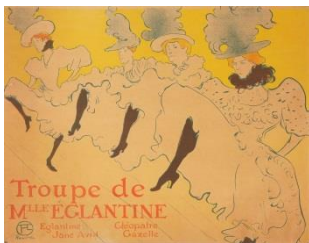


**STOP 5: The troupe of Mademoiselle Eglantine 1896 Henri  
de TOULOUSE-LAUTREC**



**Music:** *Cancan d'Orphée aux enfers*

**Narrator:**

Dressed in their trademark frilly petticoats, black stockings and plumed hats, Mademoiselle Eglantine's troupe of dancers perform the ronde de jambe – or rotation of the leg – displaying the energy and gaiety of the cancan. Jane Avril commissioned Lautrec to create this poster, advertising the troupe's appearance at London's Palace Theatre of Varieties. The commission came just a few days before their opening performance. Lautrec used an existing publicity photograph to produce a series of sketches, before coming up with the final design.

The dancers here are Jane Avril – on the far left - Cleopatre, Gazelle, and Mademoiselle Eglantine – on the far right.

These women - stars of the Moulin Rouge - were starting to make a name for themselves abroad, and when Avril and the troupe arrived in London they hoped to take the place by storm. But they were disappointed by the audience's lukewarm reaction. Londoners were no longer so excited by the cancan, and Avril feared that their show was *too genteel and too respectable* to meet British expectations of a French dance act.

**SFX:** Laughter, men hollering and wolf-whistles

In addition, the troupe thought that whistles from the audience were signs of disapproval. – At the time whistling was banned in French theatres. They soon realised they had misunderstood. - In England whistling was a sign of delight! Any fears the young women had about their reception were soon forgotten when they found themselves inundated with invitations to exclusive London clubs and to evenings at the opulent Savoy Hotel.

Fades back up into *Cancan d'Orphée aux enfers*