

2023
BEVERLEY
& EAST RIDING
EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL

Ensemble Molière

Theatrical Tastes

East Riding Theatre
Sunday 28 May 7.30pm

Ensemble Molière

Flavia Hirte *flute*

Alice Earll *violin*

Cationa McDermid *bassoon*

Kate Conway *viola da gamba, cello*

Satoko Doi-Luck *harpsichord*

Theatrical Tastes

Ouverture from *Tancredi*

André Campra 1660-1744

arr. Satoko Doi-Luck

Entrée de Polymnie from *Les Boréades*

Jean-Philippe Rameau 1683-1764

Excerpts from *Huitième Concert, dans le
Goût théâtral*

François Couperin 1668-1733

Ouverture

Grande Ritournéle

Air Noblement

Air Léger

Loure

Air animé et léger

Sarabande

Air Tendre

Air de Baccantes

Les Caractères de la danse

Jean-Féry Rebel 1666-1747

Interval

Suite from *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*

Jean- Baptiste Lully 1632-87

Ouverture

Gavotte

Canaries

Marche pour La Cérémonie des Turcs

Air des Espagnols

L'entrée des Scaramouches

Chaconne

Excerpts from *Le Jaloux corrigé*
Introduction, Contredanse, Tambourin

Michel Blavet 1700-68

Suite from *Dardanus*
Air pour les plaisirs – Marche pour les
différentes nations
Air Gracieux
Entrée Majestueuse pour les Guerriers
Premier et Deuxième Tambourins
Lieux funestes
Sommeil
Chaconne

Rameau
arr. Satoko Doi-Luck

The French baroque stage was the setting for drama, ballet and also the newly created genre of opera; the theatre facilitated a magnificent outpouring of creativity as well as being an important political tool under close supervision of the monarchy. The productions combined technological wizardry and luxurious-looking costumes with text, music and dance to create awe-inspiring spectacles.

King Louis XIV had an enduring passion for dance and music, and long admired the work of the leading French dramatist Molière. In a game-changing move he appointed Molière's friend the composer Jean-Baptiste Lully as court composer and changed the course of Western music forever. Molière and Lully collaborated on many entertainments for the King, inventing an entirely new genre – the comédie-ballet – of which *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* remains the greatest example.

Lully maintained the monopoly on theatrical composition for many years, until contemporaries such as Marc-Antoine Charpentier and André Campra began to shine through. The next biggest name in French theatre music was Jean-Philippe Rameau, and his appearance on the French music scene was so controversial that there were even factions of supporters who identified themselves as Lullistes or Ramoneurs.

Ouverture from *Tancredi*

André Campra
arr. Satoko Doi-Luck

Although relatively unknown today, Campra was hugely successful in his day and was widely regarded as the leading French opera composer in the years between

Lully and Rameau. Starting out as a cathedral music director, he gave up his position at Notre Dame in 1700, allowing him to focus solely on his career as a composer of theatrical music. Campra's tragédie en musique *Tancredi* was a collaboration with librettist Antoine Danchet, and is loosely based on the legend of Tancred and Clorinda in Tasso's epic poem *Gerusalemme Liberata*.

Entrée de Polymnie from *Les Boréades*

Jean-Philippe Rameau

Les Boréades was Jean-Philippe Rameau's last tragédie lyrique. Despite making it to rehearsals, it was never performed in Rameau's lifetime, and although we don't know why, a variety of theories has been mooted. The gossip of the time include that the music was too hard, the plots were too subversive or that the controversial production caused fighting between courtiers. As with many of the tragédies lyriques, the plot derives from classical mythology, and in this instance the legend of Abaris the Hyperborean, priest of Apollo. In this scene, we see the entrance of Polyhymnia, the goddess of poetry, hymn, dance and elegance.

Excerpts from *Huitième Concert, dans le Goût théâtral*

François Couperin

Ouverture

Grande Ritournéle

Air Noblement

Air Léger

Loure

Air animé et léger

Sarabande

Air Tendre

Air de Baccantes

François Couperin is known as one of the French baroque period's most influential instrumental composers, being a master of the harpsichord, a church organist, and charged with composing music for the royal chamber. It is in his *Huitième Concert* from his collection *Les Goûts-réunis, ou Nouveaux Concerts* that Couperin finally flexes his theatrical muscles. Titled 'dans le Goût théâtral' or 'in theatrical taste', it pays homage to the Lullian tragédie lyrique with a suite including an *Ouverture*, a *Grand Ritournéle* and an almost exhaustive catalogue of dances used on stage at the time.

Les Caractères de la danse

Jean-Féry Rebel

Jean-Féry Rebel was a prodigious violinist before going on to study composition with Lully. A hugely innovative and bold composer, Rebel was one of the first, and most successful, to write a new form of music: the ballet d'action. These works were suites contrived specifically as a showcase for skilled dancers, enabling them to demonstrate their talents through a series of dances, with a narrative guided by the music. This form was particularly celebrated by the three most famous dancers of the day – Françoise Prévost, Marie Sallé and Marie Anne de Cupis de Camargo – who wanted to promote dance as an art form that could exist independently of the tragédie en musique and tell stories in its own right.

Suite from *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*

Jean-Baptiste Lully

Ouverture

Gavotte

Canaries

Marche pour La Cérémonie des Turcs

Air des Espagnols

L'entrée des Scaramouches

Chaconne

In Lully and Molière's pioneering genre of comédie-ballet, music and dance were interspersed with spoken word, providing interludes or reflections on the narrative. *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* premiered in 1670, but by 1672 the collaboration between these two giants of the French baroque scene had ended in acrimony. Molière turned to Charpentier to provide the music for his final productions, and Lully worked with Philippe Quinault on the new genre of tragédie en musique, which later became known as tragédie lyrique.

Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme satirises social climbing in seventeenth-century France, and the title itself is an oxymoron, making fun of both the ambitious middle classes and the snobbish aristocracy. The play illustrates the life and social aspirations of the middle-class M. Jourdain as he attempts to climb the social ladder and become an aristocrat. The final scene depicts a ridiculous ceremony where Jourdain believes he will be officially ennobled by a 'Turkish prince'.

Excerpts from *Le Jaloux corrigé*

Michel Blavet

Introduction, Contredanse, Tambourin

Born in 1700, Michel Blavet reputedly acquired a flute by accident, but became known as a master of the instrument, leaving behind a record of technical knowledge that remains invaluable to this day. In 1738, he became the principal flute in Louis XV's personal musical ensemble, the *Musique du Roi*, and in 1740 he joined the Paris Opéra orchestra. Premiered in 1752, *Le Jaloux Corrigé* (The Man Cured of Jealousy) is sometimes counted as the first French comic opera, and was a parody of the Italianate style that was growing popular in France. It is the only manuscript of Blavet's four operas to survive.

Suite from *Dardanus*

Rameau

arr. Satoko Doi-Luck

Air pour les plaisirs – Marche pour les différentes nations

Air Gracieux

Entrée Majestueuse pour les Guerriers

Premier et Deuxième Tambourins

Lieux funestes

Sommeil

Chaconne

Dardanus is a tragédie lyrique by Jean-Philippe Rameau with a French-language libretto by Charles-Antoine Leclerc de La Bruère, loosely based on the Greek legend of Dardanus, son of Zeus and Electra. The opera premiered at a time when the quarrel between Rameau's supporters and those of the operas of Lully had become ever more embittered. Rameau's opponents – the so-called Lullistes – were conservatives who accused him of destroying the French operatic tradition established by Lully under King Louis XIV. Yet they could not dissuade the Paris Opéra from offering Rameau commissions for new works, despite desperately wanting Rameau to fail.

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Ensemble Molière

Ensemble Molière has gained a reputation as an established early music ensemble. The unique combination of instruments provides memorable and creative programmes from the repertoire of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, all performed on historic instruments. Ensemble Molière was selected as the first-ever BBC Radio 3 New Generation Baroque Ensemble for two years from October 2021. This new scheme is run in partnership by BBC Radio 3, the National Centre for Early Music and the Royal College of Music. Finalists at the York Early Music International Young Artists Competition and Future Baroque Artists at the London Festival of Baroque Music, the ensemble has given concerts throughout the UK and Europe, including the MAFestival fringe in Bruges and the Oudemuziek Fringe Festival in Utrecht.

The ensemble has also premiered a cross-arts opera project, *Pygmalion*, part-funded by Arts Council England and supported by Stroud Green Festival and Brighton Early Music Festival. Ensemble Molière has been invited to perform live on BBC Radio 3's In Tune on several occasions. To celebrate the 400th anniversary of French playwright and actor Molière, the ensemble joined forces with two clowns to create a new music-theatre show, an exploration of Molière's world through his words and the music of his time. The show's London premiere took place in July 2022 and it was also performed at the York Early Music Christmas Festival in December.

<https://www.ensemblemoliere.com/>

Ensemble Molière is the first ensemble to be chosen as the New Generation Baroque Ensemble supported by BBC Radio 3, the Royal College of Music and the National Centre for Early Music.



BEVERLEY & EAST RIDING EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL is directed by Delma Tomlin MBE and administered by the National Centre for Early Music through the York Early Music Foundation (registered charity number 1068331)

National Centre for Early Music

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