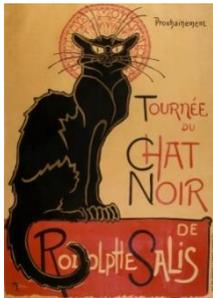


**STOP 13:** Tour of The Black Cat 1896, Théophile-Alexandre  
STEINLEN



**Music:** Aristide Bruant singing from *Music-Témoignages musicaux autour de Toulouse*

**Narrator**

The cabaret and club, *Le Chat Noir* - The Black Cat – had been going for some fifteen years when the artist Théophile-Alexandre Steinlen created this striking poster. Founded by the impresario Rodolphe Salis, Le Chat Noir was at the heart of bohemian Montmartre. – It was a place where poets, intellectuals, artists and performers mingled – and where they fell in and out of love, and caroused well into the small hours.

This poster was used to promote the tour of Le Chat Noir's famous shadow theatre, and related entertainment, to cities throughout France. The jagged, stylised contours of Steinlen's cat mimic those of the shadow theatre's cut-out figures - which were at first made from cardboard, and then later from zinc.

As well as bearing the cabaret's motto: *Montmartre Montjoye* –or Montmartre Mount Joy – the cat's halo is a tongue-in-cheek reference to the halos used by Alphonse Mucha in a number of his posters. Steinlen's iconic poster of the black cat was created months before the death of Salis, and the subsequent closure of his famous cabaret.

Steinlen has often been compared with Lautrec, with whom he shared many subjects. – And the two men often vied for celebrity commissions. Originally from Switzerland, once Steinlen had settled in France he became a member of Le Chat Noir's creative circle, making illustrations for the cabaret's journal. He was a prolific printmaker, and produced a huge quantity of posters, song sheets and theatre programmes.