



# The Romantic Ballet in Paris

*Ivor Guest*

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Stars of the romantic ballet, as well as the choreographers, composers, designers, and balletomanes of the time are brought to life in a colorful panorama of this great age of French ballet. The age of romanticism in the first half of the nineteenth century was one of the greatest periods in the history of ballet. In a span of three decades (1820 to 1847) ballet became what it had never been before a major theater art, gaining new vitality and meaning from the ideas of the romantic movement which rapidly infiltrated each one of its component parts: scenarios, music, décor, choreography and dance style.

The center of the romantic ballet was the Paris Opéra. Its high priest was the poet Théophile Gautier, who wrote the scenarios of Giselle and other ballets. He explained the dual nature of the romantic ballet by contrasting the two rival ballerinas, the spiritual Taglioni and the passionate Elssler.

This definitive study, completely revised and updated, handsomely produced and beautifully illustrated, is based on exhaustive research of the archives of the Paris Opéra and printed and pictorial sources of the time.

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