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La Petite Piaf:
The Development and Performance
of an Original One –Woman Show

Rachel M. Moulton

**Candidate for B.F.A. Degree
in Musical Theatre with Honors**

May 2006

APPROVED

Thesis Project Advisor: _____
Rodney S. Hudson

Second Reader: _____
Anthony Salatino

Honors Director: _____

Honors Representative: _____

Date: _____

ABSTRACT

My thesis project was the process of adapting the script and music, rehearsing, performing, and producing an original one-woman show. The production is called “La Petite Piaf” and is based on events in the life of Edith Piaf. I adapted, produced, starred in an original one-woman show. It ran seventy-five minutes without an intermission and consisted of dialogue in English and fifteen songs in French. I portrayed Edith Piaf. I oversaw every element of the production. I was in charge of my marketing, finding a performance space, securing dates, hiring a pianist, stage manager, and run crew, finding a lighting designer, transposing the music, adapting the script, locating properties, set and costume pieces, and ultimately performing the intermission-less seventy-two minute show.

I executed this project through various mediums. I conducted research on Piaf’s life, wrote the script based off of various plays and texts, interpolated the music, transcribed and transposed some of the songs, rehearsed, and performed the production. I also oversaw marketing and production of the show. The process took place over the course of eighteen months.

Needless to say, I completed the performances less than a month ago and I am still exhausted from the eighteen months of work leading up to its completion. Thank goodness I decided to do it, after all of my exhaustion is accompanied by the most exhilarating sense of accomplishment I have ever experienced as an artist. What a great way to end my college career.

“La Petite Piaf” is an original adaptation based on Jean Cocteau’s play “La Voix Humane” as well as Pam Gems’s “PIAF”. Rodney Hudson and I have also incorporated our own text into the script based on biographical sources about Piaf. With the exception of “A Child Is Born” and “Martina”, all of the songs were recorded and performed by Piaf throughout her career. The show takes place throughout the course of an evening during a performance at the Versailles in New York City.

The process of developing “La Petite Piaf” began in September of 2004. Rodney Hudson and I have worked together since then to shape the text, select the music and research the life of such a passionate and beautiful woman who’s artistry moved not only her nation, but all of Europe and the U.S. “*For me singing is a way of escaping. It’s another world. I’m no longer on earth.*” – Edith Piaf

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ADVICE TO FUTURE HONORS STUDENTS

Here you are probably sitting in the library of the Honors Department skimming through dozens of pages of thesis after thesis project. I did the same thing when I took HNR 309 during the fall semester of my senior year. I was wide-eyed and confident when I made the commitment to pursue a thesis project. In my area of study, Musical Theatre, most students do not do Honors Thesis Projects, so I had a mere two or three people I knew prior to my decision to do one, who I had talked with and seen the final product of their projects. I think I can speak more pointedly to those who are undertaking projects in the Creative category more accurately than other more academic procedural projects primarily because the structure, execution, and style varies greatly. However I believe there are fundamental “helpful hints” I can suggest from my own experience to everyone across the “thesis spectrum”.

Pick a topic you love. Remain organized. Keep a journal. Fundraise if your budget is costly. Do as much as you can ahead of time, especially when writing and organizing the final paper.

There are of course the universal tactics and important things to bear in mind as you work through the project. My advisor in Honors kept drilling the same point across from the onset of our first class meeting junior year, “Set aside the time every week to work on you thesis. Even if it is only two hours and all you do at first is stare at a blank computer screen- do it. We all have to start somewhere.” Regardless of what topic our study lies in, we do all start on common ground at square one. Whether it is a blank comp tutor screen, empty

canvas, or nothing at all but ideas floating around in your head, there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Eventually you will finish your project, and write this “advice” section, which I saved for last.

Devoting time for planning, brainstorming, and research early is a good idea. I am a big proponent of organizing and making lists, and goal-setting, which I found helped me keep my momentum up especially late in the game when my production was in full swing with rehearsals and organizing the production. Avoid procrastination at all costs. If you are doing anything that involves even the slightest financial investment, make a budget do not feel obligated to go overboard with expenditures, and keep track of your receipts (for some reimbursements). If you have people who are helping you in any facet with the project, make the best of their assistance and be sure to write thank you notes or do something that extends your gratitude toward their assistance. I know I had a ton of help from so many people and one hurdle I had get over was not being afraid to delegate to my crew or ask someone for what I really wanted without settling or being too over-bearing.

The thesis project is something to be proud of, it is not a requirement, and believe it or not, it is probably the one academic accomplishment in your undergraduate career that you can always look back on and be extremely pleased with. The one thing that kept me going over the eighteen months I spent working on my project was my passion. I never doubted myself for the choices I made and even when I was practically pulling my hair out with frustration, I was completely exhilarated to be producing my own original project.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have been so lucky to have the most supportive network of individuals without whom I probably would not have been able to finish my show. The first and most important person to thank is my thesis advisor from the Department of Drama, Professor Rodney S. Hudson. Rodney has helped me endlessly since I sat down with him without any concrete ideas of what I could possibly do and he agreed to work with me. Rodney served as advisor and director of my show. He assisted in the adaptation work I did to create my script and provided a much needed supply of emotional support as I struggled to persevere to write, produce, and perform my first attempt at a full –length one-woman show. I have been inspired by his immense passion for theatre and his fascinating process as a director. We worked on such intricate, detailed levels on material that pushed me to be vulnerable, ebullient, and active while never pushing or looking effortful.

My family has the greatest sense of humor and made a creative use of this characteristic throughout the duration of my project. They were my primary “financial support” and were amiable to help me without ever questioning my pursuits. They have always believed in my passion for art and have encouraged me to follow my bliss. My Aunt Jeanne showered me with Piaf anthologies and

recordings and came to my opening night performance already having studied the music of Edith Piaf.

My voice teachers Patti Thompson (here at Syracuse University) and Lisa Romero (in my hometown of Gainesville, Florida) worked meticulously with me to craft a safe and realistic vocal quality similar to Piaf's.

My lighting designer Cory Pattak came onboard after much coaxing and did a fantastic job "painting" our set with gorgeous hues that helped illustrate the various moods throughout the play.

The Syracuse Stage Costume Department and Set/Props Department were incredibly generous in lending me the costume, set, and property pieces I needed. Having all of those things to dress the stage brought my little world to life.

The faculty and staff in the Department of Drama have been accommodating and encouraging. They granted me permission to rehearse and perform in the Archbold Theatre Complex (Sutton Pavilion), provided me with House Management for my performances, and were always happy to answer the plethora of questions I came up with on what sometimes seemed like a daily basis. Tony Salatino, Jim Clark, Maria Marrero, Brian Crotty, Malcom Ingram, Lia Porter, Jim Koehnle, Sam Sheehan, Gretchen Darrow-Crotty, Kristina Scalone, Dave Bowman, Tim Klotz were all individuals on the faculty and staff at Syracuse Stage and in the Drama Department who provided me with a generous amount of assistance.

My unbelievably committed production team was the icing on the cake for me. They are all students and they all volunteered their time to assist me. Jennifer

Namoff, my assistant director, was a dream come true, seeing all of my work from a fresh and different perspective. Jackie Ganz served as my stage manager who was always ready and willing to help. My run crew: Brody Hessin, Stella Heath, Shannon Tyo, Becca Searle, and Alison Calhoun were just phenomenal helping us set up the stage and take it down before and after every show. They served as board operators for the lights, sound, and spotlight operator.

REFLECTIVE ESSAY

OPENING NIGHT (WORLD PREMIER)

My right foot had fallen asleep. I was kneeling in a corner trying to catch my breath in the dimly lit lobby atop the staircase I would glide down in less than ninety seconds. I could think of more pleasant moments in my life. The short-cropped black wig of wavy curls itched my scalp. I took a swig of luke-warm tea followed by a gulp of honey loquat syrup. My unsteady shaking hands were clammy and smeared my fire engine red lipstick as I wiped the tea that dribbled out my thermos and on my face and costume. I frantically reached for the lipstick tube I had brought up to the lobby with me from the makeshift dressing room I had made in a bathroom in the basement of the Archbold Theatre Complex (at Syracuse Stage). Aurelien crouched next to me and gave me a good luck kiss on each cheek, “You really are just like her Rachel. All you have to do is let her come alive.” He looked at me sending me an encouraging smile, waiting for me to respond. After rehearsing and spending months in close relation to one another, he could read the nervous and unsure expression on my heavily make-up laden face. Jackie, my stage manager, panted up the stairs and in a hoarse, breathless whisper informed us, “Guys, we’re ready. Show time!” Aurelien laughed, nodded at Jackie and looked back at me, “What is it you Americans like to say? ‘Break a leg’, no?”

Before I knew what had hit me, the gentle melody of “Comme Moi” began to echo throughout the building. I made my way to standing and grabbed the red

rose that was resting on the floor next to my feet. I could feel my heart racing underneath the plain black velvet dress that clung snugly to my perspiring body. As the music began to swell I approached the expansive spiral staircase and peered down to see if anyone had actually showed up for my opening night performance. I had been having nightmares for the week leading up to opening that I stepped on-stage and there no audience to watch me. The music ended. “Ladies and gentlemen I give to you your own Edith Piaf.” I giggled at Aurelien’s thick French accent and then I heard it... the applause. My fears melted away and my hands stopped shaking. I took my first step towards what would become the most unforgettable experience in my life as an actress.

I had arrived two and half-hours prior to my eleven o’clock opening. I had rushed into the Sutton Pavilion at 8:30pm to run-through some of my choreography and practice lighting an herbal cigarette without knocking over the ashtray or dropping the phone receiver that I was supposed to be cradling on my shoulder as I elegantly inhaled. Jackie had just left to pick up Aurelien and his girlfriend, both graduate students studying Music Performance at SU, born and raised in Strasbourg, France. A handful of freshmen girls (my run crew) were putting the finishing touches on setting up the stage, while Cory, the lighting designer, was checking the spotlight and adjusting some final light cues we had all decided the previous night at tech to alter.

MY BACKGROUND

To articulate the feeling I experience when I step out on-stage is difficult to put into words. Many theatrical and musical legends describe performing as a

heightened state of reality, a surrealistic state of euphoria. I feel like I am home when I am on-stage. I feel like I have woken up from the best night's sleep on Christmas morning.

I have a plethora of artists who inspire my work as an actress and as a singer. In particular, artists who were or are involved in the theatre: Mary-Louise Parker, Kate Winslet, Laurence Olivier, Audra McDonald, and William Shakespeare. When I typically do research on a part I am playing, I draw upon various acting techniques I have learned in my theatrical training, specifically Stanislavsky's principles of physiological realism, carried out by Sanford Meisner's "Method" acting and Stella Adler's "Sense Memory" technique. I often research visual art and make notebooks, including photos of paintings and sculptures. These notebooks also include personal reflections and notes to myself about character development. When doing a non-musical play, I often listen to certain styles of music or recordings that evoke moods and feelings internally reflective of my characters' moods and feelings. For example, I rehearsed and performed as Helena in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* from January to early March in 2006. I listened to Jann A.P. Kaczmarek's Oscar winning score for the film *Finding Neverland* a lot while rehearsing and performing the show.

As I approached and conducted my project I did notice that I was heavily influenced by the woman I was portraying. The project spanned the course of eighteen months and I was primarily listening to Edith Piaf's recordings and using my research photos of her for "artistic inspiration". Since I grew to be knowledgeable about Piaf, she constantly inspired me as I played her.

WHY “*LA PETITE PIAF*”?

The concept for my show began to grow one late afternoon in September of 2004. I was sitting outside of the Archbold with the enormous glass windows of the Sutton Pavilion behind me. I was asking Professor Rodney Hudson if he had any suggestions for a show I could do. I had friends who were upper-classmen who had done performances as their honors thesis and I viewed this as an admirable challenge I felt worthy enough to undertake. Looking back on that conversation eighteen months later I realize my goals were ambitious. I wanted to do something new rather than something over-done or predictable.

Rodney asked me if I spoke any foreign languages. I said, “Well, I studied French for five years in school.” I always know when Rodney has a good idea by the childish grin that creeps across his usually stern and critical face, “Ever heard of Edith Piaf? I think you could pull that off. How about it? Piaf?” I sat there on the cement bench and racked my brain thinking of who this woman was. She began to register with me when he mentioned one of her most well known recordings, “La Vie en Rose”, but beyond that I was clueless. However, when inspiration hits me, I run with it. At that moment the light bulb in my head went off; my inspiration was to write my own show about a woman who I hardly knew anything about.

La Petite Piaf developed into a full-length one-woman show I adapted, starred in, and produced. My original idea for the project was to perform a one-woman show, ideally involving music so that I could showcase both my acting as well as singing abilities. After the idea surfaced and as I began my work

researching the “subject” (Edith Piaf, her life, her music, and her career) I recognized this project was going to accomplish and exceed my original expectations. I would be tested as an actress, as a musician, and as a scholar. The challenges I faced were numerous and reached both ends of the spectrum of “putting on a show”. There is no written textbook catering to guidelines concerning how to go about a project of this caliber. Therefore it was necessary for me to create a thorough and well-organized process to accomplish all of my goals.

Many of these processes or “steps I took” overlapped with one another but generally occurred in the order I will mention them. Before I could begin developing the show I needed to spend a significant amount of time educating myself on Edith Piaf’s life. I have included hi-lights from my research that became most pertinent to the subject matter concerning my show, which was about Edith and starred Edith as the one and only character the audience ever saw on-stage. In order to create what would eventually be called, “*La Petite Piaf*” I had to adapt the show and interpolate the music before learning the material and beginning my rehearsals. There was a pre-rehearsal preparatory process I went through to develop and train myself to portray Edith as realistically, effortlessly, and naturally as possible. The actual rehearsal process involved four components prior to the performances themselves: my own independent work, rehearsals with my director (and also my advisor Professor Rodney S. Hudson), and music rehearsals with Aurelien Eulert (my accompanist on piano and music director), and finally technical rehearsals. The tasks I had a producer involved: organizing

and overseeing my production team, designing the show, securing all of the costumes, hair and make-up, properties, and set pieces needed for performance, designating and scheduling a location, dates, and times for my actual performances, marketing my show to all of Syracuse University as well as the general public of Syracuse, New York, The final (and by far the most gratifying element of my project) culminated in the performances (also known as and referred to in this particular text as “the run of the show”) of *La Petite Piaf*. Please refer to “The Development” and “The Process” chapters for my reflections on the process.

BIOGRAPHY OF EDITH PIAF

I conducted my research throughout the fall and spring semesters (2004-2005) and through the summer of 2005. What I have included here is a brief biography of Edith’s life that hi-lights specific events and dates pertinent to her career and her relationship with Marcel Cerdan. While this section is primarily based on Edith’s two autobiographies and other biographies written on Edith, I did do a significant amount of research of her recording career, listening to several CD’s of her songs. By listening to her music I was able to narrow my selections of songs I wanted to sing in the show. Conducting these two processes simultaneously also allowed me to notice parallels between the content and style of her songs in relation to events occurring in her life at the time she wrote and/or recorded the music.

Edith Piaf (Edith Giovanna Gaisson) was born December 19th, 1915 (as Piaf liked to describe) on a policeman’s cape in front of 72 Rue de Belleville in

Paris, France. No taller in 4' 11'', Piaf's life began in the depths of poverty and eventually exploded onto the international scene, but was plagued throughout by tragedy, abuse, addiction and hardships. Her mother, Anetta Maillard (Line Marsa), was a struggling chanteuse and her father, Louis Alphonse Gaisson, was a street acrobat and contortionist. Edith's mother abandoned her to pursue her singing career. The relationship Edith had with her mother after she left Edith and her father was not a pleasant one. Line's career never developed past singing in lowly clubs around Pigalle. Once Piaf's career skyrocketed, her mother attempted to steal her signature songs; She died of an undisclosed drug overdose in a neighbor Andre Comes apartment in August 1945.¹ Louis left Piaf with her grandmother Aicha when she was barely one-year old to fight in WWI. Aicha ran a brothel in the countryside outside of Paris called Bernay, where Edith lived until 1922. Aicha did not censor Piaf's experience living at Bernay and it is even rumored that she gave Edith bourbon in her bottles to help her sleep better at night.

At the age of eight, Edith began performing with her father on the streets of Paris and discovered her special talent was not acrobatics, but singing. The only song she knew at the time was "La Marseillaise" (the French national anthem). Her duty was to sing as loud as she could to grab people's attention and then pass the collection hat around the crowds that gathered to watch her father perform. At the age of fifteen, Piaf parted ways with her father and ran off to forge her own living with her best friend Simone Berteaut (who would remain by

¹ Margaret Crosland, [A Cry From The Heart](#) (London: Arcadia, 2002) PP. 69-74.

Edith's side until her death, although many believe she did not have Edith's best interests in mind). At the age of seventeen Edith met and fell in love with Louis Dupont. The couple moved into a small room in Pigalle and had a baby girl, Marcelle in February of 1933. Piaf could not resist the temptation to continue to sing and perform on the streets and soon after Marcelle's birth; she left Louis and the child to go back to the streets. Marcelle died shortly after of meningitis.

In September of 1935, Edith's life changed forever. She was discovered by Louis Leplee, owner of Gerny's a popular club on the Montmartre.² He signed her to a deal and although she could not read music and had no singing training whatsoever, he began grooming her for a career as a chanteuse. Leplee also coined Piaf's first stage name, La Mome Piaf (The Kid Sparrow), which she eventually adapted to Edith Piaf. Edith became an immediate sensation. People flocked to Gerny's to hear this rumored musical genius perform live. The likes of Maurice Chevalier, Joseph Kessel, Mistinguett, and Fernandel all came to see Piaf. Tragically, on April 6th, 1936, Louis Leplee was murdered in his apartment. Piaf became involved in the scandal surrounding his death; many believed that she was involved in the plot to kill him. Piaf endured the scrutiny and formed a working relationship with songwriter Raymond Asso.

Asso groomed Piaf. She signed recording contracts and expanded her performance circuit. Piaf began working and collaborating with other composers and lyricists such as Marguerite Monnot and Charles Dumont. Some of her most popular and well-known songs, *La Vie en Rose* and *Hymne a L'amour*, she wrote

² Edith Piaf, *The Wheel of Fortune* (Philadelphia: Chilton Books, 1965, trans.).

herself. She befriended the likes of Josephine Baker and Marlene Dietrich. Jean Cocteau worked very closely with Piaf who starred in his play, *Le Bel Indifferent* (1940), which Cocteau wrote for her to star in.³ Cocteau and Piaf had a very intimate and influential artistic relationship with one another and would work together throughout the remainder of their lives. Tragically, both Piaf and Cocteau died on the same day.⁴ Piaf was also actively involved in the Resistance during World War II. Above all Piaf was a spiritual person who remained true to her friends throughout her life.

As Piaf's popularity continued to explode throughout France and all of Europe, her personal life became increasingly violent and tragic. Piaf had a series of physically and emotionally abusive relationships. Stability seemed to frighten her. She married Jacques Pills in 1952 and Theo Sarapo in 1962.⁵

After one particular tragic loss, Piaf began to take a downward spiral, although her public life and her career continued to flourish. She went through men, developed a drinking problem and after a series of car accidents and multiple hospital stays, she became a morphine addict. She was advised by her doctors to cease her singing career, but she continued to perform. Her deterioration was apparent to the world- in fact Piaf collapsed many times in the middle of her concerts during the last couple years of her life.

It was during Edith's first trip to the United States that she met the one and only true love of her life, Marcel Cerdan. Cerdan was an Algerian-born French

³ David Bret, *Piaf: A Passionate Life* (London: Robson, 1998) PP. 173-175.

⁴ D. Bret, PP 153, 230, 232.

⁵ Monique Lange, *Piaf*. (New York: Seaver, 1979) PP. 192, 252.

boxer. He was a renowned boxer and became the European heavyweight champion. He too was also in the U.S. for the first time. The two were introduced by mutual friends. Although Marcel was married and had three children, the two began a long and very public love affair that lasted until Marcel's tragic death on October 27th, 1949. Cerdan and Piaf were media darlings, and their affair lasted for years. Marcel and Edith both had a fear of flying, but in October 1949 Marcel was determined to fly to New York City to surprise Edith while she was there performing a series of concerts. He wanted to be in Edith's dressing room waiting for her. His plane crashed over the Azores Islands. Cerdan and everyone on-board the flight were killed. Piaf was informed of his death immediately before one of her performances by her manager who begged her to cancel the show. She insisted on singing- for Marcel.⁶

In September of 1962 she returned to Paris to perform a series of concerts at the Olympia. Shortly after this stint, she married Theo Sarapo. In April of 1963 she fell into a coma and retreated with Theo to her home near Cannes where she spent the last months of her life slipping in and out of consciousness. She died on October 11, 1963.

Piaf is said by some sources to have elaborated on the nature of certain stories about her life. She was a wonderful singer, and also a wonderful actress and played upon that quality to alter the actual truth. Piaf was very superstitious and spiritual, which heavily influenced how she perceived events in her life. She describes in her second and later autobiography a recurring dream she would

⁶ Edith Piaf, My Life. (London: Peter Owen, 1964) PP. 30-39.

have. In this dream she would hear a phone ringing and once she answered it there was a man on the other line crying. After having this dream, without fail, she claimed something horrible would happen.⁷ This story became the key inspiration in persuading myself to draw upon Cocteau's "The Human Voice" for my piece. Setting the text up with the action of having Piaf talk to her lover (Marcel Cerdan) on the telephone. Throughout the play the telephone serves as a symbol for the foreshadowing of Marcel's death in the end.

THE DEVELOPMENT

I started building the foundation of the show with doing a great deal of research on Edith Piaf's life (see previous chapter). I needed to familiarize myself with every aspect of her life and career. Uncovering details about Edith's life had a tremendous influence on choices I made both as a writer and performer. I was serving as the voice behind the skeletal structure of the words (of the eventual text) as well as the voice and body lifting the words and lyrics off of the page in front of an audience.

My thesis was my opportunity to shine. While in college it has been a struggle to devote heaps of time to researching the characters I have portrayed in productions. I have yearned to follow the similar "character development" paths as Laurence Olivier and Kate Winslet, who generate dozens of notebooks documenting their studies of characters they play. I always found that balancing a full course load with homework and rehearsal time for all of the various productions I had performed in made it near impossible to designate a sufficient

⁷ E. Piaf, *My Life*. PP. 60-62.

amount of time to do character research and development for the roles I took on in these productions. By taking on a show of this nature, I finally had the opportunity to execute what I had been craving for years.

If there is one element of this entire process I had to isolate as being the most “successful”, it would have to be my character development. I studied this woman’s entire being so meticulously both out of necessity and desire. Out of necessity because Edith and I on the surface are nothing alike. Out of desire because that was a challenge that exhilarated me. I can equate it to what it would be like if Julia Roberts was to undertake Richard III. While it is funny to picture in your mind, it is also intriguing to imagine how it could possibly turn out-successfully.

The apples to oranges comparison of Rachel Moulton to Edith Piaf became the crux underlying my entire project. Included in “Appendices” are several photographs I collected as part of my research portfolio (see “Appendix I”). I have also included a headshot of myself to set up the comparison with the actual photos of Piaf as well as a comparison of my make-up, wig, and costume work (see “Appendix A”). However, my intention was never to duplicate Piaf. As I learned more about Edith, I felt an internal need to bring her back to life. The way people described her is quite powerful and intimidating:

“Edith sang. And this tiny creature, so miserable and scrawny-so wounded and shattered by life, so guilty and yet so innocent of her sins and misfortunes- this little creature knocked us out. That voice, which betrayed her worries and revealed the depths of her solitude, ultimately made her sincere. That voice made us love her. For there’s no point denying it: we did love her” –
Jean Noli

“Every time she sings you have the feeling she’s wrenching her soul from her body for the last time” – Jean Cocteau⁸

Piaf achieved transcendence. Like the Romantics strived for during the time of Goethe and Racine, Piaf’s voice lifted her audiences to a higher level of existence. She made people experience and feel torment, love, passion, and loneliness. The spectrum of emotions she conveyed with the timbres of her untrained voice coming out of her tiny childlike body astounded people.

Thus, creating a show about her, for her, developed into a tribute of an unordinary caliber. With the encouragement of my advisor, I realized the show could not merely be a biographical commentary about Piaf. A show structured in that vein would be too predictable even if it had my own unique twist on the story. Once December 2005 rolled around I was facing a fragmented script I had pieced together that did not make much sense.

I was not entering uncharted territory. There are plays in existence that have been written about Piaf. The most successful of these is Pam Gem’s *PIAF* which opened on Broadway at the Plymouth Theatre in 1981, starring renowned British actress Jane Lapotaire in the title role. In 1995, Professor Anthony Salatino adapted and directed a production, “*Bravo Piaf!*” which starred Vera Farmiga. The production was done in the Sutton Pavilion with a small ensemble cast. I viewed videos of both of these productions. Salatino was kind enough to also provide me with a copy of the script, which he based on the first of Edith’s two autobiographies, *The Wheel of Fortune*. I went to New York City in March 2005 and viewed the Broadway mounting of *PIAF*, located in the video archives

⁸ Edith Piaf, Gold Collection. CD Insert booklet.

of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center. After viewing these two very different productions I recognized the advantage of doing my production as a one-woman show rather than an ensemble piece. Although I lacked the physical presence of characters I would make reference to, I had the freedom to shape my story from one character's perspective rather than multiple points of view from various secondary and supporting characters. Plus, the burden of the show rested on my shoulders.

Rodney served not only as my advisor, but also as co-author and director. I returned to Syracuse early in January to finish performances of *The Member of The Wedding* at the Redhouse in downtown Syracuse. My fall semester was tightly packed with the three two month engagement playing Frankie at the Redhouse, writing and producing my senior cabaret, and finding a pianist for my show. My show was going up for performances in late March. I was panicked for a script.

THE PROCESS

In retrospect, the mental list of “things I learned from doing my thesis” is constantly growing. I am a worrier, a perfectionist, and a control-freak, which makes for an interesting formula when serving as writer, producer, and star of your first original one-woman show. Thank goodness I had Rodney to direct the show or else I probably would have lost my mind. He has worked with me since I was a freshman and was fully aware of all of my quirks as a performer and person and with this knowledge in addition to his genuine genius as a director and performer himself, was able to harness and focus my energy on the path it needed

to follow. The first thing he told me I had to master was her uncanny and peculiar way of singing. Piaf was a French singer; therefore this play was going to have a lot of singing- in French. Although I had studied the language for several years, I was not entirely fluent and I had not studied it since I was seventeen.

I was able to access a copy of the score from Gems's *PIAF* and was given some musical anthologies as a gift from my family. I amassed a collection of Piaf recordings on CD and listened to them almost on a daily basis for over a year. One of the delights with doing this production as my thesis was having the project span a significant period of time, which I needed in order to complete this project the way I wanted to get it done. Piaf was not a trained singer, nor could she read music. She also did not practice proper vocal care. She smoked and drank and was for most of her life primarily nocturnal.

"For me, singing is a way of escaping. It's another world. I'm no longer on earth."- Edith Piaf. While watching a DVD documentary on Piaf I heard her say these exact words (translated into English). It became my mission statement.

Piaf recorded hundreds of songs. Music was her life and performing was ecstasy and her escape from reality. Therefore, music was the core of the show. Eventually the songs became the key story-telling ingredient although all but two were sung in French while the text was in English. Included in the Appendix C is a copy of my finalized score. I had to have most of the songs transposed down because they were not published in the original keys Edith sang them in. Eric Jarboe took care of all of my transpositions. The music all sits very low in the female voice. Deciding which songs to include in the show began with certain

“Piaf standards” that represented her in her prime. Others were perhaps not as popular but I felt expressed themes and stories representative of Piaf. Putting the music together was one of the toughest parts to accomplish during this project. There were delays with getting the transpositions completed, some music I had ordered was not scored out properly, and finding a pianist took a great deal of time. I was so fortunate to have a mutual friend who knew Aurelien and introduced the two of us. His work with me made the music so much more heightened and rich not only because of his musical skills but because of the personal connections he had with the songs we were performing. All this music, with the exception of the two songs in English, he had grown-up listening to. The people of France still to this day keep Piaf’s music and her memory alive.

I translated each song from French to English and have included these translations in Appendix D. My personal translations are imperfect academically, because they are for the most part literal. I excluded the use of cultural idioms that I noticed in some versions of translated Piaf songs because they astonishingly distort the emotional heartbeat of the stories within the lyrics. These translations were primarily for my own personal reference, since I would ultimately sing in French. I needed to know what I was singing about in order to create a stream of consciousness that flowed throughout the play weaving in and out of script and song. At Rodney’s strong urging, I did wind up including some of these translations in my program (Appendix E) and in the lobby display outside of the theatre.

I created my own “Piaf technique” where I trained myself to sing like Piaf without harming my voice. During the summer (June through August 2005) I worked with my voice teacher, Lisa Romero, while working and living at home for the vacation. Lisa had me sing along with Piaf’s recordings to get the internal “feel” of such an extraordinarily unique musical style. I did begin to rely on having her in my mind once I weaned myself away from the recordings and progressed to working with just piano accompaniment. In an ideal world I would have had additional orchestrations other than piano- strings, percussion, and of course an accordion would have enhanced the complexity of my score, but keeping it simple did in turn create an intimacy that was better suited to the size of the space and overall feel of the piece itself. I worked for creating a forward, nasal sound using my palate and tongue to create her wavy, wobbly vibrato and almost strained sound. It was needless to say intense. Her range was not impressive, but every note she sang was filled with such passion, the lack of virtuosity like an opera singer did not matter at all. Piaf must have had ironclad vocal cords. I was born with a lighter sound and have been trained as a coloratura soprano and thus my cords are not nearly as thick. But as my father always told me, “practice makes perfect”. After months of easing myself into this new realm of vocalizing, it became much less of a challenge and was actually more fun than singing the high F’s or daintily touches G’s in Cunegonde’s aria “Glitter and Be Gay” in *Candide*. Ultimately, my “technique” became less about the science and physiology of emulating her sound, and more about capturing the emotional essence Piaf emitted like the sun’s rays when she performed. By doing this, I

eliminated the tremendous amount of fear and hesitation that had been ever-present and looming over me as I worked on the show.

The script began to take-off in mid-January when Rodney and I made a joint decision to base a huge portion of our adaptation on Jean Cocteau's one-woman play, "The Human Voice". Two months later I had a polished script and my stresses slowly began to melt away. This decision to base *La Petite Piau* primarily on Cocteau's play was a blessing in disguise for me. With excerpts from The Human Voice interpolated with the songs, my own writing, and adaptations based off of Pam Gem's *PIAF* and biographical sources, *La Petite Piau* blossomed into a very specific and detailed revelation of what I had grown to consider the pinnacle of Piaf's life- her relationship with Marcel Cerdan. I began rehearsing with the material as we wrote it, piecing sections together, editing and testing different ideas on my feet to get a sense of how the flow would evolve into an eventual finished product.

I rehearsed constantly. Rehearsals have become engrained in me as a sort of religious ritual, but my work on *La Petite Piau* took that definition to a heightened level. I broke down each song and "beat" would stage it with Rodney and then work out details privately independent of his directorial eye.* Staging a piece like this became very tedious. The space restrictions were tight, as we had designed the set to take place both on-stage in a performance venue and off-stage in Edith's dressing room, with no actual scene change.

* A beat is a term used to describe a section of text that has its own individual action or intention assigned to it. Often, scripts are broken-down and analyzed this way ("beat work") to determine each intention and relate it to a character's overall objective in a scene and in an entire play (known as a character's super-objective).

A quick note about the “concept” behind the staging of the show: I determined that there would be two “worlds” within the play Edith would enter. One, her dressing room, (see Appendix A and Appendix B) would be where the action involving her telephone conversations with Marcel took place. Secondly is the stage, where her performances take place.

When I first enter the stage, I am “in performance” in a concert. Please review the DVD included of my performance in addition to the script, score, and production photos (all located in the “Appendices”) to see and hear and read the context for this information. The premise for plot is that while Piaf is performing in a concert that is prolonged throughout the duration of the actual play, she takes breaks, intermission, to go to her dressing room where she receives phone calls from Marcel. Marcel is leaving to go on a trip, by airplane and is trying to convince Edith to join him, which she adamantly refuses. In reality, he is planning on flying to New York, where they first met and fell in love and where Edith is at present, to surprise her in her dressing room. Piaf receives news of Marcel’s death prior to performing her encore number, “La Vie en Rose”. My show’s plot is loosely based on the actual chain of events leading up to Marcel’s death in a plane crash.

Another important note about the staging and concept behind it (in relation to the plot and action) is that as the show progresses and Piaf and Marcel’s conversation intensifies the two worlds slowly merge. The conversation is about the lovers having to be forced apart and end their affair. Marcel was in fact married and although the public was aware of their relationship (as was Marcel’s

wife and family), there was an unspoken protection by the media for the couple since they were such media darlings throughout their careers. As the fight they are having grows, Piaf takes her sleeping tablets to ease the pain. She tells Marcel what she has done in the past (taking tablets). Eventually Piaf slips into a dazed high from the drugs and passes out leaving the phone off the hook. She passes out in a dream sequence, “Bravo Pour Le Clown” when she goes to the stage and in the dressing room throughout the song. At the end of the show Piaf hangs up on Marcel and when he does not immediately call her back, she knows intuitively something is terribly wrong. The “knock” heard on her dressing room door summons her out of the dressing room and onto the stage one final time. As I turned up-stage, away from the audience, as the lights blacked out, before this final scene, I mentally received the news of his death (the discovery is not written into the script). Piaf walks downstage into a soft pool of light and informs the audience of Marcel’s death before singing her most heart-wrenching love song, dedicating it to Marcel.

The show is abstract. However upon viewing it, a lot the concepts are clear to the viewer, especially of these two worlds merging. The design also helped illuminate the concept. The stage was set up in a diamond (see Appendix A & J) and set as her dressing room. We hung a large painting of Piaf in the center of the up-stage that was lit throughout the show, casting an eerie presence over the stage and the audience, as if she was watching the performance from above. We had costume racks, a dressing table, and lots of clutter to create an environment indicative of Piaf’s lifestyle. The phone and the microphone were the

two key props used to designate the separation between the worlds. The lighting was tremendously influential. The soft glow in the dressing room had a stark contrast with the cool, dramatic lights on-stage, as well as a bold spotlight that cast my shadow against Piaf's portrait (Appendix A). The last scene especially had dramatic lighting when Piaf walks in darkness to small haunting pool of light at the microphone. I stood outside of the light until I made the choice to let the audience see me and when I stepped into the light it cast an intense shadow, highlighting my face (see Appendix A). I wanted Cory, the lighting designer, to make these bold yet subtle dramatic lighting choices in order to paint a picture for the audience that assisted in setting up the dramatic ebb and flow throughout the play.

Details convey a wealth of knowledge in any work of art. Details in a play come fast and furious and if you are lucky as an audience member, you will be able to subconsciously tally up those small intricacies and depart from the theatre with a sense of fulfillment (and ideally, a sense of transcendence). Nationally renowned lighting designer, Lap Chi Chu lights only what is necessary. Thus what one does not see lit becomes almost as interesting as what one does see lit. It is a technique I crave to emulate. With Rodney's directing style my natural quirks had to be grounded and internalized; my energy had to shift from that of a very expressive, animated, heightened exuberance to that of a soulful, earthen state of readiness.

THE PRODUCTION

I had already learned all of the music by heart and was meeting with my pianist, Aurelien Eulert who tutored me on my French while we conducted music

rehearsals. The transitions between scene and song had to be seamless. This was absolutely necessary considering the limitations of having one actor performing. I had to hold the audience's attention while singing. Not only would the audience be primarily native English speakers, they had to understand the stories my songs were telling and appreciate and feel how they related to the plot of the play as a whole.

Mastering Edith's very stylistic mannerisms and physicalizations was also a beast to tackle. I had access to a documentary, "Piaf: A Passionate Life", which contained reels of Edith in interviews and performing. The video was an immense helper because it enabled me to observe Piaf live in a sense, beyond studying descriptions in books and stills from photographs. I worked a lot with ankle weights to get the feel of being more grounded and weighted with age. As opening night approached I watched clips of the aforementioned documentary on a daily basis so that I lived with live images of her that never left my mind's eye.

The elements behind surmounting my production were numerous to say the least. However, I made the conscious decision to dive into the project headfirst and there was not going to be any looking back. With that said, I never want to be a producer. However tedious and overwhelming the "details" became, there was a light at the end of this "Piaf" tunnel. As I sat on the floor of my living room surrounded by the wonderfully devoted friends and classmates who had helped me by serving as pianist, run crew, and stage manager, I got choked up as I made a toast to them all. I realized I had created something so different and so new that would never be replicated in quite the same fashion. Thus resulting from

my agonizing or “obsessing” as my parents joked, over the production elements. I also made use of all of the resources available to me. I made the conscious decision not to set limitations or boundaries on my process. “Let your passion be your guide.”

In short the production included organizing everything involved with the actual “putting on” of my little play. Although I did undertake an immense amount of responsibilities, I was never alone. My stage manager, run crew, lighting designer, and of course Rodney and Aurelien all helped in significant ways to create a solid production. I created a press release and publicity poster to market the show to the public (see Appendix F-H).

WHAT EDITH BECAME TO ME

I am convinced my project would not have had sparked the same artistic inspiration within me had I chosen any other topic to pursue. Edith Piaf’s spirit is eternally conveyed to the world through the preservation of her recordings and other media sources such as photographs, literature, and newsreels. I created an additional source that can now be contributed to this collection. I was tested on all fronts: as a student, as a performer, and as an artist by undertaking a project of such ambitious nature. After ruminating on the whole project post-performance, I sense the immense growth in my admiration and respect for Edith’s immeasurable artistry. I recall a conversation Rodney and I had during one of our rehearsals in early January. We were discussing the difficulty to portray a woman who did live and did die through a fictional story based on real events. Something I wrestled with for a great deal of time at the start of our rehearsing was a sense of being

unworthy to “be” Edith Piaf. After all, she had sustained legendary iconic status throughout France and much of Europe even decades after her death. Despite having faith in my abilities and skills as a performer, I did not trust I had the internal gift to emulate a woman who I had grown to revere. Her voice cried out haunting melodies that told stories evoking emotions in my on a whim. Her life in reality had been one filled with destitution, abuse, addiction, lose, love, fame, and fortune. After devoting such a great deal of time reading about her and studying her music, life, and career I was shell-shocked when it came time for me to get on my feet and start playing her as a character. Rodney listened to my lengthy and emotional tangent and then sat back and told me a story of his own experience with similar sentiments I was wrought with at the time. Many years ago he had been working at the Actors Theatre of Louisville and received a phone call one morning from a fellow company member who asked him to be a part of a reading of a new play. Rodney was obliged and the friend directed him to a house, “We’re at Kat’s house...see you soon!” Rodney took the directions and upon arriving at “Kat’s house” he realized this was not any old Kat. He knocked on the front door of a grandiose estate and was greeted by a butler who led him through parlors, foyers, and into a large den where he was to wait for his friends to begin the reading. He had stepped through the threshold of Katherine Hepburn’s Kentucky estate. He was surrounded by paintings, Oscars, even a large bust of America’s most renowned, finest actress of our time. It was at that moment he had to excuse himself to find a bathroom because he could not quite believe where he was and did not know how to exalt in such a shocking event. He was in his idol’s home,

her bathroom to be exact. His friends teased him a little, told him Katherine was not home at the time, and they all went about their play reading as planned. Rodney never struck me as the type who would get so giddy or nervous about anything, but he reminded me that we are all only human- even Katherine Hepburn and Edith Piaf. One of the best perks about acting as form of performance, he so coyly pointed out, that we have the unique gift and honor to bring life to characters, both fictional and not, for others to experience. Acting is not a self-indulgent activity. On the contrary, it was one of the most intricate forms of evoking text, music, song, dance, emotions, relationships, and ideas in us that are then translated to our audiences. It is not something to edit or be afraid of doing, it is something to luxuriate in and give yourself the freedom to explore, play, and discover how complex and real acting in theatre (and other mediums such as film and television) can become for the people who witness it.

CLOSING AND THE NEXT STEP

With all of the rehearsals and studying, producing, singing, staging La Petite Piaf gradually came together. Yes there were, as always, “things that went wrong” or perhaps it is better to say, some changes had to be made. All in all, I went on whirlwind of a ride to adapt and perform this show. Receiving feedback was very helpful for me. I had fantastic turnout at each of my four performances. The audiences were comprised of a variety people- students, teachers, musicians, family, friends, and somewhat unexpectedly, but for the better, a lot of French-speaking people. Aurelien had a network of French friends who we knew were coming to see the show, but I did not expect so many people from the university

and the community who were also French speakers to come out and see performances. I had the opportunity to talk with one boisterous group (after one show) of maybe ten or so French speakers, that came and sat at tables right in front of the stage. We had not expected them and prior to my entrance down the stairs at the top of the show, I heard them when Aurelien took his place at the piano to begin playing the musical interlude at the top of the show. They greeted him, applauded, laughed, and spoke in French. I of course heard voices, recognized the language and also their close proxemics to the stage and piano and had to calm myself down a bit. There was no room for error in my French, especially if I knew people would be able to pick up on any mistakes I made. They cheered when I walked down the stairs and as the spotlight gleamed on my figure. “Bravo!” “Piaf, tres bien! Bravo! Bravo!” I managed just fine. They sang along with nearly every song, it was a great way to pump up the rest of the audience. I even caught a glimpse of one woman clutch her companion as she nodded her head and said “Oh Marcel, oui...Marcel,” quietly under her breath when I answered the phone to be greeted by Marcel’s voice for the first time. Talking with them, they explained how they grew up with Piaf, listening to her performances, buying her records, they knew all about her love and relationship with Marcel and the devastation she faced with his tragic and untimely death. I appreciated their generosity, their presence, and the brief stories they laughed as they told me. I had other conversations with people who did not speak a word of French who told me they were able to understand every song and were moved with the power of this piece, even if they had never heard of Edith Piaf before that

night. It brings me great joy to know that my efforts and the commitment of my team helped to create a play that had the ability to affect audiences in such a variety of ways. I achieved and surpassed my original goals beyond what I had ever imagined and I am still beaming from the adrenaline and emotion I was flooded with after my final performance on March 27th.

I entered this project without any significant desire to change the world of theatre, plain and simple I just wanted to put on a show people could come and see and enjoy. The process which began with an intensive research expedition on my part, flourished into an artistic journey that culminated into a 72-minute original one-woman show, *La Petite Piaf*. Now that the show is all over, I am setting my sights on the next production mounting of the show, this time in New York City. Despite what so many believe- Piaf was defined by her singing. The world saw her as one of the greatest chanteuses of all time. I sought out to illustrate her in a different vein- as a woman who was not a victim who fell prey to or under the spell of music, but a woman who defined singing for the world and not perhaps on the same level of fame as contemporary popular musicians, but She defined singing and she made her music what it was. Her music was not in any way the entire embodiment of the essence of Piaf.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Production Photos- (A-1 – A-17)

This section includes selected production photographs taken by the show's lighting designer, Cory Pattak. They also include images of the set and a before and after photo of my make-up for the show (this was used to assist in the physical transformation to add age and alter my features to resemble Piaf).

Appendix B: Script (B-1- B- 6)

This is a copy of the script for "La Petite Piaf" with the listing and order of the songs and some notation of stage directions.

Appendix C: Songlist and Score (C1- C-67)

Included is the ordered songlist followed by each song reduced from the original size. The transpositions were done by Eric Jarboe.

Appendix D: Translations (D-1 –D-32)

Provided are the final translations I did for all of the songs performed in French (Both French and English lyrics included).

Appendix E: Program (E-1-E-8)

I have enclosed a copy of my program that was given out to each audience member at the performances of the show. Included are some translations, cast and crew list, cast and crew biographies, "Special Thanks" section, "A Note on Edith Piaf" and "La Petite Piaf", as well as some song translations. It has been formatted to accommodate the style of this document.

Appendix F: Publicity Poster (F-1)

A copy of the publicity poster I designed with the size and margins altered and formatted for this document. The original size was 11 x 17.

Appendix G: Press Release (G1- G-2)

A copy of the press release I sent out to Syracuse University sources and Syracuse general public media outlets to get coverage for the show.

Appendix H: News Coverage (H-1-H-2)

This is an article published in The Syracuse Post-Standard on 3/17/2006 that mentioned "La Petite Piaf". It serves as an example of the media coverage I received for the production.

Appendix I: Research Photos (I-1- I-5)

This is a selection of photos I used in my research process. Also included are photos taken of the display board in the lobby of the Storch Theatre (outside of the Sutton Pavilion) where I hung all of my research photos and translations.

Appendix J: Set Rendering (J-1)

This is a photo reduced reproduction of the sketch I drew to represent the original concept for the stage. It is a rough drawing, not to scale, done in pencil. It was used to make decisions about staging, setting up rehearsal furniture, and the stage for performances. It also served as a guide when selecting props and furniture for the actual show.

Appendix K: DVD (please see labeled and attached material)

The DVD of two performances of “La Petite Piaf”. The first was captured and recorded on Friday 3/24/2006 at the 11pm performance and the second on Monday 3/27/2006 at the 9pm closing performance.

Appendix L: CD 1 (please see labeled and attached material)

This is a CD of the audio for the entire show recorded live during the 11pm 3/24/2006 performance.

Appendix M: CD 2 (please see labeled and attached material)

This is a CD of the pre-show music and samples of sound cues used in the production. The pre-show music comes from the soundtrack for the film “Amelie” (A film by Jean Pierre Jeunet with Yann Tiersen as composer of the film’s score) and the sound cues are courtesy of Timothy Klotz.

LA PETITE PIAF

Adapted By: Rodney Hudson and Rachel Moulton

JE SAIS COMMENT

Mon Dieu.

Hello. Hello..... No, Madam, there are several people on this line, ring off.....Hello!.....but this is a private telephone.....Oh!.....What!.....But it's for you to ring off.....Hello, operator...Hello.....No, this isn't Doctor Weinsberg.....This number is 09, not 05.....Hello.....How annoying. I'm being called; really I don't know.

Hello! Is that you dear?...Marcel is it you?.....Yes....it's very difficult to hear....you sound ever such a long way off...Hello!....Oh! it's awful.....there are several people on the line.....Ask them to put you through again.....Hello! Ask them to put you through again.
.....Ah, Marcel.

MILORD (verse 1)

Ah! At last.....it's you, dear.....yes....very well.....hello!.....It was a real torture to hear you with all those voices in between.....yes.....yes.....yes.....no.....you're lucky.....I only came in ten minutes ago...You hadn't phoned me before, had you?Ah!.....Oh! no I dined out....at Margaret'sIt must be quarter past ten.....Are you at home? Then, what time is it by your electric clock? I cannot go on the trip with you. I hate airplanes..... What I thought..... You want me to what?....But I have to get back on-stage...sing to you here? Non, non, no, Marcel, NON! I cannot go on the trip with you. (*long pause*).....Yes, my darling....

MILORD (verse 2,3)

.....You're sweet.....you're sweet.....Neither did I. I didn't think I could be so strong.....Don't admire me. I move about my dressing room almost as in a dream. I dress, go out, I sing, and come in again quite mechanically. Perhaps I shan't be so brave tomorrow.....

You dear?.....Oh! no.....no, darling, you're not to blame for our love the least little bit.....I.....I.....Oh! don'tWhat?.....It's only natural.....On the contrary.....We.....

B-2

On the contrary, we had always agreed to act openly and I should have thought it criminal for you to leave her without telling me. The blow would have been too cruel; but now I've had time to get used to the idea, and to understand.....

Our love was up against too many things. We had to fight against it, refuse five years of happiness or take the risk. I never imagined we could settle down in our life. I'm paying dearly for a priceless happiness.....Hello.....Priceless, and I don't regret..... I don't..... I don't regret anything.....You're.....You're wrong.....You're.....You're wrong.

NON, JE NE REGRETTE RIEN

LA VIE, L'AMOUR

L'ACCORDEONISTE

Hello.Hello.....Ah, mon amour, I'm back.....That's right. Are you in your dressing gown.....Are you going to bed?.....You musn't work so late. You must go to bed if you're going to get up early tomorrow.....Oh! No, darling, whatever you do, you musn't look at me the way I am now.....Afraid?.....No I shan't be afraid.....it's worse.....You see, I've got out of the way of sleeping alone.....Yes it was an old habit.....Yes.....yes.....Oh! yes.....Darling.....I don't know. I daren't look at myself in the mirror. I don't even put on the light in the dressing room. Yesterday I found myself face to face with an old woman...no not grand-mere.....Oh! no! a thin old woman with white hair and a little mass of wrinkles.....That's kind of you dear! But, my darling: I don't have a remarkable face....a remarkable face-there's nothing worse- a face only a theatre could love.....

It was not always this way. Why at Bernay.....there were always people. People eating; people drinking; people sleeping; people.....loving. And grand-mere, Madame Billy, took care of us all....including the little ones- like me. She was mother, father, and a very good businesswoman to all the working girls..... and the men (laughs). Sailors, politicals.....virgins.I saw it all, my first lessons in love. Not bad for a little French girl, non?

A CHILD IS BORN

MARTINA

B-3

Hello.....I've got what I am used to and what I deserve. It's like a bad habit. I wanted to throw my past to the winds and be madly happy.....darling.....listen.....hello!.....darling.....let me.....Marcel.....hello.....Marcel let me speak. Don't blame yourself. It's all my fault. Oh! Yes, it is.....Think of that Sunday at Windsor and the telegram..Ah! Well?.....It was I who wanted to come, I who wouldn't let you answer, I who told you that I didn't care about anything.....No.....No.....No.....That's not right.....I..... I phoned first.

Your dog- he is here looking at me..... Here. He feels like he is a human being. Your dog is a soul in distress, Your dog spent yesterday between the hall and the bedroom. He kept looking at me. He kept pricking up his ears and listening. He looked for you everywhere. You know he even looks like you. Both of you have the same moustache.....Oh.You shaved..... He seemed to be blaming me for not helping to look for you.

I think the best thing would be for you to take him.....If the poor animal must be unhappy.....Oh! Me!He isn't a woman's type of dog. I shouldn't look after him properly. I should take him out regularly for a run. It'd be better if you kept him.....

(*Cue: LA FOULE to begin underscoring*) I'd put his red collar on. There isn't a nameplate on it. I keep him close to me on our walks. He tugs, he tugs, at me....he pulls me. We walk endlessly along the Montmartre, Champs Elysees, along the Seine.

LA FOULE

Hello! Ah! Darling! It is you dear?..... We were cut off.....Oh no, I was singing. There was a ring, but nobody answered.....Of course.....Naturally.....You're sleepy.....You are good to phone me.....very good.....

(She cries.....Silence)

No. I'm here.....What?.....Forgive.....It's ridiculous.....nothing at all.....I'm quite all right.....I swear I'm quite all right.....
Same thing...Quite, quite all right.....You're wrong.....The same as a moment ago.....Only, you see, we talk and talk and don't think we'll have to stop, ring off, and fall back into space and darkness.....So.....

(She cries)

.....Listen, amour. I never told you an untruth.
Yes, I know, I know, I believe you dear. I'm quite convinced.....No, it isn't that
(Long pause)

B-4

.....but, it's because Marcel, I've just lied to you.....Me, just now.....over the phone.....for a quarter of an hour I've been lying. Oh! I know very well I've nothing left to hope for, but lying won't help, and besides, I don't like lying to you. I can't, I won't, even for your own sake.....Oh! Nothing serious, my darling, don't alarm yourself.

I felt like I was going quite mad, MAD. So I put my coat on and was going out to take a taxi and drive in front of your windows, to wait for.....well.....to wait for.....for...I don't know what.....You're right.....But I am.....I am listening to you.....I'll be sensible.....I'm listening.....I'll answer all your questions, I promise.....Here...I haven't eaten anything.....I couldn't.....I've been very ill.....Last night, I wanted to take a sleeping tablet. Then I thought, if I took more I should sleep better, and if I took the lot I should sleep without dreaming, without waking,..... I should be dead.

(She cries)

.....I took twelve.....In hot water.....Like a lump. And I had a dream. I dreamed the truth. I woke up in a start, very glad it was all a dream, and when I realized it was really true, that I was alone and my head wasn't resting on your shoulder and my legs between yours, I felt that I couldn't, *I simply couldn't live*.....

.....light as air, and cold, and I couldn't feel my heart beating and death was a long time coming, and as I had a terrible spasm, after a quarter of an hour I phoned Margaret. I hadn't the courage to die alone.

JE N'EN CONNAIS PAS LA FIN

LA BELLE HISTOIRE D'AMOUR

Hello....hello...no...I've looked on the dressing table, in the arm chair, in the drawing room, everywhere. Your gloves aren't anywhere about....Listen, I'll look again, but I'm quite sure...if by any chance they are found tomorrow morning, I'll have them put downstairs with the bag...What darling? ...Yes...Our letters?...Yes...Burn them....I'm going to ask you to do a silly thing...No, look, I wanted to say that, if you do burn them? I'd like you to keep the ashes and put them in the little tortoise-shell cigarette case I gave you, and would you.....Hello!.... No, I'm being stupid....Forgive me...I'm really quite brave.... There, it's over. I'll use my handkerchief. But I would like to have those ashes, there....How kind you are! Forgive me-I have been so strong.

MON DIEU

B-5

...Hello! I thought we'd been cut-off....you're kind my darling...my poor darling-
I've made you suffer...Yes,...speak, speak.-Say something, anything....I was in such pain that I could have rolled on the floor and you only had to speak to make me feel all right and let me close my eyes. You know, dear, sometimes when we were in bed and I had my head in its special place with my ear against your chest and you were talking, I heard your voice exactly the same as this evening in the telephone. A coward? It's I who's the coward- I swore to myself...I- Oh no! I had made up my mind....you've-you've never given me anything but happiness...but, my darling, I tell you that's not true...because I knew- I knew- I expected what would happen. Most women fancy they're going to pass their whole existence by the man they love, and it's a shock to them when it comes to an end- but I knew, I knew...

You're right there. Oh I've seen 'em ladies. If they get the hots for a feller, they take it out on a days shopping! Can't risk a bit of the other, might give an old man an excuse, risk their investment. You look in the stores, any

afternoon, there they all are at the handbag counters. If they put themselves to better use there wouldn't be so many wars...not that they'd be any good at it, too fucking mean. They think they can take it with them the lot of 'em.

But I am different my love. I appreciate what I have right before me. My public, my music, and you. I was going to wait to give you your going away present until later. But I have written a chanson d'amour. A hymne a l'amour. Pour tu- for you. And only for you.

HYMNE A L'AMOUR

...forgive me. I know this scene is unbearable and you are very patient with me, but listen, dear, I'm suffering beyond words. I'm in pain. I'm in pain. This wire is the last which puts me in touch with you.....the night before last?I went to sleep. I took the telephone with me...No, in bed with me.....Yes, I know. I'm very silly, but I took the telephone to bed with me because, after all, we are connected by the telephone. It goes into your flat, and then there was this promise that you would give me a ring. So you can just imagine I counted the minutes and dreamed all manner of things. Then it became a different and dangerous kind of a ring- a wring of the neck which strangles, a ring of a boxing match I couldn't get out of- the bell rang, you hit me and I was counted out...or I was at the bottom of the sea- it looked like the rooms in Wigmore Street- and I was connected with you by a diver's air tube, and I was begging you not to cut it- you know, dreams that are idiotic when told, but at the time terribly real.....because you're speaking to me.... I beg you Marcel- don't leave tonight. Let the airplane go without you. No I cannot go with you. You must go alone- without me. I will be here waiting for you.... (kissing the phone)...

B-6

For five years I have lived by you, and only breathed freely in your presence. I have passed my time waiting for you, thinking you must be dead if you were late, dying that the thought of you being dead, breathing again when you came, and when, at last, you were there, I would die for fear you were going. Now I can breathe again because you are speaking to me. But my dream isn't so stupid. If you break the connection, you snap the air tube I'm holding onto for dear life- pardon me my love.....

(She puts her head on the dressing table. After a while she lifts her head up and begins to sing lightly "LA MARSEILLAISE" and then "LA VIE EN ROSE". Then for ten seconds she passes out- dream sequence.)

BRAVO POUR LE CLOWN

But my poor darling, I have never had anything else to occupy myself with except you...what! I was always busy, I agree. Busy with you, for you... You might as well ask a fish how he intends to live his life without water... But I am me. I am Piaf. I don't need you. I don't need anyone.

(She hangs up the phone)

Please God make him call me back. Please God make him call me back. Please God make him call me back ...

(she continues to repeat this as a knock is heard and she begins to dress for her encore...she repeats this all the way until she is back out onstage when she announces Marcel's death.)

Merci beaucoup ladies and gentlemen. You have been a wonderful audience. My friends, my family, my loves...but I have another love...as you well know. A man who has give me life. And now is life is gone- and I am alone. Marcel, Marcel...I sing for Marcel Cerdan. I sing only for him.

LA VIE EN ROSE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: March 10th, 2006

Contact: Rachel Moulton

829 E. Genesee Street

Syracuse, NY 13210

(352) 871-1636

Limebug@hotmail.com

***La Petite Piaf* to premier March 23rd, 2006:
SU Drama's Moulton to star in original one-woman show**

Syracuse, NY- Rachel Moulton, a senior B.F.A. Musical Theatre student (from Gainesville, FL) at Syracuse University, will star in *La Petite Piaf* opening March 23rd in the Sutton Pavilion at Syracuse Stage. The show is an original adaptation by Moulton and Professor Rodney S. Hudson, who also directs the piece. *La Petite Piaf* is based on Jean Cocteau's "La Voix Humane" ("The Human Voice"), Pam Gem's "PIAF", and various biographical texts about the life and career of the famous French chanteuse. *Piaf* also features over fifteen songs recorded by Edith Piaf during her career- including "Hymne a L'amour", "Milord", "Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien", and "La Vie en Rose".

Edith Piaf (1915-1963) was born at 72 Rue de Belleville in Paris on December 19, 1915. Abandoned by her mother, Edith was raised by her father Louis Gaisson, a street acrobat performer. She spent part of her childhood living in a brothel owned by her grandmother, and set out at fifteen to make her own living, singing on the streets of Paris. Louis Leplee (owner of Gerny's, a nightclub on the Montmartre) discovered Edith at nineteen. Edith's stage name, La Mome Piaf (The kid sparrow) stuck with her throughout her life. Over the course of her

-MORE-

career, (spanning twenty-five years) Piaf became one of France's most beloved performers. Piaf was an international singing sensation who's life was plagued by tragedy, addiction, abuse and loss. Her voice grew to be an everlasting presence that transcended the hearts of millions throughout the world. *La Petite Piaf* takes place on and off stage at the

Versailles (on her opening night performing there) in New York City on October 27th, 1949.

Moulton, a student in SU's Honors Program, is performing the show as the culmination of her Senior Honors Thesis Project. Moulton has been seen most recently as Helena (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*- SU Drama Dept.), Frankie (*The Member of the Wedding*- the redhouse).

G-2

Prior to this year while attending SU she has been seen in *Dreams, A...My Name is Alice, A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Puck- Annual Children's Tour/ Syracuse Stage), in addition to Syracuse Stage Understudy Companies (*Crimes of the Heart/Babe, Hamlet/Rosencrantz,Gravedigger*). *La Petite Piaf* will open immediately after Moulton returns from Los Angeles, CA after participating over her spring break in the Sorkin Week (a week-long intensive film/television acting program funded by Aaron Sorkin, SU/Drama Alum).

La Petite Piaf stars Rachel Moulton, directed by Rodney Hudson, accompanied on piano by Aurelien Eulert (Syracuse University Master's student- Piano Performance). Eulert is a native of Strasbourg, France. *La Petite Piaf* opens March 23, 2006 at 11pm and has performances March 24th (11pm), and March 26th- 27th at 9pm. All performances are in the Sutton Pavilion at Syracuse Stage (820 E. Genesee Street Syracuse, NY). Tickets can be purchased at the door for \$1.

-MORE-

CAST/CREATIVE TEAM:

Edith Piaf: Rachel Moulton

Accompanist/Musical Director: Aurelien Eulert

Director: Rodney S. Hudson

Lighting Design: Cory Pattak

Stage Manager: Jackie Ganz

La Petite Piaf
-SONGLIST-

Comme Moi

Je Sais Comment

Milord

Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien

L'Accordeoniste

La Vie, L'Amour

A Child Is Born

Martina

La Foule

Je N'en Connais Pas La Fin

La Belle Histoire D'Amour

Mon Dieu

L'Hymne a l'Amour

Bravo Pour Le Clown

La Vie En Rose



JE SAIS COMMENT

Paroles: Julien Bouquet.

Musique: Robert Chauvigny, Julien Bouquet 1959

Ecoute-moi, mon ami.
Aimes-tu la liberté ?
Voudrais-tu t'enfuir d'ici ?
Aimerais-tu t'évader ?
Veux-tu revivre à la vie,
Marcher sans chaînes à tes pieds ?
Oh, réponds-moi, mon ami,
Aimerais-tu t'évader ?

Je sais comment...
Comment scier tous ces barreaux
Qui sont là en guise de rideaux.
Je sais comment...
Comment faire sauter les verrous
Entre la liberté et nous.
Je sais comment...
Comment faire tomber en poussière
Ce mur énorme d'énormes pierres.
Je sais comment...
Comment de sortir de ce cachot
Fermé comme l'est un tombeau.
Je sais comment revoir les fleurs
Sous un ciel bleu.
Je sais comment avoir le cœur
Libre et heureux...

Tu ne dis rien, mon ami,
Mais tu as au fond des yeux
Plus de rêves que d'envie
Pour voir ce coin de ciel bleu.
Tu crois que je t'ai menti,
Que je n'ai pas de secret.
Pourtant, tes yeux l'ont compris
C'est eux qui sont dans le vrai...

Je sais comment...
Comment faire tourner sur ses gonds

La porte en fer de la prison.
Je sais comment...
Comment faire voler en éclats
Les boulets qui gênent nos pas.
Je sais comment...
Comment briser de nos mains nues
Toutes ses entraves sans être vus.
Je sais comment...
Comment sortir de ce cachot
Sans risquer d'y laisser la peau.
Je sais comment revoir les fleurs
Sous un ciel bleu.
Je sais comment avoir le cœur
Libre et heureux... Dors !...

**Listen to me, my friend.
Do you like freedom?
Would you like to flee from here?
Would you like to escape?
Want you to live again with the life,
To go without chains to your feet?
Oh, answer me, my friend,
Would you like to escape?**

**I know how...
How to saw all these bars
Who are there as curtains.
I know how...
How to make jump the bolts
Between freedom and us.
I know how...
How to make fall in dust
This enormous wall of enormous stones.
I know comment...
How to leave this dungeon
Closed like the east a tomb.
I know how to re-examine the flowers
Under a blue sky.
I know how to have the heart
Free and happy...**

You do not say anything, my friend,
But you have at the retina
More dreams than of desire
To see this corner of blue sky.
You believe that I lied you,
That I do not have a secrecy.
However, your eyes included/understood it
It is them which are in truth...

I know how...
How to make turn on its hinges
The iron door of the prison.
I know how...
How to make fly in glares
The balls which obstruct our steps.
I know how...
How to break our naked hands
All its obstacles without being seen.
I know how...
How to leave this dungeon
Without being likely to leave the skin there.
I know how to re-examine the flowers
Under a blue sky.
I know how to have the heart
Free and happy... Sleep!...

MILORD

Paroles: Georges Moustaki.
Musique: Marguerite Monnot 1959

Allez venez! Milord
Vous asseoir à ma table
Il fait si froid dehors
Ici, c'est confortable
Laissez-vous faire, Milord
Et prenez bien vos aises
Vos peines sur mon cœur
Et vos pieds sur une chaise
Je vous connais, Milord
Vous ne m'avez jamais vue
Je ne suis qu'une fille du port
Une ombre de la rue...

Pourtant, je vous ai frôlé
Quand vous passiez hier
Vous n'étiez pas peu fier
Dame! le ciel vous comblait
Votre foulard de soie
Flottant sur vos épaules
Vous aviez le beau rôle
On aurait dit le roi
Vous marchiez en vainqueur
Au bras d'une demoiselle
Mon Dieu! qu'elle était belle
J'en ai froid dans le cœur...

Allez venez! Milord
Vous asseoir à ma table
Il fait si froid dehors
Ici, c'est confortable
Laissez-vous faire, Milord
Et prenez bien vos aises
Vos peines sur mon cœur
Et vos pieds sur une chaise
Je vous connais, Milord
Vous ne m'avez jamais vue
Je ne suis qu'une fille du port
Une ombre de la rue...

Dire qu'il suffit parfois
 Qu'il y ait un navire
 Pour que tout se déchire
 Quand le navire s'en va
 Il emmenait avec lui
 La douce aux yeux si tendres
 Qui n'a pas su comprendre
 Qu'elle brisait votre vie
 L'amour, ça fait pleurer
 Comme quoi l'existence
 Ça vous donne toutes les chances
 Pour les reprendre après...

Allez venez! Milord
 Vous avez l'air d'un même
 Laissez-vous faire, Milord
 Venez dans mon royaume
 Je soigne les remords
 Je chante la romance
 Je chante les milords
 Qui n'ont pas eu de chance
 Regardez-moi, Milord
 Vous ne m'avez jamais vue...
 Mais vous pleurez, Milord
 Ça, j' l'aurais jamais cru.

+parlé:

Eh! bien voyons, Milord
Souriez-moi, Milord
Mieux que ça, un p'tit effort...
Voilà, c'est ça!
Allez riez! Milord
Allez chantez! Milord
Ta da da da...
Mais oui, dansez, Milord
Ta da da da...
Bravo! Milord...
Encore, Milord...
Ta da da da...

Go come! Milord
You to sit with my table

It is so cold outside

D-6

**Here, it is comfortable
, Milord let you make
And take your eases well
Your sorrows on my heart
And your feet on a chair
I know you, Milord
You never saw me
I am only one girl of the port
A shade of the street...**

**However, I passed very close to you
When you passed yesterday
You were not little to trust
Ram! the sky filled you
Your silk scarf
Floating on your shoulders
You had the beautiful role
The king would have been said
You walked as a winner
With the arm of a young lady
My God! that it was beautiful
I am some cold in the heart...**

**Go come! Milord
You to sit with my table
It is so cold outside
Here, it is comfortable
, Milord let you make
And take your eases well
Your sorrows on my heart
And your feet on a chair
I know you, Milord
You never saw me
I am only one girl of the port
A shade of the street...**

**To say that it is enough sometimes
That there is a ship
So that all tears
When the ship from goes away
It took along with him
The soft one with the so tender eyes
Who did not know to include/understand**

That it broke your life

D-7

**Love, that done to cry
Like what the existence
That gives you all the chances
To take them again after...**

**Go come! Milord
You have the air of a kid
, Milord let you make
Come in my kingdom
I look after the remorse
I sing the lovesong
I sing the milords
Who did not have a chance
Look at Me, Milord
You never saw me...
But you cry, Milord
That, I would ever have believed it.**

+parlé:

**Eh! well let us see, Milord
Smile Me, Milord
Better than that, a p' tit effort...
Here, it is that!
Go laugh! Milord
Go sing! Milord
Your da da da...
Yes, dance, Milord
Your da da da...
Cheer! Milord...
Still, Milord...
Your da da da...**

NON, JE NE REGRETTE RIEN

Musique: Marc Heyal
autres interprètes: Nicole Martin

Non! Rien de rien ...
Non ! Je ne regrette rien
Ni le bien qu'on m'a fait
Ni le mal tout ça m'est bien égal !

Non ! Rien de rien ...
Non ! Je ne regrette rien...
C'est payé, balayé, oublié
Je me fous du passé!

Avec mes souvenirs
J'ai allumé le feu
Mes chagrins, mes plaisirs
Je n'ai plus besoin d'eux !

Balayés les amours
Et tous leurs trémolos
Balayés pour toujours
Je repars à zéro ...

Non ! Rien de rien ...
Non ! Je ne regrette nen ...
Ni le bien, qu'on m'a fait
Ni le mal, tout ça m'est bien égal !

Non ! Rien de rien ...
Non ! Je ne regrette rien ...
Car ma vie, car mes joies
Aujourd'hui, ça commence avec toi !

**Not, nothing of nothing,
not, I do not regret anything!
Nor it although one made me,
nor evil;
all that is quite equal for me!**

Not, nothing of nothing,
not, I do not regret anything!
It is paid,
swept,
forgotten.
I insane of the past!

With my memories
I lit fire!
My sorrows, my pleasures,
I do not need more them!
Swept loves
with their tremors,
to sweep for always!
I set out again to zero.

Not, nothing of nothing,
not, I do not regret anything!
Nor it although one made me,
nor evil;
all that is quite equal for me!

Not, nothing of nothing,
not, I do not regret anything!
Because my life,
because me joys
today
that starts with you!

LA VIE, L'AMOUR

Paroles: Michel Rivgauche.

Musique: Robert Chauvigny 1960

La vie, la vie ça se trouve
 Dans l'amour.
 L'amour, l'amour ça se perd
 Dans la vie.
 La vie, la vie ça se donne
 Par l'amour.
 L'amour, l'amour ça se prend
 Par envie.
 La vie, la vie ça rêve
 A l'amour.
 L'amour, l'amour s'éveille
 A la vie,
 Car la vie, mais c'est l'amour.

Oui la vie, c'est l'amour
 Et l'amour, c'est la vie.
 Pas de vie, sans amour.
 Pas d'amour, sans la vie.
 Notre vie pour l'amour,
 Notre amour pour la vie.
 Mon amour, tu es ma vie.

La vie, la vie ça chante
 Dans l'amour.
 L'amour, l'amour ça crie
 Dans la vie.
 La vie, la vie nous donne
 Tout l'amour.
 L'amour, l'amour nous prend
 Toute la vie.
 La vie, la vie ça meurt
 Pour l'amour.
 L'amour, l'amour ça vit
 Pour la vie.
 C'est l'amour
 Et c'est la vie...

**The life, the life that is
 In the love.
 The love, the love that is lost
 In the life.
 The life, the life that is given**

By the love.
The love, the love that is caught
By desire.
The life, the life that dreams
With the love.
The love, the love wakes up
With the life,
Because life, but it is the love.

Yes the life, it is the love
And the love, it is the life.
No life, without love.
No love, without the life.
Our life for the love,
Our love for the life.
My love, you are my life.

The life, the life that sings
In the love.
The love, the love that shouts
In the life.
The life, the life gives us
All love.
The love, the love takes to us
All life.
The life, the life that dies
For the love.
The love, the love that saw
For the life.
It is the love
And it is the life...

L'ACCORDEONISTE

Paroles et Musique: Michel Emer 1942

La fille de joie est belle
Au coin de la rue Labas
Elle a une clientèle
Qui lui remplit son bas
Quand son boulot s'achève
Elle s'en va à son tour
Chercher un peu de rêve
Dans un bal du faubourg
Son homme est un artiste
C'est un drôle de petit gars
Un accordéoniste
Qui sait jouer la java

Elle écoute la java
Mais elle ne la danse pas
Elle ne regarde même pas la piste
Et ses yeux amoureux
Suivent le jeu nerveux
Et les doigts secs et longs de l'artiste
Ça lui rentre dans la peau
Par le bas, par le haut
Elle a envie de chanter
C'est physique
Tout son être est tendu
Son souffle est suspendu
C'est une vraie tordue de la musique

La fille de joie est triste
Au coin de la rue Labas
Son accordéoniste
Il est parti soldat
Quand y reviendra de la guerre
Ils prendront une maison
Elle sera la caissière
Et lui, sera le patron
Que la vie sera belle
Ils seront de vrais pachas
Et tous les soirs pour elle
Il jouera la java

Elle écoute la java
Qu'elle fredonne tout bas
Elle revoit son accordéoniste

Et ses yeux amoureux
 Suivent le jeu nerveux
 Et les doigts secs et longs de l'artiste
 Ça lui rentre dans la peau
 Par le bas, par le haut
 Elle a envie de chanter
 C'est physique
 Tout son être est tendu
 Son souffle est suspendu
 C'est une vraie tordue de la musique

La fille de joie est seule
 Au coin de la rue Labas
 Les filles qui font la gueule
 Les hommes n'en veulent pas
 Et tant pis si elle crève
 Son homme ne reviendra plus
 Adieux tous les beaux rêves
 Sa vie, elle est foutue
 Pourtant ses jambes tristes
 L'emmènent au boui-boui
 Où y a un autre artiste
 Qui joue toute la nuit

Elle écoute la java...
 ... elle entend la java
 ... elle a fermé les yeux
 ... et les doigts secs et nerveux ...
 Ça lui rentre dans la peau
 Par le bas, par le haut
 Elle a envie de gueuler
 C'est physique
 Alors pour oublier
 Elle s'est mise à danser, à tourner
 Au son de la musique...

...
ARRÊTEZ !
 Arrêtez la musique ! ...

The prostitute is beautiful
 With the corner of the street Labas
 It has customers

Who fills his bottom to him
 When its job is completed
 She from goes away in her turn
 To seek a little dream
 In a ball of the suburb
 Its man is an artist
 It is funny of small urchin
 An accordionist
 Who can play java

It listens to java
 But it does not dance it
 It does not even look at the track
 And its eyes in love
 Follow the nervous play
 And dry and long fingers of the artist
 That returns to him in the skin
 By bottom, the top
 It wants to sing
 It is physical
 Any sound being is tended
 Its breath is suspended
 It true is twisted music

The prostitute is sad
 With the corner of the street Labas
 Its accordionist
 He left soldier
 When y returns from the war
 They will take a house
 It will be the cashier
 And, will be to him the owner
 That the life will be beautiful
 They will be truths pashas
 And every evening for it
 It will play java

It listens to java
 That it fredonne low
 It re-examines its accordionist
 And its eyes in love
 Follow the nervous play
 And dry and long fingers of the artist
 That returns to him in the skin

By bottom, the top
It wants to sing
It is physical
Any sound being is tended
Its breath is suspended
It true is twisted music

The prostitute is alone
With the corner of the street Labas
The girls who make the mouth
The men do not want any
And so much worse if it bursts
Its man will not return any more
Good-byes all beautiful dreams
Its life, it is foutue
However its sad legs
Take along to the low dive
Where another artist has there
Who plays all during the night

It listens to java...
... it hears java
... it closed the eyes
... and dry and nervous fingers...
That returns to him in the skin
By bottom, the top
It wants of gueuler
It is physical
Then to forget
It started to dance, to turn
With the sound of the music...

...
STOP!
Stop the music! ...

LA FOULE

Musique: Charles Dumont

Je revois la ville en fête et en délire
 Suffoquant sous le soleil et sous la joie
 Et j'entends dans la musique les cris, les rires
 Qui éclatent et rebondissent autour de moi
 Et perdue parmi ces gens qui me bousculent
 Étourdie, désespérée, je reste là
 Quand soudain, je me retourne, il se recule,
 Et la foule vient me jeter entre ses bras...

Emportés par la foule qui nous traîne
 Nous entraîne
 Écrasés l'un contre l'autre
 Nous ne formons qu'un seul corps
 Et le flot sans effort
 Nous pousse, enchaînés l'un et l'autre
 Et nous laisse tous deux
 Épanouis, enivrés et heureux.

Entraînés par la foule qui s'élance
 Et qui danse
 Une folle farandole
 Nos deux mains restent soudées
 Et parfois soulevés
 Nos deux corps enlacés s'envolent
 Et retombent tous deux
 Épanouis, enivrés et heureux...

Et la joie éclaboussée par son sourire
 Me transperce et rejaillit au fond de moi
 Mais soudain je pousse un cri parmi les rires
 Quand la foule vient l'arracher d'entre mes bras...

Emportés par la foule qui nous traîne
 Nous entraîne
 Nous éloigne l'un de l'autre
 Je lutte et je me débats
 Mais le son de sa voix
 S'étouffe dans les rires des autres
 Et je crie de douleur, de fureur et de rage
 Et je pleure...

Entraînée par la foule qui s'élançe
 Et qui danse
 Une folle farandole
 Je suis emportée au loin
 Et je crisper mes poings, maudissant la foule qui me vole
 L'homme qu'elle m'avait donné
 Et que je n'ai jamais retrouvé...

**I re-examine the city celebrates some and is delirious about it
 Suffocating under the sun and the joy
 And I hear in the music the cries, the laughter
 Who burst and rebound around me
 And lost among these people who hustle me
 Dazed, disabled, I remain there
 When suddenly, I am turned over, it moves back myself,
 And crowd comes to throw me between her arms...**

**Carried by the crowd which trails us
 Us involves
 Crushed one against the other
 We form one body
 And the flood without effort
 Us pushes, connected one and the other
 And leaves us both
 Opened out, enivrés and happy.**

**Involved by the crowd which springs
 And which dances
 Insane a farandole
 Our two hands remain welded
 And sometimes raised
 Our two intertwined bodies fly away
 And both fall down
 Opened out, enivrés and happy...**

**And joy splashed by its smile
 Transpierce me and flashes back at the bottom of me
 But suddenly I push a cry among the laughter
 When crowd comes to tear off it among my arms...**

**Carried by the crowd which trails us
 Us involves
 Us moves away one from the other**

I fight and I debates
But the sound of its voice
Choke yourself in the laughter of the others
And I shout of pain, fury and rage
And I cry...

Involved by the crowd which springs
And which dances
Insane a farandole
I am carried with far
And I contract my fists, maudissant the crowd which steals me
The man that it had given me
And that I never found...

JE N'EN CONNAIS PAS LA FIN

Paroles: Raymond Asso.

Musique: Marguerite Monnot 1939

Depuis quelque temps l'on fredonne,
 Dans mon quartier, une chanson,
 La musique en est monotone
 Et les paroles sans façon.
 Ce n'est qu'une chanson des rues
 Dont on ne connaît pas l'auteur.
 Depuis que je l'ai entendue,
 Elle chante et danse dans mon cœur.

{Refrain:}

Ha ha ha ha,
 A mon amour,
 Ha ha ha ha,
 A toi toujours,
 Ha ha ha ha,
 Dans tes grands yeux,
 Ha ha ha ha,
 Rien que nous deux.

Avec des mots naïfs et tendres,
 Elle raconte un grand amour
 Mais il m'a bien semblé comprendre
 Que la femme souffrait un jour.
 Si l'amant fut méchant pour elle,
 Je veux en ignorer la fin
 Et, pour que ma chanson soit belle,
 Je me contente du refrain.

{Refrain}

Ils s'aimeront toute la vie.
 Pour bien s'aimer, ce n'est pas long.
 Que cette histoire est donc jolie.
 Qu'elle est donc belle, ma chanson.
 Il en est de plus poétiques,
 Je le sais bien, oui, mais voilà,
 Pour moi, c'est la plus magnifique,
 Car ma chanson ne finit pas.

{Refrain}

I do not know the end of it

**For some time one fredonne,
In my district, a song,
The music in is monotonous
And words without way.
It is only one song due streets
Whose one does not know the author.
Since I heard it,
It sings and dances in my heart.**

**{ Refrain: }
Ha ha ha ha,
With my love,
Ha ha ha ha,
With you always,
Ha ha ha ha,
In your large eyes,
Ha ha ha ha,
Only us two.**

**With naive and tender words,
It tells a great love
But it seemed me well to include/understand
That the woman suffered one day.
If the lover were malicious for it,
I want to be unaware of the end of it
And, so that my song is beautiful,
I am satisfied with the refrain.**

{ Refrain }

**They will like all the life.
For good to like, it is not long.
That this history is thus pretty.
That it is thus beautiful, my song.
It is more poetic,
I know it well, yes, but here,
For me, it is most splendid,
Because my song does not finish.**

{ Refrain }

LA BELLE HISTOIRE D'AMOUR

Paroles: Edith Piaf.

Musique: Charles Dumont 1960

Quand un homme vient vers moi,
Je vais toujours vers lui.
Je vais vers je-ne-sais-quoi.
Je marche dans la nuit.
Je cherche à t'oublier
Et c'est plus fort que moi :
Je me fais déchirer.
Je n'appartiens qu'à toi...

Je n'oublierai jamais
Nous deux, comme on s'aimait
Toutes les nuits, tous les jours,
...La belle histoire d'amour...
...La belle histoire d'amour...
Pourquoi m'as-tu laissée ?
Je suis seule à pleurer,
Toute seule à chercher...
Un jour où j'attendais,
J'ai longtemps attendu.
J'espérais... J'espérais...
Tu n'es pas revenu.
Je me suis révoltée.
Je me suis résignée.
J'ai crié, j'ai pleuré,
J'ai nié, j'ai prié...

Je n'oublierai jamais
Nous deux, comme on s'aimait
Toutes les nuits, tous les jours.
...La belle histoire d'amour...
...La belle histoire d'amour...
Pourquoi m'as-tu laissée ?
Je suis seule à pleurer,
Toute seule à chercher...

Quand un homme me plaît,
J'fais des comparaisons.
Je n'arrive jamais
A lui donner raison.
C'est ta voix que j'entends.
C'est tes yeux que je vois.

C'est ta main que j'attends.
Je n'appartiens qu'à toi...

Je n'oublierai jamais
Nous deux, comme on s'aimait
Toutes les nuits, tous les jours,
...La belle histoire d'amour...
...La belle histoire d'amour...
Pourquoi m'as-tu laissée ?
Je suis seule à pleurer,
Toute seule à chercher...

J'espère toujours en toi.
Je sais que tu viendras.
Tu me tendras les bras
Et tu m'emporteras...
Et tu m'emporteras...
Et tu m'emporteras...
Et tu m'emporteras...
Et tu m'emporteras...
Et tu m'emporteras...

**When a man comes towards me,
I always go towards him.
I go towards certain something.
I walk in the night.
I seek to forget you
And it is stronger than me:
I am made tear.
I belong only to you...**

**I will never forget
Us two, as one liked
Every night, tous.les.jours,
... beautiful history of love...
... beautiful history of love...
Why did you leave me?
I am alone to cry,
All alone to seek...
One day when I waited,
I waited a long time.
I hoped... I hoped...**

**You did not return.
I revolted.
I resigned myself.
I shouted, I cried,
I denied, I requested...**

**I will never forget
Us two, as one liked
Every night, tous.les.jours.
... beautiful history of love...
... beautiful history of love...
Why did you leave me?
I am alone to cry,
All alone to seek...**

**When I like a man,
I make comparisons.
I never arrive
With him to give reason.
It is your voice which I hear.
These is your eyes that I see.
It is your hand which I wait.
I belong only to you...**

**I will never forget
Us two, as one liked
Every night, tous.les.jours,
... beautiful history of love...
... beautiful history of love...
Why did you leave me?
I am alone to cry,
All alone to seek...**

**I always hope in you.
I know that you will come.
You will tighten me the arms
And you will carry me...
And you will carry me...
And you will carry me...
And you will carry me...
And you will carry me...
And you will carry me...**

MON DIEU

Paroles: Michel Vaucaire.

Musique: Charles Dumont 1960

Mon Dieu ! Mon Dieu ! Mon Dieu !

Laissez-le-moi

Encore un peu,

Mon amoureux !

Un jour, deux jours, huit jours...

Laissez-le-moi

Encore un peu

A moi...

Le temps de s'adorer,

De se le dire,

Le temps de se fabriquer

Des souvenirs.

Mon Dieu ! Oh oui...mon Dieu !

Laissez-le-moi

Remplir un peu

Ma vie...

Mon Dieu ! Mon Dieu ! Mon Dieu !

Laissez-le-moi

Encore un peu,

Mon amoureux.

Six mois, trois mois, deux mois...

Laissez-le-moi

Pour seulement

Un mois...

Le temps de commencer

Ou de finir,

Le temps d'illuminer

Ou de souffrir,

Mon Dieu ! Mon Dieu ! Mon Dieu !

Même si j'ai tort,

Laissez-le-moi

Un peu...

Même si j'ai tort,

Laissez-le-moi

Encore...

My God! My God! My God!
Leave it to me
Still a little,
My in love!
One day, two days, eight days...
Leave it to me
Still a little
With me...

Time to adore itself,
To say it,
Time to manufacture itself
Memories.
My God! Oh yes... my God!
Leave it to me
To fill a little
My life...

My God! My God! My God!
Leave it to me
Still a little,
My in love.
Six months, three months, two months...
Leave it to me
For only
One month...

Time to start
Or to finish,
Time to illuminate
Or to suffer,
My God! My God! My God!
Even if I am wrong,
Leave it to me
A little...
Even if I am wrong,
Leave it to me
Still...

L'HYMNE A L'AMOUR

Paroles: Edith Piaf. Musique: Marguerite Monnot 1949
 autres interprètes: Armand Mestral, Michel Chaineaud,
 Marcel Merké, Mireille Mathieu, Johnny Hallyday, Georgette Lemaire

Le ciel bleu sur nous peut s'effondrer
 Et la terre peut bien s'écrouler
 Peu m'importe si tu m'aimes
 Je me fous du monde entier
 Tant qu'l'amour inond'ra mes matins
 Tant que mon corps frémira sous tes mains
 Peu m'importe les problèmes
 Mon amour puisque tu m'aimes

J'irais jusqu'au bout du monde
 Je me ferais teindre en blonde
 Si tu me le demandais
 J'irais décrocher la lune
 J'irais voler la fortune
 Si tu me le demandais

Je renierais ma patrie
 Je renierais mes amis
 Si tu me le demandais
 On peut bien rire de moi
 Je ferais n'importe quoi
 Si tu me le demandais

Si un jour la vie t'arrache à moi
 Si tu meurs que tu sois loin de moi
 Peu m'importe si tu m'aimes
 Car moi je mourrais aussi
 Nous aurons pour nous l'éternité
 Dans le bleu de toute l'immensité
 Dans le ciel plus de problèmes
 Mon amour crois-tu qu'on s'aime
 Dieu réunit ceux qui s'aiment

**The blue sky on us can break down
 And the ground can collapse well
 Little imports me if you like me
 I insane of the whole world
 As long as the love inond' ruffle my mornings
 As long as my body will quiver under your hands
 Little imports me the problems
 My love since you like me**

**I would go until the end of the world
I would be made dye as a blonde
If you asked it to me
I would take down the moon
I would steal fortune
If you asked it to me**

**I would disavow my fatherland
I would disavow my friends
If you asked it to me
One can laugh well at me
I would do anything
If you asked it to me**

**If one day the life tears off you with me
If you die that you would be far from me
Little imports me if you like me
Because me I would die too
We will have for us eternity
In the blue of all the vastness
In the sky more problems
My love you believe that one likes
God joins together those which like**

BRAVO POUR LE CLOWN

Paroles: Henri Contet.

Musique: Louiguy 1953

Un clown est mon ami
Un clown bien ridicule
Et dont le nom s'écrit
En gifles majuscules
Pas beau pour un empire
Plus triste qu'un chapeau
Il boit d'énormes rires
Et mange des bravos

Pour ton nez qui s'allume
Bravo ! Bravo !
Tes cheveux que l'on plume
Bravo ! Bravo !
Tu croques des assiettes
Assis sur un jet d'eau
Tu ronges des paillettes
Tordu dans un tonneau
Pour ton nez qui s'allume
Bravo ! Bravo !
Tes cheveux que l'on plume
Bravo ! Bravo !

La foule aux grandes mains
S'accroche à ses oreilles
Lui vole ses chagrins
Et vide ses bouteilles
Son cœur qui se dévisse
Ne peut les attrister
C'est là qu'ils applaudissent
La vie qu'il a ratée !

Pour la femme infidèle
Bravo ! Bravo !
Et tu fais la vaisselle
Bravo ! Bravo !
Ta vie est un reproche
Qui claque dans ton dos
Ton fils te fait les poches
Et toi, tu fais l'idiot
Pour la femme infidèle
Bravo ! Bravo !
Et tu fais la vaisselle

Bravo ! Bravo !

Le cirque est déserté
 Le rire est inutile
 Mon clown est enfermé
 Dans un certain asile
 Succès de camisole
 Bravos de cabanon
 Des mains devenues folles
 Lui battent leur chanson

Je suis roi et je règne
 Bravo ! Bravo !
 J'ai des rires qui saignent
 Bravo ! Bravo !
 Venez, que l'on m'acclame
 J'ai fait mon numéro
 Tout en jetant ma femme
 Du haut du chapiteau
 Bravo ! Bravo ! Bravo ! Bravo !

**A clown is my friend
 A quite ridiculous clown
 And whose name is written
 In capital slaps
 Not beautiful for an empire
 Sadder than a hat
 It drinks enormous laughter
 And eats cheers**

**For your nose which ignites
 Cheer! Cheer!
 Your hair which one plucks
 Cheer! Cheer!
 You crunch plates
 Sat on a water jet
 You corrode spangles
 Twisted in a barrel**

**For your nose which ignites
 Cheer! Cheer!
 Your hair which one plucks
 Cheer! Cheer!**

Crowd with the large hands

Cling to its ears
 He steal its sorrows
 And vacuum its bottles
 Its heart which is unscrewed
 Cannot sadden them
 It is there that they applaud
 The life which it missed!

For the inaccurate woman
 Cheer! Cheer!
 And you make the crockery
 Cheer! Cheer!
 Your life is a reproach
 Who opera hat in your back
 Your sons makes you the pockets
 And you, you make the idiot
 For the inaccurate woman
 Cheer! Cheer!
 And you make the crockery
 Cheer! Cheer!

The circus is deserted
 The laughter is useless
 My clown is locked up
 In a certain asylum
 Success of nightshirt
 Cheers of cottage
 Hands become insane
 He beat their song

I am a king and I reign
 Cheer! Cheer!
 I have laughter which bleeds
 Cheer! Cheer!
 Come, that one acclaims me
 I made my number
 While throwing my wife
 Top of the capital
 Cheer! Cheer! Cheer! Cheer!

LA VIE EN ROSE

Paroles: Edith Piaf.

Musique: Louigy 1942

Des yeux qui font baisser les miens
 Un rire qui se perd sur sa bouche
 Voilà le portrait sans retouche
 De l'homme auquel j'appartiens

{Refrain:}

Quand il me prend dans ses bras,
 Il me parle tout bas
 Je vois la vie en rose,
 Il me dit des mots d'amour
 Des mots de tous les jours,
 Et ça me fait quelque chose
 Il est entré dans mon cœur,
 Une part de bonheur
 Dont je connais la cause,
 C'est lui pour moi,
 Moi pour lui dans la vie
 Il me l'a dit, l'a juré
 Pour la vie.
 Et dès que je l'aperçois
 Alors je sens en moi
 Mon cœur qui bat.

Des nuits d'amour à plus finir
 Un grand bonheur qui prend sa place
 Des ennuis, des chagrins s'effacent
 Heureux, heureux à en mourir

{au Refrain}

{Nota: variante pour le dernier couplet:}

Des nuits d'amour à en mourir
 Un grand bonheur qui prend sa place
 Les ennuis, les chagrins s'effacent
 Heureux, heureux pour mon plaisir

**Eyes which cause a drop in mine
 A laughter which is lost on its mouth
 Here is the portrait without final improvement
 Of the man to which I belong**

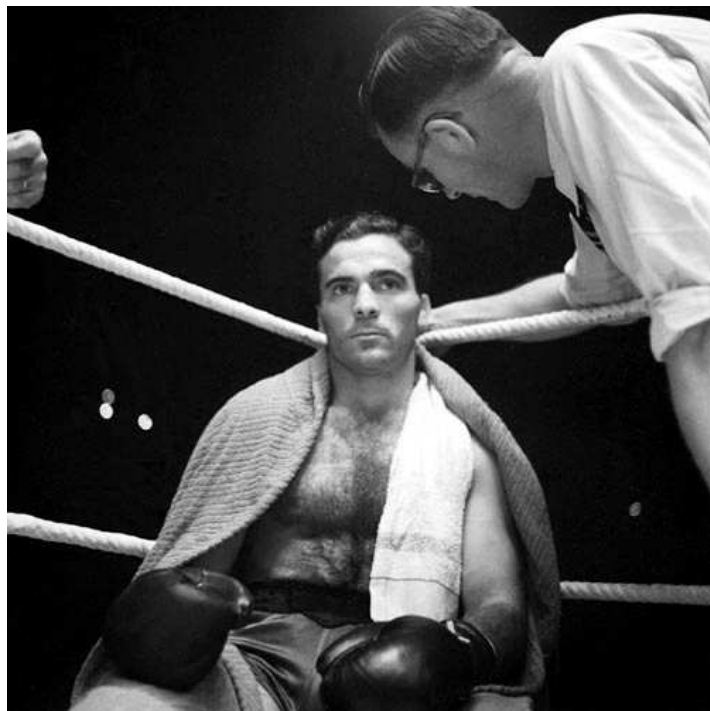
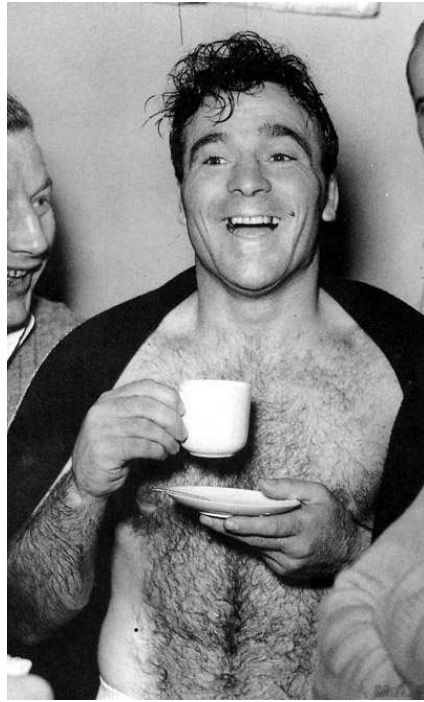
{ Refrain: }
When it takes to me in its arms,
It speaks to me low
I see the life pink,
It tells me words of love
Words of tous.les.jours,
And that does something to me
It entered my heart,
A share of happiness
Whose I know the cause,
It is him for me,
Me for him in the life
It said it to me, swore
For the life.
And as soon as I see it
Then I feel in me
My heart which beats.

Nights of love to finishing more
A great happiness which takes its place
Troubles, sorrows are erased
Happy, happy to die about it

{ with the Refrain }
{ Foot-note: alternative for the last verse: }

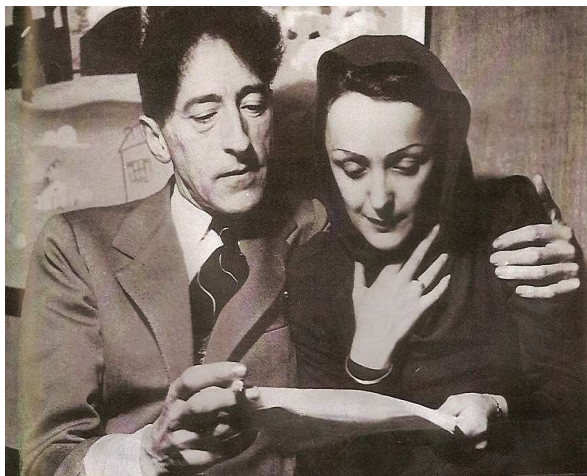
Nights of love to die about it
A great happiness which takes its place
The troubles, sorrows are erased
Happy, happy for my pleasure

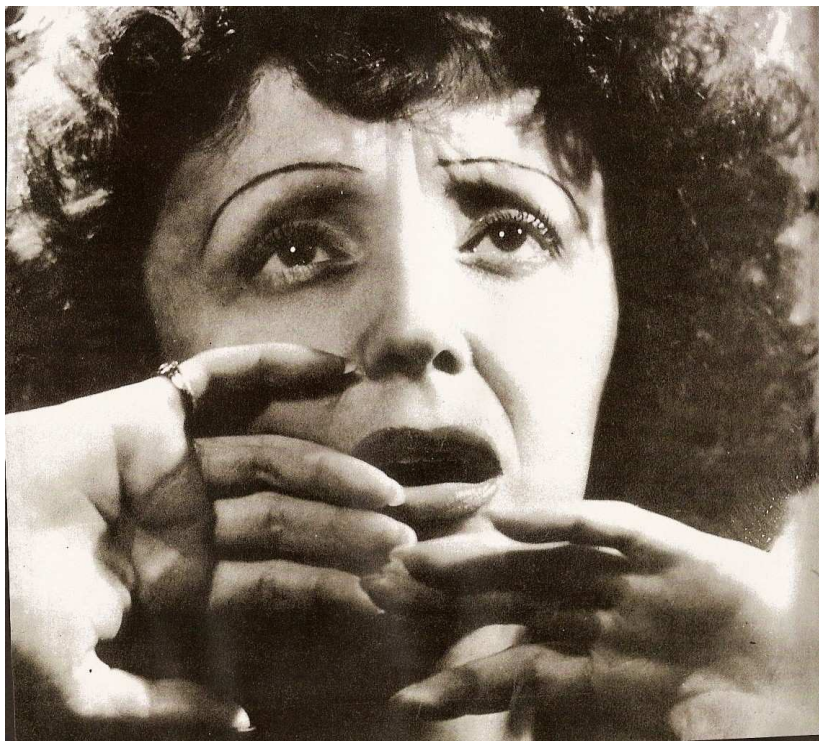






Jean Cocteau and Edith. (*Serve Lido*)







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Script hinders Anthony Hopkins in 'Indian'

Friday, March 17, 2006

JOAN E. VADEBONCOEUR
ENTERTAINMENT COLUMNIST

Anthony Hopkins adds another memorable portrait to his gallery. As Burt Munro, the actor delivers a man best described as a lovable, delightful, determined old coot.

Munro is a real New Zealander who, at age 67, was determined to break the land speed record for bikes at Utah's Bonneville Salt Flats. But Munro suffered from an inoperable heart condition and was racing an aged cycle, to say nothing of the lack of funds to finance his trip and the cycle's cargo fee to make the trip from his home to the United States.

His journey introduces him to a crass Los Angeles cabbie, a helpful transsexual motel clerk and a widow whose sexual favors Munro savors.

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In most years, his performance would have earned him an Academy Award. But in "The World's Fastest Indian" he is hampered by a script that sometimes paints him as educated but as often shows the character to be ignorant of things he should know.

Dramatic license goes too far with depicting him as a naif when it comes to advance registration for the competition and the safety requirements of his vehicle. A man who quotes Confucius and reads extensively would know the requirements. In reality, he did know the rules. Also, as the end legend mentions, he lived to race nine more times and set more records, rather than, as the film shows, appearing to be one breath short of dying.

Those who enjoyed "The Straight Story," the movie in which Richard Farnsworth's aging farmer trekked on his tractor lawn mower to link with his estranged, ailing brother, won't want to miss this similar motion picture.

Supporting performances vary from the wonderful earthiness of Diane Ladd as the widow to the awfulness of Paul Rodriguez as a used-car salesman with a horrible Latino accent.

SU student Moulton goes solo in 'La Petite Piaf'

Rachel Moulton has scored as Frankie in "A Member of the Wedding" at The Redhouse and as Helena in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" for the Syracuse University drama department.

Next week, the SU student goes solo for "La Petite Piaf," a work about

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legendary French chanteuse Edith Piaf. The musical theater senior also will show two other facets of her talents, singing and collaborating on the script with department professor Rodney S. Hudson.

The pair have adapted Jean Cocteau's "La Voix Humaine (The Human Voice)," as well as Pam Gem's "Piaf" and other biographical texts. The work will boast more than a dozen songs the singer popularized, including "La Vie en Rose."

Accompanist is Aurelian Eulert, a Frenchman who is going for a master's degree in piano.

Gainesville, Fla., native Moulton performs the show 11 p.m. March 23 and 9 p.m. March 24 in the Sutton Pavilion, between the Archbold and Storch theaters at the Syracuse Stage complex.

(<http://www.syracuse.com/vadeboncoeur/index.ssf?/base/entertainment-0/1142590394250210.xml&coll=1>)

































