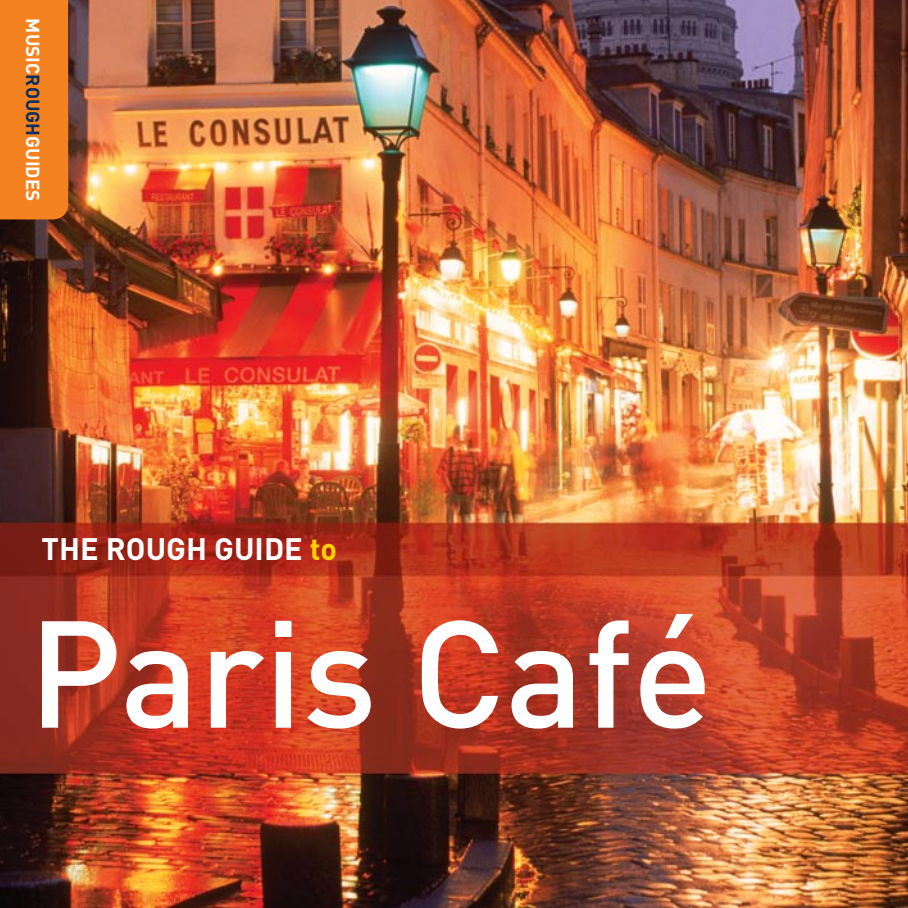


THE ROUGH GUIDE to

# Paris Café



Like tango in Buenos Aires or *rebetika* in Athens, Parisian *bal musette* is an urban musical style born in the early twentieth century from a melting pot of cultures. At the time, *café-charbons* of the Bastille area were owned by people from the Auvergne, a mountainous region in central France. There, in courtyards, people danced the emblematic *bourrée* to the sound of the *cabrette* (also called *musette*), the Auvergnat small-pipe. The Gare de Lyon train station, leading to Italy, was not far away, and many migrants from the other side of the Alps settled in the area, bringing with them their accordions. They started playing alongside small-pipe players, eventually replacing them. A new music was born, which kept the name *musette* or *bal musette*. The rest is history: the accordion soon became the symbol of Paris!

The first *musette* accordionists of the 1920s and early 1930s made people dance in the shady dance halls of the Bastille area. They imposed a new repertoire: the *valse musette* (waltz), the *java* (derived from the *mazurka*) and the foxtrot amongst other styles. Alongside the accordion, a typical *bal musette* orchestra often included the banjo (sometimes played by a Gypsy musician) and the *jâze* (drums, from the American word 'jazz'). Big names of this era include Emile Vacher (1883–1969), often credited as the real inventor of the *musette* style, the Péguri brothers (Charles Péguri was one of the first accordionists to play alongside a *cabrette* player, who happened to be his own father-in-law, Antoine Bouscatel) and Henri Momboisse (1889–1960).

In the late 1930s, some younger accordionists enjoyed American jazz so much that they created the *swing musette*, mixing both styles. This new music became especially popular during the German occupation (1940–1944), because the dance halls were closed and people turned to jazz concerts instead. Swing accordionists like Gus Viseur (1915–1974) or Tony Muréna (1916–1971) became household names.

After World War II, the *musette* style was popular all over France, and big names of the *chanson* scene, like Edith Piaf, were often accompanied by an accordionist. Then the instrument grew out of fashion. The *musette* scene did not manage to renew itself and a new generation, born in the 1940s, turned to rock music (often, they hated the accordion!). Almost all *bals musette* on the rue de Lappe closed.

In the late 1980s, though, there was an unexpected revival. Young rock bands like Les Garçons Bouchers adopted the instrument and *rock musette* was born! And now you can hear the accordion in jazz or contemporary music again, thanks to pioneers like Richard Galliano. The French are no longer ashamed of their national instrument... although it must be said that the golden age of the 1920s and 1930s is not well-known at all. Few people outside of specialist circles know about Emile Vacher or Tony Muréna, who were huge stars in their own time.

The first edition of *The Rough Guide To Paris Café Music* told the story of the Parisian accordion,

mixing historical recordings from the golden age of *bal musette* with modern recordings featuring the instrument played in a different context (jazz, rock, chanson...). It was released in the early 2000s and gave a broad overview of this typically French sound. A decade later, this second edition allows us to discover young musicians who have risen to fame during recent years. It also presents big names of the golden age (1920s and 1930s) that could not be included in the first edition.

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Comme le *tango* à Buenos Aires ou les *rébétika* à Athènes, le *bal musette* parisien est un style musical urbain né au début du XXe siècle d'un melting-pot de cultures. À l'époque, les *café-charbons* du quartier de la Bastille étaient tenus par des Auvergnats. C'est en Auvergne, dans les cours, que les gens dansaient l'emblématique *bourrée* au son de la *cabrette* (aussi appelée *musette*), la cornemuse auvergnate. La gare de Lyon, terminus de trains venant d'Italie, n'était pas loin de la Bastille, et de nombreux émigrants transalpins s'installèrent dans le quartier, avec leurs accordéons. Ils commencèrent à jouer aux côtés des joueurs de cornemuse, les remplaçant à l'occasion. Une nouvelle musique était née, qui conserva le nom de *musette* ou *bal musette*. Le reste appartient à l'histoire: l'accordéon est vite devenu le symbole de Paris!

Les premiers accordéonistes *musette* des années 1920 et du début des années 1930 faisaient danser les Parisiens dans les salles de

danse peu éclairées du quartier de la Bastille. Ils imposèrent un nouveau répertoire parmi lequel on trouvait, entre autres, la *valse musette* (valse), la *java* (dérivée de la *mazurka*) et le fox-trot. Outre l'accordéon, un orchestre de *bal musette* comprenait souvent un banjo (parfois joué par un musicien tsigane) et le *jâze* (la batterie, du mot américain "jazz"). Parmi les grands noms de cette époque, on trouve Emile Vacher (1883-1969), souvent considéré comme le véritable inventeur du style *musette*, les frères Péguri (Charles Péguri a été l'un des premiers accordéonistes à jouer aux côtés d'un joueur de *cabrette*, Antoine Bouscatel, qui se trouvait être son beau-père) et Henri Momboisse (1889-1960).

À la fin des années 1930, de jeunes accordéonistes, férus de jazz américain, inventèrent le *swing musette*, en mélangeant les deux styles. Cette nouvelle musique connut une grande popularité pendant l'occupation allemande (1940-1944), en raison de la fermeture des salles de danse qui conduisit les Parisiens à se tourner vers les concerts de jazz. Le nom des accordéonistes de *swing musette*, tels Gus Viseur (1915-1974) ou Tony Murena (1916-1971), furent connus partout.

Après la Seconde Guerre mondiale, le style *musette* était populaire dans toute la France. De grands noms de la chanson, comme Edith Piaf, étaient souvent accompagnés d'un accordéoniste. Puis, l'instrument se démoda. La scène *musette* ne réussit pas à se renouveler. La nouvelle génération, née dans les années 1940, se tourna

vers el rock (sobre todo, ella detestaba el acordeón!). Casi todos los bailes musette de la rue de Lappe fueron obligados a cerrar sus puertas.

A la fin de los años 1980, sin embargo, el género volvió a ser un descubrimiento inesperado. De jóvenes grupos de rock como Les Garçons Bouchers adoptaron el acordeón: el *rock musette* estaba ahí! De nuestros días, gracias a los pioneros como Richard Galliano, hoy puedes encontrar el acordeón en el jazz o en la música contemporánea. Los franceses ya no se sienten avergonzados de su instrumento nacional... aunque se debe tener en cuenta que la música de la era de oro de los años veinte y treinta no es muy conocida. Lejos de los grupos de especialistas son muy pocos quienes conocen los nombres de Emile Vacher o Tony Murena, artistas muy famosos en su época.

La primera edición de *Rough Guide to Paris Café Music* relataba la historia del acordeón parisino, asociando los registros históricos de la era de oro del bal musette a los registros modernos de acordeón que se tocaron en diferentes contextos (jazz, rock, canción, etc.). Salí al escenario de los años 2000, me dio una gran impresión de cómo sonaba típicamente francés. Una década más tarde, esta segunda edición nos permite descubrir a jóvenes músicos que han conquistado la gloria en los últimos años. El presente también incluye los grandes nombres de la era de oro (años 1920 y 1930) que no pudieron ser incluidos en la primera edición.

Como el Tango en Buenos Aires o 'rebetica' en Atenas, el bal musette Pariciense es un estilo musical urbano creado en los años tempranos del siglo veinte como resultado de una gran influencia multicultural. En aquel entonces el Café-Charbons en el área de la Bastilla, tenía como propietarios a personas de Auvergne, región montañosa en el centro de Francia. Allí en las terrazas, la gente bailaba el emblemático 'bourree' con el ritmo de 'cabrette' (también conocido como musette) la Auvergnat pequeña. El Gare de Lyon, la estación de trenes, con vía hacia Italia, no estaba muy lejos y muchos inmigrantes de el otro lado de los Alpes se asentaron en esta área, trayendo consigo sus acordeones. Iniciaron tocando al lado de flautistas a quienes eventualmente reemplazaron. Un nuevo estilo musical fue creado con el nombre de 'musette' o 'bal musette'. El resto ya lo conocemos: el acordeón muy pronto se convirtió en un símbolo de París.

Los primeros acordeonistas de 'musette' de los años veinte y en los comienzos de los años treinta, hicieron bailar a muchas personas en las salas sombrías del área de Bastille, estos músicos impusieron un nuevo repertorio: el vals 'musette' (vals), el 'java' (derivado del 'mazurka') y el 'foxtrot' entre otros estilos. Al lado del acordeón, una orquesta típica de 'bal musette' casi siempre incluía el banjo (algunas veces instrumento usado por músicos gitanos) y el 'jaze' (tambores de la palabra americana 'Jazz').

Grandes nombres de esta era incluyen Emile Vacher (1883-1969), a quien casi siempre se le atribuye la invención del estilo 'la musette'. Los Hermanos Peguri (Charles Peguri fue uno de los primeros acordeonistas que tocó al lado de un músico de 'cabrette', quien era su suegro, Antoine Bouscatel) y Henri Momboisse (1889-1960).

Hacia el final de los años treinta, algunos acordeonistas jóvenes disfrutaban tanto el Jazz Americano y mezclando aquellos 2 estilos dieron origen al 'swing musette'. Este nuevo ritmo se hizo muy popular durante la ocupación Alemana (1940-1944), porque las salas de bailes fueron clausuradas y la gente se volcó hacia los conciertos de Jazz. Acordeonistas de 'swing' como Gus Viseur (1915-1974) y Tony Murena (1915-1971) adquirieron gran fama.

Después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, el estilo 'musette' se hizo muy popular en toda Francia. Grandes nombres del movimiento 'chason' como Edith Piaf, fueron casi siempre acompañados por un acordeonista. Para aquel entonces este instrumento perdió popularidad. El movimiento de la 'musette' no logró alcanzar popularidad de nuevo. La nueva generación nacida en los años cuarenta adoptó la música 'rock', mostrando casi odio por el acordeón, lo que ocasionó el cierre 'bals musette' en la 'rue de Lappe'.

Al final de los años ochenta hubo un repentino renacimiento de este estilo musical. Los

jóvenes grupos de 'rock' como 'Les Garçons Bouchers' adoptaron el instrumento dando origen al 'rock musette'!

En la actualidad se puede escuchar de nuevo el acordeón en jazz o en la música contemporánea, gracias a pioneros como Richard Galliano. Los franceses ya no se sienten avergonzados de su instrumento nacional... aunque se debe tener en cuenta que la música de la era de oro de los años veinte y treinta no es muy conocida. Lejos de los grupos de especialistas son muy pocos quienes conocen los nombres de Emile Vacher o Tony Murena, artistas muy famosos en su época.

La primera edición de 'Rough Guide to Paris Café Music' cuenta la historia del acordeón Pariciense, mezclando grabaciones históricas de la era de oro de 'bal musette' con grabaciones modernas incluyendo el acordeón en ritmos como jazz, rock. Chason... Este compilatorio salió al Mercado a comienzos del año 2000 dando una visión muy general de este típico sonido Francés. Una década más tarde, esta segunda edición nos muestra músicos jóvenes que se han hecho famosos en años recientes. También presenta grandes nombres de la era de oro (1920s-1930s) que no pudieron ser incluidos en la primera edición.

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**DAVID RIVIÈRE** – This compilation begins with a catchy track by the young accordionist David Rivière. He has a love of jazz and world music,

but he can also play more traditional *musette* tunes to make people dance. He is also a member of Les Pommes De Ma Douche, a jazz-swing quintet.

**JAMAÏT** – Although he comes from Dijon (Burgundy), Yves Jamait could very well be mistaken for a modern-day Gavroche (a character created by Victor Hugo in his novel *Les Misérables*, personifying the spirit of Paris). Always wearing his distinctive cap, he started singing in small cafés, before rising progressively to fame in the late 2000s. This beautiful love song comes from his second album, *Le Coquelicot*.

**ANGELO DEBARRE & LUDOVIC BEIER** – There are many links between Parisian accordion music and Gypsy swing. Influential Gypsy guitarists and banjoists (including Django Reinhardt and the Ferret brothers) played in *bal musette* bands in the 1920s and 1930s, and most accordionists have always had a deep interest in Gypsy swing (among them Jo Privat and Marcel Loeffler). Therefore it is only natural that Angelo Debarre, a *Manouche* (French Gypsy) guitarist and Ludovic Beier, a young accordionist and a jazz-lover, have chosen to team up. Here they play their own version of an American standard from the 1920s.

**ANDRÉ MINVIELLE** – This track comes from an ambitious CD project that did a lot to revive the interest in accordion music in the early 1990s: *Paris Musette* gathered several lovers of

the old-fashioned Parisian sound, who recorded together under the supervision of jazz journalist Franck Bergerot and producer Patrick Tandin. *Swing-musette* virtuoso Gus Viseur originally recorded 'Flambée Montalbanaise' in 1940. However, André Minvielle pays tribute to Viseur by singing on this more recent version.

**LUDOVIC BEIER QUARTET** – Viseur was amongst the first accordionists to mix jazz and *musette*, and the trend has never really stopped over the last seventy years. Ludovic Beier proves it with this catchy waltz recorded in the early 2000s.

**MICHÈLE BERNARD** – Michèle Bernard's wonderful 1998 album *Voler* contains two songs that capture the spirit of Paris. The first one, 'C'est Un Rital', tells the story of *bal musette* and is featured on the first edition of *The Rough Guide To Paris Café Music*. The song here is a tribute to multicultural Paris: when you travel in the métro, you will meet people from all over the world, be they rich tourists visiting the city or African and Asian migrants commuting to work.

**MARCEL AZZOLA & DIDI DUPRAT** – Accordionist Marcel Azzola and guitarist Didi Duprat were both born in the same Parisian hospital in the late 1920s. The Hôpital Tenon is situated on the rue de la Chine, hence the name of this mazurka! It was recorded for the third and final album of the *Paris Musette* project, in the mid-1990s.

**BELTUNER** – This young quartet's music is typical of the Parisian melting pot, mixing *bal musette*, Gypsy swing – and sometimes Arabic influences – when they invite singer and *mandola* player Mustapha Messaoud Bouneb on stage! Let us not forget that many Parisian cafés are now owned by North African migrants, and therefore 'Paris café music' can equally mean Algerian *rai* or *chaabi*!

**TRIO DCA** – Even after the *musette* style became popular in the early twentieth century, the Auvergnat community in Paris continued to play their own traditional music. You can still hear many gifted *cabrette* players in the French capital, like Dominique Paris. Ten years ago, he teamed up with accordionist Hervé Capel and hurdy-gurdy player Anne-Lise Foy to form Trio DCA, one of the hottest acts on the French folk music scene today.

**FRANCIS LEMARQUE** – An album devoted to Parisian accordion could not be complete without Francis Lemarque (1917–2002), who wrote many songs praising the beauty of Paris (including 'A Paris', made internationally famous by Yves Montand). This one is a tribute to the rue de Lappe, Lemarque's native street in the Bastille area, which hosted so many *bals musette* in the first half of the twentieth century. He humorously recalls the atmosphere of his youth, when bad boys, fresh out of jail (and likely to return soon!), came to the rue de Lappe to dance the *valse musette* and the *java*.

**HENRI MOMBOISSE** – Auvergne-born accordionist Henri Momboisse (his name is sometimes spelt Monboisse) was a regular at the dance halls of the rue de Lappe in the 1920s and 1930s. This mazurka, recorded in 1930, is typical of the early *bal musette* sound, mixing the accordion and the banjo (played here by Julien Latorre).

**JOSEPH COLOMBO DU BAL TABARIN ET SON ENSEMBLE** – Joseph Colombo (1900–1973) was one of the numerous accordionists born in Italy who made a name for themselves on the Parisian scene. He recorded many catchy *musette* tunes like this one (from 1937), before switching to the *bandoneón* and specializing in tango music. He was a resident musician at the famous Bal Tabarin in Pigalle.

**LA CHIFFONIE** – This song, from the early twentieth century, tells the sad (but typical) story of a young girl from a poor family falling into prostitution. This version was recorded in 1993 by folk band La Chiffonie.

**ARMAND LASSAGNE** – Armand Lassagne comes from a generation of accordionists who are now in their seventies and eighties and started their career in post-World War II France (among them Marcel Azzola and Jean Corti). They grew up listening to traditional *musette* tunes, by people such as Emile Vacher and the Péguri brothers, but they also enjoyed the *swing-musette* played by the likes of Tony Muréna and Gus Viseur.

Thus they developed their own music, which owes to both styles, as can be heard in this track, recorded in 2003.

**DAMIA** – In the 1930s, accordion music could also be heard in the suburbs of Paris, on the banks of the Marne River, in small outlets called *guinguettes*. Here you could have a drink and dance, especially on Sunday afternoons. In this famous song from 1935, Damia (1889–1978) wonders what strange things happen in a small guinguette, soon after dark, when the shutters have just been closed.

**JEAN GABIN** – This song comes from a 1936 Julien Duvivier movie, *La Belle Équipe*. It was released at a very symbolic moment in French history, just after the electoral victory of the Front Populaire, and tells the story of three friends who turn an old abandoned building into a *guinguette*. Jean Gabin, one of the greatest French comedians of all time, sings how pleasant it is to walk along the Marne River on a Sunday afternoon, after a long week of work. Like Damia on the preceding track, Gabin is accompanied here by accordionist Adolphe Deprince.

**JEAN PEYRONNIN, A. TEDESCHI ET LEUR CÉLÈBRE ORCHESTRE MUSETTE** – Although it is immensely enjoyable, this tune, recorded in 1936, has never been reissued on CD before! So many musical treasures are to be rediscovered on old 78 rpm records, when you are lucky enough to find them at flea markets!

**UKULÉLÉ CLUB DE PARIS** – This is the only track on the *Manuia* album that does not feature an accordion! It has a real Paris café spirit, though. Firstly, because it is a *java*, the typical dance of the *bal-musette* era. Secondly, it is sung by Dora Lou in Javanais, a Parisian slang invented in the nineteenth century that only the initiated can understand! The Ukulélé Club De Paris gathers several lovers of this small Hawaiian string instrument, including Joseph Racaille and Dominique Cravic of Les Primitifs Du Futur fame.

**LES PRIMITIFS DU FUTUR** – This Parisian-based band led by Dominique Cravic can be heard on other Rough Guide albums. They have a love of *bal musette*, Gypsy swing, American jazz and blues... and their music is a mix of all these influences. The distinctive voice of scat specialist (and sax player) Daniel Huck can be heard on this foxtrot, an American dance popular in Paris in the 1920s.

**NOVELTY FOX** – Novelty Fox features several members of Les Primitifs Du Futur, but it has a distinct personality. The band is led by Jean-Michel Davis, a gifted musician who spent ten years in the USA and plays several percussive instruments, including the xylophone, which is often to be heard on old *bal musette* records from the 1920s and 1930s.

*Guillaume Veillet is a music journalist based in Paris. He is the compiler of the masterly ten-CD anthology of French traditional music, released in 2009 on the Frémeaux & Associés label. A bal musette enthusiast, he owns 3,000 accordion 78 rpm records from the 1920s and 1930s, and is still looking for more!*

- 01 **DAVID RIVIÈRE** Glissade  
from the album FROM VALSE TO SWING (CDM 043)  
[David Rivière / Pierre Delaveau] pub Copyright Control.  
Licensed from Le Chant du Monde.
- 02 **JAMAÏT** Le Coquelicot  
from the album LE COQUELICOT (3113732)  
[Yves Jamait] pub Faisage Music. Licensed from  
Wagram Music.
- 03 **ANGELO DEBARRE & LUDOVIC BEIER** I  
Wonder Where My Baby Is Tonight  
from the album ENTRE AMIS (2741288)  
[trad] Copyright Control. Licensed from Le Chant du Monde.
- 04 **ANDRÉ MINVIELLE** Flambée Montalbanaise  
from the album PARIS MUSETTE (LLL137)  
[Gus Viseur, arr Martin Cayla] pub M. Cayla. Licensed from  
Frémeaux & Associés.
- 05 **LUDOVIC BEIER QUARTET** Waltz In Paris  
from the album NEW MONTMARTRE (CDM 050)  
[Ludovic Beier] pub Bobby Stars. Licensed from  
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- 06 **MICHÈLE BERNARD** Boyaux De Paris  
from the album VOLER (EPM 984 622)  
[Michèle Bernard] pub Copyright Control. Licensed from EPM.
- 07 **MARCEL AZZOLA & DIDI DUPRAT**  
Rue De La Chine  
from the album PARIS MUSETTE VOL. 3 (LLL217)  
[Marcel Azzola/René Duprat] pub Roger Vaysse. Licensed  
from Frémeaux & Associés.
- 08 **BELTUNER** Kif [feat Mustapha MB]  
from the album BELTUNER ALBUM #2 (PULS008A)  
[Johann Riche and Mustapha Messaoud Bouneb] pub Copyright  
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- 09 **TRIO DCA** Polka À Alfred Mouret  
from the album TRIO DCA (MPJ 111026)  
[trad, arr Trio DCA] pub Modal. Licensed from ATMA.
- 10 **FRANCIS LEMARQUE** Rue De Lappe  
from the album MES GRANDS SUCCÈS (EPM ZET 505)  
[Francis Lemarque/Rudi Révil] pub Nouvelles Editions  
Méridian. Licensed from EPM.
- 11 **HENRI MOMBOISSE** Impression  
Copyright Control. Public domain.
- 12 **JOSEPH COLOMBO DU BAL TABARIN ET SON  
ENSEMBLE** Germaine  
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- 13 **LA CHIFFONIE** De Place En Place  
from the album ANTHOLOGIE DE LA CHANSON  
FRANÇAISE:DE LA RUE AU CABARET (EPM VC99-13)  
[Lucien Boyer/Adolphe Stanislas] pub Copyright Control.  
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- 14 **ARMAND LASSAGNE** Le Tournis  
from the album LE TOURNIS (2741173)  
[Armand Lassagne] pub Copyright Control. Licensed from  
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- 15 **DAMIA** La Guinguette A Fermé Ses Volets  
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- 16 **JEAN GABIN**  
Quand On Se Promène Au Bord De L'Eau  
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- 17 **JEAN PEYRONNIN, A. TEDESCHI ET  
LEUR CÉLÈBRE ORCHESTRE MUSETTE**  
Accordéonette  
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- 18 **UKULÉLÉ CLUB DE PARIS** Java Javanaise  
from the album MANUIA (FA515)  
[Joseph Racaille/Cyril Lefebvre] pub Copyright Control.  
Licensed from Frémeaux & Associés.
- 19 **LES PRIMITIFS DU FUTUR** Fox Musette  
from the album WORLD MUSETTE (SSC3043)  
[Dominique Cravic] Copyright Control. Licensed from  
Acousti Studios.
- 20 **NOVELTY FOX** Slalom À La Croix Fry  
from the album FORGOTTEN DREAMS (FA507)  
[Daniel Colin] pub Wana Music. Licensed from  
Frémeaux & Associés.

David Rivière

Ludovic Beier Quartet

Beltuner

Les Primitifs Du Futur



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