



PALAZZETTO
BRU ZANE
CENTRE
DE MUSIQUE
ROMANTIQUE
FRANÇAISE

La Vie parisienne

Jacques Offenbach



Opéra-bouffe in five acts

Music by **Jacques Offenbach**

Complete original version of 1866

Libretto by **Henri Meilhac** and **Ludovic Halévy**

Offenbach was at the height of his fame when he wrote this delightful and entertaining portrayal of Parisian society. With a dizzying libretto by the duo Meilhac and Halévy, he composed a delightful ode to the festive pleasures of his time. The Palazzetto Bru Zane and its members offer the discovery of the original version of *La Vie Parisienne* as imagined by its author in 1866. The complete orchestral material of the Orchestre du Palais-Royal has recently been unearthed and contains the music created on the evening of the premiere, as well as precious performance indications added while the composer was at work. Two new acts feature completely new music. The pre-censorship libretto and forgotten variants offer a different take on some of the most famous arias. A *La Vie Parisienne* that has never been performed before, but which retains the charm and presence of the pages that made its reputation. A fine team of French singers sets Offenbach's masterpiece alight, here enlivened by the colours and elegance of Christian Lacroix.

Musical direction: **Romain Dumas**

Stage direction, sets, costumes : **Christian Lacroix**

Staging collaborators: **Laurent Delvert, Romain Gilbert**

Choreography: **Glysein Lefever**

Lighting design: **Bertrand Couderc**

Orchestra: Les Musiciens du Louvre and their Academy
in partnership with the Jeune Orchestre Atlantique

Chorus: Chœur de chambre de Namur

Gabrielle, **Jodie Devos**

Gardefeu, **Rodolphe Briand**

Bobinet, **Marc Mauillon**

Le Baron de Gondremarck, **Franck Leguérinel**

La Baronne de Gondremarck, **Sandrine Buendia**

Métella, **Aude Extrémo**

Le Brésilien, Gontran, Frick, **Éric Huchet**

Urbain, Alfred, **Laurent Kubla**

Joseph, Alphonse, Prosper, **Carl Ghazarossian**

Madame de Quimper-Karadec, **Ingrid Perruche**

Madame de Folle-Verdure, **Caroline Meng**

Pauline, **Elena Galitskaya**

Clara, **Louise Pingot**

Bertha, **Marie Kalinine**

3:25 including one interval

In French, with English subtitles

Filmed at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées
in December 2021

Film director: **François Roussillon**

Executive producer of the show: **Bru Zane France**

ACT ONE

The Gare de l'Ouest in Paris.

Raoul de Gardefeu and Bobinet, two young Parisian dandies, discover that they have both been two-timed by the demi-mondaine Métella; tired of cocottes, they decide to go back to courting society ladies. At that very moment, Gardefeu spots a Danish baroness, who has just arrived in Paris with her husband. He pretends to be a guide attached to the Grand-Hôtel in order to try to seduce her.

ACT TWO

A salon in Gardefeu's apartment.

Gardefeu returns home with the Baron and Baroness Gondremarck, who believe themselves to be in an annexe of the Grand-Hôtel. The Baron discreetly asks him to arrange a meeting with a woman who has been recommended to him, and whose name is... Métella. While waiting for this rendezvous, he insists on having a table d'hôte dinner; Gardefeu improvises the meal with the help of his bootmaker Frick and the glovemaker Gabrielle, who will play the roles of wealthy guests. At dinner time, Frick arrives disguised as a major and Gabrielle as the widow of a colonel. They are accompanied by many German and Marseillais friends.

ACT THREE

The grand salon of the Quimper-Karadec residence.

In the townhouse of his absent aunt Madame de Quimper-Karadec, Bobinet organises the final details of a supposed all-night ball, intended to keep the Baron away from his wife and thus leave the field clear for Gardefeu. The servants, disguised as socialites, take it in turns to entertain the Baron; he is particularly delighted by the seductive behaviour of the chambermaid, Pauline. Bobinet arrives dressed as a Swiss admiral and the company sits down to dine just in time for the entrance of the merry bootmakers and glovemakers, also in fancy dress.

ACT FOUR

The same place, the next day.

On returning home, Madame de Quimper-Karadec and her niece Madame de Folle-Verdure find Baron Gondremarck locked in a bedroom. To save the situation, Pauline introduces him as her fiancé, Jean the coachman, with whom she has been out on the town. Still unaware of where he really is, the Baron goes out to get ready for a dinner party to which he and his wife are invited – in fact, to the same ladies' house. Enter the Baroness, Bobinet and Gardefeu. The Danish aristocrat informs everyone that the previous day she received a letter from a certain Métella, revealing the trap set for her by the two friends and offering to take her place in his bedroom. So it was not she who spent the night with Gardefeu! When the Baron joins them, the masks come off to general amazement and the house is invaded by the bootmakers, still dancing the frenzied galop of the night before.

ACT FIVE

A private room in a restaurant.

Bobinet and Gardefeu are invited to a fancy-dress ball given by a rich Brazilian in a fashionable restaurant. Dejected by his failure, Gardefeu is now nostalgic for cocottes. Mesdames de Quimper-Karadec and Folle-Verdure appear, along with the Baroness, all of them masked. Métella has summoned the Baroness to take her place... next to Gondremarck. When the latter appears, his wife makes him promise to return to Copenhagen the next day. The final chorus celebrates general forgiveness and the wild gaiety of Paris.

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