

it employs the unusual device of spoken words over a light orchestral accompaniment. Also among his finest and most successful operas are *Le Jongleur de Notre-Dame* (1902), *Werther* (1892; after J.W. von Goethe), and *Thaïs* (1894). The famous “*Méditation*” for violin and orchestra from *Thaïs* remains part of the standard violin repertory.

Several of Massenet’s operas reflect the succession of contemporary operatic fashions. Thus, *Le Cid* (1885) has the characteristics of French grand opera; *Le Roi de Lahore* (1877; *The King of Lahore*) reflects the Orientalism—a fascination with Asian exotica—that was also prevalent in the 19th-century European and American art market; *Esclarmonde* (1889) shows the influence of Richard Wagner; and *La Navarraise* (1894; *The Woman of Navarre*) is influenced by the end-of-the-century style of verismo, or realism. Also prominent among Massenet’s operas are *Hérodiade* (1881) and *Don Quichotte* (1910).

Of Massenet’s incidental music, particularly notable is that for Leconte de Lisle’s play *Les Érinnyes* (1873; *The Furies*), which contains the widely performed song “*Élégie*.” In 1873 he also produced his oratorio, *Marie-Magdeleine*, later performed as an opera. This work exemplifies the mingling of religious feeling and eroticism often found in Massenet’s music. Massenet also composed more than 200 songs, a piano concerto, and several orchestral suites.

As a teacher of composition at the Paris Conservatoire from 1878, Massenet was highly influential. His autobiography was entitled *Mes Souvenirs* (1912; *My Recollections*).

Massenet

Le Cid - Ballet music

Meyerbeer

Les Patineurs - Ballet music

The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Jean Martinon

Giacomo Meyerbeer, original name Jakob Liebmann Meyer Beer (born Sept. 5, 1791, Tasdorf, near Berlin—died May 2, 1864, Paris), German opera composer who established in Paris a vogue for spectacular romantic opera. Born of a wealthy Jewish family, Meyerbeer studied composition in Berlin and later at Darmstadt, where he formed a friendship with C.M. von Weber. His early German operas, produced at Munich, Stuttgart, and Vienna, were failures, and after a journey to Paris and London he settled in 1816 in Italy, where he produced five operas in the style of Rossini. The best of these was *Il crociato* (Venice, 1824), given the following year in London and Paris. His first French opera, written in association with Eugène Scribe, was *Robert le Diable* (Paris, 1831), produced on an extremely lavish scale and calculated to appeal to the current romantic taste for medievalism, the supernatural, and the macabre. Its success was immediate, establishing this work as the model of French grand opera. *Les Huguenots* was similarly successful in 1836. In 1842 Meyerbeer temporarily returned to Berlin, where he became music director to the King of Prussia and where he prompted the production of Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer*. During this period he wrote a German opera, *Ein Feldlager in Schlesien* (1844), in which Jenny Lind took the principal part. His third romantic opera on a libretto of Scribe, *Le Prophète*, was given in Paris in 1849. He then turned to a lighter style and produced two works in the tradition of the *opéra comique*, *L'Etoile du nord* (1854) and *Le Pardon de Ploërmel* (1859). His last opera, *L'Africaine*, was in rehearsal at the time of his death.

Meyerbeer enjoyed an enormous vogue in his day, but his reputation, based on his four Paris operas, did not survive long. Yet he exercised a consider-

able influence on the development of opera by his conception of big character scenes, his dramatic style of vocal writing, and his original sense of orchestration—particularly his novel use of the bass clarinet, the saxophone, and the bassoon. Berlioz came under his influence, and operas such as Verdi's *Don Carlos* and Puccini's *Turandot* are traced to Meyerbeer not only for their spectacular elements but also for their effective manipulation of ensembles and arias. A number of his operas, most notably *L'Africaine*, were revived in the 20th century, and a ballet suite, *Les Patineurs*, based on *Le Prophète*, was arranged by Constant Lambert.

Jules Massenet, in full Jules-Émile-Frédéric Massenet (born May 12, 1842, Montaud, near Saint-Étienne, France—died August 13, 1912, Paris), leading French opera composer, whose music is admired for its lyricism, sensuality, occasional sentimentality, and theatrical aptness.

The son of an ironmaster, Massenet entered the Paris Conservatoire at age 11, subsequently studying composition under the noted opera composer Ambroise Thomas. In 1863 he won the Prix de Rome with his cantata *David Rizzio*. With the production in 1867 of his opera *La Grand' Tante* (The Great Aunt), he embarked on a career as a composer of operas and incidental music. His 24 operas are characterized by a graceful, thoroughly French melodic style. *Manon* (1884; after Antoine-François, Abbé Prévost d'Exiles) is considered by many to be his masterpiece. The opera, marked by sensuous melody and skilled personification, uses leitmotifs to identify and characterize the protagonists and their emotions. In the recitatives (dialogue)

Massenet Led Cid

Meyerbeer Les Patineurs

Jean Martinon conducts The Israel Philharmonic

Le Cid Ballet Suite 17:44

1 Castillane 2:49

2 Andalouse 2:35

3 Aragonaise 1:40

4 Aubade 1:11

5 V. Catalane 3:12

6 Madrilene 3:29

7 Navarraise 2:48

Les patineurs 20:19

8 Entree: Allegro moderato e pesante 3:00

9 Pas seul: Allegro 1:10

10 Pas de deux: Cantabile 2:43

11 Ensemble 5:13

12 Pas de trois: Allegro con spirito 1:16

13 Duet: Allegro scherzoso 1:16

14 Pas de Patineurs: Allegretto molto moderato 2:18

15 Finale: Allegro con spirito 3:23

Producer: John Culshaw Engineer: James Brown

Recorded by Decca May 1958 Mann Auditorium, Tel-Aviv



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