

Daniel-François-Esprit Auber:  
*Zanetta*



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*Zanetta*

Edited and Introduced by

Robert Ignatius Letellier

**CAMBRIDGE  
SCHOLARS**  

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**P U B L I S H I N G**

Daniel-François-Esprit Auber: *Zanetta*,  
Edited and Introduced by Robert Ignatius Letellier

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D.F.E. Auber (1845). Lithograph by Lafosse



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## INTRODUCTION

*Zanetta*, an *opéra-comique* in three acts with libretto by Eugène Scribe and Jules Henri Vernoy de Saint-Georges, was first performed at the Opéra-Comique (Deuxième Salle Favart) on 18 May 1840. It is set in Naples in the early 1740s, and is the second of Auber's three Sicilian operas, along with *Actéon* and *Zerline*. The original subtitle 'ou [il ne faut pas] jouer avec le feu' was suppressed after several performances.

As act 1 opens King Charles VI is thinking that his favourite, the German nobleman Rodolphe, is too attentive to his sister Nisida. Nisida, in order to allay her brother's suspicions, conceives a plan in which Rodolphe will openly court Zanetta, the daughter of the royal gardener. The unsophisticated girl readily responds to Rodolphe's advances.

In act 2 Nisida becomes jealous of Zanetta and tries to hurt her by showing her one of Rodolphe's love letters. The simple girl cannot read German, and thinks it is his fulfilment of a promise to bring her father to the King's attention. Zanetta shows it to Baron Mathanasius, a councillor to the Elector of Bavaria, who immediately recognizes it as confirmation of a tryst scheduled for that evening. He orders an ambush to be laid for Rodolphe, when he comes to see Nisida. On his way to her, Rodolphe encounters the affectionate Zanetta and cruelly rebuffs her when she delays him.

In act 3 Rodolphe evades the guards by arriving for his rendezvous with Nisida by an unexpected route. Zanetta learns that Rodolphe has duped her, and her entrance, with her demonstration of love, convinces him that he has acted wrongly. The King and Mathanasius then confess that they had planned for Nisida to marry the Elector of Bavaria; this pleases her far more than a match with Rodolphe.

The libretto is confusing; instead of concentrating interest in two characters, the authors multiplied the number of intrigues. The music of this pleasant work is notable for the amount of vocal display (created for Mme Cinti-Damoreau) and the recurrent use of the waltz rhythm which dominates the finales of the first and third acts (cf *Fiorella* and *Haydée* as earlier and later works respectively with a similar emphasis; *La Sirène*, *Zerline* and *Rêve d'amour* also have good examples of choral waltzes).

The overture is very attractive, with its mysterious opening of descending triplets, and dancing common-time theme punctuated by overlapping downward spiralling woodwind figures. Auber, like so many 19<sup>th</sup>-century composers, had a particular love of the waltz, with *Zanetta* singled out as the work in which this rhythm predominates. Act 1 contains a lovely *sicilienne* for Nisida ("Plus doucement l'onde fuit"), and a trio for Rodolphe, the King and Nisida ("Oui, si vous daignez m'approuver"). The song about the gardener demonstrates how Auber's melody often oscillates around the tonic of the tonality ("Voici la jardinière" act 1), and also provides an extreme instance of the chromatic seasoning Auber employed in many of his conjunct melodies.

Mmes Damoreau and Rossi were applauded for the duet in act 2 ("Contre l'hymen qu'ordonne"), which is followed by the 6/8 ballade "Sur les rivages de Catane". The galop "L'on me trompe, l'on m'abuse" shows Offenbach's debt to Auber in the development of the can-can. Act 3 has a cavatina for the Princess ("Pendant toute la nuit"), and the remarkable moment of reflection for Zanetta ("Adieu mes fleurs

chéries"). All three duets are very expressive.

The original cast consisted of: Joseph-Antoine-Charles Couderc (Rodolphe); Laure Cinti-Damoreau (Zanetta); Mme Rossi (Nisida); Ernest Mocker (Charles VI); Honoré Grignon (Baron Mathanasius); Charles-Louis Sainte-Foy and Emon (Dionigi and Ruggieri, gentlemen of the court); and Haussard (chamberlain to the baron). The work was in the repertoire 1840-41, with a total of 35 performances. It was translated into German and Danish, and produced in Amsterdam, Prague, Hamburg, Copenhagen, Brussels and London. Richard Wagner arranged the piano reduction of the score during his youthful sojourn in Paris.



Zanetta carrying her basket of flowers. Woodcut from Scribe's Works

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## PERSONNAGES.

*Soprani.*

NISIDA.

ZANETTA.

~~~~~

~~~~~

*Tenors.*

LE ROI CHARLES.

RODOLPHE DE MONTMART.

RUGGIERI.

DIONIGI.

*Basses.*

MATHANASIUS de VANDERDOEF.

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

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OUVERTURE.

(● = i26)

*Allegretto.*

*P.*

 $f$ 

8<sup>th</sup> of July.

*p*

1

2

This page of musical notation, likely for piano, consists of six systems of staves. The notation is complex, featuring numerous triplets, sixteenth notes, and dynamic markings such as *p* (piano) and *f* (forte). The piece is in a key with one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and a 2/4 time signature. The notation includes various musical symbols such as slurs, ties, and accents, indicating a highly technical and expressive composition. The first system begins with a piano (*p*) marking and features a triplet in the right hand. The subsequent systems show a variety of rhythmic patterns and dynamic contrasts, with the final system ending with a forte (*f*) marking.

*p*

*Allegro moderato. (♩=92)*

*dolce.*

Plus facile.

CE SC 2

*f*

*dolce.*

The image displays a page of musical notation for piano, consisting of six systems of staves. Each system typically includes a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a single bass staff. The notation is in 3/4 time and features various musical elements such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The first system is marked "Plus facile." and the second system is marked "CE SC 2". The third system features a forte dynamic marking (*f*). The fourth system is marked "dolce." and the fifth system is marked "f". The sixth system is marked "f". The notation is in 3/4 time and features various musical elements such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

The musical score is written for piano and consists of six systems of grand staves. The notation includes a variety of musical elements such as chords, melodic lines, and rhythmic patterns. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The piece concludes with a final cadence in the last system.

Dynamic markings include *p* (piano) and *dolce* (dolce).

This page of musical notation, likely for piano, consists of seven systems of staves. Each system typically contains a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a single bass staff. The music is characterized by dense, rhythmic patterns, often featuring sixteenth and thirty-second notes. Dynamic markings such as *f* (forte) and *ff* (fortissimo) are present throughout the piece. The notation includes various musical symbols such as beams, slurs, and accents, indicating complex rhythmic structures and phrasing. The overall style is typical of 19th-century French piano music, emphasizing technical virtuosity and intricate harmonic textures.



This page of musical notation, titled "Zanetta" and numbered "11", contains eight systems of piano music. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The music is written in a style that suggests a 19th-century composition, with frequent use of sixteenth and thirty-second notes, often beamed together in rapid passages. The first system shows a complex texture with many sixteenth notes in both hands. The second system includes a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) and a fermata over a measure in the right hand. The third system continues the intricate melodic and harmonic development. The fourth system features a *dolce.* (dolce) marking, indicating a change in the character of the music to be more tender or sweet. The fifth system shows a continuation of the rapid passages, with some measures featuring triplets. The sixth system has a more melodic focus in the right hand, with the left hand providing harmonic support. The seventh system returns to a more complex, textured passage. The eighth system concludes the page with a final, somewhat simpler melodic line in the right hand and a sustained harmonic base in the left hand. The notation is clear and well-organized, typical of a professional musical score.



*p*

*tr*

*tr*

*tr*

*tr*

*Cresc.*

*f*



# N<sup>o</sup> 1. INTRODUCTION.

Allegretto. (♩. = 60)

**RODOLPHE.**  Pourquoi s'attrister sur les

**MATHANASIJS.**  Pourquoi s'attrister sur les

**1<sup>er</sup> Tenor.**  Pourquoi s'attrister sur les

**2<sup>d</sup> Tenor.**  Pourquoi s'attrister sur les

**Basse.**  Pourquoi s'attrister sur les

**PIANO.** 

**R.**  maux de la vi\_e à ta ble messieurs gaiment on les oubli\_e et jusques aux bords quand ma

**M.**  maux de la vi\_e à ta ble messieurs gaiment on les oubli\_e et jusques aux bords quand ma

**1<sup>er</sup> T.**  maux de la vi\_e à ta ble messieurs gaiment on les oubli\_e et jusques aux bords quand ma

**2<sup>d</sup> T.**  maux de la vi\_e à ta ble messieurs gaiment on les oubli\_e et jusques aux bords quand ma

**B.**  maux de la vi\_e à ta ble messieurs gaiment on les oubli\_e et jusques aux bords quand ma

**PIANO.** 

13

**RODOLPHE** avec le 1.<sup>r</sup> Tenor.

R.  
1.<sup>r</sup> T. coupe est remplie je ris je bénis le vin qui fait fuir soudain le chagrin lorsque votre ami vous sup-

2.<sup>e</sup> T. coupe est remplie je ris je bénis le vin qui fait fuir soudain le chagrin lorsque votre ami vous sup-

**MATHANASIOS** avec les Basses.

M.  
B. coupe est remplie je ris je bénis le vin qui fait fuir soudain le chagrin lorsque votre ami vous sup-

R.  
1.<sup>r</sup> T. plante à la Cour ou quand votre belle a tra-hi votre amour buvez car le vin qui sé-

2.<sup>e</sup> T. plante à la Cour ou quand votre belle a tra-hi votre amour buvez car le vin qui sé-

M.  
B. plante à la Cour ou quand votre belle a tra-hi votre amour buvez car le vin qui sé-

R.  
1.<sup>r</sup> T. duit nos esprits fait croire aux amours aussi bien qu'aux amis pourquoi s'attrister sur les

2.<sup>e</sup> T. duit nos esprits fait croire aux amours aussi bien qu'aux amis pourquoi s'attrister sur les

M.  
B. duit nos esprits fait croire aux amours aussi bien qu'aux amis pourquoi s'attrister sur les

The image displays a musical score for three voices (R., 1<sup>re</sup> T., 2<sup>me</sup> T.) and piano (M., B.). The score is written in French and consists of three systems of staves. The lyrics are: "maux de la vi - e a ta - ble messieurs gaument on les oubli - e et jusques aux bords quand ma coupe est rempli - e je ris je benis le vin qui fait fuir soudain le chagrin et jus - ques aux bords quand ma coupe est remplie je benis le vin qui fait fuir le chagrin et". The piano accompaniment is written in treble and bass clefs, featuring chords and melodic lines that support the vocal parts. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

R.  
1<sup>re</sup> T.  
2<sup>me</sup> T.  
M.  
B.

maux de la vi - e a ta - ble messieurs gaument on les oubli - e et jusques aux bords quand ma  
maux de la vi - e a ta - ble messieurs gaument on les oubli - e et jusques aux bords quand ma  
maux de la vi - e a ta - ble messieurs gaument on les oubli - e et jusques aux bords quand ma

coupe est rempli - e je ris je benis le vin qui fait fuir soudain le chagrin et jus - ques aux  
coupe est rempli - e je ris je benis le vin qui fait fuir soudain le chagrin et jus - ques aux  
coupe est rempli - e je ris je benis le vin qui fait fuir soudain le chagrin et jus - ques aux

bords quand ma coupe est remplie je benis le vin qui fait fuir le chagrin et  
bords quand ma coupe est remplie je benis le vin qui fait fuir le chagrin et  
bords quand ma coupe est remplie je benis le vin qui fait fuir le chagrin et



The musical score is arranged for three voices (R. 1.T., 2.T., M.B.) and piano. The lyrics are in French and describe a scene where a glass is filled with wine, which is then drunk to alleviate sorrow (chagrin). The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, often with triplets, and a steady bass line.

**First System:**

R. 1.T. jus- - \_ques aux bords quand ma coupe est rem - plie je bénis le vin qui fait fuir le cha-  
2.T. jus- - \_ques aux bords quand ma coupe est rem - plie je bénis le vin qui fait fuir le cha-  
M. B. jus- - \_ques aux bords quand ma coupe est rem - plie je bénis le vin qui fait fuir le cha-

**Second System:**

R. 1.T. - grin je bénis le vin qui fait fuir le cha - grin je bé - nis je bé - nis le  
2.T. - grin je bénis le vin qui fait fuir le cha - grin je bé - nis je bé - nis le  
M. B. - grin je bénis le vin qui fait fuir le cha - grin je bé - nis je bé - nis le

**Third System:**

R. 1.T. vin qui fait fuir le cha - grin  
2.T. vin qui fait fuir le cha - grin  
M. B. vin qui fait fuir le cha - grin

The piano accompaniment continues throughout, providing a harmonic and rhythmic foundation for the vocal lines.



# N<sup>o</sup> 1 bis.

## CHŒUR.

Allegretto.

**RODOLPHE.** Bu-sons mes amis bu-sons à l'inconnu, e qu'un sort fortuné la pré-

**MATHANASIUS.** Bu-sons mes amis bu-sons à l'inconnu, e qu'un sort fortuné la pré-

**1<sup>er</sup> Tenor.** Bu-sons mes amis bu-sons à l'inconnu, e qu'un sort fortuné la pré-

**2<sup>d</sup> Tenor.** Bu-sons mes amis bu-sons à l'inconnu, e qu'un sort fortuné la pré-

**Basse.** Bu-sons mes amis bu-sons à l'inconnu, e qu'un sort fortuné la pré-

**PIANO.** *p*

**R.** - sente à nos yeux cha-cun va peut être alors qu'il l'aura vu, e brû-ler comme lui d'un feu mystérieux

**M.** - sente à nos yeux cha-cun va peut être alors qu'il l'aura vu, e brû-ler comme lui d'un feu mystérieux

**1<sup>er</sup> T.** - sente à nos yeux cha-cun va peut être alors qu'il l'aura vu, e brû-ler comme lui d'un feu mystérieux

**2<sup>d</sup> T.** - sente à nos yeux cha-cun va peut être alors qu'il l'aura vu, e brû-ler comme lui d'un feu mystérieux

**B.** - sente à nos yeux cha-cun va peut être alors qu'il l'aura vu, e brû-ler comme lui d'un feu mystérieux

