

Bennington Baroque

Eine glückliche Melange

8 October 2017
Carriage Barn, Park-McCullough House
North Bennington, VT

Mathieu Langlois, baroque flute
André Laurent O'Neil, viola da gamba
Sandra Mangsen, harpsichord

Sonata 11 in B Minor Jean-Marie Leclair, l'aîné
Second Livre de Sonates (1728) (1697–1764)

Adagio – Allegro – Aria Gratoso, allegro ma non troppo

Pieces from the 18^e Ordre François Couperin
Troisième Livre de Pieces de Clavecin (1722) (1668–1733)

Allemande La Verneüil Soeur Monique Le Tic-Toc-Choc ou Les Maillotins

Second Concert Couperin
Concerts Royaux (1722)

Prélude – Allemande Fuguée – Air Tendre – Air Contrefugué, – Échoes

Pause

Sonata No. 6 in G Major for flute and continuo Georg Philipp Telemann
Sonate Medodiche (1728) (1681–1767)

Cantabile – Vivace – Mesta – Spiritoso

Sonata in E Minor for viola da gamba and continuo Telemann
Essercizii musici (1740)

Cantabile – Allegro – Recitativo – Arioso – Vivace

Trio in G Minor for flute, viola da gamba, and continuo Telemann
TWV 42 :g15 (ca. 1720)

Vivace – Cantabile – Vivace

A performer and scholar, **Mathieu Langlois** (flute) holds degrees from Western University (Canada), the Royal Conservatory of The Hague (The Netherlands), and Cornell University (USA). A student of Wilbert Hazelzet and Kate Clark, Mathieu has concertized on baroque and renaissance flutes with the Attaignant Consort, the Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Music Society, the Rotterdam Baroque Ensemble, the Bach Orchestra of The Netherlands, and Bennington Baroque. While completing his PhD at Cornell, Mathieu was director of the university's performance practice ensemble, Les Petits Violons, from 2010-2012, and the founding director of Cornell's Renaissance Wind Consort in 2013-2014. As a professor of music history, Mathieu has taught at Syracuse University, Binghamton University, and the State University of New York at Buffalo.

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 is currently editing a CD of Bach's solo cello suites. 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 **Sandra Mangsen** taught musicology and historical performance, and served as Associate Dean of Music at Western University in London, 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 focuses on historical performance practice and on the dissemination of music; she has presented at many international conferences and published widely in professional journals. Sandra has much enjoyed performing with friends in England, Italy and Canada, and with her oboist daughter at Western Washington University in Bellingham, WA. *Entretiens* (2000), her solo CD devoted to harpsichord music of seventeenth-century France, offers a good introduction to the French style. (That tenure project now clutters the basement: If you would like one or a dozen, please help yourself before I dispose of them.) This season Sandra will again serve as volunteer program annotator for the local Sage City Symphony and is a new member of the Board of the Westfield Center for Historical Keyboard Studies. Sandra holds graduate degrees from Cornell and McGill, and an undergraduate degree in sociology from Oberlin College.

Founded in 2012, *Bennington Baroque* is now a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Your donations are deductible to the full extent of the law. We have begun some outreach activities (at the Woodford School) and would welcome other opportunities to introduce music lovers to early music performed with attention to the practices of the period. See our website, benningtonbaroque.org for contact information.

Notes on the Music

In his *Generalbass in der Composition* (1728), Johann David Heinichen asserted that a “happy mixture of the Italian and French tastes would most astonish the ear.” Telemann’s music was frequently characterized in those terms, as music for a mixed taste, but Leclair and Couperin also tried to achieve a *goût réuni*, drawing on the French and Italian styles they knew. This concert explores their efforts in compositions from the 1720s.

A dancer as well as a violinist, **Jean-Marie Leclair** (*l’aîné* to distinguish him from his younger brother, *le cadet*) studied and worked as composer, ballet master, and violinist in Turin in the 1720s, and was probably more adept than many of his contemporaries at combining the two national styles. He published five collections of solo violin sonatas, drawing on the models of Corelli. But all five volumes were published in Paris, and the musical language was adapted to suit French taste. Sonata XI was one of those he marked as suitable for the flute. It demonstrates well his ability to combine French and Italian styles—the second movement seems the most Italian, although the harmonic language strikes me as rather French. The *Aria gratoso*, despite its Italian title, is a *rondeau* (ABACA), a form long favored by French composers such as Lully, in which the opening *rondeau* alternates with two or three *couplets*. Leclair was successful in Paris, playing a dozen times at the recently established concert series, the Concert Spirituel. After the death of François Couperin, he was appointed *Ordinaire de la Musique du Roi*, but in 1737 Leclair left Paris for The Netherlands, where his Italianate style was better appreciated than at the musically old-fashioned French court.

The title page of the *Troisième Livre de Pièces de Clavecin* lists **François Couperin** as *Organiste de la Chapelle du Roi* and *Ordinaire de la Musique de sa Chambre*. By 1722 he had published nineteen harpsichord suites, a harpsichord method, and the *Concert Royaux*. In the Preface to Book 3 he draws our attention to a new sign, indicating the small silences the player is to observe to mark phrase endings, for if such “*petit silences* are lacking, persons of taste feel that something is missing in the performance. In a word, it is the difference between those who read one word after another without pause, versus those who stop at commas and periods.” Another new feature are the *pièces croisées*, which must be played on a two-manual instrument, since the two parts are in the same register. Those without two keyboards are instructed simply to transpose one of the two parts by an octave, in order to play on a single manual. Several of the harpsichord pieces carry descriptive titles, often an enigma to us. The Allemande *La Verneüil* may have referred to the actor Achille Varlet, Sieur de Verneuil, head of the King’s French theatrical troupe and famous for his tragic roles, although other suggestions have been made. The word *soeur* was apparently used ironically in the eighteenth century to refer to women of the night, which has led one writer to characterize *Soeur Monique* as “mock-innocent in the *rondeau* and seductive ... in the *couplets*.” The suggestions about *Tic-Toc-Choc ou les Maillotins* vary, but the term *maillotins* certainly suggests repeated movements, like those made by a double-headed hammer (*un maillet*) or a clock pendulum.

As for the *Concerts*, “They are not simply for the harpsichord, but also for violin, the flute, the oboe, the viol, and the bassoon. I created them for the small *concerts de chambre* that Louis XIV had me present nearly every Sunday” in 1714 and 1715. Couperin names the players who participated in those intimate evenings, but the volume gives very little specific advice as to instrumentation. The music is printed on two staves, and includes a figured bass (a short-hand

notation for the harmonies supplied by the harpsichordist). The Second Concert works well on the flute, although occasional notes are out of range and must be transposed or covered by another player. The Prelude (*gracieusement*), *Air Tendre* and *Echoes (tendrement)*, all in triple meter, are juxtaposed with two faster (*gayement* and *vivement*) movements marked *fugué*, which demonstrate that the French were not as uninterested in counterpoint as many 18th-century observers claimed.

Georg Philipp Telemann died 250 years ago in Hamburg, where he was enormously successful as a composer of many genres, from opera and cantata, to orchestral suite, concerto, and chamber music. In Hamburg from 1721, he served as Kantor at the Johanneum Lateinschule and director of music for five city churches. He led weekly performances of the collegium and composed and directed operas. His struggle with the City Council over his right to engage in such sidelines probably led him to apply for a similar position in Leipzig, which was indeed offered to him in August 1722. Eventually he used that offer to negotiate an increase in salary in Hamburg. Bach took up the Leipzig position in 1723. Telemann was extremely prolific, and active as engraver and publisher of his own music (forty-three volumes appeared between 1725 and 1740).

Like Couperin and Leclair, Telemann was a proponent of the mixed style, but there are many other sides to his music. He published two volumes of *Sonate metodiche* in Hamburg (1728 and 1732) for flute or violin and figured bass. In these collections Telemann supplied extensive Italianate ornamentation in many of the slow movements. He had a sharp eye on the market, and must have been well aware that amateurs found supplying appropriate ornamentation for such pieces to be a formidable challenge. The *Essercizii musici* (published in 1740, but composed more than a decade earlier) offer strong evidence of his early penchant for the galant style favored later in the eighteenth century (treble dominated, less contrapuntal, with a slower harmonic rhythm than most music of the high Baroque). The final movement of the E-minor sonata is a rondeau, and may remind you of some of the French rondeaux you have already heard today, but it is also extremely virtuosic, unlike the simpler rondeaux found in much French chamber music and opera.

The final work on the program comes from manuscript sources now in Dresden, probably copied around 1720. The first movement might belong to dancers in an opera (they just seem to be marching around the stage), while the second is a more or less standard Italian *cantabile* (think of it as an aria for the *prima donna*). The final *Vivace* brings the dancers back on stage for a rondeau, but Telemann offers his own twist. After the second *couplet*, marked *piano*, we hear the expected return to the opening music, but instead of simply restating the rondeau, Telemann translates it into the major mode, producing a light-hearted ending.

Underappreciated in modern times, in his own day Telemann was regarded as foremost among German composers, and was certainly one of the most prolific. His music remains engaging.