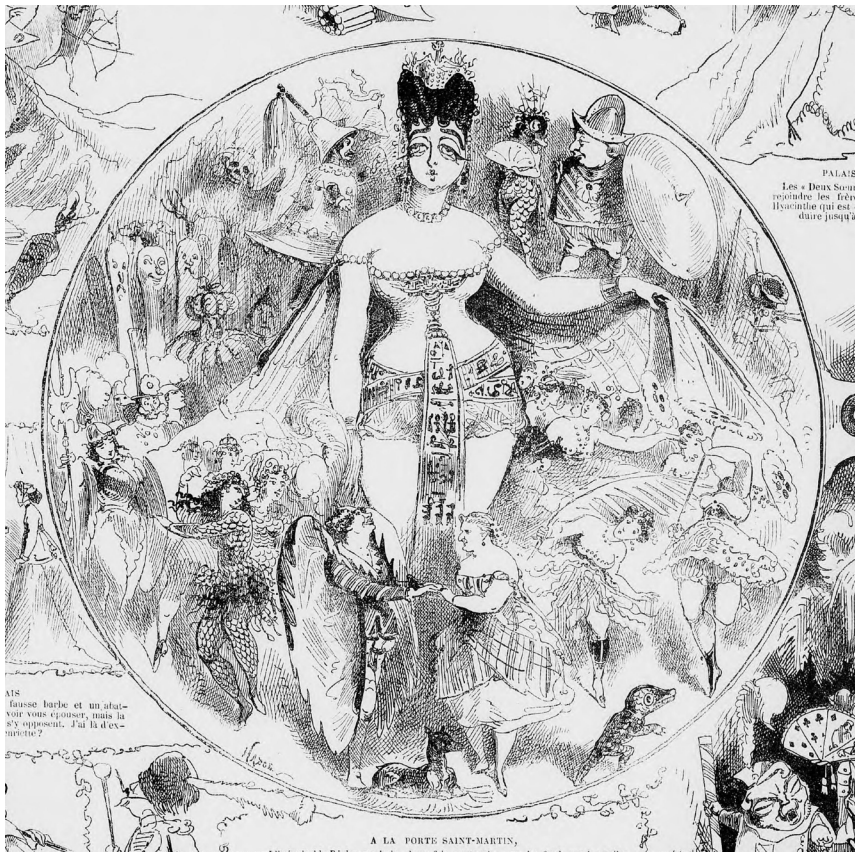


Figure 4.7 Paul Hadol, 'Les théâtres en ce moment', detail with the caricature of Delval as Aïka in *La biche au bois*. From *La Vie parisienne*, 30 October 1865. Source: Gallica, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Théodore Banville's collection *Les Occidentales*.[89] In one she is remembered for her 'naked parts' (*les portions nues*), in the other for her tights (*maillot à cuisses*) (Fig. 4.7). Eugénie Mariani, who performed in *Cendrillon*, *Les voyages de Gulliver*, the 1869 *La poudre de Perlinpinpin*, *Le roi Carotte* (as the sorceress Coloquinte), and the 1872 revival of *La poule aux œufs d'or*, was known as 'the most attractive woman in Paris' (*la femme la mieux faite de Paris*).[90]

[89] Théodore de Banville, 'À la biche empaillée qui figurait à la Porte-Saint-Martin dans *La biche au bois*' and 'Inventaire', in *Œuvres poétiques complètes*, ed. Peter J. Edwards (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1994–2009), 5:22–5 and 5:40–3.

[90] Albert Vizentini, *Derrière la toile (foyers, coulisses et comédiens): Petite physiologie des théâtres parisiens* (Paris: Achille Faure, 1868), 200, which is not, however, the only occurrence.

The public perception of this category of *féerie* performer is best summed up by a vocal number from the metatheatrical prologue to *La reine Carotte*. Right after securing an engagement with a theatre manager, an aspiring *féerie* star, perhaps inspired by Delval or Mariani, sings the following, to a tune that is identified in the printed play as the 'air des *Deux maîtresses*' but was actually composed by Alexandre-Pierre-Joseph Doche for an 1834 vaudeville, *Jacquemin, roi de France* (Ex. 4.1):

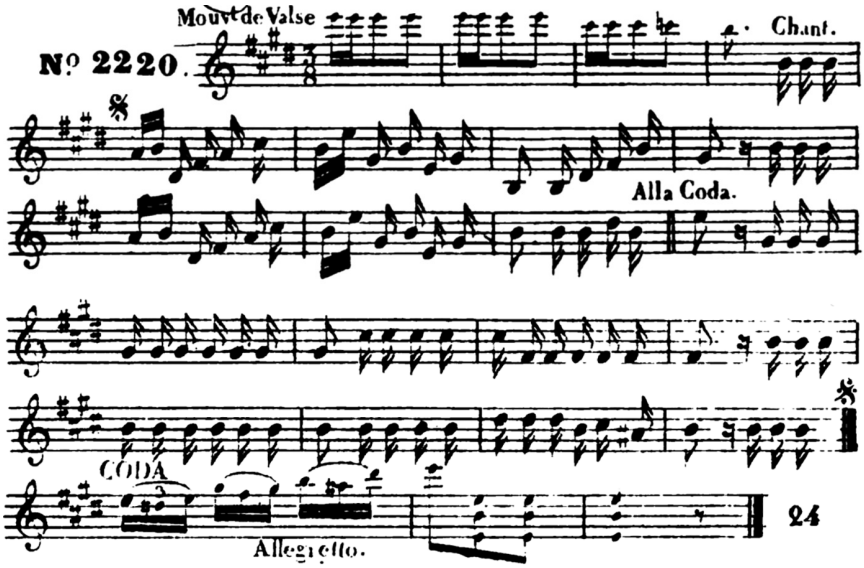
La comédie
Que j'étudie
A pour public tout un monde élégant.
Je serai reine[,]
Mais sur la scène
Où des amours le cortège m'attend.
Belle statue, il faut qu'[o]n idolâtre
Tout ce que j'ai de bien…, d'original,
Qu'on me connaisse… et je prends le théâtre
Qui n'est pour moi qu'un premier piédestal.

J'y veux des rôles
Courts et peu drôles,
Je ne tiens pas aux bons mots… pas du tout;
Mais je désire
Pouvoir sourire
À l'avant-scène, à l'orchestre, partout.
Ça m'est égal qu'on m'appelle une grue,
Pourvu qu'on dise: 'elle est très bien, ma foi[',]
Et que la foule au théâtre accourue
N'ait de regards et des cœurs que pour mo[i.]

Fée ou princesse,
Page ou déesse,
À peu de frais on me costumera[:]
Plus mon costume,
Comme une plume,
Sera léger, plus mon rôle plaira.
Être une actrice et se montrer habile,
Que de travail pour en arriver là[!]
Ce que je veux être est moins difficile,
Il ne faut pas étudier pour ça
La comédie.[91]

The play / I am practising / Draws a whole elegant set. / I will be queen, / Though on the scene, / Where love's procession awaits me. / Pretty statue, people must worship / All my good and interesting bits. / As they get to know me, I will conquer the theatre / Which is just a starting pedestal to me. // I want my roles / To be small and

[91] Clairville, Victor Bernard, and Victor Koning, *La reine Carotte* (Paris: Dentu, 1872), 1–2 (prologue, 1st tableau, scene 2). I have revised the punctuation to improve readability.



Example 4.1 Tune no. 2220, after Alexandre-Pierre-Joseph Doche, from *La clé du caveau*, 4th edition: Pierre Capelle, ed., *La clé du caveau* (Paris: Cotelle, 1848). To accommodate the text of *La reine Carotte*, the quavers at the beginning of bars 7 and 11 need to be split into two semiquavers. The final E at bar 21 also needs to be split.

> not so funny. / I do not care about jokes, not at all, / But I wish / To be able to smile / At the proscenium boxes, the front stalls, every seat. / I do not mind being called an easy woman, / As long as they say: 'She is so good, by Jove!', / And the crowd who has come to the theatre / Has eyes and hearts for no one but me. // Fairy or princess, / Page or goddess, / My costumes will be cheap: / The more my dress is / As flimsy as a spider web, / The greater my success in the role. / Proving oneself an accomplished thespian, / That is something that takes so much work! / My goal is less hard to achieve: / No need, for that, / To practise plays.

I have reproduced the text in full as it articulates, in a way that manages to be nuanced and crude at the same time, a *féerie*-specific version of that 19th-century French stereotype, the actress-courtesan, most famously embodied by the title character of Zola's novel *Nana* (1880).[92] For this ambitious young woman, the performance that matters is not the one that takes place on stage, but that of the social life to which she aspires, in select circles where she will enjoy the protection of influential men: 'des amours le cortège', in keeping with the analogy between

[92] On the social position of women in the theatre industry, see Lenard R. Berlanstein, *Daughters of Eve: A Cultural History of French Theater Women from the Old Regime to the Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); Anne Martin-Fugier, *Comédienne: De M^lle^ Mars à Sarah Bernhardt* (Paris: Seuil, 2001); Isabelle Michelot, 'Du plancher au pavé: parcours et détours des comédiennes des petits théâtres', *Romantisme* no. 134 (2006), 43–54.

the stage and social life, evokes a *féerie*-style procession, but refers to a string of romantic relationships. In other words, she envisions the theatre as a mere stepping stone ('un premier pédestal') to a career as a *demi-mondaine*, a 'kept woman'. She is not worried about her reputation; on the contrary, she plans to use her sex appeal to her advantage, smiling to spectators, with a preference for those sitting in the most expensive seats.[93] All this might also apply to an operetta performer, such as Zola's Nana, who appears in a fictional counterpart of *La belle Hélène*.[94] Other elements, though, betray the *féerie* starlet. She is cast in a few stock roles, chiefly that of the fairy; she squarely refuses to learn how to act or even how to deliver jokes, and considers her body her only asset. Not her body movements, though, but her features, which are to be admired like those of a statue, and revealed by the scantiest costumes imaginable (as a 'page' she would have worn tights, as a 'goddess' probably a body stocking). By describing herself as a living statue, the *féerie* starlet of *La reine Carotte* is essentially claiming that she is not so much a performer as an attraction. When she is playing a fairy, she is not on stage as a fictional character but as herself, or at least that is what she (and the creators of the *féerie*) want the audience to think. As for the exotic exhibits of scientific *féeries*, this contrived immediacy was made possible by the very nature of *féerie* as a total artwork of the present.

The erotic charge of *féerie*, though, was deeply intertwined not just with the ontology of the genre, but with its economy as well. This is apparent if one descends through the hierarchy of performers, from the Delvals and the Marianis, to the supernumeraries to whom most of the 'shoulders, napes of the neck', and so on seen in *féeries* belonged. Casting women supernumeraries was an important moment in the making of a *féerie*. In the 1898 article mentioned earlier, Ernest Blum explains how this was carried out. First of all, a 'young and pretty women needed at the Such-and-Such Theatre' advertisement is circulated in newspapers. For the 1898 revival of *La poudre de Perlinpinpin*, for example, a similar advertisement appeared in the press a couple of months before the première.[95] This kind of advertisement was also, apparently, disseminated through posters. According to Blum, 'five to six hundred women' would turn out: those with some evident physical defect would be rejected on the spot; the others would be asked to undress to their underwear and would undergo another round of selection, purely based on their appearance.

[93] Delval probably owed her marriage to an aristocrat in 1881 to the networks she had built while she was active as a performer. Needless to say, a desire for social ascension does not necessarily mean that one's artistic vocation is insincere, as *La reine Carotte* would have us believe.

[94] Nana does, however, end her career with the non-speaking role of a fairy in a *féerie*.

[95] 'Au théâtre du Châtelet, on demande de jeunes et jolies femmes pour les petits rôles qui restent à distribuer dans la *Poudre de Perlinpinpin*.' 'Échos', *L'Art lyrique*, 25 September 1898, 10. This particular advertisement, mentioning 'bit parts' and appearing in a specialised publication, seems targeted at aspiring performers.

In the 1870s, Maxime Du Camp writes that the supernumeraries of *féeries* and other 'pièces à femmes' (as the brutal contemporary jargon had it) are recruited 'in fashion stores, in seamstresses' workshops, in the small furnished apartments that are rented on a monthly basis'; in 1898, Paul Ginisty writes that they are workers (*ouvrières*), but also artists' models and wives of theatre employees.[96] Du Camp gives as their daily wage '30 *sous*', that is, 1 franc 50, Ginisty '1 franc 50 or two francs', specifying that they are paid 50 centimes more than their male counterparts. Despite the intense eroticism surrounding *féerie*, this information would suggest that the milieu of female *féerie* supernumeraries was not necessarily adjacent to prostitution, as was famously the case for female ballet dancers. The pay was low, but not necessarily much lower than a regular seamstress's salary: if it represented additional income for an already employed woman with the possibility of working flexible hours, or additional family income in the case of married supernumeraries, it could boost the finances of a working-class woman or family, respectively. The fact that some of the supernumeraries were married and that women were paid more than men is also telling. The only suspicion of licentiousness in these passages is an aside in which Ginisty remarks that artists' models are 'more capricious than the others'; but that too might only imply lack of discipline.

And yet there is no doubt that male theatre-goers paid to see female bodies, that *féerie* was trafficking in voyeurism under the cover of children's entertainment, and that it relied on the invisible manual labour of the machinists as much as it did on the very visible emotional labour of the women supernumeraries. Cultivating the impression of sexual availability in exchange for remuneration, indeed, seems a textbook example of emotional labour as conceptualised by Arlie Hochschild in the 1980s.[97] It was part of the job of the flight attendants Hochschild observed as her case study; in the case of *féerie* women supernumeraries, it was essentially the job description. Virtually nothing but emotional labour was demanded from women supernumeraries, and theatres were happy to pay for that emotional labour. Financial records for commercial theatres are rare to come by, but we do have a tentative budget for a revival of *Orphée aux enfers* that Albert Vizentini, then manager of the Gaîté, planned in the summer of 1875, and that presumably would have taken place while rehearsals for *Le voyage dans la lune* were under way (Fig. 4.8). We can then compare Vizentini's estimated daily personnel expenses for *Orphée aux enfers* with the personnel expenses of the Opéra for 1875.[98] The wages

[96] Maxime Du Camp, *Paris: Ses organes, ses fonctions et sa vie dans la seconde moitié du XIX^e siècle* (Paris: Hachette, 1869–75), 6:178 ('On prend dans les magasins de modes, dans les ateliers de couturières, dans les petits appartements meublés loués au mois, le plus de femmes jeunes et jolies que l'on en peut trouver'); Ginisty, *Vie d'un théâtre*, 83.

[97] Arlie Russell Hochschild, *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012). First published 1983.

[98] Sources: administrative records in Albert Vizentini's hand in F-Pnas collection Rondel MRt boîte 72 Gaîté; F-Po CO-365.

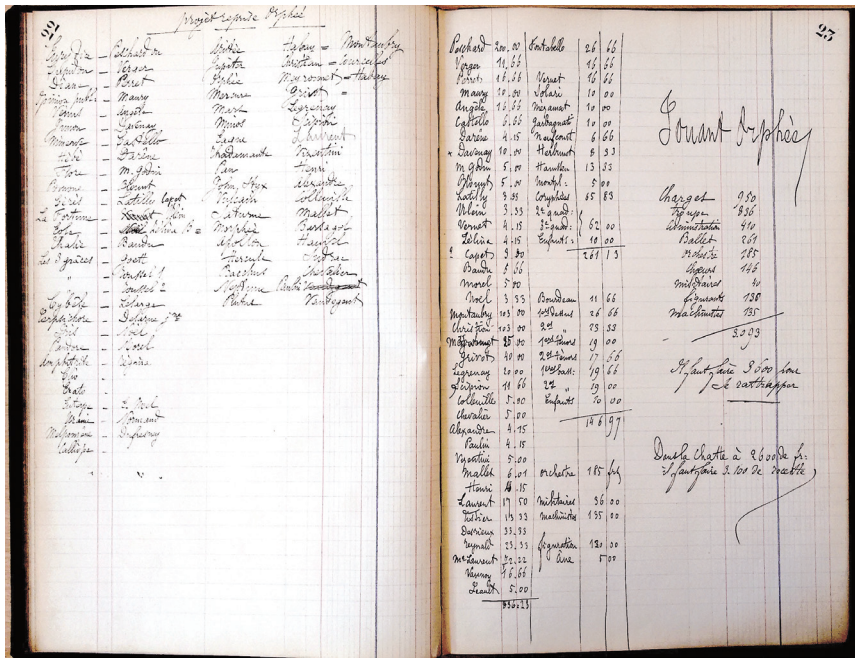


Figure 4.8 Administrative documents from the Gaîté, in the hand of Albert Vizentini (summer 1875). Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des arts du spectacle.

of choristers, dancers, and musicians represent a similar proportion of the total wages of non-administrative personnel at the Gaîté and the Opéra: 8 per cent for choristers at both theatres, 15 per cent and 16 per cent for dancers at the Gaîté and the Opéra, respectively; 11 per cent for orchestral musicians at both theatres (but 13 per cent at the Gaîté including the stage band); 8 per cent for machinists at both theatres. The expenditure for cast members is lower as a proportion at the Gaîté (48 per cent) than at the Opéra (54 per cent). But the most significant difference is the expenditure for supernumeraries, which is four times higher at the Gaîté: 8 per cent versus 2 per cent. It should be noted that, at the rates mentioned here, Vizentini's budgeted expenditure for supernumeraries, 130 francs a day, would not have remotely covered the 210 supernumeraries (150 men and 60 women) mentioned in an 1874 publication.[99] It would have paid for 70 men at one franc a day and 40 women at 1 franc 50, though, or 55 men and 50 women; either way, the number of people on stage, with cast members, choristers, and dancers, could have

[99] [Henry Buguet], *Gaîté*, no. 7 in the series *Foyers et coulisses: Histoire anecdotique des théâtres de Paris* (Paris: Tresse, 1875), 2:113.

easily been close to 250, roughly half of whom would have been women.[100] The 1874 figures might have been inflated for publicity purposes, Vizentini might have been planning a revival on the cheap (relatively speaking), and the former does not exclude the latter. Blum's 'five to six hundred women' claim is probably not to be taken too literally either.

The foreigner

The role of *féeries* as purveyors of voyeuristic pleasures in the last third of the 19th century is inextricably linked with the transformations in the Parisian theatre industry: the gentrification of the eastern part of the city centre, the deregulation of 1864, the rise of the new regime of production. Both Maxime Du Camp and, some 20 years later, Georges Moynet stressed that theatres were not catering to a neighbourhood, nor even to a Parisian, audience any more. They instead relied on visitors from the provinces and from abroad, whose constant influx by train made it possible for productions to run for months on end (and thereby recoup exorbitant upfront investments). Theatres then needed to accommodate the tastes of this audience: according to Moynet, 'these recruits from the outside especially appreciate inordinate luxury', which included 'the accumulation of masses of supernumeraries'; for Du Camp, 'It is for this audience, the most forgiving of all and an easily charmed one, that they invented … the *pièces à femmes*.'[101] The 1864 satirical prediction of Paris as 'a transit city' for global tourists with 'a theatre playing *Peau d'Âne* forever', mentioned in Chapter 2, was not far off.[102] In the minds of both the 1864 writer and, apparently, theatre managers, *féerie*, unlike literary theatre, was suitable for an international audience who did not master the French language and supposedly did not seek high art but rather visual, and erotic, stimulation.

The *féerie* productions that targeted visitors to the five World's Fairs held in Paris in the 19th century are a testament to the privileged relationship between *féerie* and audiences from outside Paris. *Les pilules du diable* and *Les sept châteaux du diable* were revived for the World's Fair in 1855; in 1867 it was the turn of *Cendrillon*, *La biche au bois*, and *Peau d'Âne*, as we have seen. Of subsequent World's Fair years, 1878 witnessed a new *féerie*, *Le Chat botté*, and revivals of *Les sept châteaux du diable*, *Orphée aux enfers*, and *Le tour du monde en 80 jours*.

[100] I reckoned 38 cast members (18 women, 20 men), 46 choristers (18 women, 22 men, 6 children), 46 dancers (38 women, 8 children). The budget for the stage band is 36 francs: about 15 players paid between 2 and 3 francs seems a reasonable guess.

[101] Moynet, *Trucs et décors*, 123 ('[C]es recrues du dehors apprécient surtout le luxe à outrance … [L]e luxe écrasant, l'accumulation des masses de figuration … sont à la portée de tous ceux qui ont la bourse bien garnie ou du crédit sur la place'); Du Camp, *Paris*, 6:178 ('C'est pour ce public indulgent entre tous et facile à charmer que l'on a inventé … les pièces à femmes').

[102] See Chapter 2, footnote 46.

The Châtelet, as a marketing strategy, gifted a ticket to the World's Fair to those who bought their *féerie* ticket in advance.[103] *Orphée* and *Le tour du monde* were revived again in 1889, when, as we have seen, the Châtelet also conceived a new *féerie* with the World's Fair audience in mind, *Le prince Soleil*. In 1900, *féerie* and theatres in general were already in crisis, but visitors to the World's Fair were not left without a *féerie*—a revival of *La poudre de Perlinpinpin*. After *Le prince Soleil*, the Châtelet tried (in vain) to replicate its success with other summer *féeries* clearly aimed at international tourists: *Orient-Express* in 1890, *Tout Paris* in 1891. Both had vocal numbers, like *Le prince Soleil*, and at least some of the music of *Tout Paris* was by Louis Ganne, the future operetta composer, then known for his *café-concert* music. *Tout Paris* subverts the premise of the *Tour du monde*-type plays by applying it to Paris: it is, in fact, an excursion through the most picturesque locales of the French capital. The reviewer for *Le Ménestrel* commented that the play was intended 'exclusively for the foreigners who choose the two months of June and July to make their little visit to the City of Lights', and joked that it would have allowed travellers on a Thomas Cook tour to squeeze more sights into a short stay.[104]

One could probably argue that the relationship of *féerie* to its cosmopolitan audience is thematised in the cosmopolitan casts of characters of scientific *féeries*—especially when those characters are witnesses to divertissements showcasing scores of women's bodies or in general to performances within the performance. At least one traditional *féerie* seems to engage in a similar self-reflection: in *L'arbre de Noël*, the good fairy Bagatelle, played by Zulma Bouffar, singlehandedly confers cosmopolitan vibrancy on an empty hotel by impersonating, in quick succession, a side-whiskered, heavily built American man, a Belgian woman, and a female Spanish dancer. But the most obvious equivalent within *féerie* for the foreigners who patronised *féerie* is to be found in Serpette, and precisely in the *rastaquouères* featured briefly in *Madame le diable* and prominently in *Le carnet du diable*. In *Le carnet du diable*, in particular, the servers of the *brasserie à femmes* can be seen as a stand-in for *féerie* women performers: the pairing of a *rastaquouère* (Rodrigo) and a server (Jacqueline) then becomes a virtual fulfilment of the erotic fantasies entertained by voyeuristic *féerie* spectators.

However, it is tempting to think that Serpette's *féeries* flattered their spectators' sense of superiority not just over children and working-class theatre-goers, but also over foreigners seen as wealthy but uncultured. By satirising the *rastaquouères*, *Le carnet du diable* might have been telling its audience: this is a *féerie* for the chosen few, and the crass foreigners who are only interested in 'inordinate

[103] Édouard Noël and Edmond Stoullig, *Les annales du théâtre et de la musique*, year 1878 (Paris: Charpentier, 1879), 422.

[104] '[L]a vraie pièce d'été, faite exclusivement pour les étrangers qui choisissent les deux mois de juin et de juillet pour faire leur petite visite à la ville-lumière'. Paul-Émile Chevalier, 'Semaine théâtrale', *Le Ménestrel*, 21 June 1891, 196.

luxury' (to borrow Moynet's expression) would not enjoy it. Real-life *rastaquouères* might actually have been less interested in the offering of the small vaudeville and operetta theatres than they were in the colossal *féeries* of the large eastern houses. Perhaps, instead, rich foreigners did attend *Le carnet du diable*, which provided them with an opportunity to dissociate themselves from the *rastaquouère* stereotype and to be accepted by their French-born peers. Even in the latter case, the circular logic of exclusivity resists falsification: if a play is for people of taste only, enjoying it proves that one has good taste.

This is only a tentative first step toward a social history of fin-de-siècle *féerie*. Future researchers might be able to do more justice to the tapestry of human experience that made 19th-century commercial theatre. Similarly, I hope that the 40 or so profiles that I have collected in Appendix 2 will encourage scholars to tease out the threads of individual trajectories that are woven together in this tapestry.

Beyond *féerie*

The date 1900, which I have chosen as an endpoint for my title, makes for a nice round number and coincides with the last revival of *Le carnet du diable*. But I could easily have chosen another year: 1895, the première of the last successful composerly *féerie* (*Le carnet du diable*); 1897, the last composerly traditional *féerie* (*La montagne enchantée*); 1898, the last *féerie* production at the Porte-Saint-Martin (*Cendrillon*); 1899, the last traditional *féerie* production at a theatre other than the Châtelet (*Le Chat botté* at the Théâtre de la République); 1905, the last Serpette-style *féerie* (*L'Âge d'or*); 1907, the last production of a new traditional *féerie* (*La princesse Sans-Gêne*); 1908, the last revival of a traditional *féerie* (*La chatte blanche* at the Châtelet); or even 1912, the last film *féeries* of Georges Méliès, which are among the last film *féeries* altogether, as other filmmakers (Albert Capellani, Segundo de Chomón, Gaston Velle) had already abandoned the genre. Moreover, all these 'lasts' should not overshadow the firsts of those same years.

The waning of commercial *féerie* coincided with the waxing of literary *féerie*. In the 1876 article quoted earlier, written in the wake of Offenbach's works for the Gaîté and of *Le tour du monde*, Zola was already calling for high-art *féerie*; in the 1890s he would write a libretto for a *féerique* opera, *Violaine la chevelue*, to be set to music by Alfred Bruneau, but the project would not come to fruition. In 1880, towards the end of his life, Gustave Flaubert managed to have the *féerie* he had written in the 1860s, *Le château des cœurs*, published, although not performed. Banville had his verse *féerie Riquet à la houppe* both published (in 1884) and performed (in 1896), although by the student troupe of the Théâtre d'application and not by a professional company. In 1887 and 1888, André Antoine's avant-garde, subscription-only Théâtre Libre gave one performance each of two very brief,

féerie-inspired one-act verse plays, Banville's *Le baiser* and Ephraïm Mikhaël's *Le cor fleuri*. (The former then found a home at the Comédie-Française.) In 1894, Aurélien Lugné-Poe's Théâtre de l'Œuvre produced a *féerie* with a score by Georges Hüe, *La Belle au bois dormant*. Literary *féerie* eventually broke into the mainstream at the end of the first decade of the 20th century: Jean Richepin and Henri Cain's *La Belle au bois dormant* dates from 1907, and Maurice Maeterlinck's *L'oiseau bleu* premièred in 1908 in Moscow and in 1911 in Paris.[105] The verse *féerie Un bon petit diable*, by Rosemonde Gérard and her son Maurice Rostand, is also from 1911. Moreover, the waning of film *féerie* coincided with the waxing of narrative film and the institutionalisation of cinema. To borrow an image from early cinema, *féerie* did not end on an iris out, but on a dissolve.

Contrary to received wisdom, the story of *féerie* in the last third of the 19th century is not a story of decline, and *féerie* did much more than rest on its past glories. That period also contained the seeds of what was to come—even though it cannot be reduced to an incubation period, which is why media scholars have now moved away from teleological discourse about *pré-cinéma* or the prehistory of cinema. Fully retracing the connection between fin-de-siècle *féerie* and modern mass culture would be a job for media archaeology. But it is evident how *féerie* as a total work of art of the present prefigures 20th-century mass culture: cultural production as an industry, cultural practices as consumption, non-autonomy of the work of art, limited agency of the creators. Unlike both high culture and folklore, *féerie* was produced by a small number of intellectuals for the consumption of a relatively vast and relatively diverse audience. This, of course, does not mean that the consumers were necessarily passive or naive. But the power imbalance between producers and consumers allowed it to serve as a vehicle for the transmission of dominant values: the educational side of scientific *féeries* and *féerie*'s targeting of children are aspects of a wider pedagogical function.

In the preceding chapters, I have foregrounded unfamiliar plays such as *Les bibelots du diable*, *La biche au bois*, *Le roi Carotte*, or *Le carnet du diable*. In keeping with my revisionist agenda, I have also aimed to shed new light on more familiar cultural artifacts such as *Orphée aux enfers*, *Le tour du monde en 80 jours*, and *Le voyage dans la lune*, by placing them in non-obvious contexts. On the other hand, my mentions of Emmanuel Chabrier, of *La damnation de Faust*, *Carmen*,

[105] For literary *féerie* in the 20th century, see Hélène Laplace-Claverie, *Modernes féeries: Le théâtre français du XX^e siècle, entre réenchantement et désenchantement* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2007). On Flaubert's *Le château des cœurs*, see Marshall C. Olds, *Au pays des perroquets: Féerie théâtrale et narration chez Flaubert* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001); Léa Caminiti Pennarola, 'Le genre de la féerie dans le théâtre de Flaubert', in *Flaubert et la théorie littéraire*, ed. Tanguy Logé and Marie-France Renard (Brussels: Publications des Facultés universitaires Saint-Louis, 2005), 273–92; and Roxane Martin, *La féerie romantique sur les scènes parisiennes, 1791–1864* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2007), 352–6 and 424–47. See also Patrick Besnier, 'L'ancienne féerie', *Histoires littéraires* 2, no. 7 (2001): 47–54, for the place of *féerie* in the work of Arthur Rimbaud, Stéphane Mallarmé, and Zola.

Parsifal, *The Black Crook*, and *Peer Gynt* hint at how *féerie* can suggest new readings for works that lie outside the domain of *féerie*. Two more examples come to mind here.

Jules Massenet's 1899 opera *Cendrillon* is an obvious case of a work that familiarity with *féerie* can cause us to recontextualise. In particular, two elements in the opera clearly pay homage to the *féerie* tradition. One is Massenet's decision to have a woman play the role of Prince Charming. Casting *féerie* princes as *travesti* roles had been a long-standing practice. Delphine Ugalde, as we have seen, was Prince Souci in the 1865 *Biche au bois*; Marie Desclauzas was the first Prince Charming in the 1866 *Cendrillon*; the 1869 production of *La poudre de Perlinpinpin* also had a female prince.[106] Bouffar and Anna Van Ghell, both of whom already specialised in breeches roles, starred as *féerie* princes in the 1870s. Closer to Massenet's opera, both Prince Isolin in *Isoline* and the eponymous hero of *Le prince Soleil* were impersonated by women, and Juliette Simon-Girard appeared in male roles in the 1896 *Biche* and in the 1897 revival of *Rothomago*. The other blatant *féerie* element of Massenet's *Cendrillon* is the procession of princesses in act 4, which is, for all intents and purposes, a *féerie défilé*. The production book and a stage photograph show that the procession, at the Opéra-Comique, consisted of nine princesses from various parts of the world with their attendants.[107] The idea of a *défilé* of princesses from all over the world, lining up to try on the glass slipper, has no basis in Perrault's tale, but reproduces instead a *clou* of the 1866 *Cendrillon*. That the *défilé* of the Massenet opera was similarly intended as a spectacular *clou* is evident from the fact that both the libretto and the score are designed to draw attention to it. Indeed, it is announced by a monologue by the wicked stepmother that anticipates its musical material.

Cendrillon is not an isolated case. It was followed by several other Opéra-Comique productions that can be seen as at least partly *féerie*-inspired: the translation of Engelbert Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel* in 1900, Massenet's *Grisélidis* (1901), Hüe's *Titania* (1903), Fernand Halphen's setting of Mikhaël's *Le cor fleuri* (1904), the translation of Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov's *Snegurochka* in 1908. A fuller investigation is required, but one cannot help wonder whether *féerique* opera at the Opéra-Comique might have been the missing link, both chronologically and in terms of cultural legitimacy, between the old world of commercial *féerie* and the new world of literary *féerie*. For sure, *féerique* opera and literary *féerie* go hand

[106] Though not technically princes, the male heroes of *Les bibelots du diable* (1858), of the 1860 revival of *Le pied de mouton*, and of *Rothomago* (1862) were already played by women.

[107] I consulted the manuscript production book at F-Pbh fonds ART 8-TMS-02739. An engraved production book also exist at F-Po B-400 (5). Photographs of the Opéra-Comique production are reproduced in the July 1899 issue of *Le Théâtre*. See also Jonathan Parisi, 'Mettre en scène *Cendrillon*: d'Albert Carré (1899) à Benjamin Lazar (2011)', in *Massenet aujourd'hui: Héritage et posterité*, ed. Jean-Christophe Branger and Vincent Giroud (Saint-Étienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 2014), 253–83.

in hand in Rosemonde Gérard and Maurice Rostand's *La marchande d'allumettes*, after Hans Christian Andersen, set to music by Tiarko Richepin (Jean's son) and given at the Opéra-Comique in 1914.

Fast forward to Maurice Ravel's *L'Enfant et les sortilèges* (1925) and its duet between a fairytale Princess and the titular Child, who identifies with the prince in her fairytale. Since the Child is a *travesti* role, it is a duet between two female voices, echoing both Massenet's *Cendrillon* and the *féerie* tradition. The harp arpeggios that mark the appearance and disappearance of the Princess have attracted the attention of Carolyn Abbate and Jessie Fillerup.[108] Complementing their readings, I have formulated elsewhere the hypothesis that these arpeggios—respectively ascending and descending—are a nod to the mimetic musical gestures of *féerie*.[109] Nothing more *féerie*-like, in fact, than having the orchestra play an ascending figure as a character emerges from a trap, and a descending figure as a trap swallows her back.

In 1864, Gustave Vapereau, echoing the 'Sonate, que me veux-tu?' attributed to Bernard Le Bovier de Fontenelle, asked: '*Féerie*, what do you want from us? What do you have in common with art?'[110] Today, English-speaking academia is fond of asking 'Why should we care?' My answer to both would be that *féerie* should have brought Vapereau to re-examine his concept of art, and that studying *féerie* should bring us to re-examine our concept of 'opera' (and 'opera studies').

Recent scholarship has rightly investigated operatic canons.[111] But the very idea of 'opera' is predicated on a canon of canons, which has not been challenged to the degree the individual canons have. Western cultures of the early modern and modern ages practised a wide range of stage-music genres, with and without singing, with and without original music—what I call theatre with music. And the 'opera' label arbitrarily includes some of them, not necessarily closely related, while excluding others. Carl Dahlhaus nonchalantly brushed aside this issue when he wrote that no music historian would 'want to abandon the concept of "opera" simply because there are no logically sound criteria for selecting from the untold number of musicotheatrical genres … a particular group to be classified as "opera"'.[112] But it is worth examining the fact that for decades

[108] Carolyn Abbate, 'Outside Ravel's Tomb', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 52, no. 3 (1999): 465–530; Jessie Fillerup, 'Ravel and Robert-Houdin, Magicians', *19th-Century Music* 37, no. 2 (2013): 130–58.

[109] Tommaso Sabbatini, 'Music-hall avec effraction: Inquiétante étrangeté et métathéâtre dans *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* de Maurice Ravel', in *L'espace 'sensible' de la dramaturgie musicale*, ed. Héloïse Demoz, Giordano Ferrari, and Alejandro Reyna (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2018), 261–91, at pp. 277–9.

[110] '[F]éerie, que nous veux-tu? qu'il y a-t-il de commun entre l'art et toi?' G[ustave] Vapereau, *L'année littéraire et dramatique*, year 1863 (Paris: Hachette, 1864), 242.

[111] See, for instance, Cormac Newark and William Weber (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Operatic Canon* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

[112] Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 226.

musicology broadly accepted a view of what 'opera' was, and that such a view was historically situated.

The canon of canons that comprised 'opera' seems to have coalesced around the turn of the century, thanks to theatres, the recording industry, and music writers: essentially, some Gluck and Mozart (plus *Fidelio*); some *opera buffa* and *opéra comique* (plus one German Romantic opera, *Der Freischütz*); Verdi; Wagner; *verismo* opera and Puccini. It is actually surprising to see how stable this canon of canons has been since, despite a few additions, and how little its emergence has been investigated.[113] While no one, in academia, would say 'classical music' with a straight face any more, 'opera' is still largely used with the same meaning it had in the early 20th century for the Victor company (which issued the *Victor Book of the Opera* to promote their records) or for Ernest Newman (author of *Stories of the Great Operas*). But 'opera' as this canon of canons has not always existed, and we can retrace its coming into being. In Paris, that happened over the 1890s and the first decade of the new century, when *grand opéra* and older *opéra comique* gradually receded; Wagnerian music drama entered the repertoire (mostly at the Opéra); recent Italian opera was given in translation (mostly at the Opéra-Comique); Gluck, Mozart, *Fidelio*, *Der Freischütz* were revived (mostly at the Opéra-Comique). It is only at this point that it is fair to call the Opéra-Comique an 'opera house', and it is only at this point that the Opéra and the Opéra-Comique can be said to have complementary, even overlapping, missions.

Not only is reading 19th-century Paris through the lens of 'opera' anachronistic, but also 19th-century Paris can teach us how to read theatre with music at large. We can learn by putting ourselves in the place of the passers-by in Jean Béraud's street scene, navigating the colour-coded posters of the Morris column. We can learn, too, from fiction. 'Soirée à l'opéra' is a convenient shorthand for a literary trope, but on closer inspection, the 'night at the opera' in Guy de Maupassant's *Fort comme la mort* (1889) is a night at the Opéra with a capital *O*; that in Joris-Karl Huysmans's *À vau-l'eau* (1883) is a night at the Opéra-Comique. In *L'éducation sentimentale* (1869), Flaubert has Frédéric go to the Palais-Royal, to the Porte-Saint-Martin (where he sees a *féerie* that sounds very much like the 1843 *Les mille et une nuits*), to the Vaudeville, and to the Opéra (where he sees a ballet).[114] Given the novel's strong internal focalisation, we can be sure that Flaubert is providing this information because it matters to Frédéric. To the protagonist of Édouard Dujardin's *Les lauriers sont coupés* (1887), Léa is neither a singer, nor an

[113] See, however, James A. Parakilas, 'The Operatic Canon', in *The Oxford Handbook of Opera*, ed. Helen M. Greenwald (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 862–80.

[114] In part 1, ch. 3; part 1, ch. 5; part 2, ch. 3; and part 2, ch. 4, respectively. Gustave Flaubert, *L'éducation sentimentale*, ed. Peter Michael Wetherill (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2018 [1984]), 25, 87, 183, 227.

operetta performer, but somebody 'who plays *travesti* roles at the Nouveautés'.[115] If we managed—both in academia and in the arts sector—to recapture the sensitivity to various musical art forms that 19th-century Parisian audiences possessed, we would be less wedded to the idea of 'opera' and more open to the richness and diversity of theatre with music. We would be able to appreciate repertoires ranging from Neapolitan *opera buffa* to English masque, from *tragédie lyrique* to Brechtian epic theatre, from melodrama to revue on their own merits, without the need for granting or withholding letters of operatic nobility.

[115] '[U]ne demoiselle qui joue les travestis aux Nouveautés'. Édouard Dujardin, *Les lauriers sont coupés*, ed. Jean-Pierre Bertrand (Paris: Flammarion, 2001), 110.

Appendix 1

Chronology and Sources

Chronology of plays

Table 1 New *féeries* at Parisian theatres, 1864–1908.

Not included: one-act works; private or semi-private performances; works performed at *théâtres de banlieue*, unless revived elsewhere; aborted projects. An asterisk next to a composer's name means that the work is a composerly *féerie*. When a run of performances carries over into the following year, only the initial year is given; when performances resume the following year after an interruption, both years are given.
Ad.: adaptation; mus: music; rev.: revision.

Authors	**Title**	**Première**	**Revivals**	
Clairville, Monnier, Blum, **mus.** Chéri	*Cendrillon, ou La pantoufle merveilleuse*	Châtelet, 1866, 1867, and 1868	Porte-Saint-Martin, 1879 Châtelet, 1888 Châtelet, 1891 Châtelet, 1895 Porte-Saint-Martin, 1898	**66A**
Clairville, **mus.** Javelot, Moniot	*Ric-din Ric-don*	Délassements-Comiques, 1866		**66B**
Clairville, Monnier, Blum, **mus.** Chéri	*Les voyages de Gulliver*	Châtelet, 1867		**67B**
Oswald, **mus.** Hervé, Graziani, Raspail	*Les contes de fées*	Délassements-Comiques, then Ambigu, 1871	Menus-Plaisirs, 1872 (as Oswald and Lemonnier, *Les contes de Perrault*)	**71A**
Clairville, Marot, **mus.** Diache	*La queue du chat*	Château-d'Eau, 1871 and 1872	Châtelet, 1883	**71B**
Clairville, Grangé, **mus.** Raspail	*Le puits qui chante*	Menus-Plaisirs, 1871		**71C**

(*Continued*)

Table 1 (Cont.)

Authors	Title	Première	Revivals	
Clairville, Bernard, Koning, **mus.** Thérésa, Raspail, Chéri, Cœdès	*La reine Carotte*	Menus-Plaisirs, 1872		**72A**
Sardou, **mus.** Offenbach*	*Le roi Carotte*	Gaîté, 1872		**72B**
Clairville, Gabet, de Vermand (after Sedaine, *Le diable à quatre*, 1756), **mus.** Hervé, Cœdès, Raspail, Chautagne	*Les griffes du diable*	Menus-Plaisirs, 1872		**72C**
Clairville, Grangé, Koning, **mus.** Hervé, Cœdès, Raspail, Patusset	*La cocotte aux œufs d'or*	Menus-Plaisirs, 1872		**72E**
Laporte, Rigodon	*Pommes d'Ève*	Déjazet, 1873		**73A**
Chivot, Duru, Blondeau, Monréal, **mus.** Diache, Chautagne	*Les pommes d'or*	Château-d'Eau, 1873	Menus-Plaisirs, 1883, with composerly score by Audran	**73B**
Marot, **mus.** Oray	*Les trois princesses*	Déjazet, 1873		**73C**
Marot, **mus.** Monet	*Le poisson volant*	Déjazet, 1873		**73D**
Clairville, Marot, **mus.** Diache	*La patte à Coco*	Château-d'Eau, 1873		**73E**
Crémieux, [Halévy], **mus.** Offenbach* (ad. of 1858 operetta)	*Orphée aux enfers* (new version)	Gaîté, 1874	Gaîté, 1878 Gaîté, 1887 Éden, 1889 Variétés, 1902	**74A**
Clairville, Busnach, **mus.** Litolff*	*La Belle au bois dormant*	Châtelet, 1874		**74B**

Clairville, Marot, **mus.** Debillemont*	*Le treizième coup de minuit*	Château-d'Eau, 1874		**74F**
d'Ennery, Verne, **mus.** Debillemont	*Le tour du monde en 80 jours*	Porte-Saint-Martin, 1874	Châtelet, 1876 Porte-Saint-Martin, 1878 Châtelet, 1884, 1886, 1889, 1891, 1893, 1896, 1898, 1901, 1904, 1905, 1907, 1908	**74H**
Crémieux, Tréfeu, **mus.** Offenbach* (ad. of 1859 operetta, rev. 1867)	*Geneviève de Brabant* (3rd version)	Gaîté, 1875	Variétés, 1908	**75A**
Léon and Frantz Beauvallet	*Riquet à la houppe*	Théâtre des Arts (=Menus-Plaisirs), 1875		**75B**
Clairville, Monréal, Blondeau, **mus.** Samuel David, Matz-Ferrare	*Pif-paf*	Château-d'Eau, 1875		**75C**
Vanloo, Leterrier, Mortier, **mus.** Offenbach*	*Le voyage dans la lune*	Gaîté, 1875	Châtelet, 1877 Porte-Saint-Martin, 1892	**75D**
Dreyfus, Grédelue, **mus.** Debillemont	*Le miroir magique*	Porte-Saint-Martin, 1876		**76A**
de Kock, L. and F. Beauvallet	*Les cornes du diable*	Beaumarchais, 1877		**77A**
Tréfeu, Blum, **mus.** Jonas, Darcier, Bourdeau	*Le Chat botté*	Gaîté, 1878		**78A**
Clairville, Grangé, Delacour, **mus.** Cœdès, Édouard Clairville, Cellot, Lindheim	*Coco*	Nouveautés, 1878	Folies-Dramatiques, 1888	**78B**
d'Ennery, Verne, **mus.** Debillemont	*Les enfants du capitaine Grant*	Porte-Saint-Martin, 1878	Châtelet, 1892	**78C**

(*Continued*)

Table 1 (Cont.)

Authors	**Title**	**Première**	**Revivals**	
Belot, **mus.** Artus	*La Vénus noire*	Châtelet, 1879		**79A**
Leterrier, Vanloo, Mortier, **mus.** Lecocq, Jacobi	*L'arbre de Noël*	Porte-Saint-Martin, 1880		**80A**
d'Ennery, Verne, **mus.** Artus	*Michel Strogoff*	Châtelet, 1880	Porte-Saint-Martin, 1882 Châtelet, 1887, 1891, 1893, 1897, 1900, 1903, 1904, 1906	**80B**
Marot, Philippe, **mus.** Bourgeois and Pugno*	*La fée Cocotte*	Palace-Théâtre, 1881		**81A**
d'Ennery, Ferrier, **mus.** Artus	*Les mille et une nuits*	Châtelet, 1881		**81B**
Meilhac, Mortier, **mus.** Serpette*	*Madame le Diable*	Renaissance, 1882		**82A**
d'Ennery, Verne, **mus.** de Lagoanère	*Voyage à travers l'impossible*	Porte-Saint-Martin, 1882		**82B**
Verne	*Kéraban le Têtu*	Gaîté, 1883		**83A**
Blum, Toché, **mus.** Serpette*	*Le château de Tire-Larigot*	Nouveautés, 1884 and 1885	Nouveautés, 1888	**84A**
Ferrier, Burani, Floury, **mus.** Pourny	*Coco-Fêlé*	Châtelet, 1885		**85A**
Leterrier, Mortier, Vanloo, **mus.** Messager, Chassaigne, Fock	*Le Petit Poucet*	Gaîté, 1885 and 1886	Gaîté, 1891	**85B**
Blum, Toché, **mus.** Artus	*Les aventures de Monsieur de Crac*	Châtelet, 1886		**86A**
Blum, Toché, **mus.** Serpette*	*Adam et Ève*	Nouveautés, 1886		**86B**
Sardou, **mus.** Massenet*	*Le Crocodile*	Porte-Saint-Martin, 1886		**86C**
Ferrier, **mus.** Varney*	*Dix jours aux Pyrénées*	Gaîté, 1887		**87A**

Beaumont, Burani, **mus.** Audran*	*Le puits qui parle*	Nouveautés, 1888		**88A**
Mendès, **mus.** Messager*	*Isoline*	Renaissance, 1888		**88B**
Ferrier, Charles Clairville, **mus.** Varney*	*Riquet à la houppe*	Folies-Dramatiques, 1889		**89A**
Raymond, Burani, **mus.** Vasseur*	*Le prince Soleil*	Châtelet, 1889		**89B**
Duru, Chivot, **mus.** Vasseur (also composerly setting entirely by Vasseur)	*Le voyage de Suzette*	Gaîté, 1890 and 1891	Châtelet, 1901 Châtelet, 1907	**90A**
Cogniard brothers, Raymond, Liorat (ad. of 1837 *féerie*), **mus.** Lacome*	*La fille de l'air*	Folies-Dramatiques, 1890		**90B**
Burani, **mus.** Goudesone	*Orient-Express*	Châtelet, 1890		**90C**
Duval, **mus.** Ganne	*Tout Paris*	Châtelet, 1891		**91A**
Morel	*Le tour du monde d'un enfant de Paris*	Belleville, 1891	Théâtre de la République (=Château-d'Eau), 1894 Ambigu, 1904	**91B**
Chivot, Vanloo, **mus.** Vasseur*	*Le pays de l'or*	Gaîté, 1892		**92A**
Blum, Toché	*Madame l'Amirale*	Châtelet, 1892		**92B**
Chivot, Blondeau, **mus.** Carman (also composerly setting entirely by Carman)	*Les bicyclistes en voyage*	Gaîté, 1893		**93A**
Nuitter, Tréfeu, **mus.** Offenbach* (adaptation of *Whittington*, London, Alhambra, 1874)	*Le chat du diable*	Châtelet, 1893		**93B**

(*Continued*)

Table 1 (Cont.)

Authors	**Title**	**Première**	**Revivals**	
Bataille, d'Humières, **mus.** Hüe*	*La Belle au bois dormant*	Théâtre de l'Œuvre (at the Nouveau-Théâtre), 1894		**94A**
Sardou, **mus.** Renaud* (ad. of 1864 play)	*Don Quichotte* (new version)	Châtelet, 1895		**95A**
Blum, Ferrier, **mus.** Serpette*	*Le carnet du diable*	Variétés, 1895	Variétés, 1897 Variétés, 1900	**95B**
Marot	*Les aventures de Thomas Plumepatte*	Théâtre de la République, 1895	Ambigu, 1905	**95C**
Blum, Ferrier, **mus.** Serpette*	*Le carillon*	Variétés, 1896		**96A**
Marot	*Le voyage de Mistress Robinson*	Théâtre de la République, 1896		**96B**
Albert Carré, Moreau, **mus.** Messager, Leroux*	*La montagne enchantée*	Porte-Saint-Martin, 1897		**97A**
Morel, **mus.** Mauget	*Le Chat botté*	Montparnasse, 1898	Théâtre de la République, 1899	**98A**
Blum, Decourcelle, **mus.** Baggers	*Robinson Crusoé*	Châtelet, 1899		**99A**
Blum, Decourcelle, Ferrier	*Le Petit Chaperon rouge*	Châtelet, 1900		**00A**
d'Ivoi	*Les cinq sous de Lavarède*	Châtelet, 1902		**02A**
Gavault, Berr, Vély	*Les aventures du capitaine Corcoran*	Châtelet, 1902		**02B**
de Cottens, Darlay	*L'oncle d'Amérique*	Châtelet, 1903		**03A**
Decori, Darlay, **mus.** José, Baggers	*Monsieur Polichinelle*	Châtelet, 1904		**04A**
de Cottens, Darlay, **mus.** Baggers	*Tom Pitt, le roi des pickpockets*	Châtelet, 1905		**05A**
Feydeau, Desvallières, **mus.** Varney*	*L'Âge d'or*	Variétés, 1905		**05B**

de Cottens, Darlay, **mus.** Baggers	*Les 400 coups du diable*	Châtelet, 1905		**05C**
Collins, Herbel (ad. of Drury Lane Christmas pantomime)	*Cinderella*	Porte-Saint-Martin, 1906		**06A**
de Cottens, Darlay, **mus.** Baggers	*Pif! Paf! Pouf!, ou Un voyage endiablé*	Châtelet, 1906		**06B**
Kéroul, Barré, **mus.** Baggers	*La princesse Sans-Gêne*	Châtelet, 1907		**07A**
Richepin, Cain, **mus.** Thomé	*La Belle au bois dormant*	Théâtre Sarah-Bernhardt, 1907		**07B**

Table 2 *Féerie* revivals, 1864–1908.

Cirque: variously known as Cirque-Olympique, Théâtre national, Théâtre impérial du Cirque. Demolished 1862, company moved into the newly built Châtelet. Prince-Impérial: later Château-d'Eau.				
Playwrights	**Title**	**Première, revivals to 1863**	**Revivals from 1864**	
Clairville, d'Ennery	*Les sept châteaux du diable*	Gaîté, 1844 and 1845 Gaîté, 1855 Gaîté, 1857	Châtelet, 1864 Châtelet, 1876 Châtelet, 1878 Châtelet, 1895	**64A**
Cogniard brothers, Raymond	*La fille de l'air*	Folies-Dramatiques, 1837	Folies-Dramatiques, 1864 Menus-Plaisirs, 1877 Folies-Dramatiques, 1890 (see Table 1)	**64B**
Cogniard brothers	*La biche au bois*	Porte-Saint-Martin, 1845	Porte-Saint-Martin, 1865 Porte-Saint-Martin, 1867 Porte-Saint-Martin, 1881 (rev. Blum, Toché) Châtelet, 1896 (rev. Blum, Ferrier)	**65A**
Clairville, Laurencin, Vanderburch	*Peau d'Âne*	Porte-Saint-Martin, 1838 Gaîté, 1863	Gaîté, 1867 Châtelet, 1883 Châtelet, 1890	**67A**

(*Continued*)

Table 2 (Cont.)

Playwrights	Title	Première, revivals to 1863	Revivals from 1864	
Cogniard brothers	*Ali-Baba, ou Les quarante voleurs*	Cirque, 1853	Prince-Impérial, then Châtelet, 1868	**68A**
Cogniard brothers	*La chatte blanche*	Cirque, 1852	Gaîté, 1869, 1870, and 1871 Gaîté, 1875 Châtelet, 1887 (rev. Blavet, Prével) Châtelet, 1908	**69A**
Cogniard brothers	*La poudre de Perlinpinpin*	Cirque, 1853	Châtelet, 1869 Châtelet, 1898 (rev. Blum, Decourcelle) Châtelet, 1900	**69B**
Clairville, d'Ennery	*La poule aux œufs d'or*	Cirque, 1848 Cirque, 1860	Gaîté, 1872 Châtelet, 1884	**72D**
Bourgeois, Laloue, Laurent	*Les pilules du diable*	Cirque, 1839 Cirque, 1842 Cirque, 1849 Cirque, 1853 Cirque, 1855 Cirque, 1858 Porte-Saint-Martin, 1863	Châtelet, 1873 and 1874 Châtelet, 1880 Châtelet, 1890 Châtelet, 1907 and 1908	**73F**
Théodore Cogniard, Clairville	*Les bibelots du diable*	Variétés, 1858 Variétés, 1862	Renaissance, 1874 Beaumarchais, 1875	**74C**
Clairville, Cordier	*La queue du diable*	Ambigu, 1852	Déjazet, 1874 Ambigu, 1885	**74D**
Cogniard brothers, [Delaporte] (after Ribié and Martainville, 1806)	*Le pied de mouton*	Gaîté, 1850 Porte-Saint-Martin, 1860 and 1861 (credited to Cogniard brothers and Crémieux)	Porte-Saint-Martin, 1874 Éden, 1888	**74E**
Clairville, Siraudin, Lambert-Thiboust	*La fille du diable*	Variétés, 1860	Château-d'Eau, 1874 Ambigu, 1884 (rev. Busnach)	**74G**
Clairville, d'Ennery, Monnier	*Rothomago*	Cirque, then Châtelet, 1862	Châtelet, 1877 and 1878 Châtelet, 1897	**77B**

Selected primary sources

Vocal and instrumental excerpts (i.e., sheet music) only given for plays for which a vocal score is not available. Not included: quadrilles and other derivative works; additional arrangements (e.g., piano duet). Place of publication, unless otherwise specified, is Paris. For additional sources see Tommaso Sabbatini, 'Music, the Market and the Marvelous: Parisian Féerie and the Emergence of Mass Culture, 1864–1900' (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2020), 253–78. For *féerie* primary sources prior to 1864, see Roxane Martin, 'Répertoire bibliographique des pièces et des documents rélatifs à leur représentations', in *La féerie romantique sur les scènes parisiennes, 1791–1864* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2007), 525–610. For *manuscrits de censure* at F-Pan see Odile Krakovitch, *Censure des répertoires des grands théâtres parisiens (1835–1906): inventaire des manuscrits des pièces (F[18] 669 à 1016) et des procès-verbaux des censeurs (F[21] 966 à 995)* (Paris: Centre historique des Archives nationales, 2003).

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64B. [Théodore and Hippolyte] Cogniard and [Provost] Raymond, *La fille de l'air*, féerie en cinq actes et neuf tableaux. Barbré, [1864]. (1864 revival.)

65A. [Théodore and Hippolyte] Cogniard, *La nouvelle 'Biche au bois',* grande féerie en 5 actes et 17 tableaux. Barbré, [1867]. (1867 revival.)
[Théodore and Hippolyte] Cogniard, Ernest Blum, and Raoul Toché, *La biche au bois*, féerie en quatre actes & dix-sept tableaux. Barbré, [1881]. (1881 revival.)

66A. Clairville, Albert Monnier, and Ernest Blum, *Cendrillon, ou La pantoufle merveilleuse*, grande féerie en cinq actes et trente tableaux. Librairie internationale, [1867].

66B. Clairville, *Ric-din Ric-don*, féerie en 4 actes et 14 tableaux. L. Vieillot, [1866].

67B. Clairville, Albert Monnier, and Ernest Blum, *Les voyages de Gulliver*, pièce fantastique en quatre actes et trente tableaux. Librairie internationale, [1867].

71B. Clairville and Gaston Marot, *La queue du chat*, féerie en vingt-quatre tableaux. Michel Lévy frères, [1871].

71C. Clairville and E[ugène] Grangé, *Le puits qui chante*, grande féerie en trois actes et vingt tableaux. Michel Lévy frères, [1872].

72A. Clairville, Victor Bernard, and Victor Koning, *La reine Carotte*, pièce fantaisiste en trois actes et douze tableaux dont un prologue en deux parties. E. Dentu, 1872.

72B. Victorien Sardou, *Le roi Carotte*, opéra-bouffe-féerie en quatre actes, vingt-deux tableaux. Michel Lévy frères, 1872. Three-act version (never

performed in Paris, possibly never performed at all): Victorien Sardou, *Le roi Carotte*, opérette-féerie en trois actes et onze tableaux. Michel Lévy frères, 1872.

72C. Clairville and Charles Gabet, *Les griffes du diable*, pièce fantastique en trois actes et douze tableaux, imitée de Sedaine. Michel Lévy frères, [1872].

72E. Clairville, Eugène Grangé, and Victor Koning, *La cocotte aux œufs d'or*, grande féerie parisienne en trois actes et douze tableaux précedée d'un prologue en deux tableaux. Michel Lévy frères, [1873].

73B. Chivot-Duru and Blondeau-Monréal [i.e., Henri Chivot, Alfred Duru, Henri Blondeau, and Hector Monréal], *Les pommes d'or*, féerie en trois actes et dix-huit tableaux. Tresse, n.d.

Chivot-Duru and Blondeau-Monréal, *Les pommes d'or*, opérette-féerie en trois actes et douze tableaux. Tresse, 1883. (1883 composerly version.)

73C. Gaston Marot, *Les trois princesses*, vaudeville-féerie en trois actes et huit tableaux. Tresse, [1873].

73D. Gaston Marot, *Le poisson volant*, féerie en trois actes et douze tableaux. Tresse, [1874].

73E. Clairville and Gaston Marot, *La patte à Coco*, féerie en cinq actes et vingt tableaux. Tresse, [1873].

74A. Hector Crémieux, *Orphée aux enfers*, opéra-féerie en quatre actes et douze tableaux. Michel Lévy frères, [1874].

74H. *Le tour du monde en 80 jours*, pièce en 5 actes et un prologue (15 tableaux). In A[dolphe] d'Ennery and Jules Verne, *Les voyages au théâtre*. J. Hetzel, [1881]. Also published individually.

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75C. Clairville, [Hector] Monréal, and [Henri] Blondeau, *Pif-paf*, féerie en cinq actes et vingt tableaux. Tresse, 1876.

75D. A[lbert] Vanloo, E[ugène] Leterrier, and A[rnold] Mortier, *Le voyage dans la lune*, opéra-féerie en quatre actes et vingt-trois tableaux. Tresse, 1877.

78A. Étienne Tréfeu and Ernest Blum, *Le Chat botté*, grande féerie en trois actes et vingt-deux tableaux. A. Allouard, [1878].

78B. Clairville, [Eugène] Grangé, and [Alfred] Delacour, *Coco*, comédie-vaudeville en cinq actes. A. Allouard, 1878.

78C. *Les enfants du capitaine Grant*, pièce en 5 actes et un prologue (13 tableaux). In A[dolphe] d'Ennery and Jules Verne, *Les voyages au théâtre*. J. Hetzel, [1881]. Also published individually.

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82B. Modern edition: Jules Verne and Adolphe d'Ennery, *Voyage à travers l'impossible*, pièce fantastique en 3 actes, inédite. Edited by François Raymond. Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1981. Also Jules Verne and Adolphe d'Ennery, *Voyage à travers l'impossible*, féerie en trois actes et vingt tableaux. Edited by Agnès Marcetteau-Paul and Jean-Michel Margot. Nantes: L'Atalante, 2005.

84A. Ernest Blum and Raoul Toché, *Le château de Tire-Larigot*, opérette fantastique en trois actes, dix tableaux. Calmann Lévy, 1884.

86C. Victorien Sardou, *Le Crocodile*, comédie en 5 actes et 8 tableaux. In *Théâtre complet*. Vol. 10. Albin Michel, 1947.

87A. Paul Ferrier, *Dix jours aux Pyrénées*, voyage circulaire en cinq actes et dix tableaux. Librairie théâtrale, 1888.

88A. Not-for-sale printed play text (Choudens, 1888) in F-Pnas, F-Pa, and Bibliothèque nationale de France, site François-Mitterrand.

88B. Catulle Mendès, *Isoline*, conte de fées en dix tableaux. E. Dentu, 1888.

89A. Paul Ferrier and Charles Clairville, *Riquet à la houppe*, féerie en trois actes et un prologue. Librairie théâtrale, 1889.

90A. Henri Chivot and Alfred Duru, *Le voyage de Suzette*, pièce à grand spectacle en trois actes et onze tableaux. P.-V. Stock, 1897. (Vasseur composerly version.)

90B. Not-for-sale engraved play text (Paul Dupont, n.d.) in F-Pa and Bibliothèque nationale de France, site François-Mitterrand.

91B. E[rnest] Morel, *Le tour du monde d'un enfant de Paris*, pièce en 12 tableaux. Barbré, 1899.

92A. Not-for-sale printed play text (Choudens, n.d.) in Palazzetto Bru Zane, fonds Leduc.

93A. Not-for-sale printed play text (Choudens, 1893) in F-Pnas, F-Pa, and Bibliothèque nationale de France, site François-Mitterrand. (Carman composerly version.)

95A. Victorien Sardou, *Don Quichotte*, pièce en trois actes et onze tableaux. In *Théâtre complet*. Vol. 15. Albin Michel, 1961.

95C. Gaston Marot, *Les aventures de Thomas Plumepatte*, pièce en 5 actes et 10 tableaux. Librairie Molière, 1901.

02A. Paul d'Ivoi, *Les cinq sous de Lavarède*, pièce à grand spectacle en 4 actes et 21 tableaux. Combet, [1902].

02B. Paul Gavault, Georges Berr, and A[drien] Vély after [Alfred] Assol[l]ant, *Les Aventures du capitaine Corcoran*, pièce en 5 actes et 17 tableaux. P.-V. Stock, 1904.

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05C. Victor de Cottens and Victor Darlay, *Les 400 coups du diable*, féerie en 3 actes et 34 tableaux. *Mon beau livre*, 15 February 1906.

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72B. J[acques] Offenbach, *Le roi Carotte*, opéra-bouffe-féerie en 4 actes 18 tableaux. Choudens, [1872]. Plate number A.C. 2273.

73B. Edmond Audran, *Les pommes d'or*, opérette féerie en 3 actes. Choudens, [1883]. Plate number A.C 5802. (1883 composerly version.)

74A. J[acques] Offenbach, *Orphée aux enfers*, opéra-féerie en quatre actes et douze tableaux. Heugel, [1874]. Plate number H. 4425.

75A. Supplement to the 1867 vocal score: J[acques] Offenbach, *Geneviève de Brabant*, opéra bouffe en cinq actes. Heugel, [1875]. Plate number H. 3610.

75D. J[acques] Offenbach, *Le voyage dans la lune*, opéra-féerie en 4 actes. Choudens, [1876]. Plate number A.C. 3340.

82A. Gaston Serpette, *Madame le Diable*, féerie-opérette en 4 actes et 12 tableaux. Enoch frères & Costallat, [1882]. Plate number E.F. & C. 608.

84A. Gaston Serpette, *Le château de Tire-Larigot*, opérette fantastique en trois actes et dix tableaux. E. Gérard, 1884. Plate number C.M. 11838.

86B. Gaston Serpette, *Adam et Ève*, opérette fantastique en 3 actes. Heugel, 1886. Plate number H. 6295.

86C. J[ules] Massenet, *Musique de scène composée pour une pièce de Victorien Sardou ('Le Crocodile')*. G. Hartmann et C^{ie}, [1887]. Plate number G.H. & C^{ie} 1759. (Piano reduction of melodramatic music.)

87A. L[ouis] Varney, *Dix jours aux Pyrénées*, grande opérette en 5 actes et 10 tableaux. Choudens, [1887]. Plate number A.C. 7383.

88A. E[dmond] Audran, *Le puits qui parle*, opéra-comique fantastique en 3 actes. Choudens, [1888]. Plate number A.C. 7854.

88B. André Messager, *Isoline*, conte de fées en 3 actes et 10 tableaux. Enoch frères & Costallat, [1888]. Plate number E.F. & C. 1545.

89A. Louis Varney, *Riquet à la houppe*, féerie en trois actes. Choudens, [1889]. Plate number A.C. 9566.

89B. Léon Vasseur, *Le prince Soleil*, pièce à grand spectacle en 4 actes et 22 tableaux. Société anonyme d'édition mutuelle de musique, [1889]. Plate number E.M. 127.

90A. Léon Vasseur, *Le voyage de Suzette*, opérette en 3 actes à grand spectacle. Choudens, [1890]. Plate number A.C. 8303. (Vasseur composerly version.)

90B. Paul Lacome, *La fille de l'air*, opérette fantastique en 4 actes et 7 tableaux. Paul Dupont, [1890]. Plate number A.G. 1re Sie 10.14.1.

92A. Léon Vasseur, *Le pays de l'or*, opérette en 3 actes, à grand spectacle (but title page: pièce à grand spectacle en 3 actes). Choudens, © 1892. Plate number A.C. 8809.

93A. Marius Carman, *Les bicyclistes en voyage*, pièce à spectacle en 3 actes et 7 tableaux (but title page: opérette en trois actes). Choudens, © 1894. Plate number A.C. 9382. (Carman composerly version.)

93B. Bilingual (English-French) vocal score of *Whittington*: Jacques Offenbach, *Whittington*, opera bouffe in 3 acts. [London]: Cramer, [1874?]. Plate number C. & Co. 7058.

95B. Gaston Serpette, *Le carnet du diable*, pièce fantastique en 3 actes et 8 tableaux. Choudens, © 1895. Plate number A.C. 10036.

97A. André Messager and Xavier Leroux, *La montagne enchantée*, pièce fantastique en cinq actes et douze tableaux. Alphonse Leduc, © 1897. Plate number A.L. 9787.

Vocal excerpts

64A. Victor Chéri, 'On a tout quand on a d'ça', ronde. E. Gérard et Cie, [1864]. Plate number C.M. 10181. (1864 revival.)
Victor Chéri, 'Rondo'. E. Gérard et Cie, [1864]. Plate number C.M. 10182. (1864 revival.)

64B. Jacques Offenbach, 'La pêche'. Challiot & Cie, [1865]. Plate number E.C. 3178. (1864 revival.)

65A. Hervé, 'Duo'. Ph. Feuchot, [1865]. Plate number P.F 571. (1865 revival.)
Hervé, 'Duo des sirènes'. Ph. Feuchot, [1865]. Plate number P.F 572. (1865 revival.)
Hervé, 'Rondeau'. Ph. Feuchot, [1865]. Plate number P.F 580. (1865 revival.)
Hervé, 'Romance comique'. Ph. Feuchot, [1865]. Plate number P.F 582. (1865 revival.)

66A. Victor Chéri, 'Les trois amants de Jeannette', ronde. [Bazar européen, 1872.] Plate number C. 2.
V[ictor] Chéri, 'Des cœurs plus grands et des pieds plus petits', rondo. Bazar européen, [1872]. Plate number C. 45.
G[aston] Serpette, 'Valse de Cendrillon'. Choudens, [1888]. Plate number A.C. 8100. (1888 revival.)

66B. Eugène Moniot, 'Le punch', ronde. L. Vieillot, [1866]. Plate number L.V. 796. *Petit format* (unaccompanied vocal line).
Eugène Moniot, 'Ric-din Ric-don', ronde. L. Vieillot, [1866]. Plate number L.V. 2798. *Petit format*.

67B. Victor Chéri, 'Le mousse et la reine', ronde. E. Heu, [1867]. Plate number E.H. 284.
Victor Chéri, 'Les matelots de la Marine anglaise', couplets. E. Heu, [1867]. Plate number E.H. 285.
Victor Chéri, 'La chanson du bébé', ronde. E. Heu, [1867]. Plate number E.H. 288.
Victor Chéri, 'La chanson du capitaine'. E. Heu, [1867]. Plate number E.H. 289.

69A. Thérésa (L[éon] Fossey, arranger), 'Les canards tyroliens'. E. Heu, [1869]. Plate number E.H. 1014. (1869 revival.)
Émile Jonas, 'La mare aux grenouilles'. E. et A. Girod, [1875]. Plate number E.J. 19. (1875 revival.)
Émile Jonas, 'Couplets de la fauvette'. V[eu]ve Girod, [1887]. Plate number E.J. 71. (1887 revival.)
Émile Jonas, 'Couplets de Pierrette'. V[eu]ve Girod, [1887]. Plate number E.J. 73. (1887 revival.)

69B. Victor Chéri, 'Sérénade'. E. Heu, [1869]. Plate number E.H. 1016. (1869 revival.)

71A. Hervé, 'Valse des fiançailles'. E. Heu, [1872]. Plate number E.H. 1056.

71C. G[illes] Raspail, 'Valse des syrènes'. V[eu]ve Margueritat, [1872]. No plate number.

72A. A[uguste] Cœdès, 'Faut que l' train passe'. G. Hartmann, [1872]. Plate number G.H. 800.
Thérésa (G[illes] Raspail, arranger), 'La reine Carotte', chanson. G. Hartmann, [1872]. Plate number G.H. 801.
G[illes] Raspail, 'Bonsoir'. G. Hartmann, [1872]. Plate number G.H. 802.

72C. A[ugus]te Cœdès, 'Chanson des animaux'. Dupuis, [1872]. No plate number.
A[uguste] Cœdès, 'Scène de la psyché', couplets. Dupuis, [1872]. No plate number. *Petit format* only?
A[uguste] Cœdès, 'C' que mon mari m'a défendu'. Dupuis, [1872]. No plate number. *Petit format* only?
Hervé, 'Le raccomodement', couplets. Dupuis, [1872]. No plate number.

72D. Albert Vizentini, 'La boîte à musique'. Choudens, [1873]. Plate number A.C. 2594. (1872 revival.)
Albert Vizentini, 'L'histoire à Mad'leine'. Choudens, [1873]. Plate number A.C. 2595. (1872 revival.)
Albert Vizentini, 'Chanson de la cocotte'. Choudens, [1873]. Plate number A.C. 2596. *Petit format* only? (1872 revival.)

Albert Vizentini, 'Romance du printemps'. Choudens, [1873]. Plate number A.C. 2597. (1872 revival.)

Albert Vizentini, 'Couplets de l'effet'. Choudens, [1873]. Plate number A.C. 2598. (1872 revival.)

72E. A[uguste] Cœdès, 'Cot, cot, codette!', chanson. G. Hartmann, [1873]. Plate number G.H. 329.

73E. Charles Diache, 'La patte à Coco'. V[eu]ve Margueritat, [1874]. Plate number (4525) bis. *Petit format*.

74E. Gaston Serpette, 'Duo de la grotte enchantée'. Choudens, [1888]. Plate number A.C. 8099. (1888 revival.)

74G. A[dolphe] Lindheim, 'Tyrolienne'. Le Bailly, [1885]. Plate number L.B. 2341.

77B. Victor Chéri, 'Turlurette', ronde. L. Conrard, [1878]. Plate number L.C. 349. (1877 revival.)

Adolphe de Groot, 'Les heures', mélodie. C. Alard, [1878]. Plate number C.A. 110. (1877 revival.)

78A. Émile Jonas, 'Rondeau des chats'. E. & A. Girod, [1878]. Plate number E.J. 52.

78B. A[uguste] Cœdès, 'Couplets du château'. J. Hiélard, [1878]. Plate number J.HD. 871.(1).

A[uguste] Cœdès, 'Le sabot de Jeannette', ronde. J. Hiélard, [1878]. Plate number J.HD. 865.(2).

A[uguste] Cœdès, 'Couplets des saltimbanques'. J. Hiélard, [1878]. Plate number J.HD. 872.(3).

A[uguste] Cœdès, 'Chanson de Coco'. J. Hiélard, [1878]. Plate number J.HD. 866.(4).

A[uguste] Cœdès (after a tune performed by the Estudiantina Española), 'Madrilène'. J. Hiélard, [1878]. Plate number J.HD. 867.(5).

[Adolphe] Lindheim, 'Chanson des mousses'. J. Hiélard, [1878]. Plate number J.HD. 868.(6).

80A. Charles Lecocq, 'Rondeau de la poupée'. Heugel, [1880]. Plate number H. 5204.(1).

Charles Lecocq, 'Polka de la montreuse d'ours'. Heugel, [1880]. Plate number H. 5205.(2).

Charles Lecocq, 'Le noël des petits enfants'. Heugel, [1880]. Plate number H. 5206.(3).

81A. Émile Bourgeois, 'Chanson à boire'. *Le Figaro*, 9 February 1881.

81B. Hervé, 'Le petit mousse', chanson maritime. Choudens, [1882]. Plate number A.C. 5419.

Gaston Serpette, 'Je t'aime!', couplets de la déclaration. Choudens, [1882]. Plate number A.C. 5420.

85A. Ch[arles] Pourny, 'La culotte et le pompon', chanson à boire. L. Bathlot, [1885]. Plate number L.B. 5468.

Ch[arles] Pourny, 'Ronde de Coco-Fêlé'. L. Bathlot, [1885]. Plate number L.B. 5469.

85B. André Messager, 'Chanson des loups'. Enoch frères & Costallat, [1885]. Plate number E.F. & C. 1161.

86A. Alexandre Artus, 'Couplets du tambour et de la trompette'. Le Bailly, [1886]. Plate number O.B. 2458.

95A. Albert Renaud, 'Sérénade'. A. Quinzard et C^{ie}, [1895]. Plate number A.Q. et C^{ie} 448.

04A. Marius Baggers, 'La chanson du gui', chanson populaire enfantine. E. Gallet, [1904]. Plate number E.G. 6501.(1).

07B. Francis Thomé, 'Chanson'. Henry Lemoine, [1908]. Plate number 20367 H.

Instrumental excerpts

64A. Alexandre Artus, 'Thérésa-polka'. No mention of publisher, [1876]. No plate number. (1876 revival.)

65A. Hervé, 'Polka-marche'. Ph. Feuchot, [1865]. Plate number P.F 569. (1865 revival.)
Amédée Artus, 'Les poissons', polka-mazurka. Ph. Feuchot, [1865]. Plate number P.F 579. (1865 revival.)

66A. Jean Brus, 'Stichel-danse'. Humblot, [1888]. Plate number P.H. (1888 revival.)
Jean Brus, 'Valse de Cendrillon'. Choudens, [1888]. Plate number A.C. 8087. (1888 revival.)

67A. Charles Hubans, 'Grande valse'. L. Bathlot, [1883]. Plate number L.B. 3756. (1883 revival.)
Charles Hubans, 'Pizzicato'. L. Bathlot, [1883]. Plate number L.B. 3757. (1883 revival.)
Charles Hubans, 'Saltarelle'. L. Bathlot, [1883]. Plate number L.B. 3758. (1883 revival.)

69A. Émile Jonas ([Isaac] Strauss, arranger), 'Polka'. E. et A. Girod, [1869]. Plate number E.J. 16. (1869 revival.)
Émile Jonas ([Isaac] Strauss, arranger), 'Polka-mazurka'. E. et A. Girod, [1869]. Plate number E.J. 18. (1869 revival.)
Émile Jonas ([Isaac] Strauss, arranger), 'Valse'. E. et A. Girod, [1869]. Plate number E.J. 20. (1869 revival.)
Émile Jonas, 'Sommeil et réveil des oiseaux'. V[eu]ve Girod, [1887]. Plate number E.J. 75. (1887 revival.)
Émile Jonas, 'Pizzicato du ballet des oiseaux'. V[eu]ve Girod, [1887]. Plate number E.J. 76. (1887 revival.)

69B. Victor Chéri ([Isaac] Strauss, arranger), 'Polka des potiches'. E. Heu, [1869]. Plate number E.H. 828. (1869 revival.)

72E. G[illes] Raspail, 'Valse des girouettes'. No mention of publisher, [1873]. No plate number.

74C. Alexandre Artus, 'Valse des sultanes'. A. O'Kelly, [1874]. Plate number A.O'K. 154. (1874 revival.)

74H. J[ean-]J[acques] Debillemont, *Le tour du monde*. Léon Grus, [1875]. Plate number L.G. 3238. Contains 'Marche des rajahs', 'La Malaisienne', 'Valse indienne', 'God Save the Queen'.

J[ean-]J[acques] Debillemont (Léon Dufils, arranger), 'Mariquita-polka'. Léon Grus, [1875]. Plate number L.G. 3239.

J[ean-]J[acques] Debillemont (Renaud de Vilbac, arranger), 'Le tour du monde', valse brillante. Léon Grus, [1875]. Plate number L.G. 3272.

75C. F[erdinand] Matz-Ferrare, 'Pif, paf!', polka. Bordeaux: V[ict]or Ravayre-Raver, [1881]. Plate number R. 615 R.

77B. Alexandre Artus, 'Rothomago-fanfare'. Le Bailly, [1878]. Plate number L.B. 1593. (1877 revival.)

Victor Gentil (Alfred Fock, arranger), 'Polka des cloches'. E. Chatot, [1877]. Plate number E.C. 1195. (1877 revival.)

79A. Alexandre Artus, 'Marche de la caravane'. Le Bailly, [1880]. Plate number L.B. 1883.

80A. G[eorg] Jacobi, 'Valse'. Heugel, [1880]. Plate number H. 6870.

G[eorg] Jacobi, 'Polka-mazurka des poupées'. Heugel, [1880]. Plate number H. 6871.

G[eorg] Jacobi, 'Galop final'. Heugel, [1880]. Plate number H. 6872.

G[eorg] Jacobi (E. Mangin, arranger), 'Le rêves de Noël', andante. Heugel, [1881]. Plate number H. 7017.

80B. Alexandre Artus, 'Musique russe de Michel Strogoff'. *Le Journal de musique*, 11 December 1880.

Alexandre Artus, 'Marche triomphale'. Le Bailly, [1881]. Plate number L.B. 1974.

Alexandre Artus (F[rédéric] Wachs, arranger), 'Retraite russe et marche de cavalerie'. Le Bailly, [1881]. Plate number L.B. 1997.

Alexandre Artus, 'Chant du Volga — Chant cosaque — Retraite des fifres — Danse cosaque — Marche des trompettes'. Le Bailly, [1882]. Plate number L.B. 2172.

G[eorges] Guilhaud, 'Fête tartare', ballet. Choudens, [1881]. Plate number A.C. 5068.

Marius Baggers, 'Fête de nuit à Moscou', ballet russe. G. Siéver, [1909]. Plate number G. 1545 S. (1900 revival.)

Marius Baggers, 'Au camp tartare', ballet oriental. G. Siéver, [1910]. Plate number G. 1546 S. (1900 revival.)

81A. Raoul Pugno, '3 airs de ballet'. Heugel, [1882]. Plate numbers H. 7378 (1), H. 7378 (2), H. 7380 (3).

81B. Alexandre Artus, 'Marche de Cléopâtre'. Le Bailly, [1882]. Plate number L.B. 2052.

Alexandre Artus, 'Scheerazade', polka mazurka. Le Bailly, [1882]. Plate number L.B. 2053.
Alexandre Artus, 'Dinarzade', polka mazurka. Le Bailly, [1882]. Plate number L.B. 2054.
Alexandre Artus, 'Alchimiste-polka'. Le Bailly, [1882]. Plate number L.B. 2055.

82B. O[scar] de Lagoanère, 'Valse des Altoriennes'. L. Bathlot, [1882]. Plate number L.B. 3397.
O[scar] de Lagoanère, 'Valse du feu' (but cover: 'Valse des salamandres'). L. Bathlot, [1882]. Plate number L.B. 3398.
O[scar] de Lagoanère, 'Les canotiers altoriens', polka. L. Bathlot, [1882]. Plate number L.B. 3405.
O[scar] de Lagoanère, 'Les follets', polka. L. Bathlot, [1883]. Plate number L.B. 3508.

85B. Alfred Fock (after André Messager), 'Suite de valses'. Enoch frères & Costallat, [1885]. Plate number E.F. & C. 1163.
Alfred Fock, 'Polka'. Enoch frères & Costallat, [1885]. Plate number E.F. & C. 1164.
Léon Vasseur, 'Menuet des Contes de Perrault'. Roger & C^{ie}, [1891]. Plate number R. et C^{ie} 72. (1891 revival.)
Léon Vasseur, 'Grande valse' (but cover: 'Valse des Contes de Perrault'). Roger & C^{ie}, [1891]. Plate number R. et C^{ie} 73. (1891 revival.)

86A. Alexandre Artus, 'Valse des bergers'. Le Bailly, [1887]. Plate number O.B. 2455.
Alexandre Artus, 'Marche indienne du Rajah'. Le Bailly, [1886]. Plate number O.B. 2456.
Alexandre Artus, 'Valse des bayadères'. Le Bailly, [1886]. Plate number O.B. 2457.
Alexandre Artus, 'De Crac-polka'. Le Bailly, [1887]. Plate number O.B. 2464.

91A. Alexandre Artus, 'Tout-Paris', valse. Le Bailly, [1891]. Plate number O.B. 3960.(7/91).

94A. Georges Hüe, *La Belle au bois dormant*, féerie dramatique. Alphonse Leduc, © 1895. Plate number A.L. 9570. (Melodramatic music, arranged for piano duet.)

99A. Marius Baggers, 'Pas des neiges de décembre'. *Le Figaro*, 23 December 1899.

Manuscript music

65A. Autograph full score of Hervé's newly composed music: F-Po fonds Hervé 19. (1865 revival.)
Incomplete manuscript vocal score: F-Po fonds Hervé 255. (1865 revival.)

71A. Incomplete orchestral material?: F-Pnas fonds Ambigu-Comique 4-COL-54(835).

72B. Autograph full score: F:Pn MS-21015 (1) through MS-21015 (4).
Incomplete orchestral and choral material: F-Pn MAT TH-1042.
Sketches and fragments in full score: US-NHub Koch Collection FRKF 1113 (GEN MSS 601, box 178, folder 1520).
Manuscript full score, presumably for the 1876 Theater an der Wien production: A-Wn Mus.Hs.25693/1-2.

72C. Auguste Cœdès, 'C' que mon mari m'a défendu'. Autograph manuscript: F-Po CS-4855 (18).
Auguste Cœdès, 'Rondeau de Margot'. Autograph manuscript: F-Po CS-4855 (19).
Manuscript sketch for five vocal excerpts by Cœdès, including 'Air de la fée Popotte' and 'Couplets de Margot': F-Po CS-4855 (22).

72D. Manuscript full score in the hand of Albert Vizentini: F-Po CS-5402. (1872 revival.)
Short score (*violon conducteur*?) of the 'Ballet des instruments': F-Pn MAT TH-354. (1872 revival.)

73F. Manuscript full score in the hand of Albert Vizentini: F-Po CS-5395. (1873 revival; also used for 1890 revival.)

74A. Sketches in D-KNa Best. 1136 (Offenbach, Jacques), A 1767.

74B. Autograph full score once at F-Po, currently unaccounted for, save for two leaves under shelf mark RES-573.
Sketches in F-Po RES-614, ff. 17v–18r.

74C. The orchestral material from 1858 and 1862 seems to have been used for the 1874 revival as well: F-Pnas fonds Variétés 4-COL-106(926,1).

74H. Incomplete vn. 1 part: F-Pbh fonds ART 2-TMS-00107.

75D. Autograph full score: A-Wn Mus.Hs.2341.

77A. Incomplete short score in Hervé's hand: F-Po fonds Hervé 268.
Incomplete manuscript short score: F-Po fonds Hervé 276 (act 1), F-Po fonds Hervé 268 (acts 2 and 3).

81A. Sketches by Raoul Pugno: F-Pn MS-19646.

82A. Orchestral and choral material: F-Pnas fonds Variétés FOL-COL-106(8,1) through FOL-COL-106(8,5), 4-COL-106(961,1), 4-COL-106(961,2).

86C. Manuscript full scores: F-Pn D-12679, AC E10-953.

90A. Manuscript fragment: US-CAt HTC-LC b M1508.V34 V69 1890. (Non-composerly version?)

93B. Sketches for *Whittington*: US-NHub Koch Collection FRKF 95 (GEN MSS 601, box 47, folder 948) and FRKF 236.34 (GEN MSS 601, box 281, folder 1623); also in D-KNa Best. 1136 (Offenbach, Jacques), A 1767.

95B. F-Pnas fonds Variétés FOL-COL-106(646,1) through FOL-COL-106(646,3), FOL-COL-106(10).

Incomplete manuscript vocal score: F-Pnas fonds Variétés FOL-COL-106(102).

97A. Autograph (Xavier Leroux) fragment in full score: F-Pn MS-20619.

07B. Manuscript (including autograph) score and sketches: F-Po fonds Thomé.

Production books and notated choreographies

65A. Notated choreography and *mise en scène* by Henri Justamant: New York Public Library, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, MGRN-Res. 73-259. (1881 revival.)

66A. Notated choreography and *mise en scène* by Henri Justamant: New York Public Library, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, MGRN-Res. 73-259. (1879 revival.)

67A. Notated choreography by Henri Justamant: F-Po B-217 (13). (1883 revival.)

71B. Notated choreography by Henri Justamant: F-Po B-217 (29).

72A. Notated choreography by Henri Justamant: F-Po B-217 (29).

72B. Some staging notes, in Albert Vizentini's hand, in F-Pnas collection Rondel MRt boîte 72 Gaîté.

72C. Notated choreography by Henri Justamant: F-Po B-217 (29).

74A. Notated choreography and *mise en scène* by Henri Justamant: D-KNth Inv. no. 70 473–475. (1877 London production, 1878 Gaîté revival.)

74B. Notated choreography by Henri Justamant: F-Po B-217 (37).

74E. Notated choreography by Henri Justamant: F-Po B-217 (14). (1888 revival.)

74H. Copies of the printed play with staging annotations at F-Pbh fonds ART.

75D. Notated choreography by Henri Justamant: New York Public Library, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, MGRN-Res. 73-259.

79A. Notated choreography and *mise en scène* by Henri Justamant: New York Public Library, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, MGRN-Res. 73-259. (1870 revival.)

80A. Notated choreography and *mise en scène* by Henri Justamant: New York Public Library, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, MGRN-Res. 73-259.

80B. Copies of the printed play with staging annotations at F-Pbh fonds ART.

90A. Choudens production book: F-Pbh fonds ART 4-TMS-03978.
Other *mises en scène* (manuscript copies of the Choudens production book, annotated copies of the play) at F-Pbh fonds ART.

95B. Choudens production book: US-BUu MT955 .C27.

95C. Annotated copies of the play: F-Pnas fonds Ambigu-Comique 4-COL-54(2079) through 4-COL-54(2083), 4-COL-54(32). (1905 revival.)

02A. Copies of the printed play with staging annotations at F-Pbh fonds ART.

Appendix 2

Personalia

Names marked with an asterisk have their own entry.

Alexandre, stage name of Alexandre Guillemet (1814–1904), performer. Played comic roles in melodramas. Appeared in several *féeries*: *Peau d'Âne* (1863 and 1867), *La chatte blanche* (1869), *Le roi Carotte* (1872), *La poule aux œufs d'or* (1872), *Orphée aux enfers* (1874) at the Gaîté; *Le pied de mouton* (1874), *Cendrillon* (1879), *L'arbre de Noël* (1880), *La biche au bois* (1881) at the Porte-Saint-Martin; *La poule aux œufs d'or* (1884), *La chatte blanche* (1887), *Peau d'Âne* (1890) at the Châtelet. Was the first Passepartout in *Verne and d'*Ennery's *Le tour du monde en 80 jours* (1874) and had a Passepartout-like role in *Voyage à travers l'impossible* (1882). Was again in *Orphée*, in the more prominent role of Pluton, for the 1887 and 1889 revivals at the Gaîté and the Éden respectively. Appeared in bit parts in *Don Quichotte* (1895) and in the 1896 revival of *Le tour du monde* (with *Pougaud as Passepartout). Father of Alexandre fils (1856–?), performer and theatre manager, who was cast in a few *féeries* and in the comic travelogues of the Gaîté.

Audran, Edmond (1840–1901), composer. Born in Lyon, son of tenor Marius Audran. Was revealed in 1879 by the operetta *Les noces d'Olivette*, followed the next year by *La mascotte*; his *Le grand Mogol*, first performed in Marseille in 1877, had its Parisian première in 1884. In 1883, set to music the *féerie Les pommes d'or*, from 10 years before. Also scored *Le puits qui parle* (1888). His 1890 operetta *Miss Helyett* launched Biana Duhamel, who as a child actor had played the title character in the *féerie Le Petit Poucet* (1885).

Baron, stage name of Louis Bouchenez (1838–1920), performer. Born in Alençon. Joined the Variétés in the late 1860s and was in the original cast of *Offenbach's *La grande-duchesse de Gérolstein* and *Les brigands*. Appeared in *féeries* at larger theatres—*Le Petit Poucet* (1885), *La poudre de Perlinpinpin* (1898)—as well as in the *féeries* scored by *Serpette at the Variétés, *Le carnet du diable* (1895) and *Le carillon* (1896). Was also in most of the vaudevilles that *Hervé scored for Anna Judic, among them *Mam'zelle Nitouche*.

Blum, Ernest (1836–1907), playwright. Son of an actor. Author of melodramas, revues, vaudevilles, and operettas (including *Offenbach's *La jolie parfumeuse* and *Belle Lurette*). Collaborated with *Clairville on *Cendrillon* (1866) and *Les voyages de Gulliver* (1867); with Raoul Toché (1850–95) on the 1881 revision of *La biche au bois*, *Le château de Tire-Larigot* (1884), *Les aventures de Monsieur de Crac* (1886), *Adam et Êve* (1886); with Paul *Ferrier on *Le carnet du diable* (1895), *Le carillon* (1896), the 1896 revision of *La biche au bois*, *Le Petit Chaperon rouge* (1900).

Bouffar, Zulma (1843–1909), performer and theatre manager. Born in Nérac, Lot-et-Garonne. Grew up in a theatrical family, toured Europe extensively as a child and teenage performer of *café-concert* and operetta. Was hired at the Bouffes-Parisiens after *Offenbach heard her in Bad Ems in 1863. Starred in several Offenbach works, including *La vie parisienne*, the 1867 version of *Geneviève de Brabant*, *Les brigands*, and the *féeries Le roi Carotte* (1872) and *Le voyage dans la lune* (1875)—in every case except the first in *travesti* roles. In 1864, she had already taken part in a revival of the *Cogniard *féerie La fille de l'air*, where she had sung a number newly composed by Offenbach. Continued to appear in *féeries* in the 1880s: *L'arbre de Noël* (1880), *Les mille et une nuits* (1881), an 1884 revival of *Clairville's *La fille du diable*. Briefly managed the Ambigu, 1891–3. In addition to Bouffar and *Silly, other performers associated with Offenbach in the 1860s crossed over to *féerie*: Lise Tautin was in the 1862 revival of *Les bibelots du diable* and in *Aladin* (1863), Irma Marié in *Cendrillon* (1866), Hortense Schneider in *Les voyages de Gulliver* (1867).

Brasseur, stage name of Jules Dumont (1829–90), performer and theatre manager. Comedian, was one of the stars of the Palais-Royal from the 1850s to the 1870s. Excelled at *rôles à tiroirs*, with multiple changes in appearance over the length of a play, and had one such role in the first production of *Offenbach's *La vie parisienne*. In 1878, started his own theatre, the Nouveautés, which opened with *Clairville's spectacular vaudeville *Coco* and which specialised in vaudeville, operetta, and *féerie*. Under his management the Nouveautés gave *Le château de Tire-Larigot* (1884) and *Adam et Ève* (1886), both scored by *Serpette, and *Le puits qui parle* (1888), scored by *Audran. Father of Albert *Brasseur.

Brasseur, Albert, stage name of Albert Dumont (1860–1932), performer. Son of *Brasseur, debuted at his father's theatre in 1878. Was in *Le château de Tire-Larigot* (1884), *Adam et Ève* (1886), *Le puits qui parle* (1888). In 1890, after Brasseur's death, joined the Variétés, where he performed in the *féeries Le carnet du diable* (1895), *Le carillon* (1896), and *L'Âge d'or* (1905), as well as in revivals of Second Empire operettas by *Offenbach and *Hervé, also reprising his father's role in *La vie parisienne*.

Chivot, Henri (1830–97), and Alfred Duru (1829–89), team of playwrights. Chiefly associated with vaudeville and operetta. Librettists of *Offenbach's *Madame Favart* and *La fille du tambour-major* and *Audran's *Le grand Mogol* and *La mascotte*. Authors of the *féerie Les pommes d'or* (1873) and of the comic travelogue *Le voyage de Suzette* (1890); Chivot went on to write *Le pays de l'or* (1892) and *Les bicyclistes en voyage* (1893).

Christian, stage name of Christian Perrin (1821–89), performer. Joined the Variétés in 1855 and performed in *Offenbach operettas in the 1860s. Starred in Offenbach's *féeries Orphée aux enfers* (1874), *Geneviève de Brabant* (1875), *Le voyage dans la lune* (1875), and was later cast in *Les mille et une nuits* (1881) and *Le Petit Poucet* (1885). In the 1880s, was in some of the vaudevilles written for Anna Judic and scored by *Hervé at the Variétés, among them *Mam'zelle Nitouche*.

Clairville, pseudonym of Louis-François Nicolaïe (1811–79), playwright. Born in Lyon, son of an actor, had a long and prolific career, specialising in vaudeville, revue, and *féerie*. Collaborated on two 'classic' *féeries*, *Peau d'Âne* (1838) and *Les sept châteaux du diable* (1844), as well as, among others, *La poule aux œufs d'or* (1848), *Les bibelots du diable* (1858), *Rothomago* (1862), *Cendrillon* (1866), *Les voyages de Gulliver* (1867). In the early 1870s, wrote *féeries* for the Théâtre des Menus-Plaisirs, where he had *Hervé, *Justamant, *Thérésa, and *Silly as collaborators or performers. Also remembered as one of the librettists of Lecocq's *Les cent vierges* and *La fille de Madame Angot* and of Robert Planquette's *Les cloches de Corneville*. Father of composer Édouard Clairville, known as Clairville fils (1854–1906), uncle of playwright Charles Clairville (1855–1918). Édouard contributed music to his father's spectacular vaudeville *Coco* (1878).

Cogniard, Théodore (1806–72) and Hippolyte (1807–82), known as the Cogniard brothers, team of playwrights and theatre managers. Authors of melodramas, vaudevilles, and revues. With *Clairville and d'*Ennery, the most important figures of mid-century *féerie*: *La fille de l'air* (1837), *Les mille et une nuits* (1843), and three cornerstones of the *féerie* canon, *La biche au bois* (1845), *La chatte blanche* (1852), and *La poudre de Perlinpinpin* (1853), as well as the 1850 reworking of *Le pied de mouton*. Théodore collaborated with Clairville on *Les bibelots du diable* (1858). Managed the Porte-Saint-Martin 1840–48 (partly jointly, partly Théodore alone); Hippolyte managed the Variétés 1855–69 and oversaw the theatre's turn to *opéra-bouffe* after 1864.

Debillemont, Jean-Jacques (1824–79), conductor and composer. Born in Dijon. Had several one-act operettas performed in the 1860s and early 1870s; in 1868, he was among the first composers other than *Offenbach and *Hervé to have a full-length operetta performed, with *Le grand-duc de Matapa*.

Tried, without success, to follow in Offenbach's footsteps with a composerly *féerie*, *Le treizième coup de minuit* (1874). Was resident conductor at the Porte-Saint-Martin 1865–7 and again from 1873 to his death. In this capacity he contributed music to the 1865 and 1867 productions of *La biche au bois* and scored the *Verne–d'*Ennery scientific *féeries Le tour du monde en 80 jours* (1874) and *Les enfants du capitaine Grant* (1878), as well as the traditional *féerie Le miroir magique* (1876). Was also active in London, where he and Hervé both contributed to the score of the local *féerie Babil and Bijou* (1872).

Delval, Mademoiselle, stage name of Léontine Goret (?–1919), performer. Was at the Variétés, the Gymnase, and the Porte-Saint-Martin in the 1850s and 1860s, and found fame in roles that capitalised on her physical appearance: the Venus de Milo in the 1858 revue *As-tu vu la comète, mon gas?* and Aïka in the 1865 and 1867 productions of *La biche au bois*. Her performance as Aïka was evoked by poet Théodore de Banville in *Les Occidentales* (originally published as *Nouvelles odes funambulesques*, 1869); she also appears in the autobiographical fiction of Marcelin (pseudonym of Émile Planat, 1825–87), visual artist and journalist, who designed the costumes for the 1865 *Biche*. Sister of *Silly.

Dennery, Adolphe. See under d'*Ennery.

Desclauzas, Marie, stage name of Malvina Ernestine Armand (1841–1912), performer. Now chiefly remembered as a star of Third Republic operetta (*La fille de Madame Angot*, *Le petit duc*), started her career at the Cirque (later Châtelet), where she took part in most *féerie* productions of the 1860s: the revival of *La poule aux œufs d'or* (1860), *Rothomago* (1862), *Aladin* (1863), the revival of *Les sept châteaux du diable* (1864), *Cendrillon* (1866). She was also in the cast of the *Serpette *féerie Madame le Diable* (1882), of the 1884 revival of *La poule aux œufs d'or*, and of the composerly *féerie La montagne enchantée* (1897).

Duru, Alfred. See Henri *Chivot.

Ennery (Dennery), Adolphe d', pseudonym of Adolphe Philippe (1811–99), playwright. Immensely successful, active from the July Monarchy through the Third Republic, possibly the paragon of the *faiseur* kind of writer for the stage, driven by craftsmanship rather than by literary ambition. Author of melodramas (*La grâce de Dieu*, *Don César de Bazan*, *Les deux orphelines*), including military plays (*La prise de Pékin*), librettist to Adolphe Adam, Daniel-François-Esprit Auber, Charles Gounod, and Jules Massenet. Among his *féeries* are *Les sept châteaux du diable* (1844), *La poule aux œufs d'or* (1848), *Les sept merveilles du monde* (1853), *Rothomago* (1862), *Les mille et une nuits* (1881). Collaborated with Jules *Verne on *Le tour du monde en 80*

jours (1874), *Les enfants du capitaine Grant* (1878), *Michel Strogoff* (1880), and *Voyage à travers l'impossible* (1882). His house is now a museum showcasing his wife Clémence's collection of East Asian art.

Ferrier, Paul (1843–1920), playwright. Author of vaudevilles, librettist to most major operetta composers of the Third Republic (most notably, collaborated on *Varney's *Les mousquetaires au couvent*). In addition to the *féeries* co-authored with Ernest *Blum, wrote *Les mille et une nuits* (1881) with Adolphe d'*Ennery, as well as *Dix jours aux Pyrénées* (1887) and *Riquet à la houppe* (1889), both scored by Varney.

Fournier, Marc (1818–79), playwright and theatre manager. Born in Geneva, started his career in journalism. Author of melodramas in the 1840s and 1850s (*Les nuits de la Seine*, *Manon Lescaut*). Managed the Porte-Saint-Martin 1851–68, where he gave unprecedentedly lavish *féerie* productions: d'*Ennery's *Les sept merveilles du monde* (1853), then revivals of *Le pied de mouton* (1860), *Les pilules du diable* (1863), and *La biche au bois* (1865 and 1867). His directorship was pivotal in the careers of *Mariquita, *Justamant, *Debillemont, and *Vizentini; the 1865 *Biche* helped *Hervé stage a comeback.

Gélabert, Conchita (1857–1922), performer. Born in Madrid. Came to attention in the 1876 operetta *Jeanne, Jeannette et Jeanneton*; was in the original cast of great hits of the 1870s and early 1880s such as *Les cloches de Corneville*, *Offenbach's *Madame Favart*, and *Audran's *Le grand Mogol*. Played the female lead in the 1881 revival of *La biche au bois* and in the 1883 revival of *Les pommes d'or* with a new score by Audran. Was also in the 1889 production of *Orphée aux enfers* at the Éden, in the 1891 production of *Le Petit Poucet*, and in the comic travelogues *Le voyage de Suzette* (1890) and *Le pays de l'or* (1892).

Godin, Eugène (1829–94), stage carpenter (*chef machiniste*). Worked at the Lyceum in London under the management of Anglo-French actor Charles Fechter (1863–7). Was at the Gaîté, where he devised the stage machinery for *La chatte blanche* (1869 and 1875), *La poule aux œufs d'or* (1872), *Le Chat botté* (1878), and the *Offenbach *féeries*, as well as for melodrama productions. Was brought in at the Renaissance for *Madame le Diable* (1882). From 1883 was at the Éden-Théâtre, which specialised in spectacular ballets and presented two *féeries*, then, from 1891, at the Opéra-Comique.

Grévin, Alfred (1827–92), visual artist. One of the most prominent Parisian caricaturists and illustrators of the 1860s to the 1880s, also designed costumes for stage productions, including for several *féeries*: *Cendrillon* (1866) and *Les voyages de Gulliver* (1867) at the Châtelet; all the Gaîté's *féerie* productions of the 1870s, including the four *Offenbach *féeries*; *Le pied de mouton* (1874), *Les pilules du diable* (1880), *L'arbre de Noël* (1880), *Les mille et une nuits* (1881), *Coco-Fêlé* (1885), *Le Petit Poucet* (1885). Now chiefly

remembered for the wax museum that bears his name, the Musée Grévin, opened in 1882.

Grivot, Pierre (1836–1912), performer. Got his start in vaudeville; was in the original cast of *Sardou's *La famille Benoîton* in 1867. Was in most productions of the golden age of *féerie* at the Gaîté: *La chatte blanche* (1869 and 1875), the four *Offenbach *féeries*, *Le Chat botté* (1878). In 1879, joined the Opéra-Comique as a *trial* (comic tenor), where he remained until 1902 and originated roles in *Les contes d'Hoffmann* and *Manon*.

Hervé, pseudonym of Florimond Ronger (1825–92), composer, performer, and theatre manager. Born in Houdain, Pas-de-Calais. One of two practitioners of one-act operetta in 1850s Paris with *Offenbach, established his theatre in 1854. Disgraced in 1856, when he was sentenced to prison for sexual harassment, made a comeback in the 1860s. Performed in and wrote additional music for the 1865 production of *La biche au bois*. In 1866, had his first full-length operetta performed at the Bouffes-Parisiens (*Les chevaliers de la Table ronde*), and between 1867 and 1869 scored three hits at the Folies-Dramatiques with *L'œil crevé*, *Chilpéric*, and *Le petit Faust*. An 1870 Lyceum production of *Chilpéric* marked the beginning of a parallel career in London. Contributed music to various *féeries* in the early 1870s, both for the Menus-Plaisirs in Paris and for the London Alhambra (*Babil and Bijou*, 1872). Performed as Orphée in the 1878 production of *Orphée aux enfers*. In the 1880s, specialised in vaudeville with original scores; also wrote *café-concert* songs (including for *Thérésa) and ballet music. Father of composer, performer, and playwright Emmanuel Ronger, known as Gardel-Hervé (1847–1926).

Justamant (Justament), Henri (1815–90), choreographer. Born in Bordeaux. One of the most important choreographers of the second half of the 19th century, and possibly the one whose work is best documented. Began his career in the French provinces and in Brussels, made his Parisian debut with the 1865 *La biche au bois*. Was briefly at the Opéra, where he choreographed the 1869 version of *Faust*. In the 1870s and 1880s worked on a number of *féerie* productions, including *La chatte blanche* (1870), *Les pilules du diable* (1874), *Le voyage dans la lune* (1875), *Orphée aux enfers* (London 1877 and Paris 1878), *Cendrillon* (1879), *L'arbre de Noël* (1880), *La biche au bois* (1881), *Peau d'Âne* (1883), *Le pied de mouton* (1888). His surviving notated choreographies are at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, the New York Public Library, and the Theaterwissenschaftliche Sammlung of the University of Cologne.

Leterrier, Eugène (1843–84), and Albert Vanloo (1846–1920), team of playwrights. Chiefly active as operetta librettists, most notably for *Lecocq and Emmanuel Chabrier. Collaborated with Arnold *Mortier on the *féeries Le voyage dans*

la lune (1875), *L'arbre de Noël* (1880), *Le Petit Poucet* (1885). After Leterrier's death, Vanloo wrote the comic travelogue *Le pays de l'or* (1892, with *Chivot) and more libretti, including for André Messager (*Les p'tites Michu*, *Véronique*). He also left a memoir, *Sur le plateau: Souvenirs d'un librettiste* (1917).

Mariquita, Mademoiselle, later Madame, stage name of Marie Thérèse Gamaleri (1840?–1922), dancer and choreographer. Appeared in *Les bibelots du diable* (1858) and in the 1860 revival of *La poule aux œufs d'or*; starred in Porte-Saint-Martin productions of the 1860s and 1870s, including the *féeries* (scientific or otherwise) *Les pilules du diable* (1863), *La biche au bois* (1865 and 1867), *Le pied de mouton* (1874), *Le tour du monde en 80 jours* (1874), *Le miroir magique* (1876), and *Les enfants du capitaine Grant* (1878). Starting from the 1870s, worked as a choreographer for various Parisian theatres as well as for the Folies-Bergère. Choreographed several *féeries* or *féerie*-like plays at the Châtelet—*La poule aux œufs d'or* (1884), *Coco-Fêlé* (1885), *Les aventures de Monsieur de Crac* (1886), *La chatte blanche* (1887)—at the Gaîté—*Le voyage de Suzette* (1890), *Le Petit Poucet* (1891), *Le pays de l'or* (1892), *Les bicyclistes en voyage* (1893)—and at smaller theatres—*La fille de l'air* (1890), *Le carnet du diable* (1897). In 1898, the newly appointed manager Albert Carré hired her as *maîtresse de ballet* of the Opéra-Comique, a post she held for the rest of her career. Choreographed the literary *féerie La belle au bois dormant* (1907), starring Sarah Bernhardt.

Méliès, Georges (1861–1938), stage magician and filmmaker. Managed the Théâtre Robert-Houdin, the stage-magic venue in the passage de l'Opéra, from 1888. Adopted film technology soon after the Lumière brothers' 1895 demonstration of the Cinématographe, founding his production company in 1896. Used the new medium of film to create *féeries*, both of the traditional kind—*Cendrillon* (1899), *Le royaume des fées* (1903)—and of the scientific kind—*Le voyage dans la lune* (1902), *Le voyage à travers l'impossible* (1904). Provided film projections for the stage *féeries Les 400 coups du diable* (1905) and *Pif! Paf! Pouf!* (1906): the material filmed for the former was extended and released as *Les quat' cents farces du diable* (1906). Made his last film *féeries* (*À la conquête du pôle* and *Cendrillon*) in 1912, by which time they represented an obsolete genre and an outdated film culture. His work was not rediscovered until the late 1920s.

Mortier (Mortjé), Arnold (1843–85), critic and playwright. Born in Amsterdam. Brought the spirit of society reporting to theatre journalism. Starting 1873, had an influential daily column in *Le Figaro*, headlined 'Soirée théâtrale' and signed 'Un monsieur de l'orchestre' (both column and pseudonym would later be taken over by others). Also published a yearly selection of his articles in book format as *Les soirées parisiennes*. Collaborated with

*Leterrier and Vanloo on the *féeries Le voyage dans la lune* (1875), *L'arbre de Noël* (1880), and *Le Petit Poucet* (1885) and with Henri Meilhac (of Meilhac and Halévy fame) on *Madame le Diable* (1882), scored by Gaston *Serpette.

Offenbach, Jacques (Jacob) (1819–80), composer and theatre manager. Born in Cologne. Established the Bouffes-Parisiens in 1855. In the 1850s and early 1860s was one of two practitioners of one-act operetta with *Hervé, then, from 1858 (*Orphée aux enfers*), the sole practitioner of full-length operetta. The theatre deregulation of 1864 allowed him to have works performed at the Variétés (*La belle Hélène*, *La grande-duchesse de Gérolstein*), the Palais-Royal (*La vie parisienne*), the Menus-Plaisirs (*Geneviève de Brabant*, second version). In the 1870s, had four *féeries* performed at the Gaîté, which he also managed 1873–5: *Le roi Carotte* (1872), in collaboration with *Sardou, new versions of *Orphée aux enfers* (1874) and *Geneviève de Brabant* (1875), and *Le voyage dans la lune* (1875). Also composed additional music for the 1875 revival of *La chatte blanche*. Further *féerie* plans made with Sardou (*Don Quichotte*) and with Meilhac and Halévy (*L'oiseau bleu*) did not come to fruition. Wrote a *féerie* for the London Alhambra, *Whittington* (1874), performed in Paris in 1893 as *Le chat du diable*. Starting with *La jolie parfumeuse* in 1873, his operettas embraced the new subgenre pioneered by Charles Lecocq, *grande opérette* or (commercial) *opéra comique*.

Pougaud, Désiré, stage name of Désiré Cousin (1866–1928), performer. Son of a melodrama actor. Debuted in 1885 at the Ambigu-Comique. Took part in the 1892 Porte-Saint-Martin revival of *Le voyage dans la lune* and performed in the 1895 scientific *féerie Les aventures de Thomas Plumepatte* at the Théâtre de la République. Was at the Châtelet 1894–1907, where he was cast in both traditional *féeries—Les sept châteaux du diable* (1895), *La biche au bois* (1896), *Rothomago* (1897), *La poudre de Perlinpinpin* (1898), *Le Petit chaperon rouge* (1900), *Les 400 coups du diable* (1905), *Pif! Paf! Pouf!* (1906), *Les pilules du diable* (1907), *La princesse Sans-Gêne* (1907)—and scientific *féeries*, most notably as Passepartout in *Le tour du monde en 80 jours* (starting in 1896). Because of his celebrity status among the Châtelet's family audience, was dubbed 'le Coquelin des gosses' (the kids' Coquelin). Wrote the lyrics to a few *café-concert* songs. After the Châtelet appeared in revue, operetta, vaudeville, and film.

Sardou, Victorien (1831–1908), playwright. Launched by actor and manager Virginie Déjazet, in the 1860s mainly author of comedies for the vaudeville theatres (*Nos intimes*, *La famille Benoîton*), later turned to melodrama: *Patrie!*, *La haine* (scored by *Offenbach), a string of plays for Sarah Bernhardt (including *Fédora*, *Théodora*, *La Tosca*, *Gismonda*, all later adapted into operas).

Together with Offenbach gave a *féerie*, *Le roi Carotte* (1872), and planned another, an adaptation of his earlier play *Don Quichotte*. Wrote a *Verne-style, scientific *féerie*-like play, *Le Crocodile* (1886), scored (like *Théodora*) by Jules Massenet. A *féerie* version of *Don Quichotte* eventually saw the stage in 1895 with music by Albert Renaud. Member of the Académie française from 1877.

Serpette, Gaston (1846–1904), composer. Born in Nantes; 1871 Prix de Rome winner. In addition to operettas proper, scored vaudevilles, as well as five adult-themed *féeries* for smaller, upmarket theatres: *Madame le Diable* (1882), *Le château de Tire-Larigot* (1884), *Adam et Ève* (1886), *Le carnet du diable* (1895), *Le carillon* (1896). Composed vocal numbers for *Les mille et une nuits* (1881) and revivals of *Cendrillon* and *Le pied de mouton* (both 1888). Provided music for the *féerie Le mirliton enchanté*, privately performed at the Cercle des Mirlitons in 1883.

Silly, Mademoiselle, stage name of Léa Goret (?–1917), performer. Was the first Oreste in *Offenbach's *La belle Hélène*; attracted media attention for her feud with co-star Hortense Schneider. In addition to vaudeville and operetta, was active in *féerie*: the 1867 revival of *La biche au bois*, *Les griffes du diable* (1872), the 1874 revival of *Les bibelots du diable*. Was in the cast of *Clairville's spectacular vaudeville *Coco* (1878). Sister of *Delval.

Simon-Girard, Juliette, née Girard (1859–1954?), performer. One of the foremost operetta stars of her generation, rose to fame as a teenager with *Les cloches de Corneville*; soon afterwards married fellow Folies-Dramatiques cast member Simon-Max (1847–1923), with whom she formed an operetta power couple until their divorce in 1895. They appeared together in several *féeries*: *La chatte blanche* (1887), the comic travelogue *Le voyage de Suzette* (1890), *Cendrillon* (1891); Simon-Girard was also featured in *La biche au bois* (1896), *Rothomago* (1897), and *Les 400 coups du diable* (1905).

Théo, Louise, stage name of Cécile Piccolo (1854–1922), performer. Daughter of *café-concert* manager Anna Piccolo. Started her career as a *café-concert* singer, made the transition to operetta and rose to fame with *Offenbach's 1873 *La jolie parfumeuse*. Also performed vaudeville. Joined the cast of *Orphée aux enfers* in December 1874; was in the 1879 revival of the classic *féerie Cendrillon*, in the comic travelogue *Dix jours aux Pyrénées* (1887), and in the *Serpette *féerie Adam et Ève* (1886).

Thérésa, stage name of Emma Valadon (1837–1913), performer and composer. Born in La Bazoche-Grouët, Eure-et-Loir. The most celebrated *café-concert* singer of the 1860s, and one of the most celebrated performers of the decade—in *Offenbach's *La vie parisienne* she is mentioned among the chief attractions of Paris, on a par with opera star Adelina Patti. Famous for *tyroliennes* (yodelling songs), composed some of her material, sang songs by *Hervé.

Reinvented herself as a theatre performer with an emphasis on *féerie*: was in *La chatte blanche* (1869), *Le puits qui chante* (1871), *La reine Carotte* (1872), *La poule aux œufs d'or* (1872), *Geneviève de Brabant* (1875), *Le voyage dans la lune* (1876), *Les sept châteaux du diable* (1876 and 1878), *Cendrillon* (1888). Joined the cast of *Le puits qui chante* and *Le voyage dans la lune* mid-run, wrote songs for *La chatte blanche* and *La reine Carotte*.

Toché, Raoul. See Ernest *Blum.

Ugalde, Delphine, née Beaucé (1829–1910), performer, composer, and theatre manager. Over the course of her career as a performer (1848–73) moved repeatedly between the state-subsidised theatres (Opéra-Comique, Théâtre-Lyrique) and the commercial houses (Variétés, Bouffes-Parisiens, Porte-Saint-Martin, Châtelet, Athénée, Folies-Marigny). Appeared in the 1865 production of *La biche au bois*, taking over the role of Prince Souci from *Hervé, and in 1867 joined the cast of *Cendrillon* as Prince Charming. Composed stage works and songs. Was appointed to the administration of the Opéra by the Commune. Later managed the Folies-Marigny 1872–3, the Bouffes-Parisiens 1885–8. Mother of performer Marguerite Ugalde (1861–1940).

Van Ghell (Vanghell), Anna (1847–26), performer. Belgian-born. Debuted in the title role of Laurent de Rillé's fairytale operetta *Le Petit Poucet* in 1868, rose to stardom in 1869 with two *travesti* roles in *Hervé's *Le petit Faust* and *Offenbach's *La princesse de Trébizonde*. In addition to operetta, performed in *féerie* productions: *Rothomago* (1877 and 1878), *Cendrillon* (1879), *La biche au bois* (1881), in the first two cases in *travesti* roles. Was also in an 1881 production of *Les sept châteaux du diable* at the Éden-Théâtre in Brussels.

Vanloo, Albert. See Eugène *Leterrier.

Varney, Louis (1844–1908), composer. Born in New Orleans, son of conductor and composer Alphonse Varney. Achieved fame with the 1880 operetta *Les mousquetaires au couvent*. In addition to operettas and vaudevilles, set to music the comic travelogue *Dix jours aux Pyrénées* (1887), the traditional *féerie Riquet à la houppe* (1889), and a *féerie* modelled on those by *Serpette, *L'âge d'or* (1905). His 1892 operetta *Miss Robinson* echoes the Gaîté comic travelogues (and shares the lead performer, *Simon-Girard, with *Le voyage de Suzette*).

Vasseur, Léon (1844–1917), composer and conductor. Born in Bapaume, Pas-de-Calais. From the same generation of operetta composers as Paul Lacome, Edmond *Audran, Louis *Varney, Gaston *Serpette, and Robert Planquette, was the first to find success with *La timbale d'argent*, in 1872. Scored the *féerie* *Le prince Soleil* (1889) and the comic travelogue *Le pays de l'or* (1892); wrote ballet music for the 1891 revival of *Le Petit Poucet*. Provided some original

music for the version of *Le voyage de Suzette* (1890) heard in Paris, as well as an alternate composerly setting. Was resident conductor at the Folies-Bergère 1879–84.

Verne, Jules (1828–1905), novelist and playwright. Born in Nantes, based in Amiens for the later part of his life. In the 1850s and early 1860s tried to break through as a playwright and write four librettos for his composer friend Aristide Hignard. Found immense, international, and long-lasting success with the novel series billed as *Voyages extraordinaires*, begun in 1863. Collaborated with Adolphe d'*Ennery on the stage versions of *Le tour du monde en 80 jours* (1874), *Les enfants du capitaine Grant* (1878), and *Michel Strogoff* (1880), signed alone that of *Kéraban le Têtu* (1883). His other play with d'Ennery, *Voyage à travers l'impossible* (1882), references *Voyage au centre de la terre*, *Vingt mille lieues sous les mers*, and *De la terre à la lune*. Was among the inspirations for *Offenbach's *Le voyage dans la lune* (1875) and the film *féeries* of Georges *Méliès. Offenbach's operetta *Le docteur Ox* (1877), on a libretto co-authored by Arnold *Mortier, is based on a character from a Verne story (later featured in *Voyage à travers l'impossible*).

Vizentini, Albert (1841–1906), violinist, conductor, composer, writer, and theatre manager. Son of *metteur en scène* Augustin Vizentini. Published a volume of theatrical gossip as a young man (*Derrière la toile*, 1868). In 1867 became resident conductor at the Porte-Saint-Martin. Conductor at the Gaîté from 1871, took over from *Offenbach as manager, 1875–8. *Le voyage dans la lune* premièred during his tenure; subsequently he turned the theatre into an opera house, 1876–7. Managed the Folies-Dramatiques 1890–4, the Lyon opera house 1895–8 (where he gave the French première of *Meistersinger*). Was *directeur de la scène* at the Opéra-Comique under Albert Carré, 1898–1906. The Bibliothèque-musée de l'Opéra holds manuscript full scores in his hand for melodrama and *féerie* productions from the late 1860s and early 1870s, mostly at the Porte-Saint-Martin and the Gaîté. The *féerie* scores are *La poule aux œufs d'or* (Gaîté, 1872) and *Les pilules du diable* (1873), commissioned by the Châtelet.

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Includes personal names and titles of stage works and films. Names of modern scholars are included only when occurring in the main text. *Particules* in front of French surnames (whether of aristocratic origin or not) and articles at the beginning of titles have been ignored in alphabetising, with the exception of French indefinite articles. Codes assigned to plays in Appendix 1 are given in bold (e.g., **64A**); page numbers in bold refer to biographical entries in Appendix 2.