

Henri Tomasi and Radio: a protean Musician on the Waves

Christophe Bennet

► **To cite this version:**

Christophe Bennet. Henri Tomasi and Radio: a protean Musician on the Waves. 2015. <halshs-01146551>

HAL Id: halshs-01146551

<https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-01146551>

Submitted on 28 Apr 2015

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

HENRI TOMASI AND RADIO: A PROTEAN MUSICIAN ON THE WAVES

by Christophe BENNET

Between the ages of 30 and 45, i.e. at the beginning of his musical maturity, Henri Tomasi devoted his professional life to radio. A written version of a paper proposed at the “Henri Tomasi et la Méditerranée” (Henri Tomasi and the Mediterranean) symposium held in Marseille in September 2013, this article will notably show that his position as orchestra conductor and musical manager at Radio-Colonial, then at Radio-Paris, was a genuine “springboard” for the composer. The gathering of a wide sampling of musical programs and broadcasting press articles of the thirties enables us to highlight an unknown aspect of this musician, especially in his relation with the emerging media. At first, we are going to see how this experience already underlines his humanist involvement by confronting the expression of his conceptions of the medium with the way his work was welcomed by the broadcasting protagonists. Secondly, the eclecticism of his production and his opening to exoticism are going to be verified through Tomasi’s different appearances on the waves, either as a composer or as a conductor. Finally, a survey of his very diverse broadcasted works is going to show how the medium reinforced his quality of “protean musician”, posted at a crossroad of numerous and complementary aesthetics.

Throughout the thirties, at the time when radio became a mass medium in France, the broadcasting of music was absorbing 60% of the whole programs¹. During the decade, while the medium was becoming more professional, its audience figures kept increasing. Though it only concerned a few thousands middle-class people or technicians at the dawn of the thirties², one Frenchman out of two was having access to the “magic waves” by the time of the Second World War³. At national and stations’ levels, managers were recruiting some of the greatest personalities of the artistic area, including well-established composers. Henri Tomasi himself started his broadcasting experience in January 1931 with the creation of “*Poste Colonial*” (1931-1935), a government station broadcasting on short waves that was created by Marshal Lyautey and inaugurated on May 6th 1931 within the frame of the Colonial Exhibition. A former broadcasting reporter with a long equatorial experience, Julien Maigret was the first manager. Beside the programs dedicated to the French expats in Asia, Africa and South America, he followed a quality policy as regards the other two other components of the programs: concerts and theatre, both broadcasted on a weekly basis. Conducted by Tomasi, the musical band of the station consisted of 35 musicians, but

¹ Cécile Méadel, *Histoire de la radio des années trente*, PhD in History, under Jean-Noël Jeanneney’s direction, Institut d’Études Politiques of Paris, 1992. This thesis was published under the title: *Histoire de la radio des années trente*, Paris, Anthropos / INA, 1994.

² René Duval, *Histoire institutionnelle de la radio en France*, PhD in “Sciences de l’information”, Université de Paris II, 1979, published the same year: *Histoire de la radio en France*, Paris, Alain Moreau. The author clearly shows how the distribution of this audience at an early stage: households that were capable of buying a set, and technical fans who assembled the components themselves.

³ Cécile Méadel, “*Programmes en masse, programmes de masse*”, in Régine Robin “*Masse et culture de masse dans les années trente*”, Paris, Les éditions ouvrières, 1991 p. 56. By adding those who avoided to pay the broadcasting tax to the mass of supposed listeners, Cécile Méadel put forward the hypothesis that more than 56% of the inhabitants were within reach of a TSF set at the end of the thirties.

remained flexible, from a quintet to the whole orchestra. In 1934, he was appointed by Georges Colin to Radio-Paris, where, until 1939, he was to conduct many concerts and for which he wrote more than thirty pieces. Therefore, it's not astonishing to find traces of his statements about a medium that was then still emerging, and also testimonies of his action⁴.

I – HENRI TOMASI AND THE RADIO OF THE THIRTIES

In the broadcasting press of the time⁵, one can actually find many traces of his presence in the stations, and also see that the prerogatives of a “station musician” sometimes went beyond his role of conductor. Those testimonies of the daily life of the stations prove Tomasi's entire involvement

1.1 AN INVOLVEMENT CORRESPONDING TO HIS CONVICTIONS

Obviously, we are going to describe Henri Tomasi's action as a conductor and a composer, but we can right away notice that he also collaborated to “*causeries musicales*” (musical lectures), a program format that was very popular during the thirties. Inspired by the “*Comité de propagande pour la rénovation et le développement de la musique*”, and broadcasted from the very beginning of the thirties on Radio-Paris, the “*Causeries avec audition de disques*” were a genuine model of the genre. Every week, with no fee to expect, celebrities would come to the studio and speak, bringing their knowledge “to the audience” by summarizing an issue and presenting it in a simple way. Among those lecturers one can find many composers: Louis Aubert, Pierre-Octave Ferroud, Jean Roger-Ducasse, Gustave Samazeuilh, Emile Vuillermoz, Stan Golestan, Maurice Emmanuel, and many others. While listening to those moving and rare sound archives⁶, one realizes that, independently of the proposed subject, the natural and ease in the articulation of the lecturers probably determined their audience's interest. In the matter of broadcasting, some great composers had a genuine narrative gift. In September 1936, when Henri Tomasi was hosting a program of Corsican folklore on Radio-Paris, the “listening notes” of the weekly “*Choisir*” were using glowing terms:

“Henri Tomasi, who was known as an excellent composer and orchestra conductor, hadn't told us that he also was a perfect narrator. His explanation suited every work performed by Miss Angelici perfectly well.”⁷

⁴ For an outlook of the relations between musicians and the radio of the interwar period, one can read: Christophe Bennet, *Musique et radio dans la France des années trente. La création d'un genre radiophonique*, a PhD thesis in History of Music and Musicology, held on June 13th 2007, under Michèle Alten's direction, Paris-Sorbonne, 2 volumes, 942 p. This thesis was published under the following references: “*La Musique à la Radio dans les années trente*”, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2010, 314 p.

⁵ Some newspapers remain visible at BnF and Inathèque de France: *Choisir*, *TSF programme*, *Le Petit Radio*, *Mon programme* et *Radio-Magazine*.

⁶ They can be consulted at Phonothèque de Radio France.

⁷ “*Choisir*” #210 of October 4th 1936, p. 2: “Notes d'écoute”.

By devoting a big part of the programs to classical music, the artistic departments of French stations were already welcoming well-known composers to let them express the multiple aspects of their art and knowledge. Beside giving them access to the microphone, their status as musicians also brought them backstage. Apart from the didactic programs that we mentioned earlier, a genre prevails during the whole decade: the vocal and instrumental recital. Born in the very first hours of the medium (owing to the difficulty to capture the sound of a band), the principle of a solo or a duet of fifteen minutes at the microphone finds its peak on Radio-Paris as early as 1936: anonymous artists perform short sequences of instrumental or vocal recital. On April 20th 1934, the daily *Comœdia* already stated:

“In the Paris area, two broadcasting juries have been set up. The first one, constituted by Mssrs. Inghelbrecht, Tomasi, and Jacques de la Presle, will be listening to singing or playing in front of the microphone of the government stations of the capital.”⁸

Désiré-Emile Inghelbrecht’s presence new to Henri Tomasi’s is not surprising. The founder of the very young *Orchestre National* (born in 1933), was entrusted by Minister Jean Mistler with nothing less than “the monitoring of the programs of Paris-PTT, with a right of inspection of Radio-Paris, and also the artistic management of federal programs.”⁹ As for composer Jacques de la Presle, whose works were then often broadcasted on waves, he had been the artistic manager of Radio-Paris for many years.¹⁰

Obviously, Tomasi’s action as a musician devoted to a Radio in its youth is not an exceptional case. At the very beginning of the thirties, Henri Büsser was appointed manager of the musical programs of Radio-Paris; Victor Charpentier, who was the artistic manager of the first hours, was entrusted in 1933 with the artistic management of Paris-PTT, and also the role of deputy chairman of the Board of the General Society of the TSF listeners; Gustave Charpentier succeeded Paul Dukas in 1935 as member of the literary and artistic section of “*Conseil Supérieur de la radiodiffusion*” and Louis Aubert sat from 1927 onward on the Board of the Programs of Radio-Paris (a great private station bought by the Government in 1933).

Through their multiple responsibilities at the helm of the artistic departments of the stations, these musical protagonists were choice observers. They played an important role in the arguments about the stakes of the developing medium. Initiated by mediators (the columnists of the specialized press), these debates around the broadcasting of the thirties are fueled by the emitters, on the one hand, and the audience, on the other hand. A pessimistic view of a massive demand combined with a dwindling of sophisticated programs (educative-oriented) of the first hours especially opposed some of the programs makers. Besides, those who were denying the victory of a subculture upon a legitimate culture also refuted the

⁸ The second jury concerned dramatic art.

⁹ *TSF Programmes* n°202 of July 29th 1934, p. 45 “Quelques instants avec D.-E. Inghelbrecht” by Pierre Keszler.

¹⁰ Composer Jacques de la Presle was the artistic manager of Radio-Paris as of 1930, then as of until 1943, and “Inspecteur principal de l’enseignement musical” from 1945 to 1952. A composer of symphonic pieces, he is mainly recognized for his numerous melodies, always written in a meticulous and delicate style. His famous song *Chanson intime*, ten times mentioned in our computation, is often present in the concerts of “light and varied symphonic music”. One can see his whole catalogue at: http://www.musimem.com/La_Presle.htm (consultation of July 2013).

presumed fall of the “musical propaganda” of the programs makers¹¹. As for Tomasi, backed by his experience of several years at the “musical commands” of various Paris stations, he seems to have joined the category of the optimists. In 1938, he pleasantly recalls the musical awakening which the radio provided to people of a modest condition. Expressing himself in a survey called “*radio et culture*”¹² led by Pierre Descaves for *Radio-Magazine*, he describes an example of a successful cultural penetration:

*“Radio is inseparable from the spreading of the appetite for culture. The mind of the new generations will be more and more curious. For example: in an old Corsican village, where I very often spend my holidays, a young shepherd last summer sang the first eight bars of the Andante of the Fifth Symphony for me. Before the radio, Beethoven was an obscure celebrity for him. You may draw the conclusion yourself!”*¹³

Several factors may explain why the young shepherd (with folkloric references) was capable of memorizing the melody of the second movement, despite its rather sophisticated harmony¹⁴: the readability of the melody by cellos, and probably a repeated listening of the work. One can assume that the recurrence of famous pieces stimulates the awakening of a listener to a foreign culture, without any deliberate purpose.

As we saw in the case of Tomasi, whenever composers give guidelines to the listeners, the magic seems to be there. In 1938, one of the columnists of the weekly *Radio-Magazine* underlined the savoir-faire of the composer of *Ciboulette*:

*“Last year, Reynaldo Hahn one evening explained ‘L’Enlèvement au Sérail’ with records. For someone like Reynaldo Hahn, who embodies taste, knowledge, civilization in all its shapes, how many miserable oafs and sinister drags have been speaking in front of the microphone without ever leaving it.”*¹⁵

We can also notice that during the second half of the decade, a long series of 91 talks on “*Le Théâtre lyrique en France depuis les origines à nos jours*” comes and completes the list of the “*conférences sur la musique*” that Radio-Paris usually proposes to its listeners. During one of those, Henri Tomasi, then well known by the listeners, is presented as a composer.

¹¹ For a further comprehension of those debates, one can read chapter “Auditeurs, programmeurs et musiciens : des divergences de points de vue et d’intérêt” in *La Musique à la Radio dans les années trente*, op. cit., p. 83-111.

¹² Based on comments collected among the elite of the arts and literature, this study follows Georges Duhamel’s polemical arguments on the issue. Over four editions of weekly *Radio-Magazine* (from November 20th to December 11th 1938), it overtakes the strict frame of the journal. In fact, the debate is widening until the columns of *Le Figaro* (including the conservative stances of Maurice Donnay and Maurice Dekobra) and those of the weekly *Ici...Radio-Cité* (where the manager of the station, Jean Antoine, expresses his reformist ambitions).

¹³ *Radio-Magazine* #789 of November 27th 1938, p. 3: “Radio et Culture”, by Pierre Descaves.

¹⁴ The smooth flavor of a flat major is rapidly contradicted by the successive passages in f minor (bar 4) and b flat minor (bar 5).

¹⁵ “*Radio-Magazine*” #749 of February 20th 1938, p. 2-3: “Bureau des réclamations”.

1.2 A MUSICIAN WELL KNOWN BY THE LISTENERS

On Wednesday June 2nd 1938, composer Louis Aubert takes part in this broadcasting series on a topic entitled: “Bondeville, Delannoy, Tomasi, Ferroud.” After Emmanuel Bondeville’s presentation, Louis Aubert announces, in a tone that we would consider old-fashioned today:

“ Now, this is ‘l’air de la Vieillesse’, from L’École des maris *performed by M. Lovano. Then, performed by M. Cathelat, a tune of the second act of L’École des maris : Comme des fleurs* .¹⁶”

He then proceeds with Henri Tomasi’s presentation, then aged 37. The lectures were published, which provides an interesting occasion to assess the already well established reputation of the composer. One can see that his Mediterranean temperament is already well underlined and that the most significant features of his style are already mentioned at that time of his beginning maturity, as well as his themes of inspiration, which his future productions vouchsafed.

“After Marcel Delannoy, a musician from “Ile- de- France” (the Paris area), here is a genuine Mediterranean. Born in Marseille in 1901, Henri Tomasi is of pure Corsican stock, and all his work appears to be deeply filled with this ethnical influence. This doesn’t mean that we immediately pick out the great dramatic themes or the folkloric elements that are dear to his original island, as is the case for most Spanish composers for instance. Tomasi only dealt with Corsican themes in some of his works, and particularly in his Vocero, an impressive “poème symphonique”, whose success was immediate and considerable.

Besides, he tried the most diverse styles and genres, and his wandering muse has made him walk about f into time and space or a long time, from ancient Greece to the Paris of the “Grands Boulevards” in 1830, to the present-day little French village to the black communities of the African Bush, then to the Far East, in the Japanese geishas’ flowered gardens, after a stopover in Laos.

Yet, if I said earlier that Tomasi’s music owed much to his Corsican roots, this is because I see in them the very principle of the capability (astonishingly developed in his case) to integrate everything which, under any longitude or latitude of our globe, is directly based on our popular soul. Tomasi indeed hardly borrows from the folklore of the diverse countries that he is inspired by. Even more, he ignores those countries, or rather he only knows what their name suggests to his imagination, so flexible and rich that it may, by this kind of musical “radiesthesie”, reach the essential reality of the theme more deeply than it would have by direct contact. This is where Tomasi appears to be the son of a land of a race, where the instinct, not yet halted by too artificial, too materialistic and too industrious a civilization still has the value of a guide and the infallibility of a natural law.

¹⁶ *Histoire du théâtre lyrique en France, "de la Révolution à l’année 1900", tome 2, p. 265.*

All in Tomasi's disposition reserves him for the theatre, and particularly the generous lyricism that seems to flow from his audacious pen. By a curious paradox, he however is the only of the four musicians that we are talking about today who has never written for the lyrical stage. We should precise that his name is often mentioned in the programmes of the Opéra or Opéra-Comique. Though he has met with remarkable success there with two ballets: La Grisi et La Rosière du village, he has not yet produced a lyrical drama as such.

On the contrary, nobody who is used to listening to radio ignores the admirable realizations that we owe him, in the field of broadcasted theatre. Tomasi has been one of the pioneers of this fresh art, which promises such beautiful results. Although the genre is not for the time being considered as linked to lyrical drama, I won't resist the desire to let you hear an extract of the work that you probably know, Tam-tam, both an attempt and a master-stroke of the broadcasted lyrical theatre. Created in 1933, Tam-tam was born from Julien Maigret's collaboration and Henri Tomasi's. The work evokes a bush drama. Among the savage tribes of Ubangi, there is a white man, the manager of an advanced post. Completely incomprehensive of the deep poetry of the customs and traditions of the country, he laughs at them in front of his black common-law wife. He will die for this imprudence. The woman dulls his vigilance to the sounds of a bewitching monotonous song, the Chanson des Sables (Song of the Sands). This song is also a signal. The tom-tom, which from the beginning has been sputtering from a remote place, is approaching step by step. Its hammering, the natives' clamors, and the arabesques of Chanson des sables, everything are melting and dancing in an enchanting crescendo that will spark the final drama.

The following year, still in collaboration with Julien Maigret, Henri Tomasi released a new work for the radio, Ajax, a piece written in a beautiful dramatic way. He still works in this genre, in a regular collaboration with Georges Colin. Though his works are not as important as the first two, they nevertheless are interesting for this art of creating an atmosphere in which this musician has really become a master.¹⁷

This enthusiastic lecture is rather moving, if we try to imagine it with the doctoral tone and the solemnity of the time. It also suggests that Tomasi, through his regular contributions to the broadcasting productions, was already confirming his attraction to “music with a program” and passed for a well-identified celebrity by the radio listeners, even those who did not necessarily belong to the tiny part of the population concerned by classical music. This is confirmed in 1936 by the weekly *TSF Programme*. In an article entitled “*Un compositeur aimé des sans-filistes : Henri Tomasi*” (a composer loved by the radio listeners: Tomasi), the anonymous columnist says:

“What seduces in his style: the impulsion of his melody, the richness of his instrumentation. Furthermore he dares, if necessary, to ‘let his heart speak’.¹⁸”

Though Tomasi's statements on radio and their echoes by the mediators of the specialized press and even some programs enlighten his convictions and his personality, they

¹⁷ *Histoire du théâtre lyrique en France, de la Révolution à l'année 1900, op. cit.*, p. 241. This lecture was broadcasted on Wednesday June 1st 1938 on Radio-Paris [Source: *Mon Programme*].

¹⁸ *TSF Programme* #313 of September 11th 1936: “Un compositeur aimé des sans-filistes : Henri Tomasi”.

remain negligible compared to the numerous appearances of this musician on the broadcasting programs, either as a composer, or as a performer. The mentions of his name in the programs show the important space allowed to modern musicians on radio in the thirties.

II – A COMPOSER AND AN ORCHESTRA CONDUCTOR USUALLY MENTIONNED IN THE PROGRAMS

Radio-Paris enables the understanding of the distribution of the genres and types of programs in the musical supply of this station for the whole decade thirty¹⁹. Since this station, which was traditionally open to a “sophisticated broadcasting”, used to provide with the highest precision the contents of most of its programs, this wide computation enables us to monitor, at a first time, how Tomasi’s appearances occurred as an orchestra conductor.

2.1 AMONG RADIO-PARIS’ ORCHESTRA CONDUCTORS

As soon as the musician joined Radio-Paris, he appears fifteen times as a conductor in our computation. In 1936, a year that stands out by an explosion of the musical slots on this station, one can count ten concerts broadcasted under his baton. The program is sometimes common to Radio-Colonial, since those network connections between public stations between public stations were rather usual. He is once at the helm of the Chamber orchestra of Concerts Poulet (on June 22nd 1936), and several times at the musical conduction of a band probably issued from the station (the only title then is “*Orchestre symphonique*”). The *Orchestre symphonique de Paris* is usually broadcasted under his conduction (6 mentions of this orchestra over four distinct days). In 1938, he is still mentioned as the leader of the band, as well as three other times on a regular half-an-hour slot on Saturday evenings.

Based on a sampling of the ten months of the decade on Radio-Paris and Radio-LL / Radio-Cité, our computation includes 2,014 performers. Tomasi occupies the 42nd rank (as classical performer / orchestra conductor) with a total of fifteen mentions, knowing that he is exclusively mentioned on Radio-Paris. Since the recurrence of the orchestra sequences or symphonic concerts is very strong from 1936 on, the appearances of conductor Tomasi on the waves occur at various moments of the day: in the end of the morning or the beginning of the afternoon slots (such as on Thursday June 22nd 1936 from 11 am to 2 pm); at the beginning of the afternoon (on Wednesday June 10th 1936 from 2.30 pm to 4 pm); in the end of the afternoon or beginning of the evening, with a half-an-hour interlude for the news (on Monday June 8th 1936 from 6.30 to 7.30 pm); half an hour on Saturday evening on June 18th 1938 from 10.05 to 10.35 pm), between a 40-minute slot of entertaining music (from 9.10 to 9.50 pm) and two hours of dancing music (“Jo Bouillon and his orchestra” from 11 pm to 1 am).

A constant fact on Radio-Paris during the whole decade, the slots where Tomasi leads an orchestra are sometimes split up by the performance of a female singer, who is either accompanied by the orchestra or a pianist. This is how the performers who are nowadays forgotten may have crossed the path of our conductor, for the whole length of a programme:

¹⁹ The whole musical programs of every month of June over the decade 1930 have been made in an inventory. Those represent 2,766 distinctive slots and 2,143 hours of programs. This computation generated 8,769 references of composers and 3,540 references of performers.

Miss Meunier-Delince (on June 22nd 1936); Miss Javogne (on June 29th 1936); Mrs. Maria Branèze (on June 11th 1938); Mrs. Deva-Dassy (on June 18th 1938).

date	title	content	beginning	end	duration
June 1 st 36	Concert	Depuis le salon de la TSF, Orchestre symphonique de Paris dir. par Tomasi, avec Mme Arvez-Vernet : <i>D'un soir triste</i> ; <i>D'un matin de printemps</i> (Lily Boulanger) ; Prélude du deuxième acte de <i>l'Etranger</i> (d'Indy) ; <i>Didon et Enée</i> , Oh Zeus! ; <i>Bellinde</i> (Purcell) ; <i>Au loin</i> (Schumann) ; <i>Le tilleul</i> (Schubert) ; <i>Venicarella</i> (Tomasi) ; <i>L'attente</i> (C. Saint-Saëns) ; <i>Sérénade italienne</i> (Chausson).	17:3	18 :00	00:30
June 1 st 36	Concert	Suite du concert de l'Orchestre symphonique de Paris, direction Tomasi. <i>Chaconne et rigaudon</i> (Monsigny) ; <i>Déjanire</i> (Saint-Saëns) : Prélude et cortège du quatrième acte ; <i>Esquisses</i> (Schumann) ; <i>Musiques pour films</i> (Rhené-Baton).	18:35	19:15	00:40
June 3 rd 36	Symphonic Concert	Poste colonial. Concert symphonique, dir. M. H. Tomasi, avec M. Chedecal, violoniste : <i>Symphonie</i> (Schubert) ; <i>Concerto pour violon et orchestre</i> (Mendelssohn) ; <i>Scherzo</i> (Ed. Lalo) ; <i>Divertissement pour violon et orchestre</i> (R. Bernard) ; <i>Danses norvégiennes</i> (Grieg).	14:30	16:00	01:30
June 8 th 36	Concert	Orchestre symphonique de Paris (O.S.P.) dir. par Tomasi : <i>Les Hérétiques</i> , ballet (Levadé) ; Mélodies par Mme Chalante : <i>Cantate 57</i> , Air de l'âme (Bach) ; <i>Héraclès</i> (Haendel) ; <i>Air de l'Impatience</i> (Rameau).	17:30	18:00	00:30
June 8 th 36	Concert	Suite du concert de l'Orchestre symphonique de Paris, direction Tomasi : <i>Symphonie en ut majeur</i> (Mozart) ; <i>La Forêt enchantée</i> (d'Indy) ; <i>Germania</i> (Brahms).	18:35	19:30	00:55
June 10 th 36	Symphonic Concert	Poste colonial. Concert symphonique, dir. Tomasi : <i>Symphonie Pastorale</i> (Beethoven) ; <i>Valses</i> (Schubert) ; <i>Musiques intimes</i> (F. Schmitt) ; <i>Suite</i> (A. Périlhou).	14:30	16:00	01:30

date	title	content	beginning	end	duration
June 15 th 36	Concert	Orchestre de chambre symphonique de Paris (O.S.P.) , dir. par Tomasi, avec Mlle Ina Niel : <i>Suite de danses</i> (Gabriel Pierné) ; <i>1812</i> (Tchaïkowsky) ; <i>Mélodies</i> par Mlle Niel : <i>La création : Air de Gabriel</i> (Haydn) ; <i>Berceuse</i> (Mozart) ; <i>Les noces de Jeannette</i> ; <i>Air du rossignol</i> (Massé) .	17:30	18:00	00:30
June 15 th 36	Concert	Suite du concert de l'Orchestre symphonique de Paris, direction Tomasi : <i>La vie pour le Tsar</i> , ouverture (Glinka) ; <i>Les saisons : Chant du Faucheur, La moisson, Chant d'Autmone, En traineau, La Fête de Noël</i> (Tchaïkowsky) ; <i>L'album des six</i> (Poulenc) ; <i>Petite suite symphonique</i> (Ch. Pons) ; <i>Journée de mai</i> (Haydn).	18:30	19:25	00:55
June 17 th 36	Symphonic Concert	Poste colonial. Concert symphonique, dir. Tomasi : <i>Symphonie écossaise</i> (Mendelssohn) ; <i>Pièces françaises</i> (Canteloube) ; <i>Danses espagnoles</i> (Mozkowsky) ; <i>Rédemption</i> , fragment symphonique (Franck).	14:30	16:00	01:30
June 22 nd 36	Symphonic Concert	(et Poste Colonial). Orchestre de chambre des Concerts Poulet, direction Henri Tomasi : <i>Sinfonia brève</i> (Inghelbrecht) ; <i>Le Bal des Pendus</i> (Bondeville) ; <i>Fervaal</i> (d'Indy) ; <i>Concerto en fa</i> (Gaubert) ; [à 12h15:] <i>Valses</i> de Schubert (orchestration Bigot) ; <i>L'Enfant et les Sortilèges</i> (Ravel) ; <i>Suite carnavalesque</i> (Erlanger) ; <i>L'Ecole des Maris</i> (Bondeville) ; <i>Mélodies</i> par Mlle Meunier-Delince : <i>L'eau qui court</i> (Alex. Georges[-Richepin]) ; <i>Un Bal d'oiseaux</i> (Lacôme) ; <i>Silence amoureux</i> (de Miollis [-Longas]) ; <i>Ce n'était rien</i> (R. Gérard) ; <i>Mire dans mes yeux</i> (Puget) ; <i>Pas des fleurs</i> (Delibes) ; <i>La Bohème</i> (Puccini) ; <i>Préludes</i> (Chopin). [à 12h45 : informations].	11:00	14:00	03:00

date	title	content	beginning	end	duration
June 24 th 36	Symphonic Concert	Poste colonial. Concert symphonique, dir. Tomasi : <i>Symphonie en sol mineur, Concerto pour clarinette et orchestre</i> (Mozart) ; <i>Les Heures dolentes</i> (Dupont) ; <i>Capricio italien</i> (Tchaïkowsky) ; <i>La Danse d'Abisag</i> (Florent Schmitt).	14:30	16:00	01:30
June 29 th 36	Concert	Orchestre symphonique de Paris (O.S.P.) dir. par Tomasi, avec Mlle Javogne : <i>Madrigal</i> (Gaubert) ; <i>Compliments</i> (Schmitt) ; <i>Sérénade</i> (Hüe) ; <i>A Napoli</i> (Leleu). Pièces pour violon : <i>Intrada</i> (Desplanes-Nachez) ; <i>Guitare</i> (Lalo) ; <i>Le Cherrier</i> (Wooleert).	17:30	18:00	00:30
June 11 th 38	Concert	Concert symphonique, direction H. Tomasi, Mélodies par Mme Maria Branèze : a) <i>Etienne Marcel</i> , air (Saint-Saëns) ; b) <i>Six chansons françaises</i> (Tailleferre) ; <i>Trois pastorales</i> (Rivier).	22:05	22:35	00:30
June 18 th 38	Concert	Concert symphonique, direction H. Tomasi, Mélodies par Mme Deva-Dassy : <i>Mexico</i> (Oberfeld) ; <i>Yana</i> (T. Richepin-Christiné) : a) "Si mon cœur de femme" ; b) "C'est toi" ; <i>Parysatis</i> , airs de ballet (Saint-Saëns).	22:05	22:35	00:30
June 25 th 38	Concert	Mélodies, par M. René Hérent : a) <i>Le tambourin</i> (J.-Ph. Rameau) ; b) <i>Sérénade</i> (Schubert) ; c) <i>L'enterrement du Duc de Guise</i> (Laparra) ; d) <i>Le jardin d'amour</i> (Vuillermoz) ; Concert symphonique, direction H. Tomasi : <i>Les hérétiques</i> , ballet (Levadé).	22:05	22:35	00:30

The content of these broadcasting slots resemble those of the numerous “*radio-concerts*” and other “*concerts symphoniques*” which punctuate the programs of the stations of the thirties, and more particularly Radio-Paris’, which was classically oriented. In this sampling of fifteen programmes one can find the inevitable ambassadors of the baroque period (Bach, Handel, Rameau, Purcell) and the classical one (Mozart, Haydn), pre-romantic (Beethoven, Schubert) and romantic (Brahms, Schumann, Chopin, Grieg, Lalo, Delibes). One can find another constant element of the thirties, which is the vast proportion of modern French musicians (d’Indy, Saint-Saëns), or even living musicians (Gaubert, Tailleferre, Bondeville, Levadé, Canteloube).

It was not possible to find recordings of programmes of the period with Tomasi leading an orchestra. The only archive that we were able to retrieve was produced in 1944. It is a recording of the final movement of Arthur Honegger's *Rugby* by Orchestre national. It shows that the broadcasting technique of the time hardly tolerated such a luxuriant sound and polytonal orchestral material²⁰.

Tomasi's broadcasts, as the orchestra conductor of the station, make him one of the ten most often broadcasted performers in our sampling of the programs of Radio-Paris for the period 1936-1939.

The ten most broadcasted performers on Radio-Paris of the 1936-1939 period

Rank	Performer	Category	Under-Category	References on RP (1936-1939)
1	Orchestre Victor Pascal	Classical band	Large band	27
2	Orchestre Jo Bouillon (1936-1947)	Entertaining band	Entertaining orchestra	26
3	Cloez, Gustave	Classical performer	Conductor	24
4	Labis, Raoul	Classical performer	Conductor	18
5	Doyen, Jean (1907-1982)	Classical performer	Instrument player	18
6	Orchestre national	Classical band	Large band	18
7	Orchestre symph. de Paris	Classical band	Large band	17
8	Bigot, Eugène (1888-1965)	Classical performer	Conductor	15
9	Tomasi, Henri (1901-1971)	Classical performer	Conductor	15
10	Orchestre Georges Bailly	Classical band	Large band	15

On surveying this list of the most mentioned performers of the 1936-1939 period, one can't be astonished that Tomasi appears as a conductor, since he was hired by Radio-Paris from 1935 on, and was then usually broadcasted. The nine other performers are also used to the time schedule of the Paris station. They are broadcasted at least weekly, which explains the high number of those performers' mentions. This sampling shows that there is only one program in which Tomasi is mentioned both as a composer and a conductor. One can therefore not blame him for promoting his own works. One will indeed soon see that, without needing to promote his own music, Henri Tomasi largely benefited from the habits of the stations of the thirties and their broadcasting of modern French musicians. The only program when Tomasi is mentioned both as composer and conductor is scheduled on Monday June 1st 1936. We can notice that the content of this program also confirms the already mentioned phenomenon: the usual presence of French composers, either living or at least belonging to the end of the 19th / beginning of the 20th century period. Apart from this piece by Tomasi there are indeed works by Lily Boulanger, Ernest Chausson, Camille Saint-Saëns and Vincent d'Indy.

²⁰ Phonothèque de l'INA, broadcasting of the first semester 1944 during Pierre de Coubertin's celebration in Lausanne: performance of the final of Honegger's *Rugby* by Orchestre national conducted by Henri Tomasi. Band referenced KO00084B ; X00235 à 38'41''

Mentions of Tomasi both as a composer and a conductor

date	title	contents	beginning	end	duration
June 1 st 36	Concert	Depuis le salon de la TSF, Orchestre symphonique de Paris dir. par Tomasi, avec Mme Arvez-Vernet : <i>D'un soir triste</i> ; <i>d'un matin de printemps</i> (Lily Boulanger) ; Prélude du deuxième acte de <i>l'Etranger</i> (d'Indy) ; <i>Didon et Enée</i> , Oh Zeus! ; <i>Bellinde</i> (Purcell) ; <i>Au loin</i> (Schumann) ; <i>Le tilleul</i> (Schubert) ; <i>O Ciuciarella</i> (Tomasi) ; <i>L'attente</i> (C. Saint-Saëns) ; <i>Sérénade italienne</i> (Chausson).	17:30	18:00	00:30

Radio-Paris, our template of the public stations, therefore favours the orchestras and their conductors. Through the principle of recurrent programs, the regular customers of the programs, including Henri Tomasi, are often mentioned in the program journals. The latter is also mentioned as a composer throughout the decade.

2.2 AN OFTEN BROADCASTED COMPOSER

Over the 2,185 composers of our computation, he sits at the 124th rank with seventeen mentions (we also could add a 18th considering the *causerie musicale* or musical talk of 1938 in which Louis Aubert mentions his work and proposes an excerpt from the work *Tam-tam*). By our reckoning, he appears in 1930, 1933, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938 and 1939²¹.

On referring to the catalogue of his works published by the association of Henri Tomasi's friends²², one can see that by 1939 he had composed 62 works. In our sampling of the decade, out of the eighteen programs where he's mentioned as composer, one can count eight different works. Among those, one was broadcasted four times (*O Ciuciarella*²³), and another three times (*Scènes municipales* in their version for orchestra). The symphonic poem *Tam-Tam*, which we'll talk about later, is broadcasted twice. As for the other works, they appear only once in our computation. This is the case of *Cynos*, the 1929 symphonic poem, which was broadcasted under Eugène Bigot's baton on June 18th 1930, performed by pianist Jean Doyen, a frequent performer in the broadcasted concert (at the 3rd rank of our index of the performers, with no less than 44 appearances in the decade). We could also mention that the *Cambodian dances* were to be regularly scheduled for many years after their composition, for instance on Sunday December 29th 1946²⁴.

²¹ *Musique et Radio dans la France des années trente*, thesis cited.

²² Site: <http://www.henri-tomasi.fr/> (consulted in July 2013).

²³ The lullaby *O Ciuciarella* is extracted from *Six mélodies populaires corses* (#4). Composed in 1930, they had been created by Madeleine Whita and Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux under Albert Wolff's conduction, on March 8th 1931.

²⁴ Concert of "varied music" on the station Programme parisien: conductor William Cantrelle with excerpts of Reynaldo Hahn's *Bal de Béatrice d'Este* (from 8.30 to 8.55).

By categorizing these works according to their title, one can see that the most suggestive themes in this sampling are exoticism and a description of the society, which brings us to the portrait that was made by Louis Aubert.

The 11 mentioned works, classed by their number of broadcastings

Work	1 st broad.	2 nd broad.	3 rd broad.	4 th broad.	theme / inspiration	Type of performer
1930 - O Ciuciarella, berceuse extraite des Six mélodies populaires corses, pour piano	June 22 nd 31	June 7 th 35	June 1 st 36	June 20 th 37	Corsica	song
1932 - Scènes municipales, pour orchestre ou piano	June 7 th 36	June 18 th 36	June 29 th 36		Society	orchestra
1932 - Tam-tam, poème symphonique	June 29 th 37	June 22 nd 38			Exoticism	orchestra
1933 – Chant de la mélancolie, première des 4 mélodies corses intitulées <i>Cantu di Cirnu</i> (Chants de Cyrnos)	June 3 rd 37	June 15 th 37			sentimental	voice
1934 - Deux danses cambodgiennes ["valse" en 1939 !]	June 11 th 39	[December 19 th 46]			Exoticism	chamber
1929 - Cyrnos, pour piano principal et orchestre ["poème symphonique..."]	June 6 th 30				instrumental	piano
1929 - Pièces brèves, pour piano [3. Le lied que chante mon cœur ; 2. Menuet]	June 13 th 33				instrumental	piano
1933 - Chants laotiens, pour voix et piano [5. Le joueur de khène]	June 11 th 37				Exoticism	voice
1933 - Le marchand à la foire, deuxième des 4 mélodies corses intitulées <i>Cantu di Cirnu</i> (Chants de Cyrnos) ²⁵	June 16 th 37				Society	unidentified
1936 - Danses brésiliennes, suite pour petit orchestra	June 21 st 39				Exoticism	orchestra
1937 - Petite Suite médiévale, tirée du ballet <i>Les Santons</i> (Pastorale provençale) ²⁶	June 29 th 37				Society	Orchestra

By considering this table, we can put forward a hypothesis: most of the works that had already been composed by Tomasi were broadcasted. In fact, though Radio-Paris distinguishes itself by its high-flown broadcasting, it is obviously not the only station that broadcasted the works of modern composers, including Tomasi. Our sampling certainly shows only eight out of the sixty-two works that he had already composed in the interwar period. It however represents only one twelfth of it for this only station. It is very likely that a survey of the other stations and the other months than June would have hugely increased the list of Tomasi's broadcasted works, and confirmed the quotation presenting him as a "composer abundantly performed and recorded in his lifetime."²⁷

²⁵ *Le Marchand à la foire (U marcante in fiero)* is the piece #2 from collection *Les Cantu di Cirnu*, written in 1933 and created on November 22nd 1936 by Martha Angelici and the Orchestre Padeloup under the conduction of Henri Tomasi.

²⁶ This is the suite for orchestra in four parts that was extracted by Henri Tomasi (from 1937) from his ballet . Let's recall here that this ballet in one act for choir and solo contralto (or mezzo soprano): screenplay by René Dumesnil. Created at the Opera de Paris on November 19th 1938 under the baton of the composer.

²⁷ Site of the "Association des amis d'Henri Tomasi", URL cited.

As far as the circumstances of those broadcastings are concerned, one can notice that the orchestra conductors were able to illustrate the works of their counterparts works including: Eugène Bigot, Marius-François Gaillard, Raoul Labis, Roger Ellis, Maurice André, Albert Locatelli, or Godfroy Andolfi. Those works were scheduled in the “varied” programs as much as in the records mix, and Tomasi’s works coexisted pell-mell, at times, with much older pieces, or works of vary different styles. One can survey the context of their appearance thanks to the content of the programs copied below:

The 18 programs in which Tomasi’s pieces are mentioned

date	title	contents	Tomasi’s mention	Beginning
18-juin-30	Radio-Concert	Radio-Concert organisé par Radio-Magazine : 1. Louise (Gustave Charpentier), avec le concours de Mmes Marguerite Soyer, Abby Richardson, Andrée Vavon, Vacchino, Villette, Julliot, Holt, Gallet, Champagne, Mart, Carl ; MM. Micheletti, Tubiana, Morturier, Mathyl, Genio. Choeurs et orchestre sous la direction de M. Henry Defossé. 2. <i>Cyros</i> (H. Tomasi), poème symphonique pour piano et orchestre, M. Jean Doyen, soliste des concerts du Conservatoire, de Colonne, Lamoureux et Padeloup. Orchestre sous la direction de M. Eugène Bigot . [à 20h30 revue sportive et à 21h15 : revue de la presse du soir. Informations et l’heure exacte Longines]	<i>Cyros</i> (H. Tomasi), poème symphonique pour piano et orchestre	20:00
22-juin-31	Radio-Concert	Radio-Concert : 1. <i>Prélude, marine et chanson</i> (Guy Ropartz), pour harpe, flûte, violon, violoncelle et alto, par le quintette Radio-Paris ; 2. <i>L’amour d’une femme</i> , extraits (Schumann) : a) Ai-je fait un rêve? b) Mon coeur, tu frémis, c) Ah! viens calmer ma fièvre, d) Tu peux lire dans mes yeux, Mlle Germaine Feraldy ; [à 21h30 :] Suite de l’audition intégrale du <i>Clavecin bien tempéré</i> , de J.S. Bach, interprété par Albert Leveque. (Cinquième groupe) a) Prélude et fugue en si bémol majeur, n°21 ; b) [...] n°22 , c) [...] en si majeur n° 23, d) [...] en si mineur, n°24 ; 4. a) Deux mélodies corses (Tomasi) , d) Nell (Fauré) , c) Notre amour (Fauré), d) Sérénade (Strauss), Mlle Germaine Feraldy ; 5. <i>Suite en parties</i> (Vincent d’Indy), pour harpe, flûte, violon, violoncelle et alto, Le quintette Radio-Paris. [à 21h15 : revue de la presse du soir, informations et heure exacte de Longines]	4. a) <i>Deux mélodies corses</i> (Tomasi)	20:45
June 13 th 33	Record music	Concert : "Musique ancienne", <i>Pièces en concert recueillies par Bazelaire</i> (Couperin), violoncelle : Roger Boulmé : Allegro spiritoso et Sicilienne (Dalayrac) ; <i>Célèbre gavotte, Passepied du jardinier</i> (Lully) ; Ouverture de <i>l’Epreuve villageoise</i> (Grétry). - Musique française contemporaine. <i>Pièces brèves</i> (G. Ropartz) ; <i>Le lied que chante mon amour</i> , Menuet (Tomasi) ; <i>Cloches dans la brume</i> (Stalin) ; <i>Quatre esquisses</i> (Gaubert) ; <i>Berceuse</i> (Durosoir), violon : R. Krettly ; <i>Zorriga</i> (Bousquet) ; <i>Pavane pur une infante défunte</i> (Ravel) ; <i>Divertissement sur des chansons</i> ([?] lips) ; <i>Miramar</i> (Turina) ; <i>Trois danses [...]</i> (Rabaud) ; <i>Arabesque</i> (Montague Philmann) ; <i>Suite pour cordes</i> (Konguelli).	<i>Le lied que chante mon amour</i> , Menuet (Tomasi)	12:00

date	title	contents	Tomasi's mention	Beginning
June 7 th 35	Symphonic concert	Concert symphonique : Orchestre dirigé par F. Gaillard, avec Mlle N. Guérald ; <i>Le Calife de Bagdad</i> , ouverture (Boieldieu) ; <i>Petite Suite</i> (Pierné) ; <i>Les Zingaris imminent</i> (Gabriel-Marie) ; <i>Paganini</i> (F Lehar) ; Mélodies par Mlle N. Guérald : <i>Adieu</i> (Dussau) ; <i>O Ciuciarella</i> (Tomasi) ; <i>Carmen</i> (Clergue), solo de hautbois : M. Goubet, solo de violoncelle : M. Navarra ; <i>Le Rouet d'Omphale</i> , Poème symphonique (Saint-Saens) ; <i>Pavane</i> (G. Fauré) ; <i>Peer Gynt</i> (Grieg).	<i>O Ciuciarella</i> (Tomasi)	12:15
June 1 st 36	Concert	Depuis le salon de la TSF, orchestre [symphonique de Paris] dir. par Tomasi, avec Mme Arvez-Vernet : <i>D'un soir triste</i> ; <i>d'un matin de printemps</i> (Lily Boulanger) ; Prélude du deuxième acte de <i>l'Etranger</i> (d'Indy) ; <i>Didon et Enée</i> , Oh Zeus! ; <i>Bellinde</i> (Purcell) ; <i>Au loin</i> (Schumann) ; <i>Le tilleul</i> (Schubert) ; <i>O Ciuciarella</i> (Tomasi) ; <i>L'attente</i> (C. Saint-Saëns) ; <i>Sérénade italienne</i> (Chausson).	<i>O Ciuciarella</i> (Tomasi)	17:30
June 7 th 36	Symphonic concert	Poste Colonial. Concert direction Labis. Orchestre de chambre de l'orchestre symphonique de Paris [suite] : <i>Scènes municipales</i> (Tomasi) ; Mélodies par M. Rudeau : <i>Partir en voyage</i> (Ordner) ; <i>Je chante pour toi</i> (Lehar) ; <i>Tu m'as dit non</i> (Rosen) ; <i>Petit village</i> (Nevi) ; <i>Petite Suisse</i> (Ducasse) ; <i>Le Matin</i> (Chaminade) ; <i>La Verbena</i> (Lacôme).	<i>Scènes municipales</i> (Tomasi)	13:00
June 18 th 36	Symphonic concert	(et Poste Colonial) Concert symphonique, direction Roger Ellis : <i>Euryanthe</i> , ouverture (Weber) ; <i>La Khovantchina</i> : Entracte et danse des fées (Moussorgsky) ; <i>Aux Etoiles</i> (Duparc) ; <i>Scènes napolitaines</i> (Massenet). [à 12h15 :] <i>Masques et bergamasques</i> (Fauré) ; <i>Les Maîtres chanteurs</i> , extraits (Wagner) ; <i>Danse castillane</i> (J. Turina) ; <i>Izeil</i> , suite d'orchestre (G. Pierné) ; <i>Cordoue en fête</i> (Turina) ; Mélodies par Mlle Mildah Polia : <i>Danza, Danza</i> (Durante) ; <i>A une jeune mariée</i> (Nérini) ; <i>Soir d'Idumée</i> (Vellones) ; <i>Ev'ry Tune, I fell the spirit</i> (Harm. Burleigh) ; <i>Tarentelle</i> , flûte et clarinette solos (Saint-Saëns) ; <i>Dom Quichotte</i> , Entr'actes des 4e et 5e actes (Massenet) ; <i>Marouf</i> , danses (Rabaud) ; <i>Scènes municipales</i> (Tomasi).	<i>Scènes municipales</i> (Tomasi)	11:00
June 29 th 36	Symphonic concert	(et Poste Colonial). Orchestre de chambre des concerts Poulet, direction M. Elie Schuyer : <i>Ruy-Blas</i> (Mendelssohn) ; <i>Serenata</i> (Braca) ; Fête de charité, suite d'orchestre (Lecocq) ; <i>Danses hongroises</i> (Brahms) ; <i>Barcarolle</i> (Tchaïkowsky) ; <i>Espana</i> (Waldteufel) ; <i>Pavane</i> (Fauré) ; <i>Fêtes romaines</i> (Fourdrain). [à 12h15 :] avec Madame Jeanne Eudes : <i>Mireille</i> , ouverture (Gounod) ; <i>Extrême-Orient</i> (de la Presle) ; <i>Chant du soir</i> (Schumann) ; <i>Le Roi des Aulnes</i> (Schubert) ; <i>Scènes municipales</i> (Tomasi) ; <i>Phrynée</i> (Saint-Saëns) ; <i>Un Bouquet de Strauss</i> (arr. A. Winter). Mélodies populaires de la famille Strauss ; <i>Exiane</i> (Doire) ; <i>Engerrande</i> (Chapuis) ; <i>C'est le temple d'hiver</i> ; <i>Mon âme est en fleur</i> (Lermyte) ; <i>Suite Lorraine</i> (Boisdeffre) ; <i>La Bohème</i> , fantaisie (Puccini). [à 12h45 : informations].	<i>Scènes municipales</i> (Tomasi)	11:00
Jun 3 rd 37	Concert	Mélodies, par Mme Rosenfeld : <i>C'est lui</i> (Hugo Wolf) ; <i>Sérénade à Ninon</i> (Delibes) ; <i>Le sourire, Sonnet champêtre</i> (E. de Lassus) ; <i>Chant de la mélancolie</i> (Tomasi).	<i>Chant de la mélancolie</i> (Tomasi).	13:15
June 11 th 37	Concert	Mélodies, par M. L. Dufont : <i>Les Saisons</i> , air du Laboureur (Haydn) ; <i>Le Voyageur</i> (Fauré) ; <i>La lune sur le bois se penche</i> (Clergue) ; <i>Chants laotiens, Khène</i> (Tomasi).	<i>Chants laotiens, Khène</i> (Tomasi).	13:15

date	title	contents	Tomasi's mention	Beginning
June 15 th 37	Concert	Mélodies, par Mlle De Mayo : <i>Vieille chanson espagnole</i> (Aubert) ; <i>Il était une fille</i> (Emmanuel) ; <i>La chanson du verger fleuri</i> (Rhené-Baton) ; <i>Chant de mélancolie</i> (Tomasi) ; <i>Tu m'oublieras</i> (Clergue) ; <i>Les vieilles de chez nous</i> (Levadé).	<i>Chant de mélancolie</i> (Tomasi)	19:00
June 16 th 37	Concert	Mélodies, par Mme Germaine Huber : a) <i>Veux-tu mon rêve</i> (Filippucci) ; b) <i>Il neige</i> (Bemberg) ; c) <i>La Flûte enchantée</i> (Ravel) ; d) <i>Le marchand à la foire</i> (Tomasi).	d) <i>Le marchand à la foire</i> (Tomasi).	15:00
June 20 th 37	Concert	Mélodies, par Jean Sorbier : <i>Les yeux dont je rêve</i> (Nastorg) ; <i>Deux mélodies populaires corses</i> : a) <i>Ninina</i> (de Bradi) ; b) <i>O Ciuciarella</i> (Tomasi) ; <i>L'amour tel qu'on le parle</i> (Richepin).	b) <i>O Ciuciarella</i> (Tomasi)	20:15
June 29 th 37	Records	"Musique coloniale" : <i>Danse de Yafil</i> (X.) ; <i>Tam-Tam</i> (Tomasi) ; a) <i>Chant et danse de l'Epervier</i> (X.) ; b) <i>Chant de travail</i> (X.).	<i>Tam-Tam</i> (Tomasi) ;	10:30
June 29 th 37	Symphonic concert	Concert direction Maurice André : <i>Cavalerie légère</i> , ouverture (Suppé) ; <i>Mimi Pinson</i> , valse (Schmitt) ; <i>Marche de noce</i> , Berry (Tiersot) ; [à 12h30 :] <i>Le cheval de bronze</i> , ouverture (Auber) ; <i>Suite médiévale</i> (Tomasi) ; <i>Cavalleria Rusticana</i> , sélection (Mascagni) ; <i>Fraises au champagne</i> , valse (Klein) ; <i>Marche funèbre d'une marionnette</i> (Gounod) ; <i>Ballet de Cinq-Mars</i> (Gounod).	<i>Suite médiévale</i> (Tomasi) ;	12:00
June 22 nd 38	Concert	"Histoire du théâtre lyrique en France", "Bondeville, Delannoy, Tomasi, Ferroud", par M. L. Aubert [diffusion d'un extrait de <i>Tam-Tam</i>]	Un extrait de <i>Tam-Tam</i>	18:30
June 11 th 39	Concert	Concert, direction Andolfi : <i>Marakech</i> (Aube) ; <i>Gondoles vénitiennes</i> (Leemans) ; <i>Three plantation sketches</i> (Clutsam) ; <i>Cordoba</i> (Albeniz) ; <i>Valses cambodgiennes</i> (Tomasi) ; <i>Aubade à Claudine</i> (Haudebert) ; <i>Aubade</i> (Luigini) ; <i>Par une nuit bengale</i> (Dreyer).	<i>Valses cambodgiennes</i> (Tomasi) ;	13:00
June 21 st 39	Concert	Concert direction Locatelli [même créneau que la semaine précédente] : <i>Danses brésiliennes</i> (H. Tomasi) ; <i>Romance andalouse</i> (P. de Sarasate) ; <i>Petite danse</i> ; <i>Sacro Monte</i> (Turina) ; <i>Calme</i> (Honegger) ; <i>Rapsodie norvégienne</i> (Svendsen) ; <i>Masques et Bergamasques</i> (G. Fauré) ; <i>Trianon</i> (Lachaume).	<i>Danses brésiliennes</i> (H. Tomasi)	17:05

However, if Tomasi's works easily find room in so heterogeneous programs (according to present-day criteria), this is not only due to this improbable mixtures of that time. This is also because his work in itself reflects a deep orientation toward a multiform writing, without any genuine border between the styles and the genres.

III – AT A CROSSROAD OF MULTIPLE AESTHETICS

It is well known that Tomasi explored minor genres, especially by producing *Méto Barbès*, a tango-song of 1937 or *Miomo*, a "Corsican java" in 1938²⁸. It is therefore natural that his work was interpreted by classical performers as well as by those specializing in more popular genres. An ultimate vector of communication between different aesthetics and

²⁸ Michel Solis, *Henri Tomasi, un idéal méditerranéen*, Albiana EDS, 2008, p. 31.

possibly different performers, the radio of the thirties reveals the links that some protagonists, including Tomasi, have been able to establish between the genres.

3.1 THE MUSICAL EXPRESSIONS OF THE TIME

By the diversity of his works and the repertoire that he was used to conducting, we could have set Henri Tomasi in the “cultural passers” categories of our indexes of authors and composers²⁹. We only did so for the composers and performers whose connection with several musical genres (especially halfway between sophisticated and popular aesthetics) is visibly expressed in our sampling of the programmes. For example, Tomasi’s melody inspired by Corsica, which was apparently very often broadcasted in classical concerts during the decade, was interpreted by Tino Rossi. As conductor, he conducted Aubert, Saint-Saëns, Gluck, Massenet, Wagner as much as Vincent Scotto (the friend with whom he wrote the music of the movie *Colomba*, which took José Luccioni to stardom status), or his own works.

As Frédéric Ducros implicitly explained, Tomasi’s creation appetite brought him to stand alongside the artists of every horizon that he encountered, even though:

“At 38, he escapes... taking his leave of everyone, his father, his wife, Ginette, ‘a nice girl from Radio-Paris’, the applause of the audience, that of Palais-Garnier, as well as of the ancient Orange theatre, he turns his back to the photographers, to the artists, whose works he had performed or those who created his own. Albert Wolf, Paul Paray, Eugène Bigot, society life, celebrities, Charles Dullin, Tino Rossi, César Vezzani, Joséphine Baker, Gabin, Brasseur, Morgan..... he puts an end to all this ‘cinema’! On May 25th 1939, he escapes from the screenplay that others had written [...]”³⁰.

All these “other” artists evoked by the musicologist progress in professional sectors that are brought by narrowly connected mass industries: the movie industry, the record industry and the network of radio stations. Albeit it was felt as a concurrent at the beginning, this medium eventually appears to be an ally, inseparable from the two others. This explosion of both supply and cultural demand sparks off a strange porosity of stylistic borders. Tomasi’s music writing in the thirties is in keeping with this trend, as the diversity of artists he dealt with can prove.

As regards our broadcasting computation, his melodies inspired by Corsica are mainly the works that placed him at the crossroad of performers of very distant genres. We have seen that on Friday June 7th 1935 his piece *O Ciuciarella* was mentioned right in the middle of a symphonic concert conducted by Marius-François Gaillard, with the collaboration of Miss Ninon Guérald from the Opéra-Comique. Some months later, we can actually read in the journal *Radio-Magazine* that *chanteur de charme* Tino Rossi “is used to singing earlier Corsican songs the masterpiece of which [precisely] is *O Ciuciarella*.”³¹ Three years later, *Le*

²⁹ Because their belonging to very diverse genres appeared in our samplings (which was not Tomasi’s case), we created a group of 297 “passers”, i.e. composers (including Vincent Scotto, Charles-Emile Waldteufel, Jean Wiener or Maurice Yvain) and 120 performers who can be styled “passers”.

³⁰ *Henri Tomasi, un idéal méditerranéen*, op. cit., p. 33.

³¹ *Radio-Magazine* #629 of November 3rd 1935, p. 5: “Tino Rossi”, by Jacques Maréchal. In the same article, the author indicates that the singer, after recording his version of “L’Aubade” of Lalo’s *Roi d’Ys*, for Columbia, has, and at the very moment of his fabulous selling successes “just, beside the easy choruses, recorded two melodies by Reynaldo Hahn: *Paysages* and *D’une Prison*”, commercial initiatives that make him an unexpected “passer performer”.

Petit Radio tells in confidence that the Corsican female singer Lina Tosti “*obviously has in her repertoire Corsican songs including this Ciuciarella by Henri Tomasi, whose melancholy she wonderfully expresses with tenderness and grace*”³². Female and male singers are the first that interpret the “*passer composers*”. Even if around 1935 Tino Rossi fluctuates between his monotonous “*latin lover*” songs, Édouard Lalo’s operatic arias, Reynaldo Hahn’s operettas, and Henri Tomasi’s folkloric Corsican songs, he remains above all a popular singer. Some lyrical artists however are “*on the verge*”, so that it is not possible to qualify them either as *prime done* or female singer. For example, Miss Marie Simon “*from the Paris Opera*” sings melodies by Saint-Saëns³³ but also performs in Paul Clérouc’s entertaining programs³⁴. About her, Jacques Tem wrote the following:

*“Seduced from the beginning by Radio, by the infinite possibilities of this art, she has almost exclusively devoted herself to the broadcasting programs in which she brings a particularly varied repertoire. This repertoire actually stems from great lyrical works to light operetta, from classical melodies to entertainment.”*³⁵

It is therefore in a context of moving borders, perfectly embodied by broadcasting artists that Tomasi bridges the gap between works for the lyrical stage (he successfully created the ballet *La Rosière du village* in 1936 at the Paris Opera-Comique) and broadcasting productions that spontaneously crop up for this man deep-rooted in the land of his origins.

Among those productions, one expresses his attraction for faraway civilizations and also is the one in which all the musical resources inspired by his time come into play.

3.2 TAM-TAM AND THE POSTE COLONIAL

On June 13th 1933, the French Radiodiffusion network proposed the very first federal broadcasting (that is to say simultaneously broadcasted on the whole or part of the state network) of the work *Tam-tam*, a “*lyrical drama in two parts*” by Jules Maigret. In *Les Nouvelles Littéraires* of July 8th 1933, critic Pierre Descaves declared that he was convinced that this work, whose action is located at the core of Africa “*is going to mark the annals of French broadcasting [with] its satanic cannibals, its stabbing dances, its heavy atmosphere, and its mysterious grandeur.*”

According to the site of Henri Tomasi’s friends, the composer, like Jules Verne, was a motionless traveler (should it be possible), a master in the art of those imaginary voyages so well described by critic and musicologist José Bruyr:

*“Twenty bars are enough for my disembarking in Brazil, Cambodia, Japan, for my landing on an African vermillion beach, or in a moon-lit clearing with tom-tom in the distance.”*³⁶

Speaking of *Tam-Tam*, the piece we are interested in is mentioned among those which testify, in their inspirational roots, the “*encounter of other beings, diverse and yet alike in their interrogation face to life and death, face to their human condition.*” Curiously, the “*sketch lyrique en deux actes*” *Tam-tam* is not listed on the catalogue among the seven pieces

³² *Le Petit Radio* #547 of April 8th 1938, p. 1: “Lina Tosti”, by Jacques Tem.

³³ In the recital she releases on Monday June 29th 1936 on Radio-Paris (According to *TSF-Programme*).

³⁴ Program “Les ondes de Paris” on June 22nd 1938 (according to *Le Petit Radio*).

³⁵ *Le Petit Radio* #570 of March 11th 1938, p. 1: “Marie Simon, de l’Opéra”, by Jacques Tem.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

broadcasted, which are all qualified as: “*designed to musically accompany radio productions that are not devoted to concert.*”³⁷” The criteria might not have been sufficiently clear to consider this work as a musical one *per se*.

Anyway, this drama, the arrangement of a novel that Julien Maigret had published in 1927, was created on June 13th 1933 on Radio-Paris and *Le Poste Colonial* in a technical transmission by the author. Composed by Henri Tomasi, the music is used in narrow association with the text. Many years later, the argument may appear a little melodramatic. It can be summed up as follows: a conceited black common-law wife, beaten up by her white partner, a brutal post manager at Ubangi, calls on her tribe for revenge. The convicted man hears the approaching tom-tom without understanding that it announces his imminent murder by cannibals. All the interest seems to stem from the increase of the dramatic tension and the strangeness of the atmosphere, served by the suggestive strength of the soundwaves. According to Pierre Descaves, this was a genuine “classic” of broadcasting drama. The work was to be broadcasted twice during the following years (Radio-Paris on October 21st 1936, and Radiodiffusion Nationale on January 5th 1942). Announcing a new broadcasting on Radio-Paris on October 18th 1936 we can read what follows:

“M. Henri Tomasi’s score is vastly adapted to the cruel mood of [the evocation of the imminent killing of a convicted man by the cannibals]. In this way it has already travelled all over Europe. Backed by the strange rhythm of the tom-tom constantly amplified, there are worrying calls. The principal episodes of the piece are fortunately marked by a nostalgic tango: ‘Disillusion’, a foxtrot: ‘Whisky’, and a ‘Song of the sands’ full of very credible exoticism.”

Beyond a screenplay targeted to its audience and the then colonial empire, one can clearly see that this production highlights pieces that belong to a musical period which is culturally identifiable but expresses an aesthetic diversity.

As a conclusion of this paper about composer and conductor Henri Tomasi, through the prism of the musical broadcasting of the thirties, we will only summarize some of the observations resulting from our survey. First, the targeted press cuttings reveal a rather unknown part of the composer’s life. They tell us both about Tomasi’s conception of the medium (especially as a formidable means of acculturation of the masses) and the way in which much the latter appeared to be enjoyed by the listeners. What’s more, this script of a broadcasting lecture that had disappeared (a genuine nugget) by Louis Aubert speaking about his colleague is astonishing in itself. The analysis is subtle and clearly matches the lasting image of Tomasi. It sounds as if Tomasi’s style, on the verge of his forties, was already characteristic. Though he was going to produce works for some thirty more years, his portrait indeed matches Tomasi’s work as a whole. Besides, his appearances on the waves, as composer as much as conductor, highlight the features of the radio of the thirties. There is a profusion of classical concerts or programs that mix the works of grand repertoire and lighter productions. Many French composers of the 20th Century, including Tomasi, share the programs with sometimes unlikely neighbors. This dichotomy of the radio of the thirties between little songs and symphonic concerts can be found in the very sources of inspiration of our musician, enriched by the blossoming of the mass media in the interwar period. Incorporating every style, without rejecting any aesthetics, his symbiosis with the medium will probably have helped him to achieve a synthesis of the different qualities of those actors,

³⁷ *Ibid.*

composers or performers that we called “cultural passers”. Tomasi perfectly fluctuates between two functions at the core of a medium that structurally absorbs all the styles. What was the weight of those experiences in the personal building of the musician, in his acquisition before his forties of the qualities specific to his work as a whole? Important, maybe, but let’s leave the last word to an observer of the radio of the thirties who, speaking about this musician “so well-loved by the listeners”, describes Tomasi’s music as “*so rich in its melody and its instrumentation, a music which knows how to speak to the heart.*”

Many thanks to Gérard Hocmard for his help with the language issues.