

**Aristide Bruant (1851-1925)** was one of the first stars of the cabaret and a forefather of the modern cabaret song. As an ensemble member of the first cabaret of the modern age, the Parisian Black Cat (Chat noir), from 1881 on, and then in his own cabaret The Reed Whistle (Mirliton) of 1885, he presented his socially critical songs that attacked the bourgeoisie and glorified the social outcasts. His songs served as models up through the singer-songwriter movement of the 1960s. Bruant's appearance in high boots, a red shirt, a broad-rimmed hat and with a rugged walking stick was immortalized by Henri Toulouse-Lautrec in portraits, drawings, and posters. His drastic castigations of the audience, raging against the cabaret as a tourist attraction, are legendary.

*Aristide*

*Bruant*

“It's the rainy air of the streets in the outlying districts, where the occasional lantern burns in the evenings, the cross and the gallows are both nearby, and all the tragedies of the stabbings and girls' sad tales end in the clinic... To the French, Bruant was the expression of his times, of his era, of his bygone Paris, which he immortalized for world literature.”  
(Kurt Tucholsky, 1925)

