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FRENCH MUSICAL BROADCASTING FROM 1955 TO 1964:

NEW PATHS FOR THE BROADCASTING OF MUSIC

by Christophe BENNET

During the 55-64 decade, French radio knows very serious modifications. Beside the birth of the private station Europe #1 (which doesn't concern our topic, since it hardly broadcasts any classical music), which is going to overshadow the national radio, it is going to be transformed, parallel to the replacement of its successive managers. The eleven years with Wladimir Porché at the helm were essential. Parallel to the development of the radio (the multiplication of the stations, programs, transmitters, the quick development of the transistor) those years were also those of the birth of television. Between 1957 and 1960, three directors succeed one another at the head of the station: Gabriel Delaunay, Christian Chavanon and Raymond Janot. Beside the change of name of the stations they'll cause, these ephemeral nominations only superficially modify the roles and the complementarity of the national stations. While Inter and the Chaîne nationale are still broadcasting classical music, in favor of a "general public" for the first one and in favor of "sophisticated listeners" for the latter, a new station, strictly musical, is about to emerge. It is going to take a lion's share in the area of broadcasted classical music, in all its forms¹.

TWO OF THE THREE PUBLIC STATIONS ARE STILL BROADCASTING MUSICAL MUSIC

On the *Programme Parisien*, the station which is at any time devoted to commercial music and entertainment, great authors and modern musicians are hardly broadcasted. Here and there, Pierre Hiégel, the indispensable "*Monsieur Music*" still plays the great popularizer. Parallel to his programs on the outlying stations (Radio Luxembourg, then Radio Monte Carlo), he is also very present on *Radiodiffusion française* from 1950 to 1956: *The great music, The great public concert, At the music lover's home, Music is for you, Love of music, The Sunday popular symphonic concert*. This program is broadcasted on Programme Parisien. On Sunday November 6th 1955, for example, he explains a work by Benjamin Britten and also the *Concerto for orchestra* by Bela Bartok, pieces which are neither "popular" nor accessible! On this station, one can also find some didactic cycles and other original productions dealing

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/

with classical music, such as Jean Doyen²'s *Romantic page* and Henri Jacqueton³'s *During the performance*.

As early as 1960, the reform of the stations imagined by Christian Chavanon for one of the three big stations, France II (Regional), a regional program broadcasting all day long (an innovation !) with a Parisian base and local branches (which anyway remain rather complicated)⁴. Beside rare scattered recitals, one can mostly notice some series of programs such as *The thousand stories of music* by Paul Castan⁵ or *Do you like [such musician]* by producer Serge Berthoumieux⁶. The latter also proposes a program which is renewed for several seasons: *If you enjoy music*. He proposes as many German works by Beethoven and Brahms⁷ as pieces by the very French composer Gabriel Fauré⁸.

PARIS INTER STICKS TO A VULGARIZATION POLICY

From 1955 to 1962, the broadcasting of Paris Inter (then called '*Paris Inter France I*' as of March 20th 1960) is comparable to what we could notice in the previous period. Around noon, one often hears performances by the orchestras of Marseille, Toulouse or Nice⁹. According to Henry Barraud, those regional orchestras were not to remain in the areas of classical music, under the baton of local conductors:

"I had a policy of conductors, but I also had a policy of programs for the provincial orchestras. For me it was a way of bringing in modern music of good quality, but not a sufficient quality to be performed by the Orchestre National, or even the Radio-symphonique. With those orchestras, I then brought in very acceptable modern music."¹⁰

During those eight years, Inter also proposes symphonic concerts in the evenings, such as on Sunday November 6th 1955 with the Orchestra of the Italian-Swiss radio¹¹ and on Saturday October 22nd 1962, when the microphone is pointed on the Orchestre Philharmonique of the RTF¹².

² On Sunday November 6th 1955, he, in a quarter of hour, presents Schubert and Liszt. Pianist Jean Doyen (1907-1982), who was then a teacher at the Conservatory, knows the broadcasting studios of the capital quite well, since he's been performing there since 1931.

³ Scheduled at 10.15, the thirty-minute program of Saturday November 12th 1955 is composed of excerpts from "*Cavalliera rusticana*" (Mascagni), with Germaine Cernay, Gaston Micheletti and Endrèze, who have been "strong values" for twenty years!

⁴ Pierre Dellard, "*The policy of the public service programs in 1960*", in "*Les Cahiers d'Histoire de la Radiodiffusion*", #28, the year 1960, April 1991, p. 101-102.

⁵ Scheduled from 11.30 to 12 am, the program of Saturday October 22nd 1960 proposes "Mozart's new works in Salzburg in 1780."

⁶ Cf. the program "Do you like Boccherini?" of Saturday November 3rd 1962 (from 6 to 7 pm), when the first movement of his *Concerto in D major for flute* is broadcasted.

⁷ Cf. Friday October 21st 1960 (from 2.02 to 2.55 pm) when he respectively broadcasts the Overture of *Egmont* and the *Concerto in D major for violin and orchestra*.

⁸ On Friday November 2nd 1962 (when the slot is later, from 6 to 7 pm), he plays *Introit and Kyrie* from his *Requiem*.

⁹ On Saturday November 12th 1955, one can anyway hear the two orchestras, respectively from 11.18 to 12.05 a.m. (conductor Maurice-Paul Gaillot) and from 1.30 to 2.15 pm (with Marcel Mirotize as conductor).

¹⁰ Interview of Henry Barraud by Pierre Dellard and Louis Courtinat, in "*Les Cahiers d'Histoire de la Radiodiffusion*", #43, the year 1964, December 1994-February 1995, p. 180.

¹¹ At 8.30 pm, Ferenc Fricsay conducts excerpts from Mozart *Entführung aus dem Seraglio*.

¹² Between 8.50 and 10.20 pm, this very good orchestra performs *Tzigane for violin and orchestra* (Ravel) and the *Symphony in C major – the Bear* (Haydn), under conductor Carlos Chavez.

As far as the didactic cycles are concerned, the daily programs *The great musicians* by Jean Witold, *Precious waxes* by Claude Lehmann or the daily series by René Dumesnil called *The Evolution of lyrical genres* tend to steadily fade away. It is the same for the other productions of classical music which also keep struggling on after the successive reshaping of the station. One must however mention, in 1960, the *Concerts in Paris*¹³ and in 1962 the Sunday program by André Gauthier, *Debussy before Pelleas*. On October 18th, for example, this producer proposes to listen to “*Nocturne for piano*, by W. Gieseeking; excerpts from *Nocturnes for orchestra*, by the Société des Concerts, conducted by Jean Fournet.” Throughout the years that precede the creation of the “*Office*”, however, the genuine novelty on Inter is probably the media coverage of the festivals staged everywhere. For example, one could mention the “1960 Besançon Festival”, including a recital by soprano Teresa Stich-Randall relayed on Tuesday October 18th from 8.50 to 10.20 pm. On Friday November 2nd 1962, focusing once again on this concept, Agathe Mella’s station splits its evening between the “*Choralies de Vaison-la-Romaine*¹⁴” and the “*Montreux Festival*¹⁵”.

In an article where she related the official opening of a formula of public classical concerts encouraged by Jean Fontaine, the female manager explained her fondness for the promotion of classical music. Having obtained a reluctant agreement from the “*Conseil des Programmes*¹⁶”, she wants the equivalent for classical music of the big public program of entertaining music, “*Discoparade*”. Under the name of “*Prestige de la musique*”, this new series is about to soon become, and remain for thirty-four years, a label of quality:

“ *The program of the ‘premiere’ [broadcasted on Saturday October 20th 1962] included, among other pieces, a Piano Concerto by Tchaikovsky with Georgy Cziffra, Mozart arias by Jane Berbié, The Golden Cock by Rimski-Korsakov, conducted by Pierre Dervaux.*

*The success was total and unchanged: the audience was often from modest origin, living in the suburbs of Paris. The listeners of the classical records programs hosted by Jean Fontaine had moved about. Excited provincial female listeners came over fawning at the feet of the the announcer; one of them, a blind woman, came every month guided by her dog.*¹⁷”

¹³ Broadcasted from 11.18 pm to midnight, the program of Thursday October 20th 1960 proposes a “*Marcel Delannoy – Louis Aubert Festival*”

¹⁴ With the Tübingen Orchestra and the Band of Ancient instruments from Remscheid which perform the *Concerto for two violins and orchestra* (Bach) from 9.18 o 10.18 pm.

¹⁵ From 10.18 to 11.15 pm: Dvorak’s *Stabat Mater op.58* by the Choir and Orchestra of the Prague Philharmonic, conducted by K. Ancerl.

¹⁶ According to A. Mella, this “*committee was composed of composers and other eminent people from the musical area [exclusively interested in] modern music, which they composed themselves.*”

¹⁷ Agathe Mella, “The Great concerts of ‘Prestige de la Musique’”, in “*Les Cahiers d’Histoire de la Radiodiffusion*” #67, “*From the pirate radios to the free stations* », January-March 2001, p. 150-156.

THE “CHAÎNE NATIONALE” REMAINS A PRESTIGIOUS STATION

The monitoring of the musical programs shows an undisputable unity, even though over the decade 1955-1964, the *Chaîne Nationale* takes on four different names in turn: “Programme National”; “National – France III”; “RTF Promotion”; and finally “France culture”. Beside the cult program by Alexis Roland-Manuel, which still illuminates the Sunday slot of 11 am to noon¹⁸, the common denominator is the daily morning slot called *Prélude symphonique*. Resisting the successive reshaping, the program increases from 9 minutes (in 1955) to 45 minutes on Sundays (in 1962, the year when this slot is split into two). The musical content is generally very classical, like the program of Friday November 2nd 1962:

7.20 – 7.30 (first part): *Chaconne in F minor* (Pachelbel), München Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Kurt Redel.
 7.45 – 7.58 (second part): *Concerto grosso #10 in G minor, op 3* (F. Manfredini, revised by Lupi), Instrumental group “I musici”.

The works of the great classical authors are omnipresent. On Sunday November 6th 1955, *Symphonie #35 “Haffner”* by Mozart is scheduled in the “Relay of the concert released at the *Théâtre du Chatelet* by the orchestra of the Concerts Colonne Society.¹⁹” Five years later, on Tuesday October 18th 1960, this same work is performed by the Marseille orchestra, conducted by Marcel Pagliano. Modern music is also well anchored in the programs of the national station. We could for instance mention: “French modern music: Raymond Loucheur, hosted by Micheline Banzet²⁰”; a “Hindemith Concert²¹”; and the series *French modern musicians*. On Sunday May 24th 1964, the latter is dedicated to Jean-Louis Martinet. The Chamber orchestra of the RTF, conducted by André Girard, performs his *Symphonic movement #5 for string orchestra*. The other “home orchestras” are highly requested: the Orchestre Philharmonique of the RTF; the Orchestre National (that very day, they are respectively conducted by Tony Aubin and Charles Bruck).

Many didactic cycles are still scheduled on this station which, under the name of France III, still hosts: “prestigious programs, art, culture, classical music, theatre, education, and scientific programs.²²” Let’s mention, for example, a program with an impressive longevity: *Vocal Art* by Colette Désormières, and the more punctual productions by Lila-Maurice Amour (*History of Music*, in 1960); René Dumesnil (*College of the waves*, in the same year); M. Terrasse (*Faces of music*, in 1962²³); Claude Baignères and P.-A.

¹⁸ The program of Sunday May 24th 1964 is announced as: “*Plaisir de la musique*, a program by Alexis Roland-Manuel, hosted by N. Binant and the producer.” For several years already, the guests of the program have no longer been announced in the newspapers.

¹⁹ As usual, the orchestra is conducted by Gaston Poulet, while composer Gustave Samazeuilh hosts the program. He still will face the microphone of the RTF (this time on *Haute Fidélité France IV*) to analyze the concert on Sunday October 1962 (during the “Paris International Weeks”), when another Paris society will be honored: the Concerts Lamoureux orchestra, conducted this time by Manuel Rosenthal.

²⁰ On Sunday November 6th 1955.

²¹ On Wednesday October 19th 1960.

²² Pierre Dellard, “The policy of the broadcasting programs of the public service in 1960”, in “*Les Cahiers d’Histoire de la Radiodiffusion*”, #28, “the year 1960”, April 1991, p. 101-102.

²³ In November, he hosts a series of programs on great conductors, including three episodes dedicated to Arturo Toscanini.

Jolivet (*The universal radiation of French music*, in 1963). Among those instructive or didactic programs, one should underline that the *Voyages of the musicians* hosted by Myriam Soumagnac in 1960, which are also broadcasted on the “Frequency Modulation Program which, on March 20th 1960, becomes France IV High Fidelity.”²⁴

The concerts are still going to be mainly broadcasted in pairs by the last born of the French radio. Inseparable from the artistic undertaking of the “Programme musical”, the seeking of a program with a high fidelity signal gives birth to a great station exclusively dedicated to “sophisticated music”.

FROM THE SPECIAL PROGRAM IN F.M. TO THE FIRST HOURS OF ‘FRANCE MUSIQUE’: A FOURTH, STRICTLY MUSICAL, STATION²⁵

Until then, only fragments of programs, ideas, or techniques had been formulated concerning a station devoted to classical music. The technical progress in stereophony and frequency modulation, and the development of new programs within the frame of the Club d’Essai researches eventually led to the creation of a fourth program on March 28th 1954: the “Special program in frequency modulation”, under the impulse of Jean Tardieu and Paul Gilson, then Manager of the Artistic Services of the RTF²⁶. What is about to become France Musique begins as an exclusive club of listeners, capable of receiving this frequency band. They know each other, have direct relations with the production, and often visit the studio based on “*Avenue du Recteur Poincaré*”, in the sixteenth district of Paris, or the offices on “*Rue de l’Université*”²⁷.

The new program remains, at the beginning, an “appendix of the Club d’Essai²⁸”, to which its programs are linked, and will remain so until about 1958, when the program ceases being experimental. It is officially placed under the direction of Jean Tardieu, but Marius Constant, assisted by Jean-Marie Oberlin, actually is the one who really decides on the programs, the styles, in a word, the one who “*without holding the name, is the manager of the emerging program.*”²⁹ From Myriam Soumagne to Micheline Banzet or Claude Roland-Manuel, and also the team of the *Tribune of the records critics*, which rapidly became famous, one can find around them the *crème de la crème* of French musicology. This program of a new type (94% music) aims at setting into relief the sounding qualities,

²⁴ For any question related to the technical situation of the emitters and receptors in frequency modulation, one should read: Jacques Chardonner, “1960 – high fidelity?”, in “*Les Cahiers d’Histoire de la Radiodiffusion*”, #28, “the year 1960”, April 1991, p. 34-41.

²⁵ The following paragraphs owe much to: Julie Marchetti, “*The History of France Musique. Or the evolution of the use of classical music on the radio, from the monopole to the concurrence of Radio Clastique*”, Master of Contemporary History, under the direction of Professor Pascal Griset, Sorbonne-Paris IV, September 2005.

²⁶ On this topic, one can see the framed part entitled “A sounding library” about Jean Tardieu and the Programme musical.

²⁷ Robert Prot, “The Club d’Essai”, in “*Les Cahiers d’Histoire de la Radiodiffusion*”, #13-14, April 1986, p. 13-19.

²⁸ Jean-Louis Alibert : “The splitting line of the waves, France Musique”, in “*Réseaux*”, #52, March-April 1992, p. 28 [Mentioned by Julie Marchetti, op. cit.]

²⁹ Julie Marchetti, op. cit., p. 16. Robert Prot, who knew Jean Tardieu well, and dedicated a book to him, nuances this statement: “*Tardieu, who was shy and reserved in current life, particularly watched the good spirit of his program, either at the Club d’Essai, or on FM. “Obviously, this attention didn’t mean he was always monitoring a coworker like Marius, for whom he had deep respect and friendship (they had written a musical work in common)”* [Interview on July 22nd 2007].

specific to the broadcasting in Frequency Modulation (FM). The programs are mainly used in order to test, in agreement with the manufacturers, the technical progress realized in the field of recording / broadcasting:

“Then the rare listeners could hear, from the very beginning of a strings quartet, the compared effects of the different types of stereophony.”³⁰

Gradually, the program is developing. We can notice a slight turning point at the end of the fifties, after an interruption from December 1957 to March 1958. This is due to Gabriel Delaunay, the new general manager of the RTF, who hardly believes in this kind of broadcasting, “a radio for the wealthy people”, according to him. In 1959 however, the first program in stereophony appears, with “*at the beginning only two programs: the Orchestre National on Thursday evenings, broadcasted in stereo, and a specialized program: “For the amateur of stereophony” on Saturday mornings.*”³¹

Successively named “France IV Haute fidélité³²”, “RTF Haute Fidélité³³”, and “France Musique”, the musical station, between 1962 and 1964, negotiates a transition, during which the opening of the ‘Maison de la Radio’³⁴ and the creation of the “*Office de Radio Télévision Française*”, linked to its famous “great reforms³⁵”, are going to make it soar.

After many years on Paris Inter, the famous and influential *Tribune of the records critics* is henceforth hosted by France Musique. On the program of Sunday May 24th 1964, A. Panigel, J. Bruyr and A. Goléa are comparing several performances of Bach’s *First concerto for keyboard BWV 1052*. The program entitled *Three days with*, first created on the Programme Special station, also enjoys a broad longevity. On Monday 7th, Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th November 1955, Micheline Banzet had already devoted three rendezvous to conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler. On Monday 9th, Tuesday 10th and Wednesday 11th December 1963, her interview of André Cluytens enables her to notably broadcast the overture of *Tannhäuser*³⁶. Other productions punctuate the programs of the specialized station: *Easy classics* and *Classical without any wig*, by Anne-Marie

³⁰ Jean-Louis Alibert, op. cit., p. 18. By the same author, one could read: “Nineteen hours of music per day: the functions of France Musique”, a Phd thesis in Information and communication, Grenoble III, November 1982.

³¹ Cf. the already mentioned article : “The beginning of France Musique”.

³² On March 20th 1960, this new name ends the “Special program in Frequency Modulation”.

³³ For a very short time between “Haute Fidélité France IV” and “France Musique”: from October 20th and December 8th 1963.

³⁴ Inaugurated by Général de Gaulle on December 14th 1963, the “Round House” has a surface of two hectares, with one thousand offices, 58 studios, a tower 68 meters high and 5 kilometers of hallways on 10 floors: Robert Prot, “Dictionary of the radio”, Grenoble/Bry-sur-Marne, PUG/INA, 1997, article “Maison de la radio de Paris”, p. 381-382.

³⁵ Christian Brochand, “*Histoire générale de la radio et de la télévision en France*”, tome 2, Paris, La Documentation Française, 1994, p. 112 : The great reforms could be summarized in “*three points : a decentralization and regionalization of the programs, the transformation of televised information, and a re-melting of the broadcasting programs.*”

³⁶ RTF Haute-fidélité, Monday December 9th 1963, from 10 to 11 pm: “Three days with André Cluytens, interviews by Micheline Banzet (first day): “*Tannhäuser*, ov. (Wagner): Orchestre National of the Opera; “*Mireille*”, abst. Act I (Gounod): Janette Vivalda, Christiane Gayraud, Madeleine Ignal, Christiane Jacquin; “*Boris Godounov*”, abst. (Moussorgsky): Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire; choirs and artists of the Sofia National Opera, conduct. André Cluytens”.

Duvemey (from 1962); *Symphonic pages*, by J. Boyer (from 1962 to 1964); *Dining with music*, by P.-M. Ondher (1962); *Concert-diner*, by Paul Aliprandi; *Notes on the way*, by J. Vaudoux or also *The journal of an all-time music lover*, by Pierre Massé (1964).

The station obviously relays the great international musical moments. On Friday November 2nd 1962, within the frame of the Salzburg Festival, Verdi's "*Requiem*, by the Choir of the Viennese Friends of Music and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, cond. Karajan" is broadcasted from 10 am to 12. This exceptionally gifted conductor has anyway been feeding the programs of the national station for a long time. During the evening lyrical program of Sunday November 6th 1955, in the first existing months of the "Special program in Frequency modulation", rare privileged people who were able to get this experimental station could already hear Wagner's "*Meistersinger*", by the Choir and orchestra of the Bayreuth Festival", conducted by him.

We'll soon see that Charles Chaynes, who, together with Marius Constant leads France Musique from 1963 to 1965, "wishes to reach a larger audience.³⁷" The first program schedules do show the aiming at a diversity and balance between concerts, original productions and the promotion of stereophony³⁸.

463 RD
RADIO DIFFUSION — TELEVISION
FRANÇAISE
COORDINATION DE LA PRODUCTION

RELEVÉ DES DROITS D'AUTEURS N° 010598

TITRE DE LA PRODUCTION: *Concert* Sc PRODUCTEUR (1) _____
ENREGISTREMENT (2) : N° *VP 483* DU _____ CENTRE OU STUDIO : _____ CHAÎNE : _____
ÉMISSION (3) LE : *12.11.50* de _____ h. _____ m. à _____ h. _____ m.

TITRES DES ŒUVRES	GENRE (4)	Minutage	AUTEURS	COMPOSITEURS	ARRANGEURS	MARQUES & N° DES DISQUES (5)
<i>Colloque sentimentale</i>	chant	3'30		<i>Debussy</i>		
<i>Roussel à son aise</i>	"	2'30		<i>Ravel</i>		
	clav.		<i>Henri Scarlatti</i>	<i>Rameau</i>		
<i>Les fêtes d'Hébé</i>	mus.	41'		<i>Rameau</i>		
<i>Pavane</i>	Violon	4'	<i>F. J. Delibes</i>			
<i>Diálogo</i>	"		<i>F. J. Delibes</i>	<i>P. Joubert</i>		

LE RÉGISSEUR DE PRODUCTION :

(1) Indiquer s'il s'agit de : MUSIQUE, LETTRES, VARIÉTÉS
(2) S'inscrit sur le formulaire d'exploitation.
(3) Diffusion en direct.
(4) Indiquer s'il s'agit de : ORCHESTRE, CHANT, VIOLON, PIANO, etc...
(5) Lorsqu'il s'agit de disques de commerce.

A concert on November 12th 1960 : Debussy, Ravel, Scarlatti, and Rameau

³⁷ In her Master's memoir (where this quotation is taken from), Julie Marchetti explains how she crossed the data of the "Archives of the Direction de la Musique (1960-1976), V. 92W, C. Origins of the program France Musique", and the words she collected during her interview of Charles Chaynes. Concerning the action of this manager, one could also read the following article, and the interview of May 3rd 2007.

³⁸ Cf., for example, the title of the program on Saturday May 23rd 1964, "Concert in stereophony", which proposes the *Concerto for two violins in D minor* by Bach.

A SPRINKLING OF CLASSICAL MUSIC ON THE PRIVATE STATIONS

On the private stations, the flow of classical music is extremely weak. On Radio Monte-Carlo, the broadcasting of concerts is very exceptional and in fact an event. We could mention, in this vein, the relay of the “Lugano Concerts 1960”. On Monday October 17th 1960, the Monacan station grants a slot of one and half an hour to classical music!

“Italian-Swiss Radio Orchestra, cond. Antal Dorati, with Maurice Gendrot, cellist: Suite #2 in B minor (Bach); Concerto for cello and orchestra (D. Kabalevski); Symphony #34 in C Major (Mozart).”

On Radio Andorra, the slots dedicated to classical music (or “grande musique”) are very few, but much more regular, and even daily. As a matter of fact, those are short slots of records playing. The aesthetic is either accessible or Hispanic-oriented, as shown by these samplings picked up during the decade:

Wednesday September 19th 1956, from 3.43 to 4.07 pm: *L'Amour sorcier* by Manuel de Falla
Sunday April 17th 1960, from 2.30 to 2.45 pm: the Madrid Chamber Orchestra
Monday October 9th 1961, from 3 to 3.10 pm: waltzes by Tchaikovsky (a program followed by a broadcasting novella: “the Johann Strauss love affairs”)
Monday October 8th 1962: from 2.30 to 2.45 pm: *Porgy and Bess* by Gershwin³⁹
Thursday October 3rd 1963: “Classical Andorra”: Extracts from *La Belle au Bois Dormant*, ballet (Tchaikovsky), The Philharmonia Orchestra, cond. H. Von Karajan;
“Waltz of the Flowers”, from *The Nutcracker* (Tchaikovsky) and waltz from *Swan Lake* (Tchaikovsky), The Philharmonia Orchestra, H. Von Karajan.
Friday May 22nd 1964, from 4 pm to 4.25 pm: *Don Quixote* by G. Philip Telemann: Saitenberg Little Symphony, cond Daniel Saitenberg.

On Radio-Luxemburg, which has its own orchestra, as we’ve already seen, a program on every Monday evening shows the artistic quintessence of the Grand-duché: “the musical hour by the grand orchestra of Radio-Luxemburg”. The orchestra consists of 60 titular musicians, who can even reach the figure of 75 with the extras. It releases about fifty public concerts a year. Regarding our period, Henry Pensis remains at the helm as conductor. On November 7th 1955, he chose to perform the Mozart’s *Concerto #23 for piano and orchestra* with Renée Collinson as soloist, and Beethoven’s *Symphony #1*.

After his death, in June 1958, the new permanent conductor was, until 1980, Louis de Froment. On Monday October 17th 1960, a pianist is still sharing the limelight. That evening, the listeners can hear Janine Dacosta and the Chorale Mixte of the Luxemburg

³⁹ This very year, Pierre Hiégel (one more time !) interviews Maria Callas in the Paris studio of the station, cf. the excellent website, very well illustrated by written and sounding archives: <http://aquiradioandorra.free.fr> [visit of July 2007] .

Conservatoire. Though the artistic resources are from Luxemburg, the program this time is 100% French: Rameau's *Dardanus*; Franck's *Symphonic variations for piano and orchestra* and Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloé*, Suite #2.

Among the soloists performing on Radio-Luxemburg at the beginning of the sixties, one could mention: Wilhelm Kempff, Monique Haas, Arthur Grumiaux, Aldo Ciccolini, Walter Ludwig, David Oistrakh, Sansom François, Zino Francescatti, Janine Micheau, and also, for the thirtieth anniversary in 1961 of the creation of Radio-Luxemburg, virtuoso violinist Yehudi Menuhin.

Considered under the angle of the musical supply, the broadcasting decade 1955-1964 appears transitional. Instituted and consolidated by Henry Barraud, the permanent orchestras are more busy than ever. The classical musical activity shows an undisputable vitality, especially since "classical musical broadcasting" is not limited to ordering works, building programs and broadcasting the concerts and festival echoed by the specialized press. Young composers also produce experiments, in the department of the "musical illustrations" ruled by Henri Dutilleux until 1962⁴⁰. This gathering of word and music, which aimed at shaping a new art of broadcasting is another way of bringing Euterpe's art on the waves. The emergence of an entirely musical station, with the unexpected fusion of technologies and experimental programs, is going to place the government radio in a situation of quasi monopoly as a sponsor providing classical music. The artistic and technical conditions are henceforth gathered to implement an ambitious musical policy, to impose music as a program in itself.

Parallel to this modernization of the public radio (embodied by the recent "round house" and the creation of the ORTF), the private stations relegate classical music to a position of minor importance. By monitoring the content and the modesty of the musical programs of Radio Monte-Carlo, Radio-Andorra, and even Radio Luxemburg, one understands that classical music, either commented, performed or even subsidized, is then the domain of the government.

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

⁴⁰ Christophe Bennet, "Henri Dutilleux and the Department of Musical Illustrations ", in "*Les Cahiers d'Histoire de la Radiodiffusion*" #89, "The year 1956", July-September 2006, p. 157-161.

A library of sound

by Robert PROT

In 1954, Jean Tardieu created the *Programme spécial* in Frequency Modulation, following a demand of the RTF general direction, the directions of the technical department and the artistic department. This new type of program (94% music) aimed at setting into relief the sounding qualities of FM broadcasting. This daily program was a kind of permanent concert on the waves, where any genre of music was represented. [...]

Jean-Marie Oberlin was, at Jean Tardieu's Club d'Essai, responsible for both the broadcasting choices and the production of the programs broadcasted by Paris-IV. He then appeared to be the one who would implement the musical program of the future France Musique station.

At the same time, he had begun to plan a sabbatical year, which would enable him to have a one-year stay at an American academic station. Jean Tardieu then called composer Marius Constant to install the new program. Eventually, Oberlin's American project didn't succeed and the Oberlin-Constant tandem gleefully launched the Special Program in Frequency Modulation. [...]

At that time, the RTF was completing the rebuilding of its emitter network, three-fourths of which had been ruined by the war. This was done without the help of the Government. Actually, the "broadcasting tax" paid by the listeners to hear the programs also feeds the investment, not only of the radio, but also of the television network. In 1954 like before the war, the radio is broadcasted in France essentially through a network of big emitters working on middle waves which are heavy energy consumers and are under growing competition from similar facilities abroad. The interferences (mainly at night) between all these emitters are multiplying, while the number of frequencies of the Hertz spectrum is not unlimited. One can ask why the engineers did not immediately think of Frequency Modulation, known since 1936 and already well implemented in the US. But we know that in 1954 there were no French receivers equipped with a FM band on the market. We can therefore admit that it would have been ridiculous to start building such a network in 1944, when the priority for households was food and housing and not the replacement of their old radio sets.

On the contrary, Germany had been made to give up its middle wave frequencies in payment for war damages. For the German engineers, frequency modulation was the only possible solution. The German industry followed this lead, and was even ready to export its production towards France ten years later. But one can wonder what stopped the French manufacturers, since the implementation of this mode of exploitation had been decided. I still recall the meetings between Paul Gilson and the manufacturers' salesmen, especially Marc Boissinot, from the national Union of electronic manufacturers, where the debates hinged on the eternal egg and hen problem. The Union probably struggled to encourage its members to launch into this great, promising venture, even without any backing program. It was Paul Gilson, and all the RTF with him, who decided to begin emitting. The first French receivers appeared on the market several months later. All of

them were built by Pathé Marconi.

The Program then was the important element. How could they persuade the listeners to buy a very performing radio receiver with the usual programs (Inter, National and Parisien), that were already received in comfortable conditions? Considering the features of the new process, music would evidently be the benefactor. An all-music program was then decided. Jean Tardieu launched the idea of a 99% musical program. This was a challenge, difficult to fulfill in the context of a rather talkative radio: the producers wanted to announce and comment the music that they broadcasted, and explain their choice. Anyway, at the beginning, everyone respected the challenge and Jean Tardieu eventually won his bet. [...]

Marius Constant had just received a *Prix Italia* for his work *The Flute Player* when he was asked by Jean Tardieu to take charge, with Jean-Marie Oberlin, of the music broadcasting of the new station. Beside the actual musical programs, of a demanding quality, some competition programs were launched by Claude Roland-Manuel, whose purpose was to retain the loyalty of the listeners and also to be able to record the audience figures. Winners won vinyl records, another novelty much sought after. The vinyl record was the other challenge of the new FM program: no 78-whorl records were to be played on this station to provide the listener with the best quality of reception. The studio located on the first floor of the Pierre Bourdan center, in the Auteuil district, had been equipped for this purpose with very sophisticated equipment, from the record player and the console to the microphones and amplification sets. The records companies soon brought their original recording tapes to the FM producers instead of their new vinyl records. This permitted to skip a stage of the reproduction chain, avoiding a loss of quality due to the record engraving.

Éliane Clancier, in the memoir she devoted to the Club d'Essai, precisely noticed the program schedules and also the contents of the broadcasting. She finds 85% of musical programs during the first year, while the Paris MF emitter worked every day from 6 to 11 pm. The spoken programs included an evening drama per year, and the reading, over three evenings a week from 10 to 11 pm, of a short novel (or a long novella), and finally a news report, specific to the program, including a sequence of listeners' mail [...]

Modern music, and the music that was more installed in the cultural habits were going to live together and gather around the special FM program a core of fervent listeners, all Parisian, due to the short range of the only emitter in activity. At that stage, those felt they belonged to a very select club, with the slight elitist flavor linked to the concept. Some of them came to the studio, at the Pierre Bourdan center, in order to meet the producers, others to the offices on *Rue de l'Université* in order to vent their demands.

I remember a very constant man who used to stay a long time in our club armchairs only to comment on his reactions about the program of the day before! One of my friends (I had known him in junior high school), a passionate music lover, largely flaunted our school relations partly for the same reason. He however was a faithful competitor in the quizzes launched by Claude Roland-Manuel, which permitted to win vinyl records. This period of settling in, with the enthusiasm linked to the venture, could not last forever. The RTF engineers and their counterparts, the big private manufacturers,

were well aware of that. [...]

Facing these technical improvements, the Paris-IV emitter looked paltry. On the other hand, some of the producers of the Club d'Essai had experienced the FM. Obviously, one had to accept the demise of the Parisian programs of the Club d'Essai, in other words of the Club d'Essai itself. According to the *Service des Archives écrites de Radio France*, the last afternoon was on Sunday March 27th 1960. The written program published by the RTF for the week of March 27th to April 2nd 1960 announces the following broadcasting of the ultimate program on Paris IV: Edouard Kneusé, in his series *Convergences*, proposes works by Bartok performed by Quatuor Parrenin followed by an extract from *Echec à Don Juan* by Claude André Puget. Then pupils of the class of André Asselin, at the *Conservatoire national de Musique*, are performing Beethoven's *Concerto for violin*. André Almuró presents his performance of *L'homme de la pampa*, by Supervielle, with Daniel Sorano and Roger Blin. From 5.30 to 6 pm, the *Petit Conservatoire de la Chanson*, by Mirelle and Georges Godebert, ends the program. Henceforth, the Paris IV Club d'Essai will be mute.

As always when action dominates, one hardly thinks to theorize, and leave written traces of the target aimed at. No one can find any published reflection on the novelty that frequency modulation in the France of the fifties represented. More surprisingly, the very year of the launching of FM, the Sociology of Broadcasting Music convention was held from October 27th to 30th 1954. None of the French attendants have expressed themselves on this issue. Musicologists like Jacques Chailley or Gisèle Brelet don't mention it. Even Jean Tardieu, when he opened the convention, didn't make any allusion to this other side of his activity, despite the fact he was the son of a female musician and a music lover. The only papers about the French FM were those of Robert Wangermée, Head of the Music Department of the Belgian radio and Lecturer at the University of Brussels, and the Swiss René Dovaz, Radio Geneva's manager.

Still, the Convention, which was prepared by the Center of radio and television studies, is a pure product of "n°37 rue de l'Université"! Were Oberlin and Constant in the room? Certainly, though none of them appears to have expressed themselves on the issue. In one of the final statements, René Dovaz recommends the *subsidiary* use of the modulated frequency. I do know that FM was in its infancy at the time, but it then brought clear and positive answers to the repeated calls of the conference delegates for a better welcoming of music on the radios. Of course, all of this could perfectly be explained, but it is a shame that there was no second congress, which could have highlighted FM as an answer to the musician's expectations. But it is easy to have Cleopatra's nose reshaped fifty years after!

Jean Tardieu nevertheless had a clear view of his ambition for his station, as Jean-Marie Oberlin told Roger Pradalié:

"Tardieu gladly mentioned this eighteenth century's novelist, who then imagined a world drenched with music, a world where music would burst out everywhere. The poet was dreaming. He also had a dream for "his" station, as you've just said, for the building of a "library of sound" (such were his words) thanks to FM; not a collection of records, that often remain silent, but a technical facility that would have to be imagined (like the

force-feeding of a computer by data), where anyone could at any time find a desired performance of music, the music needed, as we take and open a book in a library.”

This daily program became France IV Haute Fidélité in 1960, then France Musique in 1963 and France Musiques at the dawn of the twenty first century. It indeed represents a kind of permanent concert on the waves, where all the musical genres are played. After 1960, Jean Tardieu was confirmed as France Musique manager, appointed Deputy Chief of the Research Department, and then artistic Counselor for the ORTF (Direction de la Radiodiffusion), a post he kept until he retired.

Wladimir Porché and Paul Gilson probably didn't suspect what Jean Tardieu would do with Frequency Modulation. Whatever the knowledge they had of the man, they only considered this appointment as the means of carrying out an experiment among others at the Radio and Television Research Center. Jean Tardieu, however, was obsessed by music, and also poetry, and then carried out his program to the point of success it currently enjoys.

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