

(See the ridiculous article by Gaston Calmette in Figaro.) Igor Strawinsky gave his "Sacre du Printemps." Erik Satie already passed for mad. In the realm of the dance, we were forgetting Isadora Duncan, that nullity, in our astonishment over the darling of Valentine de Saint-Point who created "la Metachorie." I do not mean by this that the Muse-Pourpre, as this descendant of Lamartine loved to call himself, invented an entirely new choreography but I cannot deny that we felt a real pleasure in his attempts and experiments.

It was the famous epoch when Paris revelled in the ridiculous. Cardinal Amette, an archbishop, condemned the tango in the name of the church. As a reprisal Eve Lavallière played in a travesty of this name. Gaby Deslys turned things topsy turvy. Henry Bataille undressed Yvonne de Bray in "Phalène." Madame Caillaux killed Monsieur Calmette. De Max played the "Salomé" of Oscar Wilde. Picasso created cubism. Sarah Bernhardt was not yet dead nor had she lost a leg.

Since my pen writes this name, I must say exactly what I think of this tragedienne whose death is deplored by all the world, whose every visit to America was received with incredible enthusiasm. Sarah, against every novelty, was up to her last hour the principal pivot of a delayed fashion. Actors and actresses had their eyes fixed upon her alone and as she, for eighty years, had sung her verse and wept her prose, so all the actors and actresses sang their verse and wept their prose. It can be said that a whole generation limped behind this cripple.

Is it not so, Blanche Dufrêne, you whom I loved and who were found hanged in your dressing-room? Is it not so, Moreno? Jean Vonnell?

On the contrary, the only tragedian who owes nothing to anyone, who searches, feels, composes his text, knows neither fame nor success. . . . I refer to Édouard de Max. It is true that the legend which surrounds him discredits him. I am his friend; I know his home with its burning incense, his old servant, his sumptuous pyjamas, his silk shirts, his mocking spirit, his rings, his melancholy, his bracelets, the depth of his eyes. All this does not prevent me from repeating that he is the only actor, a hundred cubits above a Mounet-Sully or a Gémier.