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2. Valse Acadienne
3. One-Step d'Amédée
4. La Valse d'Amédée (\*)
5. Contredanse de Freeman (\*)
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18. La Malheureuse (\*)
19. Valse d'Avant-Hier (\*)
20. Two-Step d'Ambrose
21. La Valse d'Auguste Breaux
22. Two-Step de Maman (\*)

Michael Doucet – vocals, fiddle, or  
accordion (\*)

David Doucet – guitar on fiddle  
selections

Recorded in 1989 by Michael Doucet  
and Chris Strachwitz

The fiddle selections were previously  
issued on a limited edition cassette:  
"Cajun Fiddle" by Michael Doucet  
with no label or catalog number © by  
Beausoleil Productions.

Produced by Michael Doucet & Chris  
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Notes about the songs by Michael  
Doucet.

Transcriptions and translations by  
Sharon Arms Doucet.

Cover by Anne Darrah

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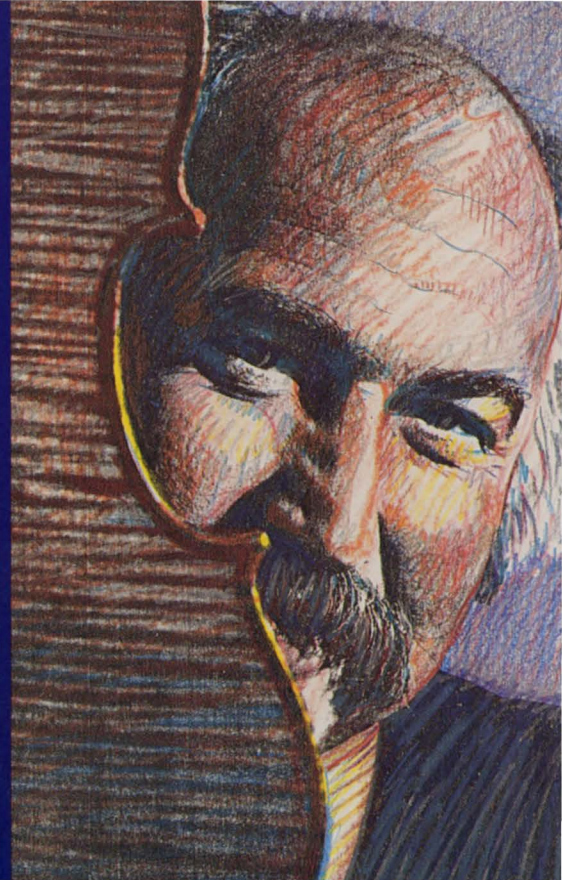
**MICHAEL  
DOUCET**

**BEAU  
SOLO**

**OVER 60 MINUTES  
OF CLASSIC  
CAJUN MUSIC**



CD321



# The Songs

**1. GRAND TASSO** (Dennis McGee): "Allons à Tasso" was the fifth song recorded by Dennis McGee and Sady Courville during their first session in New Orleans in 1929.

## **GRAND TASSO**

On va aller dans le Grand Tasso,  
C'est pour voir des bons musiciens,  
On va aller dans la Grand Tasso,  
C'est pour voir des belles bouclées,  
On va aller dans le Grand Tasso,  
C'est pour voir des belles danseuses.  
On va aller dans le Grand Tasso  
C'est pour voir des musiciens,  
On va aller dans le Grand Tasso  
C'est pour voir des belles bouclées,  
On va aller dans le Grand Tasso,  
C'est pour voir des jolies filles.

## **BIG TASSO**

We're going to go to Big Tasso  
Just to see some good musicians,  
We're going to go to Big Tasso,  
Just to see some pretty curls,  
We're going to go to Big Tasso,  
Just to see some good dancers.  
We're going to go to Big Tasso,  
Just to see some good musicians,  
We're going to go to Big Tasso,  
Just to see some pretty curls,  
We're going to go to Big Tasso,  
Just to see some pretty girls.

**2. VALSE ACADIENNE** (arr. by Michael Doucet): is a medley of three beautiful waltzes by Wayne Perry, Dennis McGee and Hector Duhon.

**3. ONE-STEP D'AMÉDÉE** (Michael Doucet): is a tune that popped out after naming our new-born son for the primo accordion player.

**4. LA VALSE D'AMÉDÉE** (Michael Doucet): is sort of rambling account of an orphan's life. Anyone who has ventured into the world of creativity and gone contrary to the grain of social acceptability may well relate. There's a certain universal peace of mind somewhere in the song.



### LA VALSE D'AMÉDÉE

O, o, dis bonsoir, chère,  
O, oué, m'en aller,  
Je suis orphelin, bébé,  
Quand j'étais jeune,  
Mes parents m'abandonnaient.  
O, o, chère catin,  
Je suis curieux, oué, pour d'être là.  
Les misères quand ça vient, bébé,  
O, yaie, ça fait du mal.  
Mais, je connais pas, ma chère joline,  
Comment t'as fais les misères.  
O, j'ai crié, Oué, quand moi, je suis  
tout seul,  
Quand je suis malade,  
Faudra aller l-bas,  
Les trois jeunes, les seuls qui me  
soignent.  
O, bébé, o j'ai crié pour toi,  
O, toi, Caroline,  
Ma chère catin,  
Comment je vas faire,  
Comment je vas faire moi tout seul?

**5. CONTREDANSE DE FREEMAN** (Freeman Fontenot): Freeman Fontenot was first a gentleman, then an extraordinary accordion player. It was always an extreme honor to be in his presence, to perform with him at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, and to listen to his always encouraging words of wisdom. His house was first a home, then the first public school for young French-speaking blacks in the Basile area, then a zydeco club that brought forth two great duos on consecutive nights: Clifton and Cleveland Chenier, and Canray Fontenot and Alphonse "Bois-Sec" Ardoin. Freeman was

### AMÉDÉE'S WALTZ

Oh, oh, say goodnight, dear.  
Oh, oh, I'm going away,  
I am an orphan, babe,  
When I was young,  
My parents abandoned me.  
Oh, oh, dear babe,  
I'm curious, yeah, to be there,  
When misery comes, babe,  
Oh, yaie, it hurts me so.  
But I don't know, my dear girl,  
How you've caused so much misery.  
Oh, I've cried  
Yeah, when I was all alone,  
When I'm sick,  
I have to go there,  
The three young ones are the only ones  
who take care of me.  
Oh, babe, I've cried for you,  
Oh, you, Caroline,  
My dear babe,  
What am I going to do,  
What am I going to do all alone?

born in 1900, and he remembered each of his special tunes by the years he learned them in. This particular piece is also known as "1916".

**6. BEE'S BLUES** (B. Fontenot & M. Doucet): The entire theme, images and melody of this song come from the late "Bee" Fontenot, Freeman's brother. Bee savored the styles of Amédée Ardoin and Adam Fontenot, Canray's father. He was the bluest accordion player under the sun and his booming baritone voice was rivaled only by Paul Robeson.

### BEE'S BLUES

Ma vieille maman, elle était là,  
On était pauvre, on était pauvre.  
On a besoin de l'argent,  
Mais elle n'en a pas trouvé.  
"J'ai besoin de la farine, oué, de la farine,  
Pour faire du pain mais dans la maison,"  
Mais elle n'avait, n'a plus.  
Elle a été là-bas dans le voisinage,  
Mais le voisinage, elle était pas pauvre,  
Mais elle n'a pas donné du tout.  
Elle n'a pas donné du tout.  
Quand ma vieille maman, elle est retournée,  
Elle m'a dit, "Non, non, non, non, non,  
Elle a pas donné, elle a pas donné,  
Elle a pas donné, pas rien du tout,  
Comment je vas faire, comment manger?"  
Mais moi, j'ai dit, "Qu'est-ce que je vas  
faire?  
Je vas prendre le vieux fusil,  
On va aller dans le clos, chercher  
un lapin."

### BEE'S BLUES

My old mama, she was there,  
We were poor, we were poor.  
We needed money,  
But she couldn't find any.  
"I needed some flour, yeah, some flour,  
To make some cornbread at the house,"  
But she didn't have any, didn't have  
any more.  
She went over to the neighbors',  
The neighbors weren't poor,  
But they didn't give her anything.  
They didn't give her anything at all.  
When my old Mama, she came back home,  
She said to me, "No, no, no, no, no,  
She didn't give, she didn't give,  
She didn't give me a single thing,  
What will I do, how will we eat?"  
So I said to myself, "What am I going  
to do?  
I'm going to take the old gun,  
I'll go into the fields  
And hunt a rabbit."

**7. VALSE A POP McGEE** (Dennis McGee): Another original Dennis McGee tune learned by listening, closely listening, and watching the master for many years in his home on St. Joseph Street, Eunice.

**8. BLUES ACADIENS** (W. Perry - B. Carriere - M. Doucet): is a combination of two old-time Acadian and Creole blues by Wayne Perry and Bébé Carriere.

**9. ISABEAU SE PROMÈNE** (PD) is an ancient French ballad overheard by a young Lula Landry at a country wedding celebration. As she tells the story, a group of elderly men, after several bottles of wine, began singing this eery melody and somber lyrics. After that one encounter, Lula retained verbatim every word from a song that originated in France, was brought to the New World and revived 200 years later by such a wonderful woman.

#### ISABEAU SE PROMÈNE

Isabeau se promène le long de son jardin,  
Le long de son jardin sur le bord de l'île,  
Le long de son jardin sur le bord de l'eau,  
Sur le bord du vaisseau.

Elle fit la rencontre de trente matelots.  
La plus jeune des trente, il s'est mis-t-à  
chanter.

"La chanson que tu chantes, je voudrais  
la savoir."

"Embarque dans ma barque, je te la  
chanterai."

Quand elle fut dans la barque, elle s'est  
mis à pleurer.

"Qu'avez-vous donc, la belle? Qu'avez-vous  
pleurer?"

"Je pleure mon anneau d'or, dans l'eau  
il est tombé."

#### ISABEAU WENT WALKING

Isabeau went walking in her garden,  
In her garden on the edge of the island,  
In her garden on the edge of the water,  
On the edge of the ship.

She met thirty sailors.  
The youngest of the thirty began  
to sing.

"The song that you're singing, I'd like  
to learn it."

"Come aboard my boat, and I will sing it  
for you."

When she was in the boat, she began  
to cry.

"What's the matter, beauty? Why are  
you crying?"

"I'm crying for my gold ring, it fell into  
the water."

"Ne pleure point, la belle, je vous le  
plongerai."

De la première plongée, il n'est rien  
rapporté.

De la deuxième plongée, l'anneau a voltigé.

De la troisième plongée, le gallant s'est  
noyé.

"Don't cry, beauty, I'll dive in and get  
it for you."

On the first dive, he brought back  
nothing.

On the second dive, the ring moved.

On the third dive, the gallant sailor  
drowned.

**10. GRAND MAMOU** (PD): is the staple of Cajun waltzes. Whether played by Clifton Chenier, Mayeuse LaFleur, or the extremely fluid Varise Connor, this tune always makes me stop, slow down, and remember the good times (les bons temps).

**11. PERRODIN TWO-STEP** (PD): was originally recorded by Angelas LeJeune on the accordion with twin fiddlers Dennis McGee and Ernest Frugè in New Orleans in 1929.

**12. CHEZ VARISE CONNOR** (V. Connor): One of the most remarkable individuals I've ever encountered is Varise Connor, a truly Cajun Renaissance man. His unique approach to life and music permeates the profound wisdom this man conveys. A song is not merely a fiddle tune in the hands of such a master, but a response to time and space, then and now, precisely dissected into equal moments of truth, dedication and perseverance. I've also had a great time while visiting Varise at his house, usually making it home just as the dawn was breaking.

**13. LA BÉTAILLE** (Isom Fontenot): is from the Cajun harmonica (musique bouche) player from Mamou, Isom Fontenot, the predecessor of Cajun blues.

#### LA BÉTAILLE

O, la bétaille,  
Elle a monté dans le 'tit arbre,  
Elle a tombé sur la hache,  
Elle a fait du mal,

#### WILD THING

Oh, the wild thing,  
She climbed up in the little tree,  
She fell on the axe,  
She hurt herself.



Du mal à 'tite bétaille,  
"Tite bétaille à cheveux rouges,  
"Tite bétaille à yeux bleus,  
Dis "bye-bye," chère bébé.

Hurt the little wild thing,  
Little wild thing with red hair,  
Little wild thing with blue eyes,  
Say "bye-bye," dear baby.

**14. GIGUE D'ACADIE** (E. Alleman): is perhaps the purest form of Acadian fiddle music to have survived the journey to Louisiana, thanks to the tenacity of Edouard Alleman of Bayou Lafourche. The fiddle is still the voice of choice over the accordion in that isolated, watery mainstay of Acadianism. Edouard raises turtles there and is not interested in winning any races. In his spare time he is a champion at pulling ancient sounds out of a fiddle.

**15. WADE'S WALTZ** (Caillette East Crêvée) (Wade Frugé): comes from the original stylist himself, Wade Frugé of Eunice. Although I've loved this tune for some time now, I promised Wade that I would not record it before he did. You can find this master musician's version on Arhoolie (LP/Cassette 5044).

**16. SEPT ANS SUR MER** (PD): is practically the only Acadian ballad that deals with the turmoils of life at sea, and loosely of the Acadian deportation from Nova Scotia.

#### SEPT ANS SUR MER

On a resté six ans sur mer,  
Sans pouvoir border la terre.  
Au bout de la septième année,  
On a manqué de provisions.  
On a mangé souris et rats,  
Jusqu' à la tourbe du navire.  
On a tiré la courte paille,  
Pour voir lequel qui serait mangé.

#### SEVEN YEARS AT SEA

They had been at sea for six years,  
Without coming near land.  
At the end of the seventh year,  
They ran out of provisions.  
They ate everything, mice and rats,  
Down to the hold of the ship.  
They drew for the shortest straw,  
To see who would be eaten.

O, voilà à 'tit Jean qu'il tombe le sort,  
a serait 'tit Jean qui serait mangé.

O, 'tit Jean, ça lui fait du mal,  
Il crie, "Courage, mes camarades!

"Je vois la terre sur toutes cotés,  
Trois pigeons blancs qui sont à voltiger.

"Je vois aussi trois filles du roi  
Qui se promenaient le long du rivage.

"O, si jamais je mets les pieds sur terre,  
La plus jolie, je l'épouserai."

Oh, it was to young John that the lot fell,  
It would be young John who would be eaten.

Oh, young John, it hurt him so,  
But he cried, "Have courage, my mates!

"I see land on all sides,  
And three white pigeons flying about.

"I also see three of the king's maidens  
Walking on the shore.

"Oh, if I ever put my feet on land again,  
I will marry the prettiest of them."

**17. CREOLE FRENCH BLUES** (Michael Doucet): A tribute to two greats of the diatonic blues, Amédée Ardoin and Nathan Abshire.

#### CREOLE FRENCH BLUES

O, chère bébé, gardez donc les paroles,  
Les paroles que tu m'as dit il y a pas  
longtemps.

Oué, bébé, depuis l'âge de quatorze ans,  
Tu m'as dit tu veux me marier souvent.

Oué, asteur, moi je t'ai guettée avec un autre,  
O, bébé, quoi tu fais avec ton homme?

Oué, chère catin, dans le fond de mon coeur,  
Tu connais t'étais la seule, malheureuse.

Oué, chère catin, gardez donc les conseils,  
Les conseils que moi je vas dire, c'est la  
vérité.

Si tu continues comme ça, chère bébé  
malheureuse,

Malheureuse, t'es jolie mais t'es pas bonne.

#### CREOLE FRENCH BLUES

Oh, dear baby, keep your word,  
Your word that you gave me so long ago.  
Yeah, baby, since the age of fourteen  
You've often told me you wanted to  
marry me.

Yeah, just now, I saw you with another,  
Oh baby, what are you doing to your man?  
Yeah, dear darling, at the bottom of  
my heart,

You know that you're the only one,  
wretched woman.

Yeah, dear darling, keep your word,  
The word that I'm going to say, it's the truth.  
If you keep on like that, wretched dear baby,  
Wretched woman, you're pretty but  
you're no good.

T'as passé dessous la porte d'en arrière,  
Chère catin, dans les misères, tout le  
temps là.

Tes parents n'est pas contents, tes  
parents est fâchés,

O bébé, quoi 'y a faire avec moi.

Moi, je vas dire bye-bye, c'est bye-bye  
pour toujours,

Chère bébé, c'est mon dernier bonsoir.

Mais, mon amour pour toi, mon amour  
pour toi,

Chère bébé, il y a pas une autre qui pensait.

**19. VALSE D'AVANT-HIER** (Michael Doucet): another original encouraged by Chris Strachwitz trailing me around my house with his portable DAT recorder saying, "Can you just make one up?" Yes, bien sûr!

**VALSE D'AVANT-HIER**

O oué, ma jolie fille,

O oué, et ou toi t'es?

O oué, je viens chercher

Dans la maison, catin, t'es pas là.

O, oué, je criais tout le temps,

Oué, pour toi, bébé, je connais.

O, oué, que moi, je m'en vas,

O, oué, pour rejoindre,

O, oué, tous les misères,

O oué, les chagrins.

**20. TWO-STEP D'AMBROSE** (Ambrose Thibodeaux): Ambrose Thibodeaux is the master at creating new segments to older songs by taking chances with different ideas. This music always has his timeless edge stamped on it.

You went through the back door,  
Dear darling, in misery, I'm always  
there.

Your parents aren't happy, your parents  
are angry,

Oh baby, what are you doing to me?

I'm going to say bye-bye, it's bye-bye  
for always,

Dear baby, it's my last goodnight.

But my love for you, my love  
for you,

Dear baby, I never think of another.

**THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY WALTZ**

Oh, yeah, my pretty girl,

Oh, yeah, where are you?

Oh, yeah, I come to look for you,

In the house, girl, you're not there.

Oh, yeah, I cried all the time,

Oh, for you, baby, I know.

Oh, yeah, I'm going,

Oh, yeah, to meet you,

Oh, yeah, all the misery,

Oh, yeah, the sorrows.

**21. LA VALSE D'AUGUSTE BREAUX** (Auguste Breaux): One of the earliest and most demanding examples of the Acadian accordion style.

**22. TWO-STEP DE MAMAN** (Amédée Ardoin & Michael Doucet): A predecessor in style to the great Iry Lejeune's "Lacassine Special."

**TWO-STEP DE MAMAN**

O, chère bébé,

M'en aller pour rejoindre,

A la maison aussi loin,

Chère catin, je vas arriver.

O yé yaie, les paroles

Que tu m'as dit, a sonnait

Tous les jours et toute la nuit,

O bébé, je veux me marier.

O oué, un jour,

Chère catin, je veux t'avoir,

Ta chère figure près de la mienne,

En septembre, je vas demander,

Je vas demander Si tu veux me marier,

O bébé, s'il vous plait,

Chère catin, donnez-moi ta 'tite main,

Ta petite main pour toujours.

**MAMA'S TWO-STEP**

Oh, dear baby,

I'm going to meet you

At your house so far away,

Dear darling, I'm on my way.

O yé yaie, the words

That you said to me, they ring

All day and all night long,

Oh baby, I want to get married.

Oh yeah, one day,

Dear darling, I'm going to have you,

Your dear face next to mine,

In September, I'm going to ask,

I'll ask if you want to marry me,

Oh baby, please,

Dear darling, give me your little hand,

Your little hand for always.

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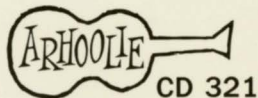
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# Michael Doucet

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