

## **LA HABANERA**

Music by Raoul Laparra

Libretto by C. Petit & M. Boisnent

First Performance: Opéra-Comique, Paris, February 26, 1908

**Act I.** At a tavern. There is first a noisy drinking scene and next a love duet between Pedro and his betrothed, Pilar. Then Pilar hurries off to join a group of dancers in the street who are performing the habañera. Ramon, brother of Pedro, secretly infatuated with his brother's fiancée, provokes a violent quarrel with Pedro and finally stabs him to death.

**Act II.** The murder has remained a mystery, for nobody suspects Ramon. In a courtyard are assembled the father of the two brothers, Pilar, Ramon, and several neighbors, all of them speaking of the young man's death with deep regret. Ramon, in order to hide his guilt the better, has sworn to his father to avenge the death of his brother. Again the company dance the habañera, and in the midst of them appears Pedro's ghost, but visible only to the murderer, to whom he whispers that if the truth is not confessed by the following day, his sweetheart Pilar, madly beloved by Ramon, shall die.

**Act III.** This act occurs in a cemetery. Flowers are placed on the tombs by a number of mourners. Pilar and Ramon are among them. After the others are gone Ramon is courting Pilar, who wagers in her mind. But suddenly the remembrance of the day before comes back to Ramon, and he finally confesses that he killed his brother Pedro. Pilar is unable to bear the truth and sinks dead on the grave of her dead lover, Pedro. Ramon himself rushes madly off the scene as the curtain falls.