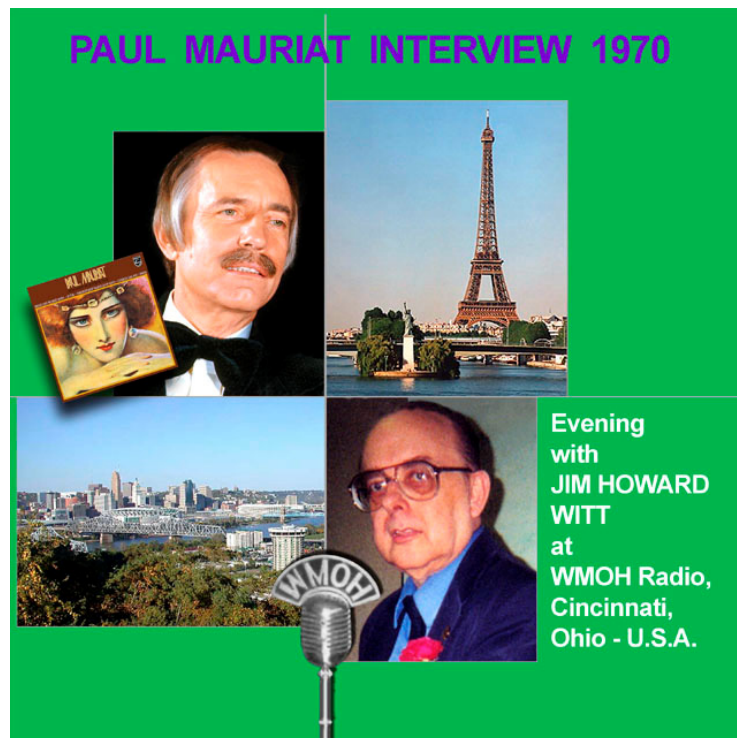


# PAUL MAURIAT INTERVIEW

For WMOH Radio, Cincinnati, Ohio – U.S.A.

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## EVENING WITH PAUL MAURIAT

Written by Jim Howard Witt

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**JIM HOWARD WITT: And from Cincinnati you will go to?**

PAUL MAURIAT: Well, I go in... After Cincinnati and Chicago and after many cities in Texas, then we come back to New York, and little tour in Canada, Montreal, and some city around New York.

**– Will you be doing on a television while you are in the United States?**

– No. Some television but only talk television, because when I arrive to a city, sometimes I take the plane and the musicians are on the road and I can't do a concert only by myself.

**– Mostly it will be local television (television on the local level) or it will be any network television?**

– Both.

**– I imagine, a lot of people would like to know, and I would like to know as well, how did you get your start in the music field and the show business?**

– I started very young. I was seventeen years old, and I decided one day to have my own orchestra. And then with this orchestra we work in all cities of the south of the France and foreign countries like Italia, Belgium and Egypt. How do you say *Egypt / Agypt*?

**– Egypt.**

– Egypt. And I come back in Marseille, because I was born in Marseille. Then I decided to go to Paris about twelve years before, twelve years ago. And I began to accompaniment for many French artists like Charles Aznavour, Dalida, Salvador, Maurice Chevalier, Danielle Darieux. And about five years ago, I signed a contract with a record company in France to have my own orchestra, a big orchestra with about 45 and... or between 45 and 50 musicians. And I worked very hard because I have two ways: one way for arrangement for artists, one way for my own orchestra. And one day I was very lucky because I got a very big success with "Love is Blue," and now I am in the States for just because the Love is Blue's success here.

**– Right. How did "Love is blue" come about as far as your arrangement, you arranging the song?**

– First of all, I didn't compose "Love is Blue". "Love is Blue" was written by a French composer Andre Popp. And this song... You know, in Europe you have each year contests, contest song, and each country of Europe presents one song. And this song was for Luxemburg, and it got little success, but I loved very much, this song, and I took it for my LP. And the LP came into the States and walked into Minneapolis, you know, and other the states.

– Of course “Love is Blue” is well-known in this area as well, because it’s sold quite a few copies, shall we say, and of course it made the local charts, and people like it very much both young and old, because of your arrangement (very pretty arrangement, I might say).

– Thank you.

– And, of course, now you have your current hit of “Gone is Love” will get there in just a moment. Now, what is your favorite type of music? I know in your concerts, you play everything from classical, semi-classical, to pop. What would be your favorite type?

– Yes, on stage it is very different, because I have many different ages, you know, I have young people, medium and old people. And I play many kinds of music, like pop music and rhythm and blues, and classical music. And I have a fantastic comic too, you know a French guy, I brought him from France, his is a very good musician, a fantastic comic. But myself, I like very much classical music, the old classical music like Bach and Mozart. And in the pop music, above all, I like rhythm and blues.

– Like rhythm and blues. That’s very... kind of a contrast between the old classics and the pop music or the rhythm and blue.

– I don’t think so because now, you know, rhythm and blues and pop music are closer than before. Classical music and pop music are very close now. You know, some groups (English groups and American groups) very often play classical music and arrange it, of course, for the whole group. They take Beethoven, Bach, Mozart. And now, I think, it’s natural to like both.

– That’s like lately, in fact, this song was popular all over the world and that’s the last movement from Beethoven “The Ode to Joy” or the renamed “The Song of Joy”.

– Yes, and I think if Beethoven was here certainly he’d like it.

– It is a very good arrangement.

– Very, very good.

– And of course from the end of the word story was Blue Spanish, Miguel Rios did a fantastic job on a vocalization.

– Yes, yes, I know.

– What do you think, this is kind of a question that I know how the American men feel, about the new mini-length – the dresses that are trying to break down.

Yes. I like very much when the fashion for women change. I like the very short... How do you say?

– Mini?

– Mini *jupe*. And then, after in France during one year of the very long dress – maxi. And now in France it is just the beginning of the mini, but I think in five or six month it will be a very big success. And I like it very much, because the fashion of the women needs to change very often, you know.

– **In this country now course men’s fashions are starting to change, where the fashion designers are putting just as much pressure on the American men to keep up with the styles. Has this happened yet in France?**

– Yes, it is the same problem in France, because I have in my home about ten or twelve suits that I can’t use now, because fashion in France changes every year now, and French people accept it. And they have to accept. Because I like to change very often, like for women.

– **It makes it better, I think, for a man to have to change fashions because it’s variety.**

– Yes, Yes, I agree.

– **But fashions are something else sometimes. In some of the cloths now are the ties are going back to the wide ties again, like they were in the 40s and the 30s.**

– **What is the most embarrassing or unusual thing, that’s ever happened to you during a life performance?**

– May be when I was to Japan for a tour, and I decided before the tour to announce my entire program in Japanese. And I learned all of my sentences in Japanese, but I did not understand what I was saying. And then one day on stage I had a very long sentence, you know. After two or three words, I don’t remember! And I don’t understand what I was saying, and it was impossible to continue. And I was on the stage, you know, without one word.

– **No script on the stage with you then.**

– Yes, I came back to my stand to take the paper, to read the paper. And I come back to the microphone and I forgot, again. And I came back two or three times, and at the end (it was the last number), and at the end I said: “Excuse me, now here is ‘The Love is Blue’” in English, you know.

– **Then, I imagine, they understood “The Love is Blue.”**

– Yes.

– **In English.**

– **Paul Mauriat, an American producer, sometimes called "A and R" man, artist and repertoire, which they look for artists, material for artists, and sometimes to the artists if they want to produce a song or play the song, in your case, to conduct your orchestra. And Paul Leka is Paul Mauriat’s American producer, and may be you, a lot of you might remember the song “Na Na Hey Hey Kiss Him Goodbye” done by the Steam, as well as**

**“Green Tambourine” – these songs were written and produced by Paul Leka. Of course he helped out in “Gone is Love” – your current hit right now on the American scene.**

– Yes, but “Gone is Love” was written by an American woman from Los Angeles, Gloria Sclerov, and by a man whose name is Joel Reed. And I choose Paul Leka because now I am an artist, a French artist, but I need many American songs because, really, I am more American artist than French artist. And many many American songs, but I can’t realize in France what kind of song the public like, you know. And Paul Leka chose many songs for me. For the last recording, he sent me about 70 songs, and I chose from these songs. Another thing very important, Paul Leka likes very much technique, you know. And him and I... I think we are now a good team because he is in New York; he is very often contact with groups, with rock-and-roll music, and he is very up-to-date, you know, and for me as French, it is very important for me.

**– Helps you out with American public – what’s current, what’s going on, so you could be right on top, as they say. Of course now you have a new album out, it’s been out for a short time now and has a title song, your current hit “Gone is Love” we’ve just been talking about, and you have Maison Williams song on your album as well, don’t you?**

– Yes. "Classical Gas". I think you know this song, because it was a big success in the States some months or some years ago. And “Let It Be” by the Beatles and “Bridge Over Troubled Water” by the Simon and Garfunkel, and about two titles were in France these two numbers. Big success in the same time, and for this reason, I think, it could be interesting to blend the two titles and to make a medley with the two titles.

**– And on the album, you do each one separately and then you do a medley of songs. And what I like about the two songs you are doing together as a medley is the free style you use, more or less you get away from the written notes and you get involved, you feel your way through almost like jazz, really.**

– Yes, yes. Because sometimes the arranger, one arranger, needs to write something just likewise, you know. And when I write an arrangement like “Let It Be” and “Bridge Over Troubled Water”, I am very easy, and I am very happy. And I hope the people will be too.

**– Wish you come across very beautifully on the album. If people don’t have the album, they should get it because it is a fantastic album. Of course, it has the current hit-song as well “Gone is Love”.**

**– We’ve been talking to Paul Mauriat who will be in concert at the Tuft Auditorium in Cincinnati, Ohio, and would like to thank him for taking**

**time to talk to us and welcome him again in Cincinnati and wish him success on the rest of his tour.**

– Thank you very much, and I'd like to be back soon.

– **I hope you can come back to Cincinnati again.**

– Thank you very much.

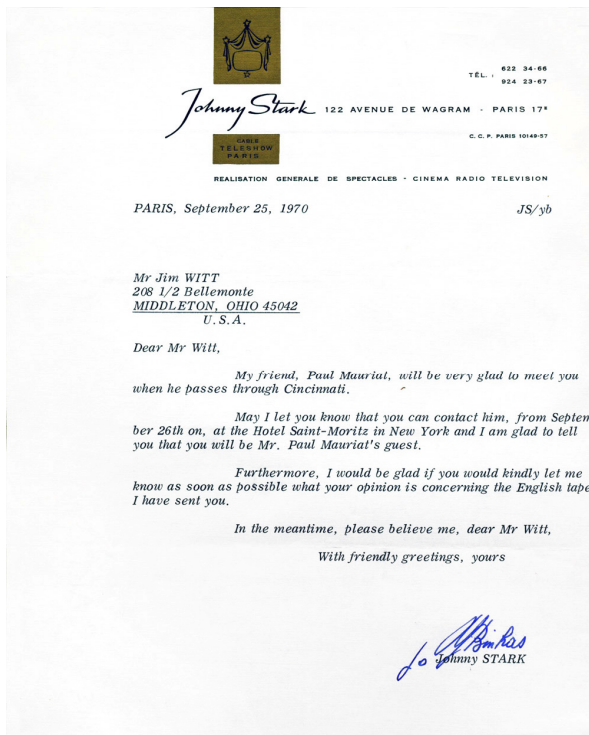
– **And thank you now. This is Jim Howard reporting from Cincinnati, Ohio.**

Transcript of the interview: Rada Sashina

# EVENING WITH PAUL MAURIAT

It was a fantastic fall evening in October '1970 when I got to spend an evening with Paul Mauriat when he visited Cincinnati, Ohio. At this time in my life, I was working for WMOH radio in Hamilton, Ohio (near Cincinnati) and was going to try to set up an interview through the agency that was bringing his show to town.

The evening was made possible by the manager/mentor of Mireille Mathieu. I had been corresponding with Johnny Stark for a short time and happened to mention in a letter that Paul Mauriat would be visiting the Queen City as part of his U.S. tour. Unknown to me at the time, Johnny and Paul were good friends. Within a few days I received a Special Delivery letter from Johnny telling that an evening with the Maestro had been arranged. Wow, was I excited.



Contact was made with Johnny Stark after I sent a letter to Barclay Records about Mireille Mathieu. He sent me, Mireille's records and publicity photos. An evening with Paul Mauriat was the... as we say in America... "the icing on the cake". Johnny sent the hotel information in New York where Paul, his wife and Loic Mirabud would be staying and I was to call him.

That day arrived and I nervously called the hotel in New York and was put right through to Paul's room. His manager, Loic, answered the phone and put me at ease right away. Loic got my information, the radio station's and my home phone number. Paul had just finished his shower and wanted to talk to me... truly a gentleman who made

me feel comfortable from the first word. Later, Loic would call me with the name of the hotel where they would be staying in Cincinnati and when we would get together.

At the hotel in Cincinnati, I was welcomed into their suite as if they had known me for a long time. For being a big named star, I was impressed with Paul's humbleness and friendliness. Of course I didn't want to talk a lot about Mireille.... even though I had a bunch of questions... because I was with him and it would not be polite.

Later at dinner, Paul discussed with me about Mireille's chances on the American record scene. After dinner, we went back to the hotel suite where we interviewed Paul for broadcast on WMOH. I was studying French at Berlitz School of Languages at the time but Paul wanted to speak in English. His English was much better than my French. When the interview was finished, we just sat around and talked about everything.



**JIM HOWARD** (right), music director at WMOH, Hamilton, Ohio, greets French band leader Paul Mauriat and wife Irene during Mauriat's recent concert engagement at the Taft Theater, Cincinnati. The meeting was arranged by a mutual friend, Johnny Stark, manager of Mireille Mathieu, one of France's top female vocalists.

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Paul asked me if I had ever talked with Johnny. Although I had Johnny's private number at his office and home, I never had the opportunity to talk to him. He was a busy person managing Mireille and Johnny Halliday. Paul had Loic call Johnny but he was on the road and not available. Needless to say my evening was full of excitement: an evening with Paul Mauriat and a chance to talk to Johnny Stark. Also, Johnny had tried to schedule a stop at the Cincinnati airport with Mireille for a visit after a command performance for the astronauts in Houston but was unable to do that because of their schedule.

Paul's concert at Music Hall was outstanding and a very enjoyable evening. This all happened in October '1970. Most of the evening remains in my mind as if it were yesterday. I still have the reel-to-reel tape of the interview which has now been put on CD.

My thanks to Paul, his wife, Irene, and Loic for a very pleasurable evening in my life.

Jim Witt

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Contact e-mail: [jimwittoh@yahoo.com](mailto:jimwittoh@yahoo.com)