

Arthur Fiedler, (born Dec. 17, 1894, Boston—died July 10, 1979, Brookline, Mass., U.S.), maestro of the Boston Pops Orchestra for 50 seasons and the best-selling classical conductor of all time; his recordings with the Pops sold some 50,000,000 discs. (The Pops Orchestra is the Boston Symphony minus its principal players.) Fiedler, whose principal aim was “to give audiences a good time,” led the Pops in performances of popular tunes, show music, and classics.



From 1911 to 1915 Fiedler studied violin, piano, and conducting at the Royal Academy of Music in Berlin before joining the Boston Symphony as a member of the second violin section. He played in the viola section from 1918 to 1930. He also was proficient on the celesta, piano, and organ. Fiedler organized the Arthur Fiedler Sinfonietta (1924), a chamber symphony, when he was refused the conductorship of the Pops. In 1929 he organized the Esplanade concerts, in which symphonic music was played outdoors in Boston for the first time. In 1930 he became conductor of the Pops.

As conductor of the Boston Pops Fiedler developed a varied and light-hearted repertoire that struck a responsive chord in the public. He excelled at adapting popular dance music and other songs to performance by a symphonic orchestra. Fiedler was viewed by many critics as a highly able technician and a superb showman rather than as a first-rate interpreter of classical music.



HIGH DEFINITION TAPE TRANSFERS

OFFENBACH

Suite Parisienne

BOSTON POPS ORCHESTRA ARTHUR FIEDLER



Mastered in DSD256

Jacques Offenbach died in 1880, yet it is his name that is attached to this ballet that first appeared in 1938. While the tunes in *Gaîté Parisienne* are his, much of the orchestration, as well as the arrangement of the numbers, was done by Manuel Rosenthal. The idea for the ballet was conceived by the talented trio of choreographer Leonid Massine, the well-known impresario Sol Hurok, and René Blum, director of the Ballet Russes de Monte Carlo, who together engaged the services of Rosenthal after they had selected the Offenbach tunes for him to use. The scenario they contrived was taken from Offenbach's operetta *La Vie Parisienne*.

The story concerns the seedy patrons of a Paris bistro called Tortoni's Restaurant, an actual business establishment. There are many amorous adventures in the ballet, with the story centering on two men: a baron who chases after a young woman selling gloves, and a Peruvian who pursues a relationship with a flower girl. It is all quite mischievous fun, colorfully packaged and brilliantly suited by the Offenbach/Rosenthal score. The premiere on April 5, 1938, at the Théâtre de Monte Carlo, was a great success and the music has been in the standard repertory ever since, often presented in "pops" concerts.

Much of the music in *Gaîté Parisienne*, of course, was already familiar when it was first presented, which may have aided its success. The popular "Can-Can," for example, is taken from Offenbach's operetta, *Orpheus in the Underworld* (1858; rev. 1874). The familiar *Barcarolle*, which closes the ballet, comes from the *Tales of Hoffman* (1881), his last operetta.

There is much other attractive music in *Gaîté Parisienne*, all of it in a light vein. There are two colorful polkas, five waltzes, a Ländler, and many other dances, most frothy and joyous, all quite tuneful and direct. In sum, this is unpretentious, well-crafted music, and while it will not appeal to those exclusively interested in serious listening, it is undeniably masterful within its genre. It should be noted that not all the music in the score is from Offenbach: Rosenthal himself wrote No. 14, "The Duel." He was a young composer of modest success when he took on the project, and would later become better known as a conductor, for a time leading the French National Radio Orchestra and later the Seattle Symphony Orchestra. Rosenthal himself recorded this score twice.

OFFENBACH

Gaité Parisienne

BOSTON POPS ORCHESTRA ARTHUR FIEDLER

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| 1 Allegro 2:05 | 13 Valse 1:52 |
| 2 Allegro Brillante 1:00 | 14 Allegro Vivace: Misterioso 2:06 |
| 3 Polka 1:25 | 15 Valse 2:42 |
| 4 Ländler: Allegro 1:33 | 16 Allegro Vivo :25 |
| 5 Mazurka 2:11 | 17 Cancan 1:43 |
| 6 Valse 1:59 | 18 Quadrille 1:51 |
| 7 Allegro 1:03 | 19 Allegro Moderato :42 |
| 8 Polka 1:19 | 20 Allegro :23 |
| 9 Valse 2:51 | 21 Vivo :57 |
| 10 Tempo Di Marcia 1:17 | 22 Vivo :02 |
| 11 Valse 1:47 | 23 Barcarolle 3:45 |
| 12 Allegro Vivo :11 | Total Time: 37:16 |

Recorded June 1954 in Boston Symphony Hall by RCA



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