

Josef Strauss **MEETS** *Offenbach*

Dances by Josef Strauss based on melodies from the operas of
OFFENBACH • THOMAS • GOUNOD • RICCI BROTHERS

Josef Strauss (1827–1870)

Josef Strauss Meets Offenbach

The elder Johann Strauss, father of the waltz dynasty, had intended a different livelihood for his three sons, Johann, Josef and Eduard. It was largely through the force of character of the younger Johann Strauss that his brothers too joined the family business. His father had intended Josef for the army, but he had turned, instead, to architecture and engineering, and it was only in 1856, seven years after his father's death, that, at the urging of his elder brother, he embarked on a full-time career as a composer and conductor, his activity eventually curtailed by continuing ill-health and his early death in 1870. Prolific as a composer, Josef Strauss had made it his custom to arrange the most suitable motifs of every Offenbach work into a quadrille, following its initial presentation on the Vienna stage, where each work was generally welcomed by the public. Included here are also dances based on melodies from Gounod's *Faust* and from works by Ambroise Thomas and by the Ricci brothers.

❶ Fortunio-Magellone-Daphnis-Quadrille (Fortunio-Magellone-Daphnis Quadrille), Op. 103 (arr. Christian Pollack)

In an undated letter, most likely from the spring of 1861, Josef Strauss wrote to his publisher:

Dear Mr von Haslinger,

The most incredible thing has happened. From different spheres of the public, inquiries have been directed towards me requesting that I play something from [Offenbach's] operetta Fortunio. Today I looked it up: I had not yet heard it and wanted to write a quadrille from it, but it does not have enough suitable melodies. So I took Daphnis and Chloé, and Magellone, and at four o'clock I started to write my quadrille, and lo and behold — I finished it completely by 7.30. Since you probably do not have much time now, and are perhaps not in the mood to go through a boring arrangement, I sat down again and completed the arrangement precisely at eight o'clock. ...

At that time Offenbach's operettas were performed at Karl Treumann's Quai-Theatre, in Vienna. *Meister Fortunio* opened on 25th April 1861, *Die schöne Magellone* on 6th April, and *Daphnis und Chloé* on 2nd March 1861. Josef Strauss first performed his quadrille on 15th May 1861 at the Grosser Zeisig on the Burgglacis, and shortly afterwards Haslinger published the piano edition.

Slovak State Philharmonic Orchestra • Christian Pollack
Producer: Rudolf Hentšel • Engineer: Gejza Toperczer
Recorded at the House of Arts, Košice, Slovakia,
9–12 April 2001 • © 2002
[From Marco Polo 8.223626]

❷ Les Géorgiennes Quadrille (The Georgian Women Quadrille), Op. 168

Offenbach's *opéra bouffe* *Les Géorgiennes*, "a three-act play about the Amazons" was performed for the first time on 16th March 1864 at the Bouffes Parisiennes. Its Viennese première, at the Carltheater on 5th October 1864 under the title *Die schönen Weiber von Georgien* (The Lovely Ladies of Georgia), was so successful that some numbers were taken up in Vienna's dance salons. Josef Strauss wasted no time in immediately arranging a quadrille inspired by motifs from the work, which was performed for the first time on 9th October 1864 at a concert in the Dianasaal. Three days later, the piano score appeared and the work remained for a long time thereafter in the Strauss orchestra's repertoire.

Razumovsky Symphony Orchestra • Alfred Eschwé
Producers: Miloš Betko and Hubert Geschwandtner
Recorded at the Concert Hall of Slovak Radio, Bratislava,
Slovakia, 20–21 May 1995 • © 1997
[From Marco Polo 8.223571]

❸ Blaubart-Quadrille (Bluebeard Quadrille), Op. 206

The comic opera *Bluebeard* was presented at the Theater an der Wien on 21st September 1866. Apparently Josef Strauss had come by the piano score of the work in Paris, for in France *Barbe bleu* had already had its première on 5th February 1866. The work did not come with a good reputation and it was considered eccentric and macabre. In Vienna too, the first performance did not receive enthusiastic reviews, but Offenbach's lively music was eventually

accepted on the Danube. The *Blaubart-Quadrille*, first performed by the Strauss Orchestra shortly after its publication in September 1866, was a resounding success.

Slovak State Philharmonic Orchestra • Michael Dittrich
Producer: Rudolf Hentšel • Engineer: Gejza Toperczer
Recorded at the House of Arts, Košice, Slovakia,
26–29 June 1995 • © 1998
[From Marco Polo 8.223574]

**[4] Quadrille über beliebte Motive der komischen Oper
‘Die Großherzogin von Gerolstein’ von Jacques
Offenbach. (Quadrille after favourite motifs from
the comic opera ‘La Grande-Duchesse de
Gérolstein’ by Jacques Offenbach), Op. 223**

Offenbach's *opéra bouffe* *La Grande-Duchesse de Gérolstein* is both a parody of a fictional warlike state (the Duchy of Gérolstein) and the story of a tyrannical, pretty and unmarried grand-duchess who keeps postponing the requirement that she make an appropriate match with an aristocratic suitor. She is in love instead with a simple soldier and right away promotes her Fritz to General. The young man, however, loves a peasant girl and spurns the duchess' hand. He is then immediately demoted to a mere soldier. All is not well that ends well: the duchess remains unmarried and Gérolstein remains the way it was until the next scandal. The opera was first performed in Vienna on 13th May 1867 at the Theater an der Wien and, as ever, Josef Strauss was inspired to write a quadrille containing the most attractive motifs of the work as soon as possible. His *Gérolstein-Quadrille* was first performed in the Volksgarten on the 7th June 1867.

Slovak State Philharmonic Orchestra • Christian Pollack
Producer: Rudolf Hentšel • Engineer: Gejza Toperczer
Recorded at the House of Arts, Košice, Slovakia,
19–22 November 1994 • © 1996
[From Marco Polo 8.223565]

[5] Genovefa. Quadrille (Geneviève. Quadrille), Op. 246
In 1859 Offenbach hurriedly wrote the music for an *opéra bouffe* entitled *Geneviève de Brabant* with the intention of parodying a French medieval story. Offenbach's music received scant attention, but the composer was convinced

that he had produced a worthwhile work which deserved success. In 1867, the year of the *Exposition universelle [d'art et d'industrie]* held in Paris, the newly-opened Théâtre des Menus-Plaisirs in the French metropolis was having little success with plays and the hall director turned to the harried Offenbach for a new musical. The composer resurrected *Geneviève*, allowing the libretto to be reworked and on 26th December 1867 the second version of the work, proudly rebilled as an *opéra bouffe*, was staged. This time the work enjoyed greater success.

Towards the end of the 1867/1868 season, as summer approached, the administration of the Theater an der Wien was looking for a dramatic work that would guarantee a capacity audience. The author, conductor and composer Julius Hopp produced a German version of Offenbach's *Geneviève de Brabant*, which was performed for the first time under the title *Genovefa van Brabant* in the Theater an der Wien on 9th May 1868. This proved to be an irresistible stimulus for Josef Strauss immediately to compose a quadrille after the striking motifs of the opera, billed in Vienna as a burlesque. Josef Strauss presented his quadrille to the public at a festival in the Volksgarten on 15th May 1868.

Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra • Michael Dittrich
Producer: Karol Kopernický • Engineer: Hubert Geschwandtner
Recorded at the Concert Hall of Slovak Radio, Bratislava,
Slovakia, 27–30 September 1994 • © 1996
[From Marco Polo 8.223564]

**[6] Périchole-Quadrille nach Motiven der
gleichnamigen Oper von Jacques Offenbach
(Périchole-Quadrille on motifs from the
eponymous opera by Jacques Offenbach), Op. 256**

Offenbach hurriedly completed his *opéra bouffe* *La Périchole* in the autumn of 1868 in order to make possible its première on 6th October at the Théâtre des Variétés in Paris. Based on a play by Prosper Mérimée, the plot revolves around the street singer Périchole with whom the viceroy of Peru falls in love at first sight. Wishing to make her his mistress and in order to keep up appearances, he tries to marry her off as quickly as possible to anyone he can. The man he chooses, however, is none other than

Périchole's fiancé, the street singer Piquinho. The action drags on until a resolution of the conflict is reached. Not even Offenbach's witty music, however, could raise the enthusiasm of the audience at the première in Paris. Despite the modest success of the performances at the Variétés, the director of the Theater an der Wien hastened to acquire the work in order to present it under the extended title *Périchole, la chanteuse des rues* (Périchole, the Street Singer). The first performance in Vienna took place on 9th January 1869.

In arranging a quadrille, featuring motifs from the opera, Josef Strauss was in as much haste as the director of the Theater an der Wien. The première of the quadrille is thought to have taken place during January 1869 on the occasion of any of the numerous masquerade balls. We do not know this for certain, however, as Josef Strauss did not even stop to write down in his notes the time, date and place of the première.

Slovak State Philharmonic Orchestra • Michael Dittrich
 Producer: Rudolf Hentšel • Engineer: Gejza Toperczer
 Recorded at the House of Arts, Košice, Slovakia,
 5–9 June 2000 • © 2002
 [From Marco Polo 8.223623]

7 'Toto-Quadrille' nach Motiven der gleichnamigen Oper von Jacques Offenbach'schen Operette ('Toto-Quadrille' on motifs from the eponymous Offenbach operetta), Op. 265

When Offenbach's *opéra bouffe* *Le Château à Toto* was performed for the first time at the Théâtre du Palais-Royal, Paris on 6th May 1868, spectators and critics were of one mind: Offenbach's seasoned librettists, Messieurs Meilhac and Halévy, had taken minimal pains with the libretto, and had simply copied the plot of the still popular opera *La dame blanche* which Boieldieu had set to splendid music in 1825. As for Offenbach's music, public and critics were also in agreement; it did not contain anything really new, but seemed to be a reworking of those melodies which had already been aired on other occasions. Although a Parisian newspaper stated soon after that "Offenbach is dried up, he is scraping the bottom of the barrel", the composer was not upset but instead continued composing his next

operetta. It was not until 1st February 1869 that the work, by then half forgotten in Paris, appeared under the simple title of *Toto* at the Carltheater in Vienna. Not even a fine cast, however, could inspire the public in the Danubian metropolis and Offenbach's time of triumph seemed to be over in Vienna too.

The lukewarm success of *Toto* did not keep Josef Strauss from arranging the motifs of the operetta in the by now customary Offenbach quadrille. Like the operetta, the *Toto-Quadrille* evidently had a short life, but it is a pleasant, amusing work which can confidently take its place by the side of other quadrilles of that time.

Slovak State Philharmonic Orchestra • Michael Dittrich
 Producer: Rudolf Hentšel • Engineer: Gejza Toperczer
 Recorded at the House of Arts, Košice, Slovakia,
 26–28 May 1995 • © 1998
 [From Marco Polo 8.223573]

8 Kadi-Quadrille nach Motiven der gleichnamigen Oper von A. Thomas (Kadi-Quadrille, after motifs from the opera *Le caïd* by Ambroise Thomas), Op. 25

The Viennese première of the German-language version of Ambroise Thomas' opera *Der Kadi* (*Le caïd*/The Quaid) was first performed at the Royal and Imperial Opera House located at the Kärntnertor, Vienna on 29th August 1856. Prior to the work's Viennese première, Josef Strauss had already presented his *Kadi-Quadrille* at Sperl's Establishment, as early as 9th August 1856. However, it remained in the repertoire of the Strauss orchestra for a short time only, until some thirty years after Josef Strauss's death, when the conductor Ernst Reiterer (1851–1923) created an operetta *Frühlingsluft* (Spring Air) from compositions written by Strauss. He transformed the second part of the finale of the *Kadi-Quadrille* by changing the rhythm to that of a fashionable dance, the cakewalk, imported from America at the turn of the century.

Slovak State Philharmonic Orchestra • Manfred Müssauer
 Producer: Rudolf Hentšel • Engineer: Gejza Toperczer
 Recorded at the House of Arts, Košice, Slovakia,
 23–27 February 2001 • © 2002
 [From Marco Polo 8.223625]

[9] Faust-Quadrille (Faust Quadrille), Op. 112

Josef Strauss wrote his *Faust Quadrille* after motifs from Charles Gounod's opera *Faust* in the summer of 1861, and performed it for the first time on 11th August at Carl Schwender's Neue Welt establishment in Hietzing. In the notes of the horn player, Franz Sabay, the première of the work is indicated as 17th August 1861, more than two years after the opera's première in Paris, but approximately six months before its première in Vienna, with the title *Margarethe* in deference to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's eponymous drama. Strauss's quadrille enjoyed considerable success and he was able to present it time and again during the 1861 season.

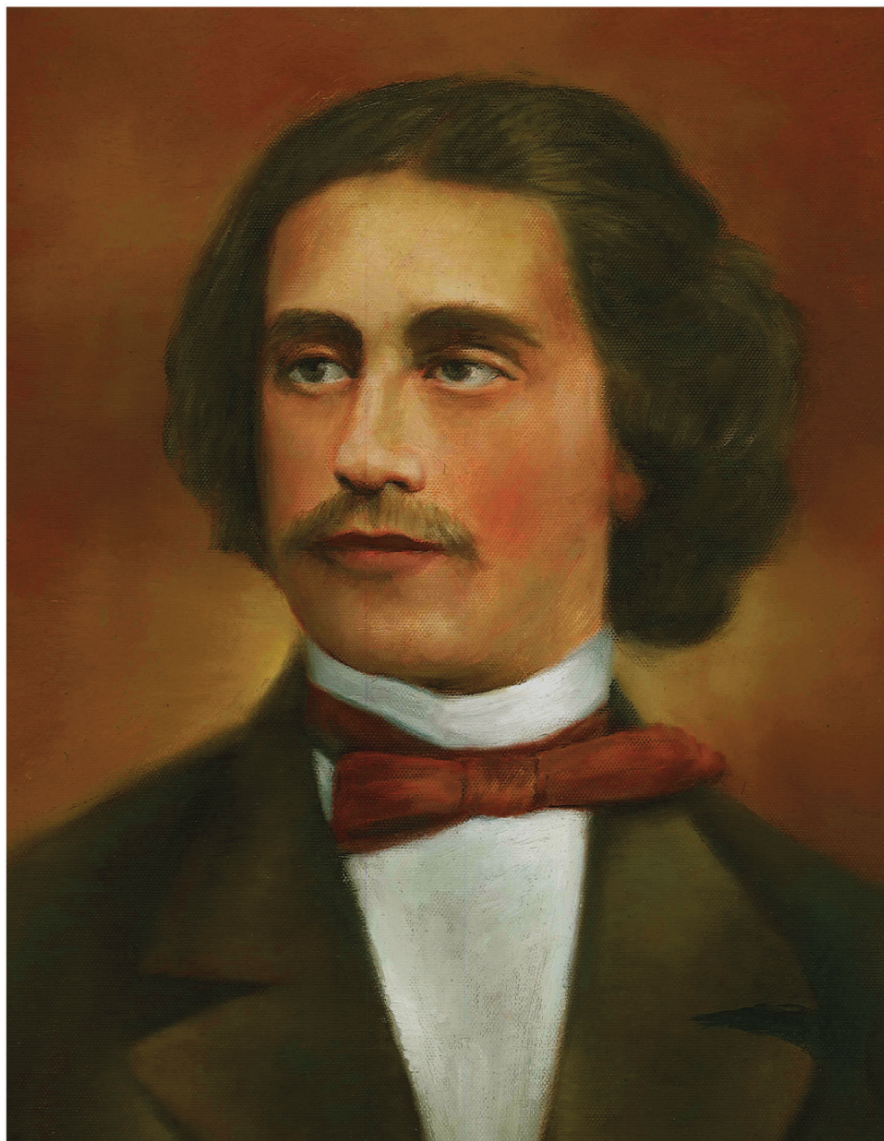
Slovak State Philharmonic Orchestra • Michael Dittrich
Producer: Rudolf Hentšel • Engineer: Gejza Toperczer
Recorded at the House of Arts, Košice, Slovakia,
11–14 September 2001 • © 2002
[From Marco Polo 8.223664]

[10] Crispino-Quadrille nach Motiven der L. u. F. Ricci'schen Oper gleichnamigen Oper *Crispino e la Comare* (Crispino-Quadrille, after Motifs from the Opera *Crispino e la Comare* by L. & F. Ricci), Op. 224

On 10th May 1867 the comic opera *Crispino e la Comare* by the Ricci brothers, Luigi (1805–1859) and Federico (1809–1877), was performed in Italian at the Hof-Operntheater next to the Kärtnertor. The Austrian première of this *Melodramma fantastico* was not rewarded with the long-running success that its première had enjoyed in Venice on 28th February 1850. Immediately after its Viennese première, however, Josef Strauss composed a quadrille based on the principal motifs. This attractive work remained for a time in the repertoire of the Strauss Orchestra, then fell into neglect, as did the opera by the Ricci brothers.

Slovak State Philharmonic Orchestra • Manfred Müssauer
Producer: Rudolf Hentšel • Engineer: Gejza Toperczer
Recorded at the House of Arts, Košice, Slovakia,
23–27 February 2001 • © 2002
[From Marco Polo 8.223625]

Adapted from notes by Franz Mailer



Portrait of Josef Strauss by Chai Ben-Shan

Intended for the army by his father, Johann – the founder of the waltz dynasty – Josef Strauss instead turned first to engineering and then, in a glittering career from 1856 until his premature death in 1870, to full-time composition and conducting. Josef was especially enamoured of the music of Offenbach whose operettas and operas travelled successfully from the Parisian stage to Vienna. It was Josef's custom to take the most attractive and suitable motifs from Offenbach's stage works and fashion them into quadrilles, works performed to huge acclaim by his virtuoso orchestra.

**Josef
STRAUSS**
(1827–1870)

Josef Strauss Meets Offenbach

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|--|-------------|---|-------------|
| 1 Fortunio-Magellone-Daphnis
Quadrille, Op. 103 | 6:25 | 5 Genovefa-Quadrille, Op. 246 | 5:56 |
| 2 Les Géorgiennes Quadrille,
Op. 168 | 5:30 | 6 Périchole-Quadrille, Op. 256 | 5:19 |
| 3 Blaubart-Quadrille, Op. 206 | 6:14 | 7 Toto-Quadrille, Op. 265 | 5:18 |
| 4 Die Grossherzogin von Gerolstein
Quadrille, Op. 223 | 5:30 | 8 Kadi-Quadrille, Op. 25 | 5:23 |
| | | 9 Faust-Quadrille, Op. 112 | 6:03 |
| | | 10 Crispino-Quadrille,
Op. 224 | 6:38 |

Full track details will be found in the booklet

Slovak State Philharmonic Orchestra
Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra
Razumovsky Symphony Orchestra
Michael Dittrich • Christian Pollack
Alfred Eschwé • Manfred Müssauer

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