

# The Socio-Political Allegory of La Cour des Miracles: A Comparative Analysis of Hugo's "Hunchback of Notre-Dame" and Gilles Maheu's eponym musical

Saturday, April 27, 2024 11:00 AM (30 minutes)

*The Court of Miracles (Cour des Miracles), is a mark left by the past existence of a marginalized society of the poor, the sick and the criminals of medieval Paris, organized as a monarchic system, between the XVI and XVII century. Thanks to Victor Hugo's renowned gothic novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame", today we are able to discover the no-longer existing Court of Miracles. The legend of this marginalized society continues to live not only through the words of Hugo, but also through the 1998 French eponym musical adaptation directed by Gilles Maheu. The two works of art show the symbolic significance of solidarity against the oppression of the Court of Miracles. Hugo's novel blends historical fiction, gothic elements, and social commentary, offering detailed insights through various character viewpoints, more specifically from the perspective of a French bohemian poet called Gringoire. Conversely, the musical adaptation, particularly Luck Mervil's rendition of "Cour des miracles", presents a poetic portrayal from the viewpoint of Clopin Trouillefou, the king of the Court of Miracles. Both works depict the Court as a refuge for the marginalized, highlighting themes of solidarity amidst societal injustices. Historical context reveals the Court's hierarchical organization and subversion of traditional morality, ultimately dismantled by royal decree. Gringoire's subjective portrayal in Hugo's novel and Trouillefou's celebratory depiction in the musical underscore the Court's transient unity amidst adversity. This analysis aims to interpret and understand the Court of Miracles as a symbol of unconventional solidarity, surviving on the margins of medieval Parisian society.*

Key words: Cour des Miracles, Victor Hugo, History, Hunchback of Notre Dame, French Literature, Marginalization, Medieval Paris

## Title

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