

## 1514. Moulin Rouge

### Backgrounds Of S. Radic

**Moulin Rouge** is a 1952 biographical film by the American director John Huston about the life of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. The screenplay of the film is based on the French writer's novel of the same name, which was published two years earlier. The Swiss title is *A Song from Paris*.

**Paris in 1890.** Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec is sitting in the Parisian variety show *Moulin Rouge* and sketching the dancers. The operator of the amusement park is fascinated by the sketches and suggests that the artist design an advertising poster for the *Moulin Rouge* in return for a month's worth of free drinks. At curfew and as the last guest, Henri leaves, and his small stature becomes visible for the first time in the film. On the way home, he reminisces about his youth (flashbacks tell us about his noble lineage and about falling down the stairs in his parents' castle, where he broke both his legs). The poor healing of the fractures is the reason for the short stature and forces Henri to spend a lot of time sitting down. He uses the time by painting motifs from his surroundings. A few years later he is seen holding the hand of a childhood friend, but he is sharply rejected with reference to his appearance. This disappointment marks the young man and, convinced that he will never find a woman who could love him, he decides to return to Paris.

**Paris in 1900.** The action jumps to the year 1900: Henri meets Myriamme, who proves to be a great admirer of his paintings. The two spend a lot of time together. When Myriamme tells him that she has received a marriage proposal from an admirer, he reacts coldly and snippy, repeatedly suggesting that true love cannot exist. Nevertheless, it becomes clear that he himself is in love with Myriamme. However, Myriamme does not see this, and so she writes the artist a letter in which she tells him that she has accepted the marriage proposal. Henri storms to her apartment, but is informed that she has moved without leaving an address. Deep down, Henri drinks more and more, eventually collapsing on the floor of a pub. On his deathbed, the dancers of the *Moulin Rouge* appear again and he dies with a smile on his face.



**Criticism.** "The story is set in Paris shortly before the turn of the century, depicted in a kaleidoscope-like manner, as sentimentally as it is dramatically portrayed. John Huston makes an important and remarkable attempt to consciously use color dramaturgy - he shapes the world of the painter in his own forms and colors and makes them the stylistic principle of the film." – Encyclopedia of International Film

**Awards.** The film received two Oscars: for best production design, for which Marcel Vértès and Paul Sheriff were responsible, and for best costume design (also by Marcel Vértès). He was nominated for five other Oscars: Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor, Best Supporting Actress and Best Editing.



*Slow Waltz, T=85*

The musical score is arranged in a multi-staff format. From top to bottom, the staves are: Bells (treble clef, 3/4 time), Piano (grand staff, 3/4 time), Strings (bass clef, 3/4 time, marked 'A Advanced'), Guitar (bass clef, 3/4 time), Bass (bass clef, 3/4 time), Perc. (bass clef, 3/4 time, marked 'Toms'), and Drums (bass clef, 3/4 time, marked 'Ride HH-sticked', 'BD', and 'Rimshot'). The score is divided into two measures. On the right side of the score, there are two vertical arrows pointing upwards, labeled 'Main 1' and 'Main 2'.

**Programming instruction**

*A "Standard Slow Waltz" could also do its job here - but this is an "extended" James Last version. The basic style is the combination of the parts under "A", with strings as the advanced part. "B+C" could then be the first piano extension - perhaps initially only with the piano bass ("B") and then treble (piano right hand) as "C". Under "D" the "full drone" is announced, the bells break down the basic chord into eighths, up and down! In the drums area, a relatively unusual rhythm orientation in 3/4 time sounds, which has hardly anything to do with "waltz" - except for the time signature. The typical waltz follow-up on 2-3 is completely missing, instead there is a mix of rimshot (snare edge) on the 2 and a BD on the 3, or in the second program bar then delayed by an eighth-note rest. Admittedly, this drum kit is one of my creations - because the JL original is barely audible - partly due to the full use of the JL strings in the well-known Mantovani mode! Have fun!*