



INTERNATIONAL COMPOSERS' GUILD, INC.

founded by Edgar Varèse, May 1921

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113 WEST 57TH STREET (STEINWAY BUILDING), NEW YORK CITY

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188 Sullivan Street
May 13, 1927

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Mr. John Barrymore
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Los Angeles, California.

Dear Jack,

I have just finished reading a play about Gilles de Rais. All the time I was reading it I thought of you. What a role for you, Gilles de Rais! Marshal of France and Blue Beard and don Juan with an almost supernatural fascination, selling his soul to the devil, indulging in satanic orgies, black masses etc. etc.; a man of tremendous imagination, dissatisfied, craving for an impossible, lasting beauty, scornful, ruthless, cruel, with an insatiable, restless, elevated mind---a devil, a Diogenes and a poet.

The play deals with that somewhat legendary period of Gilles de Rais' life, after he has fought with Jeanne d'Arc, been made Marshal of France and returned to his barony of Machecoul, where he sells himself to the devil, finds and loses Gilla, is the terror of all the mothers whose daughters and sons are his eager victims. The play ends with his historic trial, handled with great force and originality.

It seems to me that besides being remarkable from a literary point of view, this play is excellent theatre---- intensely dramatic, tragic, mordantly satiric and poignantly poetic and tender.

If you are planning a return to the stage (as we all hope) you ought to read this play. I have asked the author, Vincent Huidobro, who is here from Paris for a few weeks, not to show it to anyone else with a view to the production, until I hear from you. Let me know quickly if you would be interested to read it.

As ever

JULIUS MATTFELD
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