

L'Esprit Baroque presents
Mirecourt Festival 2018
Hall of Mirrors of the Sun King

Thursday, August 2, 2018, 7:00 p.m.
Villa Massatt



"Louis XIV and the Royal Family" Jean Nocret, 1670

featuring:

Elysha Massatt, soprano
Sarah Vay Kerns, flute
Sylvia Schwartz, violin
John Ott, viola da gamba
Heriberto Ramos, cello
Janice Massatt, harpsichord

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Program

Sonate Deuxieme in G Major.....Jean-Fery Rebel (1666-1747)

I. Gracieusement

II. Grave

III. Viste

Sylvia Schwartz, violin
John Ott, viola da gamba, Janice Massatt, harpsichord

Quartet III in D minor.....Louis-Gabriel Guillemain (1705-1770)

II. Larghetto

Sarah Vay Kerns, recorder, Sylvia Schwartz, violin, John Ott, viola da gamba
Heriberto Ramos, cello, Janice Massatt, harpsichord

Suite 1 in D Minor.....Antoine Forqueray.(1672-1745)

I. La Portugaise

II. La Couperin

Janice Massatt, harpsichord

Sonata No. 1 in F Major from *Les delices de solitude*.....Michel Corrette (1707-1795)

I. Allegro

II. Aria Affetuoso

III. Allegro

Heriberto Ramos, cello
John Ott, cello, Janice Massatt, harpsichord

Sonata 1 in D major for Flute and Harpsichord.....Joseph Bodin de Boismortier (1689-1755)

I. Sicilienne

II. Gayement

III. Gracieusement

IV. Gayement

Sarah Vay Kerns, flute, Janice Massatt, harpsichord

Suite in D Major, Livre II.....Marin Marais (1656-1728)

- I. Prelude
- II. Allemande “la Familiere”
- III. Sarabande
- IV. Les Voix Humaines

John Ott, viola da gamba
Heriberto Ramos, cello, Janice Massatt, clavicymbalum

Intermission

L'Isle de Delos.....Élisabeth-Claude Jacquet de la Guerre (1665-1729)

- 1. Prelude Symphonie
- 2. Recitatif
- 3. Aria “Pour luy les filles de memoire”
- 4. Aria “Terpsicore, au son des Muzettes”
- 5. Aria “Regnez, regnez, brillante Flore”
- 6. Recitatif
- 7. Aria “Coulez dans une paix profonde”
- 8. Recitatif
- 9. Aria “Les arbres rejouis agitent leur feuillage”
- 10. Aria “Écoutez les sons touchants”
- 11. Aria “Durez toujours tranquilles jeux”

Elysha Massatt, soprano, Sarah Vay Kerns, flute, Sylvia Schwartz, violin
John Ott, viola da gamba, Heriberto Ramos, cello, Janice Massatt, harpsichord

Fin

Program Notes

Jean-Féry Rebel (1666-1747) was the son of a singer, employed in the French court. He studied violin and composition with Jean-Baptiste Lully, who soon granted him a position in the Opera and in the 24 Violons du Roy. He soon became the concertmaster of both groups, as well as being granted the privilege to compose for the King. He dedicated many of his sonatas to his powerful patrons, including a Tombeau for his teacher Lully, who died tragically of gangrene in 1687. As Rebel grew older, he gave his positions as a court musician to his son François, also a talented violinist. He edited and published his compositions in collections later in life.

His second collection of violin sonatas, published in 1713, was surprisingly forward-looking, resembling more the sonatas of the late Baroque than the dance suites of his contemporaries. They feature four individual movements which are not dances, each a complete idea. Tonight's program features the second of this set, in G major.

Louis-Gabriel Guillemain (1705-1770) was brought up in the household of the Count of Rochecouart, a close friend and ally of Louis XIV. He received the best education and training in music, including a trip to Italy to take lessons with the renowned violin teacher Giovanni Battista Somis. Upon his return he quickly gained a position in the royal court, playing in the legendary 24 Violons du Roy. He gained a reputation as one of the best violinists in France. However, he developed habits of drinking heavily and spending money extravagantly, and frequently found himself in debt. Contemporary accounts attribute his death to suicide by stabbing.

In 1743 Guillemain published a collection of 6 *Sonates en quatuors*, op. 12, written for flute, violin, viol and basso continuo. Since he himself was a violinist, the violin part is the most prominent and most difficult. Tonight's program features the third of this set, in D minor.

Antoine Forqueray (1672-1745) was a gifted viola da gamba player, who quickly established himself a place in the Royal court, playing as a teenager alongside greats such as Marais. His reputation grew as he matured, and he was believed at the time to be the most skilled viol player to have ever lived. Certainly his music for viol and continuo is the most difficult in the repertoire. His son Jean-Baptiste-Antoine was also a gifted viol player at a very young age, which may have provoked some jealousy in their relationship. The younger Forqueray was jailed, and later exiled, due to his father's influence, but in both cases the order was remanded because of his skill in playing. They were part of the last generation of viol players in France, and in fact the last generation of viol players in Europe until the Early Music revival.

After Antoine's death, Jean-Baptiste-Antoine published a collection of pieces he attributed to his father, though he may have composed or edited some or all himself. He also published a version of the same pieces transcribed for harpsichord. Tonight's program features three movements from the first suite. Since these are transcribed from pieces written for viola da gamba, the register is very low. Each movement is fancifully named, often for a celebrity at court. La Laborde was named for Jean-Joseph de Laborde, the King's banker. La Portugaise was probably named for Mariana Victoria, once engaged to Louis XV and later the Queen of Portugal, and La Couperin was named for François Couperin, the popular composer who epitomized the style of the high French Baroque.

Michel Corrette (1707-1795) was one of eight children of an organist named Gaspard Corrette. Born in Rouen, he spent his career in Paris as an organist, teacher and composer of music. Most of his compositions use material from popular tunes and works by other composers, giving him a reputation as a composer of light, popular music. During his lifetime he was ridiculed as much as he was revered, and his students were often referred to as “anachorettes,” short for ânes de Correttes, which translates to “Corrette’s donkeys.” He also wrote many treatises about how to play harpsichord and several other instruments, which are a rich source of material for music historians.

His collection *Les Délices de la Solitude* (The delights of solitude) op. 20 (1738) consists of six cello sonatas with basso continuo. They are very melodic, in the French Galant style, imitating the vocal practices used in the opera. These were later republished in 1760 accompanying a method book for cello. Tonight’s program features the second sonata of the set.

Joseph Bodin de Boismortier (1689-1755) had a long and successful career as a composer, even though he never was granted an appointment to the French court. He was given a royal privilege to publish in 1724, and kept publishing music until his death. He published an opera, *Daphnis et Chloe*, and a number of cantatas, but is mostly known for his instrumental works. Unlike many of his contemporaries, he did not specialize in any one instrument, but wrote collections of music for every instrument popular at the time. In particular, he was one of the first composers to write sonatas and chamber works for the transverse flute. He often wrote for unusual combinations of instruments, frequently including two or more transverse flutes.

The Sonata in G Major is the first of six flute sonatas, Op. 91, first published in 1741. Unlike his previous flute sonatas written for flute and basso continuo, the Op. 91 collection is written for flute and harpsichord, where the harpsichord has an equally important role.

Marin Marais (1656-1728) was a gifted virtuoso on the viola da gamba, and one of the most important composers of the French Baroque era. He studied viola da gamba with Jean de Sainte-Colombe, and by age 19 he was playing with the Opera orchestra in Paris under Jean-Baptiste Lully. He soon started composing, under the tutelage of Lully, and was appointed as a royal chamber musician to Louis XIV. By 1690 he also conducted and composed for the Opera, a post he inherited after the premature death of Lully. As he grew older, he passed his position at court to his son Roland. Marais had a great reputation as a teacher, and many of the next generation of viol players, such as Charles Dollé, Louis de Caix-d’Hervelois, and Jacques Morel are believed to have studied with him.

The D major suite performed tonight is the fifth suite in Book 2 of his *Pièces de Viole*, a huge collection in five volumes of pieces written for viola da gamba and continuo. Book 2 was published in 1701, near the height of his career. Of particular note in this suite is the character piece, *Les voix humaines* (human voices). The rhythms and articulations of this movement imitate the natural rhythms and timbres of a speaking voice.

Elisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre (1665-1729) was born to the Jacquet family, a famous family of musicians. By the age of 5 she was adopted into the household of Madame de Montespan, Louis XIV’s most famous mistress, and sang and played harpsichord for the court until 1684, when she left the court to marry the organist Marin de la Guerre. She was given the Royal Privilege to compose and publish music, a rare honor in France, and was the first French woman to compose operas. She also published three volumes of cantatas, two volumes of keyboard music and a book of trio sonatas. Her works are revolutionary and forward-thinking, combining the Italian styles of her teachers with the tastes of the French high Baroque.

L’Isle de Delos comes from her third book of cantatas, first published in 1715. It depicts the Isle of Delos in Greek mythology, where Apollo rules over his daughters, the nine Muses. This cantata was composed for Louis XIV, who often represented himself as “the Sun King” or Apollo.



Image of Mirecourt lutherie workshop reprinted from The Strad, Magazine, August 2014

About the Mirecourt Festival

Welcome to the sixth annual Mirecourt Festival concert, which honors several people and instruments in the group before you! July 31st is the wedding anniversary of Paul and Janice Massatt, celebrated in part by this concert. The concert is titled Mirecourt in reference to the history of the famous and prolific group of luthiers who worked in Mirecourt, France. This community of instrumentmakers was decimated by World War I, with the younger generation of craftsmen pulled away to combat (from which many did not return) and with the town itself being close to the Western Front. This image shows craftsmen in a Mirecourt workshop prior to the War. The work at Mirecourt was disrupted until successful efforts to rebuild knowledge and skills and resume instrument making in the 1970s. Paul Massatt's violin was made at Mirecourt circa 1900, and his viola at the revitalized Mirecourt and sold on July 31st, 1979. John Ott's cello was made in France, likely also at Mirecourt, circa 1900.