J’Attendrai (Tornerai)

One of the most wonderful songs is the French song “J’attendrai”. Translated, it means “I Will Wait”. It’s a beautiful song about waiting for a loved one to return. Recorded in 1938 (in French) by an singer called Rina Ketty, it became hugely popular at the time and later came to represent the start of the Second World War. It became a counterpart to Lale Andersen's “Lili Marleen” in Germany and Vera Lynn's “We'll Meet Again in Britain.”

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Rina Ketty (1911 - 1996), whose real name was Cesarina Picchetto, was an Italian singer. She went to Paris in the 30s. In 1938 and 1939, she made her breakthrough with songs like “Sombreros et mantilles” and “J'attendrai.” Despite the popularity of these Chansons during World War II, she was not able to stay in the spotlights after 1945. In 1954 she moved to Canada and in 1965 she returned to France but was unable to revive her pre-war success.



Rina Ketty

Rina Ketty's Italian accent highlighting the French text of the song, worked wonderfully on the radio of those days, but also on various subsequent recorded versions. Her version was followed the same year by one of Belgian chanteuse Anne Clercy, and both Tino Rossi and Jean Sablon recorded it in 1939. When France was occupied in 1940, it quickly became the big war song, with the love song's title being interpreted as meaning waiting for peace and/or liberation.



Rina Ketty - J'attendrai, 1938

"J'attendrai" is actually a French version of the Italian song "Tornerai" (Italian for "You Will Return") composed by Dino Olivieri (music) and Nino Rastelli (lyrics). ‘Tornerai’ is the title of a piece of light music written in 1936. Dino Olivieri was born on December 5, 1905 in Senigallia, Marche, Italy. He died on January 24, 1963 in Milan, Lombardy, Italy. Nino Rastelli was born on January 1, 1913, Milano and died on October 4, 1962, Rome. French lyric written by Louis Poterat, was really an adaptation whilst keeping the sentiment of the original lyric.



Nino Rastelli

"Tornerai" was first recorded in 1937 by both Carlo Buti and Trio Lescano (accompanied by the Italian jazz quartet Quartetto Jazz Funaro), and become a huge hit in Italy. Carlo Buti (Florence, 1902 - Montelupo Fiorentino, 1963) was an Italian singer known as "the Golden Voice of Italy." He retired in 1956 after having recorded 1574 songs. At the time, he was the most recorded voice in Italian music history. His unique warm and melodic *"tenorino"* style of high quasi-falsetto phrasing sung in the
"mezza voce"
made him an international success.



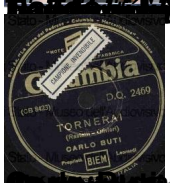
Carlo Buti

Trio Lescano was a vocal trio singing close harmony. The trio became extremely popular in Italy in the 1930s and 1940s. The trio was an Italian version of American groups such as the Boswell Sisters, the Andrews Sisters and was formed by three Dutch sisters whose names were italianized into Alessandra, Giuditta and Caterinetta Lescano. Directed by maestro Carlo Prato and thanks to the radio, they became immediately so famous that even Benito Mussolini, passing by their balcony one day, recognized them and stopped to greet them.











Madama Butterfly- Humming Chorus