

*Bennington Baroque presents*  
*Les Idées Heureuses*

Saturday, March 17, 2018

Emily Hale, baroque violin  
André Laurent O'Neil, viola da gamba  
Sandra Mangsen, harpsichord

The Old First Church  
Vermont Rte 9 & Monument Ave  
Bennington, Vermont

[www.benningtonbaroque.org](http://www.benningtonbaroque.org)



A concert celebrating the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of  
François Couperin, le Grand  
Paris, 1668

Next Concert: Such Stuff as Dreams  
*Renaissonics*  
Sunday, May 27, 2018  
2:30 pm  
Bennington Museum  
Bennington, Vermont

## Program

- Prélude 5  
*L'Art de toucher le clavecin* (1716)  
15<sup>e</sup> Ordre, *Pièces de clavecin*, Livre 3 (1722)  
François Couperin *le Grand*  
(1668–1733)
- La Régente ou la Minerve, *Noblement, sans lenteur*  
Le Dodo ou L'amour au Berceau, *pièce croisée*  
L'Évaporée, *Très légèrement*  
Muséte de Choisi, *Tendrement*  
Muséte de Taverni, *Légèrement*  
F. Couperin
- La Superbe ou la Forqueray  
*Fierement, et sans lenteur*  
*Pièces de clavecin*, Livre 3  
La Couperin  
*Pieces de viole* (1747)  
Antoine Forqueray  
(1671/2–1745)
- Sonate à la Maresienne  
*La gamme et autre morceaux de pièces* (1723)  
Marin Marais  
(1656–1728)
- Un peu grave--Légèremen  
Un peu gay  
Sarabande  
Très vivement--Gravement  
Gigue

Intermission

Prélude 2 (1716)

*L'Art de toucher le clavecin* (1716)

2<sup>e</sup> Ordre *Pieces de clavecin*, Livre 1 (1713)

F. Couperin

Allemande, *La Laborieuse*

Premier Courante

Seconde Courante

Sarabande, *La Prude*

Gavotte

*La Garnier*

*Les Idées Heureuses*

*La Diligente*

3<sup>e</sup> Concert

*Concerts royaux* (1722)

F. Couperin

Prélude, *Lentement*

Allemande, *Légèrement*

Courante

Sarabande, *grave*

Gavotte

Muzette, *Naïvement*

Chaconne, *Légère*

The harpsichord, built by David Jensen, is tuned at A=415 Hz in an 18<sup>th</sup>-century French temperament.

## Performers

**Emily Hale** is a Boston-based violinist specializing in historical performance. She performs with The Sebastians, Grand Harmonie, and has appeared with the Four Nations Ensemble and Trinity Wall Street Baroque Orchestra. In Europe, she has performed with the Early Opera Company, Jeune Orchestra Atlantique, and members of Florilegium, as well as at the London Handel Festival, Valletta International Baroque Festival, St. George's Hanover Square and the National Gallery (London). Emily won the McKenna Prize for Baroque Music, performed on BBC Chanel 4, was a soloist in Vivaldi's Four Seasons with Aston Magna, and viola d'amore soloist with the Royal College of Music Baroque Orchestra. A versatile and adventurous musician, she has commissioned new works for period instruments as a founding member of Consort 21. Emily holds an MPerf in Historical Performance with Distinction from the Royal College of Music in London as well as degrees in Violin Performance from Houghton College (BMus) and Penn State University (MMus). [www.emilyrhale.com](http://www.emilyrhale.com)

**André Laurent O'Neil**, gambist, concertizes up and down the East Coast and across the Atlantic. He also plays baroque cello and fortepiano and composes. As a member of the early music ensemble New Trinity Baroque, André has performed in Atlanta, Charleston, London, Stockholm, Belgrade and Zagreb, as well as in smaller cities in the USA, Serbia, Croatia and Finland. He is a featured soloist on their Vivaldi Concertos CD and will be releasing a CD of Bach's solo cello suites in June on their label. André has also worked and toured with the Italian ensemble Il Rossignolo in Belgrade and Mexico City, and with Boston's Handel and Haydn Society. He has collaborated with Bennington Baroque since its inception, and plays with many other local chamber groups, including Capitol Chamber Artists, Musicians of Ma'alwyck, Empire Baroque, and the St. Rose Camerata. André grew up and lives in Albany, where he is passionate about gardening and about teaching students.

From 1989 to 2011, harpsichordist **Sandra Mangsen** taught musicology and historical performance and served as Associate Dean at the University of Western Ontario. Since moving to North Bennington, she has remained active as performer and scholar, founding the period instrument ensemble *Bennington Baroque* and completing her study of keyboard transcriptions in England (*Songs without Words*, 2016). Her research, focusing on historical performance practice and on the dissemination of music, has been supported by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Fulbright Commission. She has recorded cantatas and sonatas of Buxtehude with Mary Cyr and the late Allan Fast (McGill Records) and *Entretiens* (2000), a solo CD devoted to harpsichord music of seventeenth-century France. She has performed and presented research papers internationally; this season she will again serve as volunteer program annotator for the local Sage City Symphony and as a member of the Board of the Westfield Center for Historical Keyboard Studies. Sandra completed her doctorate in musicology at Cornell, master's degrees in musicology and in harpsichord performance at McGill, and an undergraduate degree in sociology at Oberlin College.

## Notes on the music

The composers on our program held positions at court under Louis XIV and his great-grandson, Louis XV, and during the Regency. Couperin came from a large family of important musicians, including prominent composers and keyboard players. When he turned eighteen he inherited his

father's position as organist at St. Gervais, where he had deputized from the age of ten. Marin Marais, however, was born to a shoemaker, and received his initial musical training as a choirboy at St. Germain-l'Auxerrois, before studying the viol with Sainte-Colombe, the most prominent viol player in seventeenth-century France. A member of the *musique de chambre* at court, he cultivated a refined and miniaturist French style. He published five volumes of music for viol and *basse continue*, the first such pieces published in France. The "Sonata a la Maraisienne" was included in a curious collection of chamber music, *La Gamme et autre morceaux* (1723). It offers a look at his exploration of a more Italianate style, befitting the violin. As Brossard asserts in his 1703 *Dictionnaire*, Italian music in the form of sonatas and cantatas had overrun Paris in the early years of the new century. It was seen as modern, and quite distinct from the French style developed in Lully's *tragédies lyriques*, which was still favored at court prior to Louis' death in 1715.

In contrast to the refined style of Marais, **Antoine Forqueray**, who had played before Louis XIV as a child, was noted for his flamboyant and virtuosic (i.e., Italian) manner of playing. A contemporary called them the angel and the devil of their instrument. Antoine was appointed *Ordinaire de la chambre du Roi* while still in his teens. His son Jean-Baptiste (1699–1782), also a noted viol player, published a collection of pieces that he attributed to his father; however, most are now thought to have been updated or even entirely composed by the son. Couperin played often with Antoine, and included a musical portrait among his harpsichord pieces, perhaps slightly mocking. Antoine, in turn, composed an expressive portrait of Couperin, perhaps a tombeau.

**Couperin** published four books of harpsichord pieces. The meaning of his many titles is not always clear, but they often refer to well known individuals with whom Couperin would have had contact as a musician playing for and teaching the aristocracy. A recent book Jane Clark has offered several rather speculative possibilities, which may give us some insight into the titles on the program. The Fifteenth Ordre concerns itself with the Regent, Philippe d'Orléans, a connoisseur of the arts, a painter, and good musician. "La Régente ou la Minerve" Couperin offers us a portrait, Minerva being the Roman goddess of wisdom and the arts. "L'Évaporée" also likely refers to the Regent, in his more dissipated, disorganized state. "Le Dodo," a lullaby, is a *pièce croisée*, which means that as a solo it must be played with one hand on each of the two manuals. We choose to play it instead as a chamber piece. The two musettes include optional *contreperties*, played today on the violin. Built over a drone, they recall the popularity of the "indoor" aristocratic bagpipes. *Choisy* was the country home of the Prince de Conti, whom Clark blames for leading Philippe along the road to ruin and loose living. Elisabeth-Charlotte, mother of the Regent, described it as "a beautiful residence on the banks of the Seine." The "Musette de Taverny" refers to one of Philippe's own country houses where some of his notorious parties were likely held.

The Second Ordre includes more traditional dances: allemande, courante, sarabande, as well as some portraits. The dances were all known either in the ballroom or on stage; in the keyboard suites, an opening allemande is typically followed by at least two courantes and a sarabande, as here. Allemandes and gavotte may be of the faster or more tender type; here, the title suggests a serious allemande. The sarabande is in a slow triple meter, and the slightly faster courantes are marked by much alternation between 3/2 and 6/4 measures (as in "America" from *West Side Story*). "La Prude" surely refers to Madame de Maintenon, whose religiosity had cast something

of a pall over previously extravagant life at Court. “La Garnier” refers to Gabriel Garnier, one of the four organists with whom Couperin shared the position as organist at the Chapelle Royale; Garnier was said to play Couperin’s music better than the composer himself. In the engraving after a portrait by André Bouys, Couperin holds a manuscript copy of “Les Idées Heureuses,” but we do not know what happy thoughts the composer may have entertained.

The *Concerts royaux* were published as a supplement to the Third Book of harpsichord pieces (1722). However, Couperin reports in the Preface that he had performed them for Louis XIV in 1714–15, playing the harpsichord in company with Messieurs [François] Duval (violin), [André Danican] Philidor (oboe and bassoon), Alarius [Hilaire Verloge] (viol), and Dubois (oboe and bassoon). Unlike most chamber music of the time, the pieces were published in score rather than in separate parts, which facilitates playing them on harpsichord alone or in ensembles. Couperin recommends violin, flute, oboe, viol, and bassoon, although no specific instrumentation is marked on the score

Sandra Mangsen