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PAS DE QUATRE



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THE AGE OF ROMANTICISM



In the early 19th century, the Age of Reason gave way to the Age of Romanticism. Romanticism, also referred to as the Romantic Era, the Romantic Movement, and the Romantic Period, was an artistic, cultural, and intellectual movement that influenced all literature, music, and theater that originated in Europe toward the end of the 18th century.

Romanticism occurred after the French Revolution (1789-1799) and the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815). Romanticism was created by generations who had endured the stress and upheaval of revolutions and wars and now gravely doubted the promised security of the Age of Reason with its conventions of Classicism and Neoclassicism.

The essential spirit of Romanticism embodied an insurgency against the old established order of precise rules, laws, dogmas, and formulas that characterized Classicism and Neoclassicism. The metaphysical questions of existence, death, and eternity became the prominent concerns, and imagination was praised over reason, emotion over logic, and intuition over science. Romanticism spanned from 1800-1850, and during this period a plethora of artistic work was created.

CLASSICAL BALLET IN THE AGE OF ROMANTICISM



The Romantic Era of Classical Ballet began and ended with the performances of one of the most legendary ballerinas in history, Marie Taglioni. In 1832, Marie Taglioni's debut in *La Sylphide* in Paris began the Romantic era, and her London Premiere in the *Pas de Quatre* in 1845 was the zenith of Romanticism for Classical Ballet.

There were enormously significant characteristics created during the Romantic Era that altered Classical Ballet forever. First and foremost, the invention of the pointe shoe enabled the ballerina to dance on the tips of toes, which instantly sensationalized her and fashioned the female into the pinnacle of ballet. Women, once shunned from the stage, had now acquired celebrity status and were more popular than men. This colossal fascination with the ballerina led to a decline in the interest and importance of the danseur noble, the male dancer, and he virtually vanished into the background for about 100 years. Interest in the danseur noble was not reignited until Vaslav Nijinsky, a brilliant young Russian dancer, made his debut in Paris with the *Ballet Russe*.

During the Romantic Era, the technique of Classical Ballet also stylistically changed and became characterized by soft, rounded arms, a forward tilt of the upper body, elaborate leg movements, and fancy pointe work. This new technique gave the ballerina a flowery, willowy appearance. Consequently, the plots of new choreographies during the Romantic Era presented a dominating female spirit, a Sylph, Willis, or Ghost who enslaved the heart of a mortal man and made it impossible for him to live happily in the real world.

These new choreographies of the Romantic Era relied on the creation of a mysterious and dream-like atmosphere to complement supernatural themes. In order to capture the essence of supernatural characters, the costume of the ballerina had to radically evolve from a cumbersome long court dress to a shorter garment created from lighter materials that would flow. Another innovation bestowed by the Romantic Era was the romantic tutu. The first model of the romantic tutu appeared in 1830 featuring a full skirt shaped like a bell and fashioned from white muslin, gauze, and tulle. The skirt fell mid-way between the knee and the ankle, and was attached to a tightly fitting bodice with puffed sleeves, and a low off the shoulder neckline. By 1860 the usage of crinoline, a stiff fabric made of horsehair and cotton typically used for stiffening petticoats, became the popular material to *use* in the construction of the romantic tutu, as it increased the width of the costume creating the desirable voluminous skirt. The bodice also became sleeveless allowing for the bending and the raising of the arms with ease. Despite its beauty and functionality, the romantic tutu combined with new atmospheric gas lighting spelled disaster. In the middle of the 19th century, reports of romantic tutus catching fire as they brushed against the lighting instruments were numerous. In 1862, the most notable of these tragedies occurred during a rehearsal that was attended by Marie Taglioni. Emma Livry, a young rising star at the Paris Opera Ballet, suffered critical burns over her entire body when her skirt caught fire on stage. Witnesses recount that Emma, engulfed in flames, ran across the stage three times before she was caught and the fire extinguished. She died eight months later at the age of twenty-one.

Several other very important theatrical innovations of the Romantic Era were the separate acknowledgments of the author and the choreographer; the use of music especially written for choreography; the invention of gas lighting enabling gradual light changes; and the use of wires and trap doors on the stage.

PAS DE QUATRE



The introduction of the pointe shoe sensationalized ballet, and its most famous ballerinas, Marie Taglioni, Carlotta Grisi, Fanny Cerrito, Lucile Grahm, and Fanny Elssler attained such enormous celebrity status that their appearances drew massive audiences. The 19th century saw these five great ballerinas of the Romantic Era performing throughout all of Europe, and obtaining very lucrative profits for the theatres in which they performed.

In 1845 business at Her Majesty's Theatre in London was very slow. Benjamin Lumley, the enterprising impresario of the theatre, conceived of a spectacular notion for a production that he was certain would captivate the whole of Europe, and he was correct. To invite these illustrious ballerinas to dance together for the very first time in history at Her Majesty's Theatre was Lumley's brilliant idea. Taglioni, Grisi, and Cerrito accepted his invitation immediately, but Elssler declined. However, her place was taken by the youngest of them all, Lucile Grahm. Lumley secured the services of composer, Cesare Pugni, and choreographer Jules Perrot, who had created *Giselle*, *Ondine*, and *La Esmeralda*, and so the *Pas de Quatre* stepped into production.

Although Lumley's plan possessed exemplary financial ramifications, if it had not been for Perrot's masterful management, it would have been a disaster artistically. Naturally, each ballerina possessed an enormous ego and considered the other three positively inferior. This bitter rivalry caused constant feuding amongst them, and practically destroyed the production.

Not only did Perrot have the arduous task of choreographing a complete divertissement that permitted each ballerina to display the technique that exactly suited her individual style and technical strengths, but he also had to placate their egos and accommodate their fiery demanding dispositions. Perrot had previously partnered Taglioni, Grisi, and Cerrito and was familiar with both their talents and temperaments, but choreographing the *Pas de Quatre* became absolutely exasperating. Rehearsals were filled with spats over which one the choreographer favored most, the proper order of the solo variations, which one would wear the jewels, which hair ornamentation was best suited for which ballerina, and multitudes of other minutia.

On the evening of July 12, despite a most tedious and frustrating choreographic process, Her Majesty's Theatre was "crowded to suffocation" and filled with uproarious cheers, clapping, and stamping as the four ballerinas embarked upon the stage. As they advanced hand in hand toward the orchestra pit and curtsied, the audience became frenzied. Each luminary solo variation was hailed with a shower of bouquets, and gradually flower petals began to cover the stage floor. By time the ballerinas assumed their final sculptural position, the audience was utterly enraptured. *The London Times* declaration that "The *Pas de Quatre* was the greatest Terpsichorean exhibition that ever was known in Europe" produced extensive conversation about the *Pas de Quatre* and ballet in general throughout London. Lumley recorded in his memoirs that "*Pas de Quatre* probably formed the culminating point in the History of Ballet in England" and he could not have been more accurate.

Three more performances of the *Pas de Quatre* followed, and Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were in attendance on 17 July 1845, at the third of these four performances. Taglioni, Grisi, Cerrito, and Grahn never danced on the same stage together again.

LUCILE ALEXIA GRAHN



Lucile Alexia Grahn was born on June 30, 1819 in Copenhagen, Denmark. Her father was in the Norwegian Army and her mother hailed from the Jutland. Lucile's parents, although never having been involved in theatrical endeavors, thought Lucile would greatly benefit from ballet lessons. So at the age of ten, Lucile began her study of Classical Ballet at the Royal Danish Theatre School in Copenhagen under the tutelage of August Bournonville. By 1834, Lucile had become Bournonville's protegee and he took her to Paris to see the legendary Marie Taglioni dance in *La Sylphide*. Upon returning home to Denmark, and much to the chagrin of Bournonville, Lucile announced that she wanted to dance in Paris. However, Bournonville insisted that she make her stage debut in Copenhagen that same year and she became the toast of Denmark at fifteen.

After four years with the Royal Danish Ballet, Lucile had not given up her dream and requested a leave of absence to go to Paris to study. Bournonville promptly refused, but Lucile, who possessed a will of iron, decided to plead her case to Denmark's Princess Wilhelmina, who ultimately granted her permission to go. Unfortunately, not long after her arrival, she received instructions to return to Denmark to dance in a ballet being staged for Queen Marie Sophie's 70th birthday. Lucile was infuriated that she had to return to Copenhagen, and the discord between herself and Bournonville became extremely intensified. Claiming that Bournonville was dictatorial, cruel, and possessive, she once again sought to leave Denmark temporarily, and

finally received permission from the King to go perform in Germany. After completing her scheduled tour in Germany, Lucile, ignoring numerous summonses from Bournonville to return to Copenhagen, went to Paris. In June of 1838, she was granted a permanent dismissal from the Royal Danish Ballet without a pension and Lucile never returned to Denmark.

During a three-year engagement with the Paris Opera, Lucile won critical acclaim for her performance in *La Sylphide*; a role she was asked to dance when Fanny Elssler became ill and was unable to perform. Unfortunately, when Lucile injured her knee in 1840, her career at the Paris Opera ended prematurely and she did not dance again until 1843. After three long years, she stepped back onto the stage in St Petersburg, Russia for her debut in *Giselle*, which marked the beginning of her international career. By 1845, Lucile was twenty-six, had performed in all the major cities of Europe, and was at the peak of her career when she *was* invited by Jules Perrot to dance in *Pas de Quatre* with Taglioni, Grisi, and Cerrito. Lucile, the youngest of the four ballerinas, was renowned for her precise pointe work, crisp and quick Petite Allegro, and charming acting ability. Perrot, in crafting each solo variation to specifically exhibit each ballerina's technical prowess, inserted a Batterie of Entrechat Quatres at the end of her variation to display the intricate and lively footwork that set Lucile apart from the others.

Now a stellar ballerina, who could perform in any theatre of her choice, Lucile left Paris to live and work in Germany. By 1856, at the age of 37, she retired from the stage and married Friedrich Young, who was enjoying a very successful career as an opera tenor in Munich. Tragically, after only seven years of marriage, Young fell from a stage platform, injured his spine and became paralyzed. He was confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life and chose to reside in an institution of care rather than burden his wife. Lucile, realizing she must now support her husband, accepted a position at the Munich Hoftheatre and began to teach and choreograph. She not only managed to support her husband until his death in 1884, but was able to amass a large estate as well.

In the latter part of her life, Lucile discovered a new career as a teacher and a choreographer, and relished the longstanding tradition of the ballet, which passes the dance from "foot to foot." She also realized that young artists require financial support, and so she arranged that upon her death all of her estate would be bequeathed to the city of Munich, and was to specifically be distributed for the support of talented young artists. Lucile spent the rest of her life in Munich and was very highly revered throughout the city, not only for her celebrity as one of the world's greatest ballerinas, but for her great generosity as well. In Lucile Grahn's honor, Munich named a street after her — *Lucile Grahn Strasse*. She died on April 4th in 1907 at the age of eighty-eight.

CARLOTTA GRISI



Carlotta Grisi, christened Caronna Adela Giuseppina Maria Grisi, was born on June 28th, 1819 in Visinada, Istria, Austrian Empire or present day Vizinada, Croatia to Maria Boschetti and Vincenzo Grisi. The Grisi family was filled with opera singers including Carlotta's sister, aunt, uncle and two cousins. It was said Carlotta had a beautiful operatic voice as well, but she chose to dance. At the age of seven, she was enrolled in the famous La Scala Ballet School in Milan to study with Claude Guillet. However only seven years later, she left La Scala to accompany her sister, Ernestina, on an opera company tour throughout Italy.

When the opera company arrived in Naples, Carlotta met the famous Jules Perrot. He would become one of the most important influences of her career, not only as her ballet master and choreographer, but also as her lover. At the time of their meeting, Perrot was working for Paris Opera and was romantically involved with Marie Taglioni. However, he left Taglioni shortly after meeting Carlotta, quickly christened her his next protegee and brought her to Paris

to live with him. Despite the fact that Carlotta assumed the name Madame Perrot and danced in Paris under that name, there is no record of a formal marriage between them. In 1837, Carlotta gave birth to Jules Perrot's daughter, Marie-Julie, and one year later, Perrot resigned from the Paris Opera and the two began touring Europe dancing together.

After four years of touring, Carlotta once again became engaged at the Paris Opera and began rehearsing for the premiere of *Giselle* in 1841. Although Perrot had choreographed all of Carlotta's solos for *Giselle*, Jean Coralli was given credit for the choreography. Why would such a blatant oversight occur? Speculation implies that Theophile Gautier, who had written the scenario of *Giselle* specifically for Carlotta with whom he was deeply in love, had finally captured the ballerina's romantic interest and she decided to leave her common law husband. In his anger, Perrot created a dreadful backstage scene that drew an overabundance of undesirable publicity related to the upcoming premiere, and consequently was shunned. *Giselle* premiered on Carlotta's twenty-second birthday and was a rousing success. Having been particularly designed for this young ballerina, the premiere of *Giselle* immediately established Carlotta as the successor of the great Marie Taglioni, and she remained the undisputed principal ballerina of the Paris Opera until 1849.

Throughout the 1840s, Carlotta was appearing regularly in London, and so enthusiastically accepted the invitation from Benjamin Lumley to dance the *Par de Qualm* with Taglioni, Cerrito, and Gratin. Carlotta's dancing had a coquettish style and she was an excellent actress with a talent for expressive versatility. With these theatrical talents, coupled with her stunning red hair and violet eyes, she always effortlessly captivated audiences. As a ballerina, she had strong technique that was at the same time supple and light, and could dance effortlessly on pointe for an extraordinarily long amount of time. While Taglioni is credited with being the first ballerina to dance *Sur Les Pointes*, Carlotta is credited with being the first ballerina to dance on a pointe shoe that contained an actual block in the tip of the toe. Carlotta was also very famous for "hazardous dancing feats" such as her flying Grand Jete and speedy Pirouette en Manage around the stage. A review in *The Times of London* described her as "supported by air alone," and as "a dove's feather drifting downward, rather than a human being leaping from a platform." For Carlotta's solo variation in *Pas de Quatre*, Perrot choreographed a series of traveling Fouettes to be executed on the diagonal to feature the ballerina's technical strength and agility.

In 1850 Perrot accepted the position of ballet master at the Imperial Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia where he remained until 1858. While in Russia, Perrot married a student at the Imperial Theatre School with whom he had two children. Carlotta decided to follow Perrot to Russia, not for romantic reasons but rather to benefit her career, which indeed it did. She became a celebrated ballerina at the Imperial Theatre, *where* she unknowingly spent the remainder of her career. Carlotta left Russia in 1854 moving to Warsaw, Poland with the intention of continuing her career, but her plans drastically changed when she became romantically involved with Prince Leon Radziwill of Poland, who had admired her from afar for many years. He persuaded Carlotta to retire from the ballet at the height of her fame, and shortly thereafter Carlotta gave birth to her second child, Leontine Grisi. So, at the age of thirty-four, Carlotta settled in Saint-Jean, Geneva, Switzerland at the Villa Grisi to spend the next forty-six years of her life in peaceful retirement. Carlotta died on May 20th in 1899 one month before her eightieth birthday, unmounted by the thousands who had once adored her.

FANNY CERRITO



Francesca Teresa Giuseppa Raffaella Cerrito was born on May 11, 1817 in Naples, Italy to Raffaele Cerrito and Marianna D'Alife. Although it was always Francesca's wish to dance, she was a short plump child who showed little talent for Classical Ballet. Nevertheless, she was enrolled in the Ballet School of San Carlo Opera House and was placed under the tutelage of Salvatore Taglioni, Marie Taglioni's uncle. Francesca worked so very hard on her technique and physical appearance that by the time she was fifteen, she achieved the rank of a solo dancer. With Francesca's debut in July of 1832, she quickly established a reputation as a stellar ballerina in Italy. Afterward she began touring through Italy and Austria, and while in Vienna her name was changed from Francesca to Fanny by Viennese audiences. Also, while touring, Fanny arranged some of her own dances and revealed that she possessed choreographic talent as well.

Although an established ballerina, Fanny continued her studies with the renowned Carlo Blasis, whose precepts influence the teaching of classical ballet to this day. Blasis is credited with fashioning Fanny into the principal ballerina of La Scala by 1838. Fanny began to attract the attention of all of Europe, and both the directors of the Paris Opera and Her Majesty's Theatre in London hurried to engage her. Fanny chose to dance in London debuting on May 2nd of

1840. For the following nine successive seasons until 1848, Fanny was the acclaimed ballerina of Her Majesty's Theatre. Even London's most celebrated chef, Alexis Soyer, created a molded dessert topped with a miniature figure of Fanny herself, weightlessly poised on a spun sugar zigzag spiral. London society had taken her to their hearts and Fanny became an instant success not only for her dancing, but also for her opulent figure. Waiflike slimness was not always de rigueur for ballerinas, and in the 19th century, they were admired for their ample bosoms, wide hips, and sturdy legs.

The year 1845 proved to be very important for Fanny. Perrot had been engaged to choreograph the stellar *Pas de Quatre* in London, and naturally being the prima ballerina of Her Majesty's Theatre, Fanny was invited to dance alongside Taglioni, Grisi, and Grahn. Fanny was noted for her ebullient stage personality, but also for a technique that was mesmerizingly precise. She was critically acclaimed for her lyrical flowing waltzes and spectacular Grand jetes, which Perrot included in her solo variation. Interestingly, Fanny was the only ballerina of the four in *Pas de Quatre* who did not wear a rose garland in her hair, but instead a single rose behind her ear. It was rumored Fanny and Perrot were romantically involved throughout the choreographic process, and that she wished to be distinguished as the choreographer's favorite. That same year, for the first time, Fanny was recognized as a choreographer of significant talent when she presented her own ballet, *Rosida*. Finally, Arthur Saint-Leon, a dancer noble, who had become Fanny's regular Pas de Deux partner, became her husband in 1845. Neither their marital or professional unions lasted more than six years, and Fanny and Arthur separated in 1851 when Fanny became romantically involved with the Spanish Marques de Bedmar. In 1853, at the age of thirty-six, Fanny had her first and only child, Mathilde, whose father, the Marques de Bedmar, continued to be devoted and generous to her even after his affair with Fanny had ended.

Motherhood did not prompt Fanny to retire, and she returned to Paris Opera where she both danced and choreographed until her departure for St. Petersburg, Russia in 1855. Upon her arrival, Perrot, who was residing choreographer at the Imperial Theatre, choreographed *Armida* specifically for Fanny. During one of her performances of Perrot's new major ballet, Fanny was struck by a falling piece of burning scenery, but fortunately suffered no great injury. It was this nearly catastrophic event that precipitated her decision to retire in 1857. Although she remained active in the ballet world for another half century, she retired from the stage and lived the rest of her life in Paris where she raised her daughter. Fanny died in Paris on May 6th in 1909 a week shy of her ninety-second birthday. She had been one of the few women in the 19th century to achieve distinction as a choreographer.

MARIE TAGLIONI



Marie Taglioni was born on April 23rd in 1804 in Stockholm, Sweden. Her Italian father Filippo Taglioni, was a ballet dancer noble, ballet master, and choreographer, and her Swedish mother, Sophie Karsten, was a ballerina. While his family moved to Paris, where Marie began her study of Classical Ballet under Jean-Francois Coulon at the age of six, Filippo moved to Vienna to assume the position of ballet master at the Theatre am Kärtnertor also known as the Imperial and Royal Court Theatre of Vienna.

As a pupil Marie was soon discarded by Coulon because of her hunchback, overly long arms and legs, and very plain elongated face. In his *Memoirs*, the Director of the Paris Opera, Louis Vernon quotes Coulon as referring to Marie as "la petite bossue" saying, "When will that little hunchback ever learn to dance!" Marie, now labeled as the "Ugly Duckling" and rejected by her ballet master, would never have been a ballerina, if it had not been for her father. Letters from his wife concerning Marie's dreadful situation in Paris inspired Filippo to personally undertake the responsibility for Marie's training, and he requested that Marie move to Vienna immediately.

Filippo's intense desire for his only daughter to become a great ballerina was foremost, and upon her arrival in Vienna he sequestered her in an apartment some distance from the theatre hiding her from the world until she was prepared for her debut. For one year, he trained Marie privately and created a rigorous schedule for her that was composed of two hours of Adagio, two hours of Petite Allegro, and two hours of Balance sustaining each Pas for 100 counts.

Marie practiced for six consecutive hours every single day working to disguise her physical limitations with exemplary technique. In order to compensate for Marie's rounded back that caused her to lean forward and slightly distorted her proportions, Filippo even created signature Poses and Port de Bras for her, which have come to epitomize Romantic Ballet. He was very strict with Marie offering no sympathy for her aches and pains, as he shaped her into a ballerina with a supreme command of Balance and Ballon coupled with a light and delicate ethereal style. Indeed, Marie became famous for her ethereal style as is described as having curved arms overhead framing the face, a forward leaning torso, legs in Fourth Position on pointe, and the shoulder slightly tilted in Efface with the forefinger under the chin.

Finally, Filippo decided that Marie, now at the age of twenty-three, was prepared to dance on stage and *he* brought her to the Paris Opera where she made her debut in 1827. In one year, he had transformed Marie from "Bossue to Ballerina" Her debut performance *was* considered to be so sensational that both she and her father were immediately offered a contract at the Paris Opera for the following six years. Marie had Paris, London, Milan, Vienna, Berlin, and St Petersburg at her feet all hailing her as one of the greatest ballet dancers who had ever graced the stage. Despite all this notoriety, her absolute rise to fame came on the 12th of March in 1832 with the triumphant premiere of *La Sylphide*, a ballet choreographed by her father. That evening, Marie's performance made her the most celebrated ballerina of the day and the first star of the Romantic Era. She was the first to dance an entire choreography on pointe, and thereby created a new style marked by long balanced Arabesques on pointe and floating Grand Jetes. Marie performed in Paris for the next ten years, becoming famous not only for her legendary grace in the supernatural story ballets of the Romantic Era, but also for her excellent character dancing.

Marie became the rage of Europe and her influence was not only relevant in the theatrical world, but was also reflected in the fashions, music, and practices of the day. Young women, wanting to emulate the image of the ethereal sylph, began drinking vinegar mixed with water to make them look pale. Most ladies began donning Marie's hairstyle, and every little girl wanted their very own *La Sylphide* doll. A great variety of items all throughout Europe were named after Marie Taglioni. In England, it was the London to Windsor Stagecoach, and in Russia it was Taglioni Caramels and Cakes. In fact, during the apex of Marie's career in Russia, from 1837 to 1842, a pair of her pointe shoes was reportedly sold, cooked, served with sauce, and eaten by fanatical balletomanes. In 1856, the Austrian composer Johann Strauss II wrote the *Marie Taglioni Polka* (Op. 173) in her honor. He incorporated all the music of the most famous ballets in which she had danced.

Although Marie's professional life was abundantly fulfilled, her personal life was an unhappy one. In 1832, Marie married Count Auguste Gilbert de Voisins. Unfortunately, the Count did not approve of her frequent travels and asked Marie to give up her ballet career, which she refused to do. After

only four years the marriage ended, and Marie began a romantic liaison with Eugene Desmares, a loyal fan who had defended her honor in a duel. In 1836, Marie gave birth to her first child with Desmares, but before they could marry, he *died* in a hunting accident. Six years later Marie gave birth to her second child, and claimed on the birth certificate that the father was Count Auguste Gilbert de Voisins. However, history has determined that Marie and the Count had been estranged since their divorce and that the real father remained unknown.

In 1845, Marie was invited to perform the *Pas de Quatre* in London at Her Majesty's Theatre. Since Marie was the eldest of the four ballerinas and the most revered, it was determined that she would wear a pearl necklace and a pearl bracelet on each wrist to denote that she was the superior ballerina of the four. In his choreography of Marie's solo variation, Perrot highlighted Marie's virtuoso technique for which she was so beloved. Marie's long sustained Balances, dazzling Petite Allegro, and airy Grand Jets set the standard for all ballerinas for decades to come, and they sought to emulate her grace and delicacy, which in turn required tremendous strength and discipline.

The *Pas de Quatre* was one of the final episodes of Marie's career, and she retired from performing in 1847. Marie retired and moved to Palazzo Santa Sofia on the Grand Canal in Venice. Throughout her career, Marie had amassed a fortune. However, as Filippo grew older, he became very eccentric and squandered all of her riches on unwise speculations leaving her bankrupt. By 1858, Marie was forced from retirement and moved to Paris to begin working as Inspectrice de la Danse at the Paris Opera Ballet. She became the guiding spirit of the professional restructuring of the Paris Opera Ballet. During that time, she choreographed her only ballet, *Le Papillon*, in 1860 for her student Emma Livry, whom she saw engulfed in flames during a rehearsal.

During the Prussian War of 1870, Marie's financial situation became worse and so she moved to London *where* she taught social dance to children and society ladies. By 1880, Marie moved to Marseilles *where* she died on April 22nd in 1884, the day before her eightieth birthday. Alberic Second, a 19th century historian, journalist, novelist, and playwright, wrote about Marie Taglioni's career saying, "That a dancer, thirty years ago, should have been able to bring about a revolution in the art of dancing *which is* still effective, is in itself, astonishing. That this dancer, this great revolutionary, should have been an ill-made woman, almost hump-backed, without beauty and without any of those striking exterior advantages that command success, amounts to a miracle. The art of other dancers is learned like a trade, that of Mlle. Taglioni springs from nature."

NOTA BENE

It is important to note that the pointe shoe Marie wore had no similarities to the modern pointe shoe at all. She had developed the strength in her feet to balance on pointe in a soft-toed ballet slipper that had been darned at the tip.



Marie Taglioni's Pointe Shoes