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FRENCH MUSICAL BROADCASTING FROM 1945 TO 1954 **The musical programs of the “Porché decade”**

by Christophe BENNET

After the dark years of the Occupation, the Liberation launches the time of the rebuilding of the country, but also the rebuilding of the radio. New people are arriving, others are coming back. The protagonists of musical broadcasting are not necessarily sweeping away past habits. It is certain, however, that the ten years after the war mark the radio (which is now called a “public service radio”) with a new seal and a fresh spirit. Beside the strengthening of the artistic resources, especially by the creation of new orchestras, a multi-decade old idea takes shape: the conception of stations that are not necessarily thematically specialized, but differently oriented. Through the prism of musical programs, we’ll find traces of this slow mutation¹.

A HUMAN REVIVAL AND AMBITIOUS POLICIES

IN A BROADCASTING LANDSCAPE TO BE RESHAPED

The content and the organization of the musical programs in the post-war decade can only be understood in the light of the context of the “rebuilding of the radio”. The emerging personalities, the policies they favor, the arrangement of the stations and the musical resources, the innovative and creative initiatives are as many elements which interact and shape the frame.

DETERMINED MEN ARE RULING THE FRENCH RADIO

Appointed on March 12th 1946 at the head of RDF, Wladimir Porché finds a disorderly institution: services inherited from the Occupation with, on the one hand the Parisian station (held by the occupying forces) and on the other hand the Vichy station (gathering the prewar national radio services). Their tasks are multiple: leading the internal negotiations concerning the building of a status while the services inherited from the Liberation, overabundant and closed on themselves are being reorganized; launching the plans for rebuilding of the network as soon as possible despite the shortage of manpower and the industrial weakness of the country. Though indisputably influenced by his formidable step-mother, Simone Porché², the one who is the “common denominator of the RDF³” is clever enough surround himself with competent and valuable men. Created a couple of days after Wladimir Porché’s appointment, the “Club d’Essai” is handed over to Jean Tardieu, who

¹ The French version of this article could be read in : Christophe Bennet, *1925-1975 : Cinquante ans de musique classique à la radio* (direction), Les Cahiers d’Histoire de la Radiodiffusion, Cahier thématique n°95, janvier-mars 2008, 250 p.: http://cohira.fr/cahier_n_95_de_1925_a_1975_janvier_a_mars/

² “Madame Simone”, “the queen mother”, an article by Jacques Parrot in “Antennes”, April 1981, quoted in “Les Cahiers d’Histoire de la Radiodiffusion” #71 “The Porché decade”, January-March 2002, p. 103.

³ Hélène Eck, “The common denominator of the RDF, advantages and difficulties of the function”, in “Les Cahiers d’Histoire de la Radiodiffusion” #71, p. 11.

makes it a broadcasting laboratory with an exceptional prestige⁴. As early as the summer of 1946, after a few months of activity, Porché then appoints Paul Gilson at the “*direction des programmes artistiques de la RDF*”. This “perfect administrator, a poet who loved music⁵” is a former journalist and great reporter. This might explain why he is the passionate architect of the concert schedules of the best orchestras in France and abroad⁶. As for the direction of music, the “architect” Henry Barraud is appointed, almost at the same time. Gilson largely gives him a free rein. Under his impulsion, the Radiodiffusion, from the beginning of the 1950s, gains an importance that announces a great future. During the following two decades, he will be carrying on his mission with inflexible loyalty and cleverness by enlarging it to the multiple possibilities that technical progress gave⁷. Henry Barraud then accepts to manage a great musical service capable of enabling the Radio to play an important role in the artistic resurgence and, furthermore, the reputation of France. He eagerly means to apply his rules of probity to all his coworkers, the musicians, and even the listeners, considered as indispensable partners.

A CONSOLIDATED ARTISTIC ORGANIZATION

Concerning the musical bands, Henry Barraud incorporates the ‘*Orchestre National*’ to the RDF. This orchestra becomes its jewel and its emblem. Constituted in 1941, the Orchestre Radio-Lyrique also becomes one of the jewels of the musical department, since it is devoted to genres that were then appreciated by many listeners: opera, opera-comique and operetta. For about fifteen years it is handed over to Jules Gressier, who had conducted many regional theaters before entering the RDF. The latter anticipates its decentralization policy by granting six regional capitals (Lille, Lyon, Marseille, Nice, Strasbourg, and Toulouse) with orchestras whose members are as able to interpret the vast classical repertoire as the semi-character repertoire and possibly the works by local composers. As early as 1946, Henry Barraud, Raymond Loucheur and the inspector of National Education Maurice David grant the Radio with a choir school in which about twenty boys and girls aged 10 and over can receive, on the one hand a general education, and on the other hand the technical bases of music and vocal art⁸. A choir is also founded in 1947 by Renée Alix. An indispensable complement of the orchestras, this choir gathers 120 artists and remains, with that of the Opera, the only professional choir in Paris. In November 1951, the bulletin “*Radio-Informations-Documentation*” publishes a survey of the RTF orchestras where the numbers of performers are mentioned:

“For Paris: the “*Orchestre National*” (106 performers); the “*Orchestre Radio-Symphonique de Paris*” (80); the “*Orchestre Radio-Lyrique*” (56). For the regional areas: the orchestras of Lille, Lyon, Nice, Strasbourg, Toulouse. And in the overseas districts: the orchestras of Alger and Tunis.”⁹

⁴ Cf. the framed abstract of the essay by Robert Prot, “*Jean Tardieu et la nouvelle radio*”, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2006.

⁵ This is a quote by Darius Milhaud.

⁶ About Paul Gilson, one could usefully read the statement of Pierre Dellard, “Paul Gilson, a man of culture, dedicated to a modern radio”, published in “*Les Cahiers d’Histoire de la Radiodiffusion*”, #73, year 1952, p. 123-144.

⁷ One could especially read “La Musique à la RTF. Témoignages, structures techniques” by France-Yonne Brill in « *Les Cahiers d’Histoire de la Radiodiffusion* », #73, the year 1952, p. 123-144.

⁸ The “Maitrise” gave the children a school as well as a musical education.

⁹ Mentioned in “*Les Cahiers d’Histoire de la Radiodiffusion*”, #69, the year 1951, April-June 2001 : “*La musique à la RTF : 11 orchestres permanents*”, by Bernard Lauzanne.

In his purpose of keeping a balance between all the contributors of his difficult mission, Henry Barraud clearly indicates that he wants to: “recreate this warm animation which used to surround composers like Koussevitzky, Strauss, Diaghilev and the Sunday concerts societies or chamber music.¹⁰” This is because only the Radio is capable of integrating in its budget the enormous charges of such an initiative, of which he estimates that only the Radio is able to bring back the various sectors of its former audience, and more especially the bourgeoisie, visibly more attracted by sport, tourism or the cinema. Beside the reading committee, consisting of composers with various tastes, and the promise to the winners that they’ll be broadcasted soon, Barraud allows to creation the best conditions that could be imagined.

THREE COMPLEMENTARY NATIONAL STATIONS

The manager of the music department adapts the programs to the specificities of each of the three existing stations: the great repertoire and contemporary production belong to the Programme National; the semi-character pieces, jazz, songs, are often integrated into a spoken background, very much in the spirit of the “musicalfurniture” hailed by Erik Satie), which is more broadcasted by Paris Inter and the Programme Parisien. Some of the musical programs, that are instructive and even educative, are born and will last. This is the occasion to pay our tribute to Agathe Mella, and her co-worker Guy Erismann, for the sensitive initiative which, as we are going to see soon, they take on Paris Inter. On September 27th 1953, the weekly journal “*La Semaine radiophonique*” publishes parallel interviews of the two new station managers. Although the “*Chaîne nationale*” keeps Henry Barraud as manager, two new “captains” will henceforth respectively operate on “*Chaîne parisienne*” (Jean Vincent-Bréchnignac) and Paris Inter (Agathe Mella). While the first station is devoted to a light program (“the morning song, an orchestra without any oop-lah at dinner time”), the new female manager of Paris Inter explains that she “sought a formula eclectic enough to satisfy the French audience of Paris Inter, as much as an international audience.¹¹”

A DIVERSITY OF BROADCASTING FORMULAS

DEVOTED TO MUSICAL ECLECTICISM

Those complementarities of the stations of the national network appear even more in the monitoring of the musical broadcasting of the decade 1945-1954.

AN UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF CLASSICAL MUSIC ON THE WAVES

The monitoring of the programs shows the very unequal distribution of classical music on the various channels. The samplings which constitute the basis of this study show a relative continuity in the matter. Over the 463 programs relevant to the vast domain of “classical music”, 233 (meaning more than half of it) come from the Programme musical¹². This is undeniably the station where the formula of “home orchestras” is the most used. Until 1950,

¹⁰ Henry Barraud, “*Histoire de la musique* », la Pléiade, p. 1 524.

¹¹ Article quoted in “*Les Cahiers d’Histoire de la Radiodiffusion*”, #77, the year 1953 of July-September 2003, p. 60.

¹² The samplings that feed this study have been based on 42 days of the decade, from the fourth term of each year (3 to 7 days per year).

one can notice many performances of RDF's bands and orchestras. We could for instance mention "Johann Strauss's *Die Fledermaus* by the Orchestre Radio-Lyrique and the choirs of the RDF, conducted by Marcel Cariven" on Sunday December 26th 1948 and the program "*Thirty years of music in Paris*" on Sunday October 26th 1950, in which works by Daniel-Lesur are performed by the "String quartet of the RDF, conducted by Léon Pascal". As early as 1950, we can notice that the name of the station is shortened: the "Programme national" simply becomes the "National". From the following year on, the set of initials itself is modified, offering the new name of RTF to the orchestras of the "Radio-Télévision Française". The radio orchestras remain omnipresent in the time schedules of the national station. On Monday November 9th 1953, for instance, the listeners of the station can hear Marcel Dupré's "*Cortège and litanies* (by) by the 'Orchestre Radio-Symphonique de Paris' conducted by René Alix". With 167 musical programs, the Paris Inter (called 'Programme Paris Inter' until 1949) absorbs more than a third of the slots of the panel. As the "elder station", it proposes all the types of programs: many symphonic concerts (41 against 61 on the national station), like the one on Monday December 3rd 1952, in which, under a catch-all title of "varied music" the Lille orchestra notably performs the overture of *Boccaccio* (by Franz von Suppé). Over this little representative corpus of the decade, we even notice 14 concerts of chamber music, and a concert of modern music, on Sunday November 8th 1953, a "Postponed broadcasting of the concert of modern music devoted to the "*Groupe des Six*" and announced by Jean Cocteau", notably including Germaine Tailleferre's *Overture*. With 52 programs (i.e. 11% of the corpus), the Programme Parisien (or simply 'Parisien' from 1952) is on the third rung in musical matters. The only slot of chamber music is located at the beginning of the period¹³, like the three programs of didactic cycles which don't go beyond the year 1948¹⁴. That very year the lyrical shows are also no longer scheduled on Programme Parisien¹⁵. It is the same situation for the five slots of "varied music", a genre inherited from the interwar period, which includes Mozart¹⁶ as well as Chaikovsky¹⁷, and the three slots of "light music", its twin sister, where the *Romance in F minor* by the latter also finds its place¹⁸, next to Robert Schumann's *White wolf*¹⁹. Eventually, some slots of classical music also appear on Radio Luxembourg, a private station, which used to costly maintain an orchestra of about sixty musicians at the villa Louvigny²⁰. In the pages of the specialized weekly newspapers, we can notice "symphonic concerts conducted by Henri Pensis²¹" or "Musical hours", such as the one scheduled on Monday November 29th 1954, where Joseph Fuchs plays the *Concerto for violin in D Major* by Brahms. It is important to underline the presence of music on this private station, especially in view of the important decrease of the audience figures of the RTF, particularly in the evenings, while Radio Luxembourg's steadily progresses at the beginning of the fifties²².

¹³ This is the « *Sonata in B flat for violin and piano* " (by Mozart) broadcasted on Monday December 22nd 1947.

¹⁴ The "History of the Opera" and the series "The key of singing" in 1947 and the "Composers of France" in 1948.

¹⁵ At the very beginning of the period, the 'Programme Parisien' also broadcasts "home orchestras", for a lyrical work, "*Hans, the flute player* (by Louis Ganne), by the 'Orchestre Radio-Lyrique' and the choirs of the RF [Radiodiffusion Française], conducted by Roger Ellis" (on Tuesday December 24th 1946) as well.

¹⁶ On Tuesday December 23rd 1947, a concert still conducted by Roger Ellis.

¹⁷ On Saturday December 3rd 1949, "Pierre Cadel and his orchestra" add his *Russian danse* to their musical mixture.

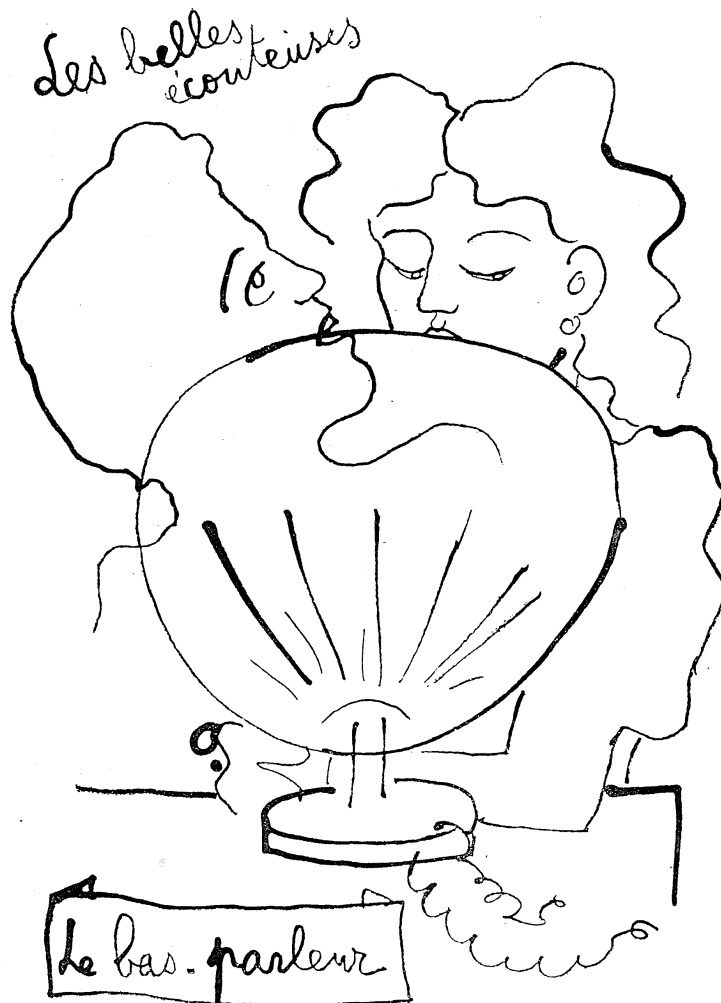
¹⁸ On Wednesday December 19th 1948, under the title "The bunch is on the table, by Marcel Pagnoud and his band."

¹⁹ On Saturday December 4th 1954 in the context of a "Light music Festival".

²⁰ This cultural effort was written in the bill of specifications of the Grand Duché.

²¹ On Saturday December 3rd 1949 and Saturday December 8th 1951, he conducts symphonies by Haydn.

²² Jacques Durand, "The audience figures of the radio from 1946 to 1956", in "*Les Cahiers d'Histoire de la Radiodiffusion*", #71, *the Porché decade, January-March 2002*, p. 53-60.



*Drawing by Jean COCTEAU, in La Chambre d'écho,
Cahiers du club d'essai de la Radiodiffusion française, 1947*

SEVERAL CATEGORIES OF MUSICAL PROGRAMS

The symphonic concerts, which represent one fourth of the sampling's slots, follow the long broadcasting tradition, and still appear as the most broadcasted genre in musical programs²³. In 1947, the stations of the RDF show their complementarity by sharing the the orchestras. This I how, on Tuesday December 23rd, the Marseille orchestra, conducted by Louis Cahuzac²⁴, performs the first part of concert including the *Symphony in G minor* (by Mozart) from 1.30 pm to 2 pm on the 'Programme national' channel, followed, from 2.05 to 2.30 pm, on the 'Programme Parisien' channel, by a second part beginning with the Overture of *The Calm of the sea* (by Mendelssohn). On Friday December 26th similarly, although the Strasbourg orchestra proposes the overture of *The Magic Flute* at 12.45 on 'Programme Paris Inter', it is on 'Programme National' at 1.15 pm that the concert continues with *Ma mere l'Oye* (by Ravel) conducted by Victor Clowez. The latter channel also relays international events, such as the "postponed program of the concert of Radio-Canada devoted to Maurice Ravel" on Tuesday December 23rd 1947. The panel of programs is full of mentions of other orchestras: the Société des Concerts Colonne (2 mentions²⁵); the Lille orchestra (13); the Nice orchestra (11); the Toulouse orchestra (11); the Orchestre National (8); the Orchestre Radio-symphonique de Paris (8). On Radio Luxembourg, the symphonic concert is also the strongest musical program. We could, among many others, mention the program titled *Popular symphonic concert*, hosted by Pierre Hiégel. In the program of Sunday November 8th 1953, the former records archivist of Radio-Cité's and ex-announcer of the German station Radio-Paris²⁶, notably explains the overture of *Le Roi d'Ys* (by Edouard Lalo). As it already did in the interwar period, this work knows a strong popularity. In a program hosted by Paul Le Flem on Sunday December 2nd 1951 on 'Programme National', the listeners can listen to this success of the composer from Lille through its interpretation by the orchestra of Concerts Padeloup and the performance of conductor Pierre Dervaux. Beside the very numerous "symphonic concerts", commented or not, we also find some sequences of "symphonic music", like on the program of Paris Inter, where, in an hour dedicated to "Works by Vaughan Williams", the British composer's *Symphony in F minor* is broadcasted on Tuesday December 28th 1948.

The slots of symphonic and chamber music also bridge the gap between two types of programs. Many slots are spread all over the daily schedule during the decade. Although they often last only a couple of minutes, those "interludes of records" are scrupulously detailed in the newspapers: 5 minutes of *I Pgliacci* by Leoncavallo on Tuesday December 23rd 1947 on Programme National; 7 minutes of the *The Silk Ladder* overture (by Rossini), on Saturday January 1st 1949 on Paris Inter; 10 minutes devoted to "Works by Fauré", on Monday December 3rd 1951 on the national station. As for the long slots of records, copied on the models of the prewar radio, they tend to fade away. With a duration of 2h35, the slot entitled "New records", which include Rachmaninov's *Concerto in G minor* by, proposed on Monday December 30th 1946 on Programme Parisien, is an exception. The "long slots of records" usually don't last more than half an hour. On Paris Inter, the title is often promising, such as

²³ For any numerical or proportional figure, one can see the table of the musical programs (1945-1954).

²⁴ A clarinet player in his youth, Louis Cahuzac (1880-1960) had illustrated himself during the thirties through concerts of chamber music.

²⁵ Including, on Sunday November 9th 1952, the "Concert of Viennese music, a relay of the concert given at the Théâtre du Châtelet, conducted by Georges Sébastien, announced by Gustave Smazeuilh."

²⁶ Cf. our recent article published under the title of "French Musical Broadcasting and the turmoil of World War Two".

the series *Music for everyone* (in 1947), thematic gatherings (like the sequence entitled *Music and candies* on Monday December 3rd 1951 (with *Crème fouettée* by Richard Strauss) and the daily *Little Morning Concert* (in 1954).

Table of the musical programs (1945-1954)²⁷

Category of program	Number	in %
Symphonic concert	118	25,5%
Interlude by record (s)	52	11,2%
Didactic cycle	47	10,2%
Long slot of records	46	9,9%
Chamber music	34	7,3%
Soloists	33	7,1%
Original production surrounding classical music	32	6,9%
Lyrical music	30	6,5%
“cult” program	14	3,0%
Varied music	11	2,4%
Light music	11	2,4%
Spiritual concert	10	2,2%
Chamber music concert	8	1,7%
Choir school	5	1,1%
Recital	4	0,9%
Symphonic music	3	0,6%
“Musique de genre” (varied and light music)	3	0,6%
Modern music	2	0,4%
Total	463	100,0%

Chamber music mainly finds its place on Programme National, in formulas of “Public concert [postponed or not] of chamber music.²⁸” We however can notice the complementarity between the stations of the RDF on Tuesday December 24th 1946. Between 12.30 and 12.55 am, “Pierre-Michel Le Conte and his orchestra of chamber music” notably perform Rameau’s *Hen* on Programme Parisien, while the Programme National releases a performance of Boccherini’s very famous *Minuetto* (between 1pm and 1.20 pm). On Paris Inter, the celebrities are regularly invited. Lily Laskine plays pieces for harp (on Friday December 26th 1947); Yehudi and Hephziba Menuhin perform the *Sonata in G Major* by Lekeu (on Thursday December 30th 1947). On Monday November 9th 1953, the station, at the head of which Agathe Mellawas recently appointed proposes a “postponed relay of the recital given by Kirsten Flagstad” with, among other pieces, *In me is shining a victorious day* (by Brahms). The pieces for soloists and programs of recital are on the contrary almost nonexistent on Programme National and Programme Parisien.

Beside these ersatz and derivative concerts, “original productions of classical music” are emerging almost everywhere. Designed by personalities of the musical area, they often have an educative orientation. In 1949, Pierre Hiégel hosts a series with the nice title of *Love*

²⁷ Following a sampling of 8 days per year.

²⁸ The 8 concerts of the corpus don’t overtake the year 1949, when are created on Paris Inter “*Three Sonatines for flute* by Marcel Bitsch” (on November 27th).

of music on Radio Luxemboug. In 1950, on Paris Inter, Claude Roland-Manuel produces *The Sunday musicians*. The program of October 29th proposes works by Wagner by the “Harmony orchestra of the Renault factories, conducted by M. Dulery.” On Monday December 3rd 1951, José Bruyr, by dissecting Gounod’s *Faust*, tries to answer the question “Who was Faust?”. As soon as Paris Inter is created, Jean Witold every morning presents *The Great musicians*. Every day, he “replies to the listeners on a precise point (*Bach’s works for organ, Weber’s trips and influence...*). A passionate lover of old forgotten musical sheets, he particularly targets the humble. It is, he says, “a great joy to lead new lovers to music.”²⁹ Behind these “didactic cycles”, there are often passionate producers, with good pedagogical qualities. The longevity of some incited us to classify them as “cult programs.” On Programme National, there is the program *The Pleasure of Music* by Alexis Roland-Manuel and Nadia Tagrine³⁰, and on Paris Inter, the no less popular *Tribune of records critics* (*The Club of the records amateurs* until 1948). Surrounding Armand Panigel, music lovers and musicians like José Bruyr or Henry-Jacques analyze various performances, like for “their guest on Saturday November 8th 1953: Mahler’s *Fourth Symphony in G Major*..”³¹

Over the panel of the 463 programs examined, the slots of lyrical music are mainly present in the first half of the decade (23 of the 30 programs are situated before 1950). Giuseppe Verdi occupies a major place in the broadcasting. His *Otello* is broadcasted twice in less than two years: on Friday December 31st 1948 on Programme National, with José Luccioni and the orchestra of the RDF, conducted by Jules Gressier; and on Saturday November 4th 1950 on Paris Inter, with the orchestra and choirs of the Scala, conducted by Carlo Sabajno. On the Programme Parisien channel, lyrical music doesn’t go beyond the threshold of 1949, and each time under the most popular aspect of the art: the operetta. On January 1st, Marcel Cariven, who had led orchestras accompanying Tino Rossi’s successes before the war, conducts “several famous tunes and duets from French operettas” to hail the new year. A couple of days before, on Tuesday December 28th 1948, Paris Inter had broadcasted a selection of Puccini’s *Bohème*, by curiously entitling this lyrical quarter of hour “Light music”. One sees well that the categorization is fragile and the borders between the musical genres porous. Many programs anyway are composed either of pieces of semi-character (or “genre music”), or pieces that have no link between themselves.

By associating the categories of “light music”, “varied music” and “genre music”, one can account not less than 25 programs that maintain the survival of an average or “middle” music, a typically broadcasting concept born in the thirties³². For the first category, we could mention as an example the half hours released by William Cantrelle³³ on Saturday evenings from 1952 to 1954, on the national station, programs which also include very classical values like *Plaisir d’amour* by Martini³⁴, the Turkish march of *The Athena’s ruins* by Beethoven³⁵,

²⁹ "Jean Witold speaking", an article from “La Semaine radiophonique” quoted in “*Les Cahiers d’Histoire de la Radiodiffusion*” #73, year 1952, July-September 2002, p. 154.

³⁰ Broadcasted on the national station, the two programs which frame our period are the one of Sunday Decemberr 23rd 1945, with the Orchestre Radio-symphonique, conducted by Jean Giardino and the one of Sunday November 28th 1954, with Marcel Couraud’s vocal band.

³¹ "During the program, the dialogue is totally improvised on themes indicated in advance: the discussion starts a second time from the listening of the records”, we can learn from the chronicle by François Pouget published on July 20th 1947 in “*Radio Loisirs*” [and quoted in *Les Cahiers d’Histoire de la Radiodiffusion*, “The year 1946”, #50 of September-December 1996, p. 158.]

³² Christophe Bennet, *Musique et Radio dans la France des années trente, la création d’un genre radiophonique*, PhD thesis of History of Music and Musicology, Paris, June 2007.

³³ At the end of the thirties, this composer and conductor was already leading mixed programs, which were usual on Poste national Radio Paris.

³⁴ In the program of November 15th 1952.

or a *Gavotte* by Veracini or Schumann's *Evening song* by³⁶. We could associate the program entitled "Festival-Lux" on Radio Luxembourg with the programs entitled "varied music", where William Cantrelle illustrates himself, by mixing for instance "the tune of *Die Entführung aus dem seraglio* (Mozart) [and] the *Nuptial march of a Puppet* (Ch. Lecocq).³⁷" In the weird promiscuity of the protagonists that the mixing of the genres sparks, François Périer hosts "the accordionist Marceau; Jean Richard, Henri Médus from the Opéra; the 'Concerts du Conservatoire' orchestra conducted by Gaston Poulet", on Sunday December 2nd 1951. As for "genre music", it flourishes under the direction of Pierre-Marcel Ondher³⁸, who produces and hosts a morning and daily program on Paris Inter from 1952 on.

Some genres in minority also enter the great family of "classical music". The "spiritual concerts", at first, bear this title all over the decade on the Programme National³⁹, but they join the Cantatas at Saint-Thomas's given on Paris Inter between 1950 and 1954, or the "postponed relay of Paul Pierné's *Requiem*" on November 28th 1949. The very young choir school performs under different titles and on different stations: on Sunday October 29th 1950, , from 9.20 to 9.35 am, we can hear "the Maîtrise of RDF, conducted by M. Couraud" on the national channel; on Sunday November 28th 1954, from 10 to 10.15 am, "the maîtrise sings" on Paris Inter. At last, modern music remains marginal. In fact, apart from the already mentioned program of Paris Inter devoted to the 'Groupe des Six', one can pick up only one other program on Programme National, entitled "French Contemporary Music" and devoted to Jean-Michel Damase, performed by the wind quintet of the Orchestre National on Sunday November 28th 1954.

Regarding this slim sampling of the programs of the (almost) "Porché decade", we could say that the term of musical eclecticism is appropriate. After the first post-war years, in which the three stations confirm their differences and their complementarities, they eventually follow broadcasting policies from which the references to the 'grand repertoire' or classical masters are not completely absent. Though "requested works" and modern creations don't appear in the typology of the programs of the decade, they're present (and it should be underlined) in the symphonic concerts and the slots of chamber music that the Programme National and Paris Inter relay or produce. The latter does not skimp on commented programs, cyclic rendezvous and other durable productions connected with music. Whereas Programme Parisien remains on aesthetically less classical positions and assumes its "entertainment" and more popular orientations, the great composers however pop in into sequences of "mainstream music": light music or operetta. Finally, Radio Luxembourg, the only private station, (since Europe #1 is then only a project) sparingly injects some concerts and didactic productions in its programs with. To that effect, it uses its own orchestra and "valuable celebrities" of the musicology at the microphone. It however remains musically very withdrawn compared to the most cultural channels of the French national radio.

Many thanks to Gérard Hocmard for his help with the language issues.

³⁵ On November 14th 1953.

³⁶ On December 4th 1954.

³⁷ Sunday December 29th 1946, at 8 pm on Programme National.

³⁸ PMO, for his friends, is a pseudonym for Pierre Hervy.

³⁹ On Monday October 30th 1950, from 10 to 10.30 pm, the listeners of the national channel can hear "*The Volunteer* by Purcell [performed by] Marie-Louise Girod and the Protestant choir of Brussels, conducted by Fritz Hoyois.

Jean Tardieu, the musicians' friend

by Robert PROT

There is no doubt that Jean Tardieu used to have a privileged relation with music. Indeed, we can speak of a particularly favorable background: his mother was a musician, his grandfather a conductor and an appreciated composer at the end of the 19th Century. Three unpublished sheets conserved at the IMEC would confirm it if necessary: *"In this world bewitched by music, was lucky enough to have access, when still very young, an amazed neophyte, and be initiated to a sacred Feast. I took my first steps in an enchanted forest and didn't believe my eyes and my ears."*

The poet in him sought to discover the encounter of music and the words, and the man in charge of the 'Radiodiffusion Française' always mixed word and music in his conception of the programs. As soon as he was appointed in 1946, he gave his program: to look for unpublished works or works ordered from musicians *in order to try to find an autonomous broadcasting style.*

Jean Tardieu gave a priority to the presence of music on the Radio. It has often been said that the prewar radio was talkative. I rather think this insipidity was due to a lack of experience of those who confused the radio studio with a lecture venue, in regard to the pompous style that the announcers felt obliged to use. A simple monitoring of the program of the period however shows the presence of music, any kind of music. Eclecticism was dominating, even a kind of bad taste.

Henry Barraud for Programme National, Jean Tardieu for the 'Club d'Essai' were going to help the young composers and performers. Successively, as we already said, Claude Arrieu, Henri Dutilleux, Christiane Barraud and France-Yvonne Bril were to be the actors of this undertaking. Then, the 'Programme special' in frequency modulation, with Marius Constant, was to be created, a logical following and outcome of this will of granting to music all its importance.

The monitoring of the programs of the 'Club d'Essai' shows how Jean Tardieu was loyal to his wish of letting all sorts sort of music heard and also of offering young musicians, composers or performers the occasion to make themselves known.

Since we cannot quote all of them, let's at least mention, among the contemporaries the names of Tony Aubin, Pierre Boulez, Marius Constant, Georges Delerue, Maurice Jarre, Maurice Ohana, Claude Prey, Henri Sauguet, Germaine Tailleferre, and others. As early as 1946, 'Club d'Essai' broadcasted not only concerts of modern, but also of ancient or almost forgotten music, organized and announced by personalities like Nadia Boulanger and her sister, Marcel Mihalovici or Tibor Harsanyi. This channel scheduled soloists like Monique Haas, Lily Laskine, Yvon and Maroussia Le Marc'Hadour, Gérard Souzay and others.

Jean Tardieu was very attached to the gathering of voice and music through the microphone. He writes: *"... technical means – in particular the Radio – when they come after the fundamental and traditional arts, are led not only to transmit and translate them, but also to metamorphose them more or less profoundly and more or less quickly."*

Under the title *Ten o'clock opera*, some forgotten or never produced works were broadcasted from February 1947 on. Because of the reduced financial means of the service, these programs were based on readings and only one or two pianos used to accompany the singers. The pianists were Geneviève Joy, Jacqueline Bonneau or Robert Veyron Lacroix! Bronislaw Horowicz adds that a modern work was accompanied on Martenot waves by young Pierre Boulez.

The series was possible thanks to the archivists of the musical library of 'La Radiodiffusion française'. Some titles among the works of ancient music produced in the first year were *La Colombe*, by Charles Gounod, *Le Combat de Tancredi et Clorinde*, by Monteverdi, *The Theater manager* and *Bastian and Bastianne*, by Mozart. In 1951 and 1952, composer Antoine Duhamel, Georges's son, produced two operas: *Il Trionfo del' onore*, by Scarlatti and *Pygmalion*, by Rameau.

Still in the series of chamber operas, a command to Georges Delerue and Michel Polac (for the libretto) sparks a confidence by the latter to Elinae Clancier: "*there was a young girl who was named France Yvonne Bril who managed the musical section and had the cheek to command chamber operas from Marius Constant, Georges Delerue, and others, and they asked me for an opera libretto. Thus I made a chamber opera with Delerue; I was twenty-three, it was quite daring! I had planned on concrete music, but as Delerue disliked it, it was very Debussy music. I would however have enjoyed, at that time, to write an opera of concrete music. There was both audacity and resistance within the 'Club d'Essai'? Delerue was a friend, but he was very classical. Finally, we did not produce so much concrete music in the works of the 'Club d'Essai'.*"

In his letters, Jean Tardieu tries to reassure his general manager on his *audacities*, but was it necessary? Wladimir Porché wasn't a "manager in slippers" and the policy proposed by Jean Tardieu couldn't displease him: "*The avant-garde character of these programs mustn't necessarily concern an "avant-garde art" but the purpose of a fresh and original broadcasting style: it could be an "avant-garde way" of presenting ancient music and literature.*"

Beside this research of unpublished works, there was the seeking of new talents, the two going hand in hand. In 1952, Jean Tardieu clearly reminds the Comity of Music that: "*Devoting ourselves to the young composers and performers was (...) our first point of view: this was essentially enabling them to agree on the means of recording, control their playing, their interpretation, the significance of their music, eventually intensify their research in the special field of radio.*"

As early as 1946, the aim was a monthly public program: *The Tribune of the young composers* presented the first audition of a work followed by a debate. This program was to be the beginning of an initiative of the International Committee for Music, which, under the auspices of UNESCO, launched the *International Rostrum of composers*; This annual event was created in 1954 by 'Radiodiffusion Française', Hessischer Rundfunk, 'Radiodiffusion belge' and 'Radiodiffusion suisse'. Its purpose was to encourage the circulation of the modern musical works between the thirty-one networks of national radios that backed this Tribune on the five continents. This is why in 2001 seven hundred radios participated in the program. The fiftieth edition was hosted in Vienna, and the fifty first in Paris in June 2004. In France, right from the

beginning, the ‘Club d’Essai’ and its musical manager, France Yvonne Bril managed the organization.

Other programs of the ‘Club d’Essai’ aimed at promoting young musicians, with *The Entrance of the musicians*, a weekly program, with the best students of the Conservatoire National de Musique (1948), *Let’s sing it now!*, a weekly program with the pupils of private singing classes, and others.

Still in 1948, Jean Tardieu decided the creation of a chamber orchestra, composed of professional musicians, recent laureates of the Conservatoire, to “*get them familiarized with the job, enabling most of them to play as soloists, and, besides and over all, to provide a young conductor with a tool, by giving him the occasion to conduct regularly.* This is how Louis de Froment, conductor of that orchestra for two years in a row, fulfilled this task *with great success, triumphin, among other difficulties, of those constantly imposed by the obligation of producing unpublished works.*”

Let’s mention other initiatives, for example the monthly program *Les Musicophiles* by Daniel-Lesur, the programs devoted twice a week to orchestras and amateur choirs: *The Musical Crusade* and *The Sunday musicians*.

About the latter, Jean Tardieu wrote: “*Do we have to assess the musical activity of amateurs in France? A weekly program entitled Les Musiciens du dimanche, which was broadcasted for several years, enabled people to listen to many orchestras, chamber music groups and choirs, composed of enlightened s and often very talented amateur, belonging to every class of the society, and to state that our country was much more musical, or had become more musical than is commonly believed – probably, precisely because of the increasing influence of the radio and the records.*”

Later in the same text, he went on: “*The other program, entitled Accord parfait, by Claude Roland-Manuel, is a competitive program, which asks the listeners a series of more or less difficult questions, which allow us to catch the — often outstanding — level of musical erudition of our listeners.*”

I shouldn’t forget the *Club of the records lovers* whose members surrounding Armand Panigel (they were eight of them) argued, week after week, about the qualities and faults of such or such recording of a famous work. From 1946 on, the program knew a success comparable to the one of *Le masque et la plume*, with which it competed in matters of longevity. It rapidly changed its title for *The Tribune of the records critics*, wich was kept until 1983.

Extracted from the book by Robert PROT: *Jean Tardieu et la nouvelle radio*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 2006, p. 17-27.