

# Les Contes d'Hoffmann

**Critical Edition**  
from the Offenbach experts  
Michael Kaye  
and Jean-Christophe Keck



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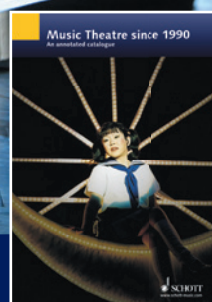
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# Les Contes d'Hoffmann

Jacques Offenbach's "The Tales of Hoffmann":

The genesis of the work and new critical edition from the  
Offenbach experts Michael Kaye and Jean-Christophe Keck

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# The Genesis of the Work

by Michael Kaye and Jean-Christophe Keck

On 21 March 1851, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, a "drame fantastique" in five acts by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré, was première at the Théâtre de l'Odéon in Paris with incidental music composed by the theater's conductor, Joseph-Jacques-Augustin Ancessy. At the time, Offenbach was musical director of the Comédie Française. It is very likely that he attended this performance and was reminded of the rich Germanic legacy of romantic, spell-binding, and gruesome tales typified by the literary works of E.T.A. Hoffmann, so skillfully dramatized for the stage and later for the opera.

In connection with Offenbach's own *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, however, the first traces of a collaboration with Barbier aren't to be found until 1873 (one year after Carré's death). Two years passed before Barbier sent the composer the first version of the libretto. In a long letter dated 19 June 1875, Offenbach informed Barbier that Camille Du Locle, the director of the Opéra-Comique (Salle Favart), was determined to stage *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in his theater

and that the cast was more or less set, and would include the famous baritone Jacques Bouhy, Escamillo in the World Première production of Bizet's *Carmen*, for whom the role of Hoffmann was intended. Offenbach further reported that he hoped to have subsequent stagings in Vienna and London, and that he intended to write recitatives for those performances. But first he had the Opéra-Comique to consider, and accordingly he asked his librettist for numerous changes: editing of the spoken dialogues (Barbier's first version of the libretto, made in 1867 for composer Hector Salomon and the Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin, was envisaged as a through-composed opera); the rewriting of several scenes; the relocation of the Giulietta act from Florence to Venice; and, finally, a complete revision of the epilogue.

Offenbach started working and filled a whole notebook with sketches. Within, nearly all the work's important themes can be found at random. It is interesting to observe that the very first drafts dealt with the "Rêverie d'Hoffmann" in

the "Légende de Kleinzach," and, following that, with the "Légende" itself. A second book of sketches from 1879 sheds light on the changes in the epilogue and the Giulietta Act.

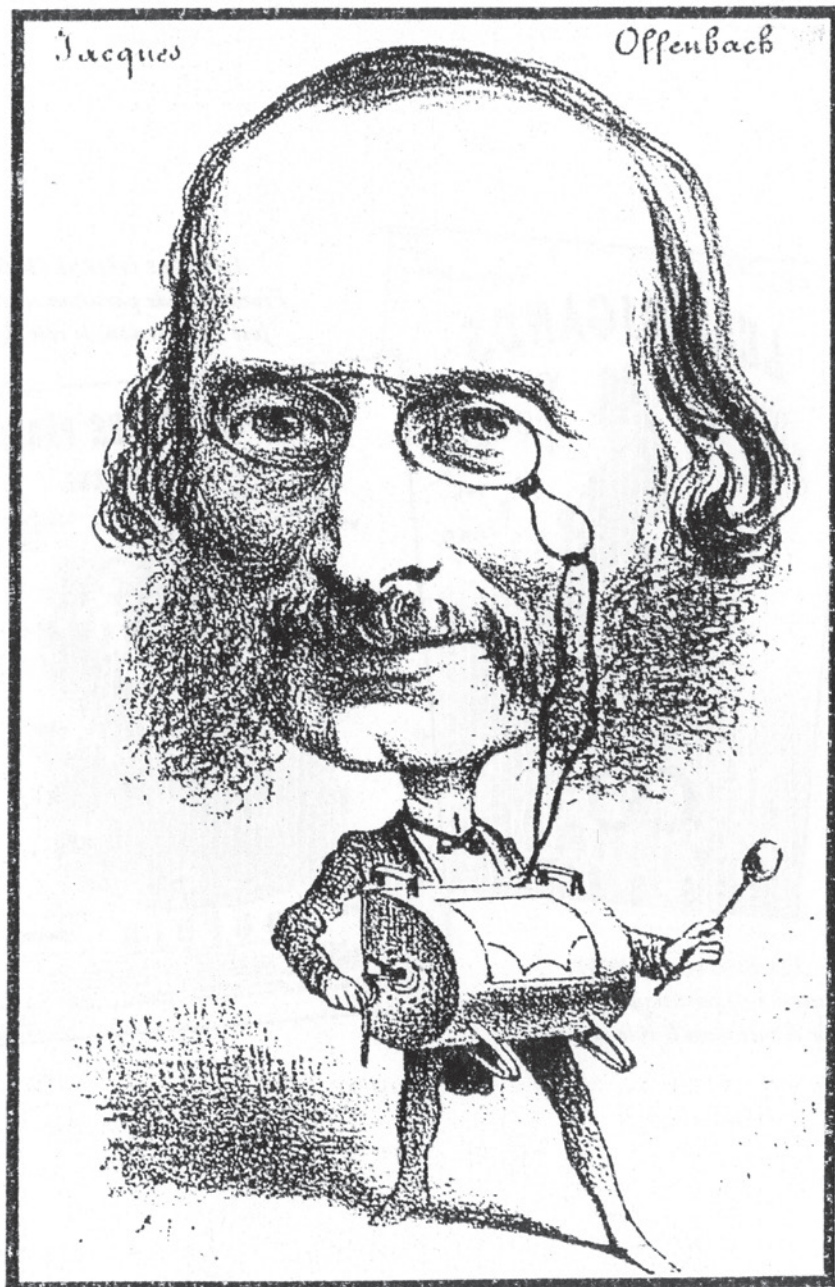
It would seem that Du Locle's resignation as director of the Opéra-Comique prompted Offenbach to move the project from the Salle Favart to his own theater, the Théâtre de la Gaîté. But in 1875 he had to give up these plans after this theater's bankruptcy, for which he was personally liable. Albert Vizen-tini, who at the time was the conductor at Offenbach's theater, decided to take up the torch, changing the name of the house and the repertoire. The Gaîté became the Théâtre-Lyrique and presented only the so-called "serious" repertoire, which justified the announcement of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* for the 1878 season. Many of the singers intended for the première at the Opéra-Comique were engaged at the Théâtre-Lyrique and it was not difficult to cast the roles anew. The only major change was the assignment of the four female roles to Marie Heilbronn, the highly regarded interpreter of the title role in Verdi's *La Traviata*.

From a letter to his librettist dated 5 July 1877, we learn that Offenbach "finally received the beginning of *Hoffmann*," and that he intended to have the score finished before the end of the year. Unfortunately, Vizen-tini was unable to put the theater back on its feet financially and, after a return to performing works of the opéra-féerie genre and a final revival of *Orphée aux enfers*, the opera house on the Square des Arts-et-Métiers closed its doors for good on 3 January 1878.

Offenbach's biographers have asserted that he needed much longer for the composition of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* than for his other works. We know today that the six years between the first sketches and the première of *Les Contes* were affected by a number of external factors: three different theaters with three different theater directors, each resulting in modifications to the score; a librettist who worked much slower







than Offenbach and who at times suggested so many different versions of a scene that the composer lost his bearings; and, above all, Offenbach's terminal illness.

### 1879: A FIRST PRIVATE PERFORMANCE

In spite of all vicissitudes, Offenbach did not lose heart, but presented excerpts from *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* to a number of invited guests, including Franz Ritter von Jauner, the director of Vienna's Ringtheater, and Léon Carvalho, the new director of Salle Favart, at a concert in Offenbach's home on

18 May 1879. Under the baton of Vizzentini, the singers Auguez, Aubert, Taskin, and Franck-Duvernoy sang the most important roles with piano accompaniment. The composer's daughters, supported by a harmonium, took the chorus parts. An evaluation of the manuscript scores made for this concert affords us insight into the composition process. What was offered on that evening comprised a synopsis of the opera in fourteen numbers (some of which were discarded before the première). The selections performed were the "Chœur des esprits invisibles" and the "Scène de la Muse", the "Chœur des étudiants" and the "Légende de Kleinzach", the "Trio des yeux",

the "Rêverie d'Antonia", "La mort d'Antonia", the "Barcarolle", the "Couplets bachiques", the "Scène et le duo du reflet", and the "Apothéose avec quatuor et chœurs". Nicklausse's Act III romance ("Vois sous l'archet frémissant") and the Hoffmann-Antonia duet were also completed and prepared in the time for this concert, but they were not listed in the published program.

The role of Hoffmann was still intended for a baritone, the four female roles for a *lirico spinto* soprano, the role of the Muse for an alto, and the roles of the villains for a bass. The Venice act, designated as act IV, came directly after the Antonia act. This private concert was a great success and both Jauner and Carvalho were determined to stage the work as soon as possible. The latter had a notorious reputation for being the sole master in his theater, and he immediately demanded numerous changes. Most importantly, the role of Hoffmann was to be recast for the tenor Alexandre Talazac. Offenbach therefore set to work again and made the desired modifications. Hoffmann's arias had to be transposed and the vocal parts in the ensembles adjusted accordingly. Since the *lirico spinto* Maria Heilbronn was replaced by the brilliant coloratura soprano Adèle Isaac, Offenbach revised her quadruple role. Keeping in mind the latter's extraordinary vocal abilities and her extensive tessitura, he composed a new aria for Olympia and added numerous passages of coloratura in the finale of the second act. The role of Antonia remained nearly unaltered. On the other hand, he rewrote Giulietta's aria and the following duet with Hoffmann. The last and perhaps most decisive modification was necessitated by the recasting of the role of Nicklausse with the novice seventeen-year-old conservatory graduate Marguerite Ugalde, replacing the soprano Alice Ducasse, who in turn took the place of the originally cast mezzo-soprano Speranza Engally.

This decision appears to have been made while Offenbach was still alive, even though Ugalde only began the stage rehearsals on 19 October 1880, fourteen days after the composer's death. Offenbach had composed a new, less dramatic couplet for Nicklausse in

the second act ("Une poupée aux yeux d'émail"), but certainly did not have enough time to work on a further revision of the role. It should be noted however that a few months earlier the authors had considered eliminating the role of the Muse/Nicklausse entirely.

In order to accelerate the completion of his masterpiece, Offenbach moved into the Pavillon Henri IV in Saint-Germain-en-Laye. The composer was seriously ill, and yet he worked unceasingly and on several scores simultaneously, as evidenced by the following lines he wrote in early August 1880 to his daughter Pépita: "I have only a month to write the third act of *Belle Lurette*, to orchestrate the three acts, to write the finale [of the Venice act] and the whole fifth act of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (I am not even talking about the orchestration, that comes later), and to write the piece for the Théâtre des Variétés [*Le Cabaret des Lilas*]. Will I make it? Let's hope so."

Since Offenbach was in the habit of dating his manuscripts, we can document the chronology of what he wrote in Saint-Germain: on 27 May 1877, the "Trio final" of the third act; on 29 May, the Hoffmann-Antonia duet; on 10 June 1880, the Hoffmann-Miracle-Crespel trio; on 26 June, Frantz's couplets; on 5 July, the gambling scene with Giulietta's aria; on 18 July, the final version Dapertutto's chanson ("Tourne, tourne miroir") and on 25 September, again in Paris, the final scene of the Giulietta act. We also know from a letter to Carvalho in September 1879 that Offenbach wanted to begin reading rehearsals on 1 October, and offered to send the first act.

## 1880: FIRST REHEARSALS

Nevertheless, the rehearsals for *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* began nearly a year later, on 11 September 1880. At first, Offenbach seemed to find a new lease on life. While his opéra comique *La Fille du tambour-major*—première on 13 December 1879 at the Théâtre des Folies-Dramatiques—remained in production, he attended the rehearsals



of *Les Contes* at the Salle Favart on a regular basis. Unfortunately, his health deteriorated rapidly. He forced himself to keep working, and apart from the complete orchestration of the opera; he now had only to finish the finale of the fourth act and the epilogue, which had merely been sketched. On 5 October 1880, Offenbach attended a rehearsal at the Théâtre des Variétés for *Le Cabaret des Lilas*, a vaudeville by Ernest Blum and Raoul Toché, for which Offenbach had consented to contribute several couplets.

Late in the afternoon, he felt sick and fainted. After regaining consciousness, he told his family that it would surely be his last night, and indeed, he died several hours later. He left the piano-vocal score of the first four acts of his masterpiece more or less completed, with the exception of the preludes and the melodramas, which he normally composed for the orchestra only at the last minute before the première. The epilogue, however, was only roughly sketched out.

## 1881: THE PROBLEMS BEGIN

After Offenbach's death, his family, represented by his son Auguste-Jacques (himself a composer), decided to enlist the help of the renowned composer Ernest Guiraud. The commission was to create, as quickly as possible, a coherent epilogue from the sketches left behind by Offenbach and to orchestrate the work, just as Léo Delibes was to

do in the case of two other unfinished works by Offenbach, *Belle Lurette* and *Moucheron*.

All this created problems for Carvalho, and the première planned for 5 January 1881 was rescheduled for 31 January. Assisted by the conductor Jules Danbé and Auguste-Jacques Offenbach, Guiraud made numerous modifications and cuts to the prologue, the "Chœur des Esprits", the "Scène de la Muse", Lindorf's recitative, and the Lindorf-Hoffmann duet. In the Olympia act, Hoffmann's aria "Ah, vivre deux" was reworked and the Hoffmann-Nicklausse duet was reduced to a short scene (in which Hoffmann nevertheless soars up to a high B). In the third act, the *ritornello* in Frantz's aria was cut and the Hoffmann-Antonia duet, as well as the finale, were substantially shortened. There was also no longer any question of Nicklausse's aria "Vois sous l'archet frémissant", which already had been completely omitted from the opera. In the Venice act, the "Couplets bachiques", the gambling scene, and the Hoffmann-Giulietta duet were greatly revised. Various versions of the epilogue were tried. In this frenzy, the music of the "Apothéose avec chœur", which originally concluded the opera—as confirmed by autograph versions of the libretto and piano-vocal score—was moved to the opening of the first act, where it served as the entrance aria for the Muse in place of her original couplets. It was probably because Marguerite Ugalde was unable to cope with the difficulties of the combined

\* Jacques Brindejont-Offenbach, *Offenbach mon grand-père* (Paris: Editions Plon, 1940), p. 258.



role of Muse/Nicklausse that the decision (tantamount to dramaturgical aberration today) was made to divide it between the singer and an actress. Ugalde retained the role of Nicklausse, but "his" "Trio des yeux" was replaced by a simple dialogue. Mademoiselle Marie Molé-Truffier – she, too, seventeen years old – was then engaged for the role of the Muse. The result did not seem convincing and led to the omission of all the musical parts of the role: the appearance of the Muse in the first act and the final apotheosis were replaced by monologues spoken over incidental music (*musique de scène*).

A duelling accident involving Carvalho's son on 28 January led to another postponement of the première. The rehearsals began anew, as did the further mutilating of the score. The dress rehearsal took place on 1 February with Offenbach's family, members of the theater, and several friends in attendance. The performance began at 8 p.m. and lasted four-and-a-half hours, in spite of the numerous cuts that had already been made. The three scenes of the Venice act posed a serious dilemma for Carvalho because the scene changes took too much time, causing the whole act to last fifty-eight minutes. On 3 February a drastic decision was

made: the role of Schlémil was eliminated, and the act was presumably reduced to a single scene comprised of a few numbers. Then on 4 February, Carvalho made the ultimate decision to cut the Venice act completely. Barbier protested. Talazac was furious. But the casualty of two ensembles, three stage settings, and more than one hundred costumes could not change Carvalho's mind. His solution was to save some of the most beautiful music, the "Barcarolle", Hoffmann's romance ("O Dieu, de quelle ivresse embrases-tu mon âme"), and the Hoffmann-Giulietta duet, by integrating them, more or less successfully, into the Antonia Act and the Epilogue. The sacrificed pages of the score disappeared into a box. One can imagine the atmosphere of tension and catastrophe during the final rehearsals: some singers saw an aria or an act, and then their entire role disappear; others had to cope with last minute changes in the text. Carvalho had to assume complete responsibility for all the changes. Blue pencil in hand, the conductor spent time writing the word "supprimé" ("cut") throughout the score, and Barbier was deeply insulted by the bad treatment his "child" had to endure.

## SUCCESS OF THE WORLD PREMIÈRE

Nevertheless, the première on 10 February 1881 was a huge success. Though scheduled to begin at 8 pm, the performance didn't start until 8:35 and, in spite of all the cuts, lasted until midnight. All of Paris was there to witness Offenbach's posthumous work. The critics were unanimous in their evaluation of the masterpiece and full of praise for the composer. The journalist in *Le Figaro* wrote: "*Les Contes d'Hoffmann* seront les Contes des Mille et Une représentations."<sup>\*\*\*</sup> The audience acclaimed the entire cast; the "Chanson d'Olympia" and the "Barcarolle" had to be reprised. But the audience was particularly impressed by the final trio of the Antonia act, which showed a little-known aspect of the genius of the creator of *La Vie parisienne*.

The first performance of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in German at the Ring-theater in Vienna was to take place

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> Untranslatable play on words: in French, "Contes" is also used for the title of the One Thousand and One Nights or *Contes des Mille et Une nuits*, out of which the critic made "Tales of a thousand and one performances."

[Translator's note]



on 7 December 1881 in the through-composed grand opera version. Ernest Guiraud therefore started composing the recitatives that Offenbach had not been able to write himself.”<sup>\*\*\*</sup> Auguste-Jacques Offenbach kept a very close watch over this work and actively participated in the creation of the new version. Guiraud relied extensively on Offenbach's autograph material for *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. This included, among other things, all of the numbers cut before the première at the Opéra-Comique. Moreover, he asked Jules Barbier to place at his disposal the texts of the recitatives that were intended for the Théâtre de la Gaîté, some of which Guiraud edited in skillful ways. The decision was made to restore the Venice act in the published editions (although it was not performed in the Viennese première). However, the memories of the problems that this had previously entailed were all too present in the minds of those involved. Guiraud therefore decided to restructure it completely. He rearranged the order of the numbers, distorted the original form of the gambling scene, removed a part of the Hoffmann-Giulietta duet, and replaced Offenbach's entire choral grand finale with a new ending and dramaturgy. The coherence of the plot suffered greatly as a result, and the role of Giulietta was bereft of its most important aria. The act was then placed before the Antonia act, where it remained for decades in most of the published scores of the opera.

For a long time, Guiraud's contributions to Offenbach's score were severely criticized, with his music being judged as too “ponderous” in comparison to that of the “Mozart of the Champs-Élysées” (as Rossini had dubbed Offenbach). Many have condemned all the recita-

tives in the score, thus also condemning those composed by Offenbach! Yet, these recitatives have proven successful and, above all, have contributed to the enduring popularity of Offenbach's masterpiece. Auguste-Jacques Offenbach in no way acted recklessly in entrusting Guiraud with such responsibility, for Guiraud was a man of great competence and talent. The beauty of the recitatives in the Antonia act speaks for itself. Selflessly, Guiraud, the composer of the once popular *Piccolino*, stepped back and provided music in a style very close to that of Offenbach.

### THE FIRST EDITIONS BY CHODENS

In 1881 and 1882, the Parisian publisher Choudens issued no fewer than four editions of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, each significantly different from the others. The first edition was intended as a documentation of the World Première version. Guiraud's first redaction of the Venice act (placed before the Antonia act) was published for the first time in the Choudens second edition, in French only. The second and fourth editions were also intermediate editions with substantial changes aimed at achieving convincing solutions for the epilogue. The third edition, with the Venice act still in that position and including all of Guiraud's recitatives, was intended for German and Italian speaking countries and only published in those languages. *Hoffmanns Erzählungen* received its first

performance in Vienna on 7 December 1881, sung in the German translation by Julius Hopp. While the première production in Paris had already tallied a hundred and one performances, a terrible tragedy interrupted the Viennese run on the second evening, when a fire caused by a gas explosion devastated the Ringtheater and claimed hundreds of lives. A black shadow began to settle over Offenbach's opera. On 25 May 1887, during a performance of Ambroise Thomas's *Mignon*, the Opéra-Comique in Paris was destroyed by a fire, again with numerous fatalities. On the official inventory of music rescued from damages caused by the fire and water, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* is missing. In all probability, the orchestral parts were indeed destroyed, but miraculously the copyist's score with Guiraud's annotations survived. After a long and mysterious odyssey, this score was recovered from obscurity in 2004 in the archives of the Opéra de Paris. It contains little music that had not already been published—merely a few measures (included in the present edition)—but is an important source with respect to the question of the authorship of the orchestration and Guiraud's role in revisions of the work. The majority of Offenbach's own autograph manuscripts had already found their way back into the possession of the Offenbach family.

In 1886 *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* disappeared from the repertoire of Salle Favart and was not performed there again until 1911. An apparently very

\*\*\* Offenbach had already composed several of the recitatives: all the recitatives of the first act, as well as “Allons! Courage et confiance”, “C'est moi, Coppélius!”, “Eh! Morbleu! Modère ton zèle!”, “Enfin je vais savoir pourquoi”, “Ah! Je le savais bien que tu m'aimais encore!”, “Tu ne chanteras plus?”, “Messieurs, silence!”, “Et moi, ce n'est pas là pardieu ce qui m'enchanté!”, “Ton ami dit vrai!”, and a number of passages marked “Récit” scattered throughout the score. Guiraud labeled his recitatives as “Scène,” rather than “Récit”.







questionable production was staged in February-March of 1893 at the Parisian Théâtre de la Renaissance, but without lasting success (and without the *Giulietta* Act). At the end of the century, Austria and Germany seem to have turned their backs on Offenbach's masterpiece; the memories of the catastrophe at the Ringtheater being perhaps still too vivid. Nevertheless, based on Guiraud's two redactions, the triumphal procession of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* through the theaters of the world had begun, performed both as an opéra comique with spoken dialogues and as a grand opéra with recitatives, and based on the two versions by Guiraud.

At the same time, Choudens undertook new editorial efforts, even printing versions of the opera that were not offered for sale. For the occasion of the first production in Brussels on 28 January 1887, a new edition was issued consisting of the libretto, piano-vocal score, and the first printed orchestral score. This edition was based on the very first version, but with the roles of Lindorf and Stella eliminated, eliciting new modifications.

More time was to pass before the score was again examined carefully for an important revival in 1904 at the Monte Carlo Opera. The famous impresario, stage director, and composer Raoul

Gunsbourg, who occupied the position of theater director for fifty-nine years, decided on a "revision" of the piece. The point of departure was the above mentioned edition of 1887. Gunsbourg's work concentrated primarily on the Venice act, for which he claimed authorship. In Monte Carlo a new character named Fulvia was created, and the order of the numbers was shuffled again. Most importantly, the famous "Septuor avec chœurs" appeared for the first time in the Venice act. It was composed by Gunsbourg, who took his inspiration from the "Barcarolle," and who commissioned the text from Pierre Barbier. The orchestration was done by André Bloch.

The only new feature to appear in the published libretto of 1904 was this "Septuor" (actually a sextet with chorus), but it is quite certain that other numbers, which were also performed in Berlin in 1905, resulted from the Gunsbourg-Barbier-Bloch collaboration. Those revisions may have even been included in Monte Carlo without being mentioned in the libretto printed for that occasion. Hans Gregor and Maximilian Morris presented this version to the Berlin public prior to its publication in a new edition by Edition Peters. Overall, the changes in the 1905 version consist of: the transformation of Dapertutto's chanson into an

aria for Coppélius ("J'ai des yeux"); the composition of a new aria for Dapertutto – the famous "Scintille diamant" based on the overture to Offenbach's *Le Voyage dans la lune* (1875); and the scene of the lost reflection ("Scène de la perte du reflet") based on the Hoffmann-Giulietta duet.

In 1907, Éditions Choudens finally issued their "definitive" edition: the "fifth edition with recitatives", known as the "Pierre Barbier version", which included a new full score, a piano-vocal score, and a corresponding libretto published by Calmann Lévy. For the next seventy years, that version held the stage in theaters throughout the world. Mention should also be made of the preceding Choudens "fourth edition with recitatives", dating from ca. 1900, in which the Venice act was again missing.

Among Raoul Gunsbourg's friends were the publisher Paul Choudens, and René Comte-Offenbach, the composer's grandson. It was surely from one of them that Gunsbourg received the bundle of manuscripts of those numbers that had been cut during the preparation of the première. More than a century later, these manuscripts became the basis of the first edition of the opera by Michael Kaye.

## THE CREATION OF THE CRITICAL EDITION

In 1976, conductor Antonio de Almeida made an important discovery in the bottom of a cupboard in the house of Offenbach's descendants: 1250 pages of manuscripts from various stages of the composition of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. One box contained part of the autograph piano-vocal score, numerous fragments of the libretto intended for the Théâtre de la

Over three hundred pages, most of them orchestrated by Guiraud, were sold at auction on 22 November 1984 at Sotheby's in London and acquired by the Frederick R. Koch Foundation. Initially placed on loan to The Pierpont Morgan Library in New York, they were ultimately donated to the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University.

Michael Kaye received permission to publish these documents in his edition of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, which took

this finale is nearly complete and entirely in the composer's hand. The orchestration, as in most of the work, was realized by Ernest Guiraud, and the lyrics correspond word for word to the libretto submitted to the censors. Although it was prepared after Offenbach's death, that libretto definitely provides us with the means to restore the composer's last wishes for the production of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at the Opéra-Comique; today, in one form or another, we have all the music that corresponds to it.

Published in two volumes and completed by a critical report, our new edition brings together all the currently known and accessible autograph sources of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, including the various versions of individual arias as well as the numbers withdrawn by Offenbach.

In addition to this, the reader will find information on the variants for the role of Hoffmann written for baritone, the various stages of Barbier's libretto, and the variants of the numerous different editions by Choudens and Peters resulting from the efforts of Ernest Guiraud and Raoul Gunsbourg.

Offenbach, who also wanted his masterpiece to be performed as a through-composed opera, probably would not have objected to Guiraud's additions to the recitatives. Therefore, they have been integrated into the present edition, making possible a realization of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* in the form of an opéra comique (or, as it is described in the censor libretto: a "drame lyrique"), as well as a grand opera. In view of the musical and dramatic value of the numbers composed but withdrawn by Offenbach, we have documented them in the form of their original piano-vocal scores as well as our own orchestrations, made with the greatest respect for Offenbach's style.



Gaîté, music written by copyists, the performance material from the house concert presented by Offenbach on 18 May 1879, and, finally, the complete orchestral score of the Venice act as organized, arranged, and orchestrated by Ernest Guiraud. De Almeida entrusted the German musicologist Fritz Oeser with copies of these sources, on the basis of which Oeser made a new edition for his own publishing firm Alkor-Edition, augmenting the score with a number of his own arrangements ("Bearbeitungen" and falsifications of the text). A discovery of even greater importance occurred in 1984. At the Château de Cormatin, the former residence of Raoul Gunsbourg, nearly all the autograph manuscripts that were cut during the rehearsals for the première at the Opéra-Comique came to light again.

into account all the accessible sources in public and private libraries and collections. The evaluation of these sources has resulted in a much more faithful picture of Offenbach's original intentions than all previous editions. This was confirmed by the discovery—in the National Archives in Paris—of the libretto submitted to the Parisian board of censors by Léon Carvalho on 5 January 1881, which was subsequently published by Josef Heinzelmann

In 1993, French musicologist Jean-Christophe Keck came upon the manuscript for the authentic finale of the Venice act. A find of enormous importance, since it concerned the last number on which Offenbach worked—just a few hours before his death—and which was thought to be scarcely more than a rough draft. The piano score of



# Facts

## Les Contes d'Hoffmann / The Tales of Hoffmann

Opéra fantastique en 5 actes / Fantastic Opera in 5 acts (1877–1880)

Libretto by Jules Barbier, based on the play by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré

Edited by Michael Kaye and Jean-Christophe Keck

German translation by Josef Heinzelmänn

**Roles:** Stella, Olympia, Antonia, Giulietta · soprano\* – la Muse, Nicklausse · mezzo soprano – la Voix de la Tombe · mezzo soprano – Hoffmann · tenor – Lindorf, Coppélius, le docteur Miracle, le capitaine Dapertutto · bass baritone – Spalanzani · tenor – Crespel · bass – Peter Schlémil · tenor – Andrès, Cochenille, Frantz, Pitichinaccio · tenor – Maître Luther · bass – Nathanaël · tenor – Wolfram · tenor\*\* – Hermann · bass\*\* – Wilhelm · bass – le capitaine des sbires · bass – Étudiants, Garçons de taverne, Invités de Spalanzani, Six Laquais, Convives de Giulietta, Valets, Sbires, Esprits de la bière, du vin et du rhum · chorus

**Orchestra:** 2(2.pic).2.2.2-4.2cornet.2.3.0-timp.2perc(crot, tri, b.d.)-2hp(2. ad lib.)org-str

**World Première:** 10 February 1881 Paris, Opéra-Comique, Salle Favart · Conductor: Jules Danbé · Director: Léon Carvalho

**Austrian Première (in German):** 7 December 1881 Vienna, Ringtheater · Conductor: Joseph Hellmesberger jr.

### PERFORMANCE HISTORY (NATIONAL PREMIÈRES):

**World Première:** 7 October 1988 Los Angeles, CA, The Los Angeles Music Center Opera (USA) · Conductor: Richard Buckley · Director: Frank Corsaro · Stage and Costume Design: Günther Schneider-Siemssen

**French Première:** 15 March 1993 Opéra de Lyon · Conductor: Kent Nagano · Director: Louis Erlo · Stage Design: Philippe Starck · Costume Design: Jacques Schmidt

**German Première:** 25 March 1995 München, Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz · Conductor: Reinhard Schwarz · Director: Hellmuth Matiasek · Stage and Costume Design: Rolf Langenfass

**Swiss Première:** 23 September 1995 Zürich, Opernhaus · Conductor: Franz Welser-Möst · Director: Cesare Lievi · Stage and Costume Design: Maurizio Balò

**Austrian Première:** 15 January 1997 Innsbruck, Tiroler Landestheater · Conductor: Arend Wehrkamp · Director: Tilman Knabe · Stage Design: Alfred Peter · Costume Design: Katrin Maurer

**Swedish Première:** 6 September 1997 Göteborg, GöteborgsOperan · Conductor: Peter Erckens / Finn Rosengren · Director: Bentein Baardson · Stage Design: Rolf Alme · Costume Design: Louise Beck

**UK Première:** 24 February 1998 London, Coliseum · Conductor: Paul Daniel · Director: Graham Vick · Stage and Costume Design: Tobias Hoheisel

**Brazilian / South American Première:** 29 November 2003, São Paulo, Teatro Municipal · Conductor: Jamil Maluf · Director and Stage Design: Jorge Takla · Costume Design: Mira Haar, Attilio Baschera, Elena Montanarini

**Danish Première:** 28 January 2004, Århus, Den Jyske Opera, Musikhuset · Conductor: Cecilia Rydinger · Director: Niels Pihl · Stage and Costume Design: Lars Juhl

**Chinese Première:** 29 July 2005 Beijing, Poly Plaza Theater · Conductor: François-Xavier Roth · Director: Daniel Mesguich · Stage and Costume Design: Frédéric Pineau

**Portuguese Première:** 2 April 2008 Lissabon, Teatro Nacional de São Carlos · Conductor: Gregor Bühl · Director: Christian von Götz · Stage and Costume Design: Gabriele Jaenecke

**Czech Première:** 6 March 2010 Prag, Nationaltheater · Conductor: Michel Swierczewski / Zbynek Müller · Director: Ondrej Havelka · Stage Design: Martin Cerný · Costume Design: Jana Zbonilová

**Russian Première:** 26 December 2011 St. Petersburg, Mariinsky Theatre · Conductor: Valery Gergiev / Mikhail Tatarnikov · Director: Vasily Barkhatov · Stage Design: Zinovy Margolin · Costume Design: Maria Danilova

**Spanish Première:** 4 February 2013 Barcelona, Gran Teatre del Liceu · Conductor: Stéphane Denève · Director: Laurent Pelly · Stage Design: Chantal Thomas · Costume Design: Laurent Pelly

\* If one woman is not available to portray all of the heroines, instead of employing four women, producers might like to consider the possibility of having two artists: a coloratura soprano singing the roles of Olympia and Giulietta and another soprano for Antonia and Stella.

\*\* In the libretto submitted to the Parisian censors the part of Wolfram is sung by Nathanaël. In the World Première, the part of Wolfram was sung by Nathanaël and the part of Wilhelm was sung by Hermann.

# Synopsis

The summary of contents adheres to the sequence of acts and scenes in the practical performance piano-vocal and conductor's scores of the Critical Edition.

Musical numbers (Dialogue and recitative versions) ↓		Scenes and cast ↓	Plot ↓
<b>Act I</b> Luther's tavern			
Prélude			
N° 1: Introduction		<b>1<sup>st</sup> Scene</b> Invisible spirits, later the Muse	The invisible spirits of beer and wine boast of their inherent soothing powers, which can help humans to overcome and ignore ennui and suffering.
N° 1A: Scene and Couplets of the Muse	N° 1B: Romance of the Muse		The Muse enters. She complains that Hoffmann is wasting all his energy on pursuing the singer Stella, who is driving him insane. The Muse however resolves to liberate him from this unfortunate situation. For this purpose, she transforms herself into Hoffmann's young friend Nicklausse and calls on the spirits to help her heal Hoffmann with the aid of "beneficial inebriation".
N° 2: Couplets of Lindorf		<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Scene</b> Lindorf, later Andrès	The privy councillor Lindorf enters, followed by Andrès, the servant of Stella, who is at this very moment entertaining the audience in the opera house in the role of Donna Anna in Mozart's Don Giovanni. Lindorf gives Andrès money to persuade him to hand over a letter from Stella's current admirer and thuswise discovers his name: Hoffmann. Stella has enclosed the key to her dressing room in the letter requesting Hoffmann to pay her a visit.
N° 3: Scene		<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Scene</b> Lindorf	Lindorf resolves to outwit Hoffmann.
		<b>4<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Lindorf, Luther, Waiters	The innkeeper Luther orders the waiters to prepare the tavern for the rush of guests who will come in and have a round of drinks during the interval of the opera.
N° 4: Chorus		<b>5<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Lindorf, Luther, Nathanaël, Hermann, Wolfram [see page 17], Wilhelm, Students, Waiters	The students burst into the tavern, raucously demanding beer and wine, playing pranks on Luther, and singing a song in praise of Stella's artistry. They notice that Hoffmann is absent and call for him to be brought in.
		<b>6<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> As before. Hoffmann, Nicklausse	Hoffmann and Nicklausse appear. The students attempt to cure Hoffmann of his melancholy and urge him to sing a cheerful song. Hoffmann allows himself to be persuaded, and launches into the ballad of Klein-zack accompanied by the students.
N° 5: Chanson and Scene			To everyone's astonishment, Hoffmann is overcome at the end of the first verse by thoughts of a girl, with whom he was madly in love in his youth. He is, however, able to contain himself and continues with the song.
N° 6: Duet and Finale			Exhausted, he orders some punch. Nathanaël and Nicklausse ridicule his display of emotion and Hoffmann swears that he will never ever fall in love. This is commented on disparagingly by Lindorf. Hoffmann recognises his former adversary and enters into a dispute with him. He tells the students about earlier unpleasant encounters with Lindorf, which were all associated with misfortune. Nicklausse attempts to calm Hoffmann by speaking of the lovers of his friends. Hoffmann takes up this subject and announces that he will tell the tale of a woman who unites three characteristics in a single person: an artist, a young woman, and a courtesan. Nicklausse also takes a role in these three tales, playing "the incarnation of rationality". Luther's announcement that the second act of the opera is about to begin is universally ignored. Everybody would rather listen to Hoffmann's tales. Lindorf is certain that within an hour nobody will be sober. Hoffmann begins with the tale of Olympia.
Entr'acte			



## Act II (Olympia)

A lavishly furnished physician's chamber in Munich\*; doors lead to a gallery and into adjoining rooms

Dialogue	Recitative	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Scene</b> Spalanzani alone	Spalanzani is examining his creation, Olympia, which he is about to present to his guests and with which he hopes to be able to compensate for his loss of 500 ducats caused by the bankruptcy of Elias the Jew. He is uneasy, fearing that Coppélius, who provided Olympia's eyes, could demand a share of the proceeds. Coppélius has, however, departed and has already been paid off. Now the guests can arrive.
		<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Scene</b> Spalanzani, Hoffmann	Hoffmann enters; his new intention is to devote himself to science. He is bewildered by Spalanzani's remarks on the merits of Olympia and physics; he cannot understand the connection between the two subjects.
		<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Scene</b> As before, Cochenille, footmen	The servant Cochenille appears with six footmen; all exit to fetch the champagne for the guests, leaving Hoffmann alone.
N° 7: Recitative and Scene, Couplets (Definitive Version)		<b>4<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Hoffmann, later Nicklausse	Hoffmann lifts the curtain in front of the area where Olympia is kept and is overwhelmed by her beauty. Nicklausse joins him and laughs at Hoffmann's infatuation. His suggestion that Hoffmann should express his emotions through music is rebuffed by the latter: Spalanzani does not care for music. Nicklausse retorts with a taunting song about a doll with enamelled eyes and a little copper rooster. They don't notice Coppélius entering the chamber.
Dialogue	Recitative		
N° 8: Recitative and Trio		<b>5<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> As before, Coppélius	Coppélius observes Hoffmann and Nicklausse, and passes himself off as a dealer selling barometers, hygrometers, chronometers and thermometers. As Hoffmann displays no interest in these objects, Coppélius sings the praises of the wonderful eyes he also has for sale. Hoffmann misunderstands him and thinks Coppélius means eyeglasses, i.e. spectacles. The latter presents him with a pair of spectacles possessing special qualities: "if desired, it can transform certain objects". Hoffmann hardly has had time to put on the glasses and pay for them when he realises that his admiration for Olympia has increased even further.
Dialogue	Recitative	<b>6<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> As before, Spalanzani, later Cochenille	Spalanzani returns. He is startled to find Coppélius there and asks Hoffmann and Nicklausse to retire as he has business matters to discuss with Coppélius. He privately regrets that he has not discovered the secret surrounding Olympia's eyes, and offers Coppélius a bill of exchange from the banking house of Elias the Jew. In return, he demands that Coppélius relinquish his share of the rights to Olympia. Coppélius agrees to the deal and suggests that Spalanzani persuade Hoffmann to marry Olympia. Cochenille enters and announces the arrival of the guests.
N° 9: Chorus and Scene		<b>7<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Hoffmann, Spalanzani, Cochenille, Nicklausse, guests, footmen	The guests are impressed by Spalanzani's house and his great hospitality. They are impatient to view his "child" Olympia, who is to be presented today. Spalanzani and Cochenille carry her into the room seated on an armchair.
		<b>8<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> As before, Olympia	The guests enthuse about Olympia's posture, complexion and eyes. Spalanzani announces that she is prepared to sing a great aria for the guests, to the accompaniment of a harp. Hoffmann can hardly contain his pleasure at hearing her sing, much to the derision of his friend Nicklausse.
Air (Definitive Version)			Olympia performs her song to the satisfaction and acclaim of all present. Spalanzani invites the guests to supper. Hoffmann is reluctant to leave Olympia without having spoken to her; Spalanzani permits him to stay with her. Before leaving, he rewinds Olympia's mechanical spring, without Hoffmann noticing.
N° 10: Scene and Hoffmann's Romance		<b>9<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Hoffmann, Olympia	Once alone with Olympia, Hoffmann declares his affection in rapturous phrases.
N° 11			When he touches her passionately, she withdraws and disappears into a side room. He is about to follow her when Nicklausse bars his way.
		<b>10<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Hoffmann, Nicklausse	Nicklausse ignores Hoffmann's claims that Olympia loves him, and attempts to persuade him that she is an inanimate creation. When Nicklausse realizes that his words are in vain, he advises Hoffmann to dance with her at the ball. Both exit.

\* Munich is named by Spalanzani as the specific location for the Olympia Act only in the dialogue version; in the recitative version, no location is specified.

	<b>11<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Coppélius, alone	Coppélius enters. He has discovered that Spalanzani has deceived him, and that the bank of Elias is bankrupt. Seeking revenge, he slips into Olympia's chamber.
N° 12: Finale	<b>12<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Spalanzani, Hoffmann, Olympia, Nicklausse, Cochenille, guests, footmen, later Coppélius	Spalanzani invites the guests to dance a waltz and prompts Olympia to dance with Hoffmann. Everyone watches the pair dancing faster and faster. Even Spalanzani is no longer able to restrain Olympia. Finally, she releases Hoffmann and leaves the room. Spalanzani examines Hoffmann, who has lost his glasses during the dance and appears to be in a trance. There is a tumult backstage and sounds of breaking metal springs can be heard. Cochenille runs in and announces that "the one with the eyes" has returned. Coppélius then appears and enters into a heated argument with Spalanzani. Hoffmann slowly realises that Olympia was just an automaton. He is ridiculed by the chorus.
Entr'acte		

Act III (Antonia)			
In Munich at Crespel's house. A strangely furnished room.			
N° 13: Romance		<b>1<sup>st</sup> Scene</b> Antonia, alone	Antonia nostalgically recalls her great affection for Hoffmann and regrets that he no longer comes to see her.
Dialogue	Recitative	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Scene</b> Antonia, Crespel	Her father Crespel enters. He reminds Antonia of her promise never to sing again, for he cannot bear to hear singing since her mother died. [Only in the dialogue; not included in the recitative:] He attempts to divert her attention with a valuable violin; he asks her to take it apart so he can study it and create a perfect violin based on this model, which he will then furnish with Antonia's voice. He realises that Antonia is still in love with Hoffmann; she leaves the room in obedience to her father.
		<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Scene</b> Crespel, alone	Crespel remembers the fate of his wife, who suffered from the same illness as Antonia. He rails against Hoffmann for having turned Antonia's head and expresses sorrow for Antonia, whose musical career has been cut short after a mere six months. He resolves that Hoffmann should never find out where she is now living.
		<b>4<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Crespel, Frantz	Crespel is preparing to go out to the Philharmonic Society, assisted by Frantz who is somewhat deaf. Crespel orders him not to open the door to anyone while he is away.
Dialogue	Recitative	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Frantz, alone	Frantz complains that nobody recognises his true talents. Hoffmann enters, accompanied by Nicklausse.
N° 14: Couplets			
Dialogue	Recitative	<b>6<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Frantz, Hoffmann, Nicklausse	They discover that Crespel will be out of the house for at least an hour. Frantz leaves the room.
		<b>7<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Hoffmann, Nicklausse, later Antonia	Nicklausse reminds Hoffmann of the episode with Olympia, but has to admit that, unlike the doll, Antonia possesses a soul. But a violin could also possess a soul...
N° 15: Romance			He sings of the power of love, which can move individuals just as strongly as music, and then recalls the love song Hoffmann used to sing as a duet with Antonia. Hoffmann sings the beginning of that song. When Antonia enters the room and both embrace, Nicklausse leaves the couple alone together.
Dialogue (Musique de Scène)	Recitative		
N° 16: Recitative and Duet		<b>8<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Hoffmann, Antonia	Hoffmann asks Antonia for the reason behind their separation. She cannot tell him the actual truth, but comes to her father's defence in the face of Hoffmann's accusations and insists that her father did, in fact, give his blessing to their union. They rekindle their feelings of love for one another. In response to Hoffmann's humorous remark that Antonia is singing too much, she asks if he also wishes to forbid her from singing, and bids him to join her in their favorite love song. Towards the end of the duet, Antonia nearly faints. Hoffmann is alarmed. They both hear Crespel coming upstairs; Antonia exits, and Hoffmann conceals himself in the recess of a window.
Dialogue	Recitative		
Dialogue	Recitative	<b>9<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Crespel, Hoffmann (hidden), later Frantz	From his hiding place, Hoffmann overhears a conversation between Crespel and Frantz, in which Crespel expresses his fear that Hoffmann will find Antonia; he intends to leave Germany to bring her to a safe refuge [only in the dialogue version; not included in the recitative]. Frantz announces a visitor: Dr Miracle. Crespel is horrified. He blames Dr Miracle for the death of Antonia's mother, a celebrated singer. He cannot, however, prevent the doctor from coming in.



		<b>10<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Crespel, Miracle, Hoffmann (hidden)	Dr Miracle feigns sympathy for Antonia's illness. He asks to see her, but Crespel forbids this, and also denies that she is ill. Dr Miracle, however, names the symptoms and declares himself willing to treat her.
N° 17: Trio		As before, later Antonia	Hoffmann (still concealed), Crespel, and Frantz all witness a spooky scene: through her defenceless father, Dr Miracle succeeds in creating a telepathic connection with Antonia, feels her pulse, and subsequently commands her to sing. He promises the horrified father that Antonia will recover if Crespel gives her the medicine that only Dr. Miracle possesses.
Dialogue (N° 16 <sup>bis</sup> Musique de Scène)	Recitative	<b>11<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Hoffmann, Antonia	Hoffmann now understands why Antonia is forbidden to sing. He gives her a letter requesting her to follow her father's wishes as the price for his love for her. She reluctantly agrees to his suggestion. Hoffmann leaves her alone.
		<b>12<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Antonia, Miracle, the Mother's voice	Suddenly, Dr Miracle appears in the room. He pleads with Antonia: she will relinquish fame and applause if she gives up her singing career. That loss can never be compensated for by Hoffmann's love. When Antonia refuses to listen to him, Miracle causes her Mother's voice to emanate from her portrait, which is hanging in the room. The voice convinces Antonia to sing, even though she knows it will be the death of her. She collapses.
N° 17 A: Trio			
N° 17 B: Finale		<b>13<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Antonia, Crespel, Hoffmann, Nicklausse, Miracle	Crespel rushes into the room and finds Antonia dying. He is convinced that Hoffmann who, rushing in, is guilty of her death. Crespel attempts to stab him, but is held back by Nicklausse. Hoffmann cries out for a doctor. Dr Miracle appears and confirms the death of Antonia.
Entr'acte			

Act IV (Giulietta)			
1 <sup>st</sup> Tableau: Venice. Festive gallery in a palazzo opening onto the Canal Grande.			
N° 18: Recitative and Barcarolle		<b>1<sup>st</sup> Scene</b> Hoffmann, Nicklausse, Giulietta, Pitichinaccio, young men and young women, servants	Hoffmann and the guests watch Giulietta and Nicklausse singing a barcarolle.
Recitative and "Chant bachique"			Hoffmann ridicules the yearning tone of the barcarolle and breaks into a song in derision of love and in praise of intoxication.
Dialogue (Musique de Scène – N° 18 <sup>bis</sup> Sortie)	Recitative	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Scene</b> As before, Schlémil	Schlémil enters. He is indignant because Giulietta apparently did not notice his absence. She introduces him to Hoffmann and Nicklausse, and invites them all into an adjoining room to play cards. Nicklausse pulls Hoffmann aside and reminds him that this "gallant game of chance" has nothing to do with love, particularly since Hoffmann has already succeeded in falling in love with an automaton (Olympia) and a music-box (Antonia), and is also entirely capable of falling in love with a courtesan. Just in case, he has arranged for two horses to be saddled on which to escape—the devil is cunning. Hoffmann replies that he is not afraid of the devil. Both exit.
		<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Scene</b> Hoffmann, Nicklausse	
		<b>4<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Dapertutto, alone	Dapertutto enters. He is confident that, as in the case of Schlémil, Giulietta will also be able to bewitch Hoffmann with a single glance. He plans to give Giulietta precise instructions and will lure her to him with a diamond ring.
N° 19 Chanson: (Definitive version)			He sings of the irresistible power of the diamond, which will help him persuade Giulietta to comply with his wishes.
Dialogue	Recitative	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Dapertutto, Giulietta	Giulietta enters. Dapertutto presents her with the ring; in return, he demands that she must obtain Hoffmann's reflection for him, just as she has already succeeded in procuring Schlémil's shadow. When Giulietta hesitates out of compassion for Hoffmann, he convinces her with the assertion that Hoffmann does not really love her, claiming that will be demonstrated by his indifference. Giulietta then assures Dapertutto that Hoffmann will become her victim that very night.
Dialogue (Musique de Scène – N° 19 <sup>bis</sup> )		<b>6<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Dapertutto, Giulietta, Schlémil	Schlémil enters the scene. He has defeated Hoffmann at cards and taken all his money, right down to the last thaler. Feigning astonishment, Dapertutto terrifies Schlémil with a trick demonstrating that Schlémil casts no shadow and is transparent.

N° 20: Aria of Guilietta (three versions)		<b>7<sup>th</sup> Scene</b> Dapertutto, Giulietta, Schlémil, Hoffmann, Nicklausse, Pitichinaccio, chorus	Hoffmann invites Schlémil to another game of cards. Dapertutto ridicules Schlémil because of his missing shadow, but Giulietta calms him down. They return to the gambling table. Pitichinaccio deals the cards. Hoffmann and Schlémil play, while the others watch, and Giulietta sings a melancholy seductive song. This distracts Hoffmann, who hands over his cards to Nicklausse so he can continue playing for him. Hoffmann turns his attention to Giulietta. He admits that he worships her, but she rejects him. Schlémil observes the scene and interrupts the game. He is barely able to contain his rage directed at his rival, Hoffmann. Giulietta whispers to Hoffmann that Schlémil has the key to her chamber and that Hoffmann must obtain it. Accompanied by the refrain of the Barcarolle, the guests board gondolas. Giulietta and Pitichinaccio exit. Schlémil and Hoffmann confront one another; Hoffmann demands the key, but Schlémil refuses and exits, having been challenged to a duel by Hoffmann. When Hoffmann also departs for the duel, he is detained by Dapertutto, who gives him his sword.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Tableau (scene change in the view of the audience): A corner of the garden illuminated by the light of the moon. In the background, the wall of a terrace.			
N° 21: Chorus (Barcarolle) underscoring the pantomime, continuing the 7 <sup>th</sup> scene		<b>1<sup>st</sup> Scene</b> Dapertutto alone	Dapertutto enters and observes the ensuing pantomime from the balustrade of the terrace.
		<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Scene</b> Dapertutto, Hoffmann, Schlémil	Hoffmann and Schlémil enter. During the duel, Hoffmann notices that Schlémil has no shadow. Hoffmann kills Schlémil, takes the key from him, and heads for Giulietta's boudoir.
		<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Scene</b> Dapertutto, Schlémil	Dapertutto comes forward, checks Schlémil's pulse, recovers his sword, and exits from the scene, laughing.
3 <sup>rd</sup> Tableau (scene change in the view of the audience): An elegant boudoir. In the background a mirror.			
Dialogue		<b>1<sup>st</sup> Scene</b> Hoffmann, Nicklausse, later Giulietta	Hoffmann relates the terrifying moment to Nicklausse when he noticed that Schlémil cast no shadow. Nicklausse attempts to persuade him to flee. Hoffmann refuses, for he does not want to leave his beloved Giulietta. She then appears and Nicklausse reiterates the necessity of leaving immediately, otherwise Hoffmann's life will be in danger. Hoffmann wants to hear confirmation from Giulietta that it was she who ordered him to take the key from Schlémil.
N° 22: Duet		Giulietta, Hoffmann, later Pitichinaccio and Dapertutto	Giulietta also urges Hoffmann to flee to a safe place, where she will follow him. Hoffmann, however, wishes to remain there, because his love for Giulietta is stronger than any threat of danger. Giulietta asks him to leave behind a memento of this love in case he should ever leave her: he should present her with a gift of his reflection, so that she can always look at it. Hoffmann initially thinks she is joking, but Giulietta reiterates her wish: Hoffmann's reflection must always remain in her heart. Blinded by love, Hoffmann agrees to grant her wish, and his reflection is imprisoned in Giulietta's mirror, as he collapses into virtual unconsciousness. Giulietta exults in her triumph. Dapertutto and Pitichinaccio return.
Dialogue (Musique de scène)	Recitative	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Scene</b> As before, Nicklausse, later the guests and the Police	Nicklausse rushes into the room and urges Hoffmann to make haste. Schlémil's corpse has just been discovered and the authorities are already searching for Hoffmann. Dapertutto jeers that Hoffmann appears not to be able to part with his reflection. Only when Pitichinaccio holds up a mirror in front of Hoffmann, does he realise what has happened to him.
N° 22B: Finale			The guests return and urge Hoffmann to flee while there is still time, otherwise he will be hung for the death of Schlémil. Hoffmann continues to hesitate, but is mocked by Dapertutto and Pitichinaccio because of the lost reflection. Hoffmann suddenly realises how he has been double-crossed by Giulietta. She justifies her actions and declares her contempt for him. The authorities enter and go to arrest Hoffmann. He bitterly reproaches Giulietta for having merely used and deceived him, and pulls out a dagger to stab her. Distracted by Dapertutto, instead Hoffmann kills Pitichinaccio. Declaring her love for him, Giulietta collapses over Pitichinaccio's dead body, to the sounds of laughter from the guests.
Entr'acte			



Act V (Stella)			
Back in Luther's tavern			
Dialogue (version of the censor libretto)	Recitative (Guiraud)	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Scene</b> Hoffmann, Nicklausse, Lindorf, Wilhelm, Nathanaël, Hermann, Luther, the stu- dents, later Stella and Andrès	Hoffmann has come to the end of his tales and sinks down in exhaustion. His friends attempt to console him. Lindorf is sure that Stella will now be his alone. Once more, Nicklausse explains to all present that in Hoffmann's imagination the three female figures are blended into a single person: Stella. Following her successful performance on stage, Stella now appears and reacts unsympathetically to Hoffmann's confused ramblings and inebriation; she accepts Lindorf's invitation.
N° 23: Chorus [N° 24]	Scene and Chorus		
[N° 25] Finale	2 <sup>nd</sup> Scene and Finale		Hoffmann holds Lindorf back and taunts him with the final verse of the Kleinzack song, which he provides with a bawdy new text. The students laugh uproariously as Lindorf exits with Stella. [This is the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Scene of Guiraud's redaction. There is also a possibility for Stella to rebuke Hoffmann, and depart with her treacherous servant, Andrès.]
Scene change in view of the audience: Through an opening at the back of the empty stage, Hoffmann can be viewed at a writing table; behind him is the Muse, and subsequently all the other protagonists.			
[N° 26: Finale]		<b>Apothéose</b>	Led by the Muse who has transformed herself from her disguise as Nicklausse, everyone involved in the opera sings of the healing powers poetry will have on Hoffmann. Even though his heart has been burned, and his pain is blazing, everything is channelled into the exaltation of the poet, who can only achieve true greatness through suffering.

Musical and textual-scenic variants have not been included here and are published in the supplements, which also include the following components:

#### ACT I

- N° 1C Introduction and Melodrama of the Muse (version of the World Première)
- N° 1D Monologue of the Muse (Calmann Lévy 1881)
- N°1 E / F Introduction (first and second redactions by Guiraud)
- 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Scenes: Dialogues (Calmann Lévy 1881)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Scene: Shortened version of the scene for Lindorf and Andrès (Guiraud)

#### ACT II

- Recitative and Romance of Hoffmann (Guiraud's first redaction)
- Romance of Nicklausse (abandoned version)
- Couplets of Nicklausse (abandoned first version)
- Aria of Olympia (first version)
- Aria of Olympia (final version, transposed to G-Major)
- Original version of the Hoffmann–Nicklausse duet
- Shortened version of N° 11, with the longer version of N° 12, with dance music (Guiraud)

#### ACT III

- Couplets of Frantz transposed to F Major (World Première version)
- Alternative recitative before N° 15
- Dialogue and scene music before the Hoffmann–Antonia duet (World Première version)
- Alternate duets (World Première version, edited by Guiraud)
- 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Scenes: Dialogue (Calmann Lévy 1881)

#### ACT IV

- Aria of Dapertutto (first version)
- "Scintille diamant" in E Major, E flat Major and D Major (Monte Carlo 1904)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Scene, alternative version
- Aria of Giulietta (first version in F-major and final version, transposed to F-Major)
- Septett (Monte Carlo 1904)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Scene (3<sup>rd</sup> part), alternative version

#### ACT V

- The final act of the World Première version and in the "Nouvelle Edition"
- Compiled version with numerous variants
- Alternate versions of the Apotheosis

# Jacques Offenbach

Jacques Offenbach was born in Cologne on 20 June 1819 into a Jewish family of musicians. Thanks to the efforts of Luigi Cherubini, the gifted young cellist was able to commence studies at the Paris Conservatoire when he was only fourteen – an extraordinary privilege not only in view of his youth, but also because of his German ancestry. Offenbach soon gained a reputation in Paris salons as the chamber music partner of such renowned musicians as Flotow, Rubinstein, Mendelssohn and Liszt. He composed many works for his instrument – among them one of the major cello concertos of the nineteenth century – but his greatest passion was for the stage. He was for a time a member of the orchestra at the Opéra-Comique where he was able to gain an in-depth knowledge of contemporary French repertoire. Offenbach shared the fate of numerous young composers whose works were ignored by the theatres of Paris; his reaction was to found his own theatre company which he named "Bouffes-Parisiens". In his double role as artistic director and house composer, he succeeded in revolutionising European entertainment theatre during the decades following 1855.

He initially produced short single-act works including *Les Deux aveugles*, *Bata-clan*, and *Croquefer* before composing his first full-length opera *Orphée aux enfers*, which was a great triumph. Offenbach acquired French citizenship in 1860 and made his debut the same year at the Paris Opéra with his ballet *Le Papillon*. In 1861, he was awarded the decoration "Chevalier" of the Legion of Honor. From 1862 onwards, Offenbach divided his time between Paris, Étretat in Normandy, Bad Ems and Vienna – a city which, alongside Paris, was swiftly becoming the most significant location of his career. His large-scale Romantic opera *Die Rheinixen* was composed for Vienna in 1864 and he subsequently returned to this music during work on what would become his posthumous masterpiece, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. During the next six years, he would experience the zenith of his popularity. Along with his

ingenious librettists Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, he produced *La Belle Hélène*, *Barbe-Bleue*, *La Vie parisienne*, *La Grande-Duchesse de Gérolstein*, *La Périhole* and *Les Brigands*. With these compositions, which were later collectively termed as "Offenbachiades", he established a new genre of political satire-based entertainment, which conquered the stages of the world.

Offenbach's reputation began to fade with the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870/71. He became unpopular in France because of his German ancestry, and also in Germany due to the decadent French character of his works. He did not, however, allow this period of unpopularity to interrupt his creativity. One of his major works, the opéra comique *Fantasio*, based on a play by Paul de Musset, was performed in 1872 – first at the Opéra-Comique and then in Vienna. In 1873, he was appointed director of the Théâtre de la Gaîté and turned his hand to a completely different genre: "opéra-féerie". He initially reworked his "lucky charm" *Orphée aux enfers*, but simultaneously embarked on a new series of collaborations with the playwright Victorien Sardou (*Le Roi Carotte*, *La Haine* and *Don Quichotte*).

Plagued by mounting debts, he set off on a concert tour through America in 1876, which brought him substantial success. On his return home, he resumed work on a project he had begun some time previously: *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. In 1879, he was able to enjoy the great acclaim received by *La Fille du tambour-major*. Offenbach died on 5 October 1880, the creator of over 600 compositions, including more than 130 stage works, but unfortunately without having been able to experience the first performance of his 'opus summum', *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*.

## The Editors

### MICHAEL KAYE

Musicologist Michael Kaye is perhaps best known for his performing editions of Offenbach's *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, based on more than 350 previously unknown pages of the composer's autograph manuscript, first performed at

the Los Angeles Music Center Opera with Plácido Domingo in the title role. The results of Mr. Kaye's *Hoffmann* studies, published by the consortium of Schott Music, Boosey & Hawkes and Bote & Bock, have been widely performed and recorded. Michael Kaye's professional career in opera spans more than 30 years, and includes broad experience in all aspects of opera production, administration, stage direction, coaching, and fund raising for the arts. After receiving his Master of Music degree from the New England Conservatory of Music, he studied coaching with Alberta Maisiello and Luigi Ricci, and stage direction with Walter Felsenstein and Jean-Pierre Ponnelle. Michael Kaye gained practical experience as a member of the the musical, production, artistic, and staging staffs of opera companies in the United States and Europe, including the Opera Company of Boston, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera, Cologne Opera, and the Metropolitan Opera.

### JEAN-CHRISTOPHE KECK

Jean-Christophe Keck is considered a distinguished expert on the music of Jacques Offenbach due to his contribution to the monumental edition of the composer's complete works (Boosey & Hawkes). Having graduated from the Conservatoire National Supérieur in Paris and the University of Aix-en-Provence, Jean-Christophe Keck received a particularly wide-ranging musical training: musicology, conducting, composition (with Pierre Villette), singing (Christiane Eda-Pierre), piano and writing. Parallel to working as a singer (tenor at the Opéra-Bastille, the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Lyon Opera, among others), he dedicated himself from an early age towards a career in conducting. He has made recordings for film, radio and television including various opéra-bouffes and film scores of his own composition. Since 1998, he has been the musical director of Opus 05, the chamber orchestra of the Départements Hautes-Alpes with whom he performs numerous and varied concerts. He is also the musical director of the opera festival of Châteaux de Bruniquel.



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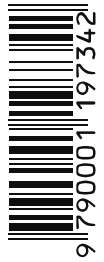
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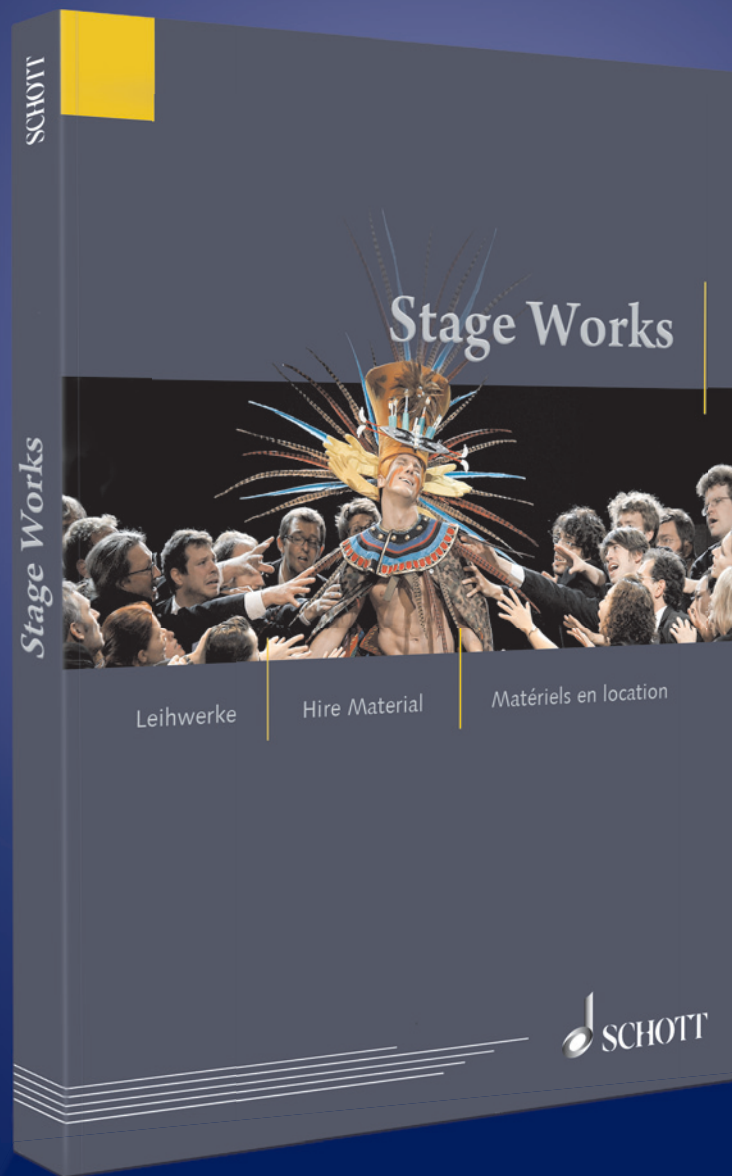
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