

E A R L Y M U S I C

N E W Y O R K

F R E D E R I C K R E N Z

D I R E C T O R

Printemps à Paris

Springtime in Paris

St. James' Church

33rd SEASON

Madison Ave. at
71st Street

Saturday, May 3rd, 2008 at 8 PM

EARLY MUSIC NEW YORK

FREDERICK RENZ, DIRECTOR

ORCHESTRA OF ORIGINAL INSTRUMENTS

Heidi Powell - concertmaster
Dongmyung Ahn - principal violin
Christopher Nunn - principal viola
Myron Lutzke - principal violoncello

Charles Brink - transverse flute
Tricia van Oers - recorders
Geoffrey Burgess - oboe I
Virginia Brewer - oboe II
James Kopp - bassoon

Dongsok Shin - harpsichord

Aaron Brown - violin
David Chapman - violone
Rachel Evans - violin & viola
Marika Holmqvist - violin & viola
Richard Hsu - violin
Peter Kupfer - viola
Marc Levine - violin
André O'Neil - violoncello
Mark Zaki - viola

Early Music Foundation presents
EARLY MUSIC NEW YORK - FREDERICK RENZ, DIRECTOR

I

Prologue: Ouverture

Jean-Baptiste Lully, 1632-1687

(from *Bellérophon*: Tragédie mise en musique,
after an edition by Christophe Ballard, Paris 1679)

Gavotte et Canarie

Rondeau

Sarabande

(from *Armide*: Tragédie en musique, 1686)

Rigaudon

Jean-Louis Lully (*le fils*), 1667-1688

Loure

Bourée

(from *Concert du souper du Roi*, 1707 posth.)

Chaconne des Maures

Jean-Baptiste Lully

(from *Alcidiane*: ballet, 1650)

II

Concerto

Joseph Bodin Boismortier, 1691-1755

Allegro

Adagio

[Allegro]

Tricia van Oers – recorder, Heidi Powell – violin, Geoffrey Burgess – oboe,
James Kopp – bassoon, Myron Lutzke – violoncello

III

Passacaille

Henry Desmarests, 1661-1741

(from *Théagène et Cariclée*: opera, 1695)

Canaris I & II

Michel Richard Delalande, 1657-1726

Sarabande

Bourrée

Passepied

(from *Ballet de la jeunesse*, 1686)

Chaconne

(from *Les fontaines de Versailles*, 1683)

IV

Concerto

Michel Blavet, 1700-1768

Allegro

Gavotte I: Tendrement & Gavotte II

Allegro

Charles Brink – transverse flute

Ouverture**Menuets I & II** (Prologue)**Musette en rondeau** (Prologue)**Marche des Fleurs** (Entré III)**Orage** (Entré III)**Danse des Sauvages en rondeau** (Entré IV)**Marche des esclaves Africains** (Entré I)**Rigaudons** (Entré I)**Tambourins** (Entré I)(from *Les Indes Galantes*: Opéra-Ballet, 1735 & 1736)**NOTES**

Jean-Baptiste de Lully [Giovanni Battista di Lulli] (b. Florence, 1632; d. Paris, 1687), was of Italian birth, who spent most of his life working in the court of Louis XIV of France. He became a French subject in 1661.

The son of a miller, Lully had little education, musical or otherwise, but he had a natural talent for playing the guitar and, violin, as well as dancing. In 1646, he was discovered by the Duke of Guise and taken to France by him, where he entered the services of Mademoiselle de Montpensier (*la Grande Mademoiselle*) as a scullery-boy. There is some dispute over this, however; it is possible that he was employed to teach her Italian. With the help of this lady his musical talents were cultivated. He studied music theory under Nicolas Métru. A scurrilous poem about his patroness resulted in his dismissal.

He came into Louis XIV's service in late 1652, early 1653 as a dancer. He composed some music for the "Ballet de la Nuit" which pleased the king immensely. He was appointed as the composer of instrumental music to the king and conducted the royal string orchestra of the French court, *Les Vingt-quatre Violons du Roi* (Twenty-four Violins of the King) or *Le Grande Bande*. He tired of the lack of discipline of the *Grande Bande*, and with the King's permission formed his own *Petits Violons*.

Lully composed many ballets for the King

during the 1650s and 1660s, in which the King and Lully, himself danced. He also had tremendous success composing the music for the comedies of Molière, including "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme" (1670). Louis XIV's interest in ballet waned as he aged and his dancing ability declined (his last performance was in 1670) and so he pursued opera. Lully bought the privilege for opera from Pierre Perrin and with the backing of the king, created a new privilege which essentially gave Lully complete control of all music performed in France until his death.

He was a notorious libertine. In 1662, he did marry Madeleine Lambert, daughter of Lully's friend and fellow musician Michel Lambert, and proceeded to have ten children by her. But at the height of his career, in 1685 he felt confident enough to flaunt his relationship with Brunet, his young page from *La Chapelle*. Although his life is full of meteoric heights, his love affairs with boys and women brought him down in scandal several times to the great displeasure of Louis XIV and led to his renown as a sodomite.

Despite these scandals, he always managed to get back into the good graces of Louis XIV who found Lully essential for his musical entertainments and who thought of Lully as one of his few true friends. In 1681 Lully was appointed as a court secretary to Louis XIV and was ennobled, after which he wrote his name "Jean-Baptiste de Lully" and was addressed as "Monsieur de Lully."

On January 8, 1687, Lully was conducting a "Te Deum" in honor of Louis XIV's recent recovery from illness. Story has it that he was beating time by banging a long staff (a precursor to the baton) against the floor, as was the common practice at the time, when he struck his toe, creating an abscess. The wound turned gangrenous, but Lully refused to have his toe amputated and the gangrene spread resulting in his death on 22 March. He left his last opera, "Achille et Polyxène," unfinished.

Lully's music is from the middle baroque period, 1650 to 1700. The pitch standard for French baroque music was about 392 Hz for A above Middle C, a whole tone lower than modern practice where A is usually 440 Hz.

Lully's music is known for its power, liveliness in its fast movements and deep emotional character in its sad movements. Some of his most popular works are his *passacaille* (*passacaglia*) and *chaconne* which are dance movements found in many of his works. Equally acclaimed are his minor sacred compositions.

The influence of Lully's music produced a radical revolution in the style of the dances of the court itself. Instead of the slow and stately movements which had prevailed until then, he introduced lively ballets of rapid rhythm. He affected important improvements in the composition of the orchestra, into which he introduced several new instruments, and Lully enjoyed the friendship of Molière, with whom he created a new music form, the *comédie-ballet* which combined theater, comedy, and ballet. The instruments in his music were: violins, five sizes/voices: (*dessus, haute-contre, taille, quinte, basse*). The top voice was played on violins, the inner three voices by violas, and the bass by celli, *basse de viole*, accompanied by *theorbo*, harpsichord or organ. Wind instruments used were the oboe, bassoon, recorder, flute, trumpets and percussion.

Jean-Louis Lully (b. Paris, 1667; d. Paris, 1688) was the third and youngest son of Jean-

Baptiste. Upon his father's death, he acquired the posts of *surintendant* and *compositeur de la musique de la chambre du roi*. After his premature death in 1688, the post passed out of the Lully family to the composer Michel Richard Delalande.

Joseph Bodin de Boismortier (b. Thionville, 1689; d. Roissy-en-Brie, 1755) was a composer of instrumental music, cantatas, opera ballets, and vocal music. He was purely a composer and one of the first to have no patrons, making his living simply by writing and selling new works of music.

Boismortier married Marie Valette, the daughter of a rich goldsmith and a relative of his teacher Montigny. In 1724 Boismortier and his wife moved to Paris where he began a prodigious composition career, writing for many instruments and voices. He was prolific: his first works appeared in Paris in 1724, and by 1747 he had published more than a hundred works in various vocal and instrumental combinations. His music was extremely popular and, as mentioned, he became wealthy without the aid of patrons.

Boismortier was the first French composer to use the Italian concerto form. Much of his music is for the flute, for which he also wrote an instruction method (now lost). His op. 91 for harpsichord obbligato and flute derives from Rameau's "Pieces de Clavecin en Concerts" and is dedicated to the flutist Michel Blavet. Boismortier and Rameau who both lived during the Rococo era of Louis XV upheld the French tradition, composing music of beauty and sophistication that was widely appreciated by the French musical public.

The music theorist Jean-Benjamin de la Borde wrote in his "Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne" (Essay on ancient and modern music) in 1780 about Boismortier: *Bienheureux Boismortier, dont la fertile plume peut tous les mois, sans peine, enfanter un volume*. (Happy be Boismortier whose fertile pen can give birth without pain to a new piece of music every month.)

To such criticism, it is said that Boismortier would simply answer: "I'm earning money."

Henri Desmarets [Desmarest] (b. Paris, 1661; d. Lunéville, 1741) was a composer of the middle baroque period. He was a child prodigy and sang as a boy soprano in the Royal Chapel. His opera "Endymion" was staged at Versailles in March, 1682.

In 1696, Desmaret's wife died. Three years later, he took a lover, Marie-Marguerite, and was arrested and sentenced to death for helping her flee a convent. He escaped on August 5, 1699, and fled the country with Marie-Marguerite for the Low Countries.

He was then hired by the King of Spain, Philip V, in 1701 and later by Leopold Joseph, Duke of Lorraine, in 1707. He was pardoned by the Duke of Burgundy in 1720.

Michel Richard Delalande [de Lalande] (b. Paris, 1657; d. Versailles, 1726) was an organist and prolific composer. He also wrote orchestral suites titled "Simphonies pour les Soupers du Roy," or in an alternative spelling of the time, simply *Symphonies*. Delalande composed ballets as well.

He taught music to the daughters of Louis XIV, and was director of the French Chapel Royal from 1714 until his death in 1726.

Delalande was arguably the greatest composer of French *grands motets*, a type of sacred work that was more pleasing to Louis XIV because of its pomp and grandeur, written for soloists, choir and comparatively large orchestra. Delalande left many versions of his works. His earlier versions show adherence to French baroque style, but the later revisions incorporate more Italian florid lines and greater attention to polyphonic counterpoint.

Scholarship of Delalande's work was for many years hindered because of inconsistencies in the spelling of his last name: de Lalande, Lalande, la Lande, de la Lande, and others. The family wrote the name as 'Delalande.' In 2006, the definitive "Thematic Catalogue of the Works of

Michel-Richard de Lalande (1657-1726)" was published, containing over 3,000 music examples.

Michel Blavet (b. Besançon, 1700; d. Paris, 1768) was a flute virtuoso. Although he taught himself to play almost every instrument, he specialized in the flute (which he held to the left, the opposite of how most flutists hold theirs today) and bassoon. Blavet wrote primarily for the flute; his surviving works include a concerto and three books of sonatas.

The son of a wood turner, Blavet was famous for maintaining impeccable intonation, even when he played in difficult keys, and for the beauty of his tone. By the time he was forty years old, Blavet had been both the principal flutist in both Louis XV's personal musical ensemble, the *Musique du Roi*, and the Paris Opera orchestra. Blavet turned down a post in Frederick the Great's court (which Quantz eventually accepted after payment had been increased significantly).

Jean-Philippe Rameau (b. Dijon, 1683; d. Paris, 1764) was one of the most important French composers and music theorists of the baroque era. He replaced Jean-Baptiste Lully as the dominant composer of French opera and he is also considered the leading French author of music for the harpsichord of his time alongside François Couperin.

Little is known about Rameau's early years, and it was not until the 1720s that he won fame as a major theorist of music with his "Treatise on Harmony" (1722). He was almost fifty before he embarked on the operatic career on which his reputation chiefly rests. His debut "Hippolyte et Aricie" (1733) caused a great stir and was fiercely attacked for its revolutionary use of harmony by the supporters of Lully's style of music. Nevertheless, Rameau's pre-eminence in the field of French opera was soon acknowledged and he was later attacked as an "establishment" composer by those who favored Italian opera during the controversy known as the *Querelle des Bouffons* in the 1750s. Rameau's music had gone out of

fashion by the end of the 18th century and it was not until the 20th that serious efforts were made to revive it. Today he enjoys renewed appreciation with performances and recordings of his music ever more frequent.

The details of Rameau's life are generally obscure, especially concerning his first forty years before he moved to Paris for good. He was a secretive man and even his wife knew nothing of his early life, which explains the scarcity of biographical information available.

While the details of his biography are vague and fragmentary, Rameau's personal and family life is almost completely obscure. His music, so graceful and attractive, completely contradicts the man's public image and what we know of his character, as described – or perhaps unfairly caricatured theory – by Diderot in "Le neveu de Rameau." Throughout his life music was his consuming passion; it occupied his entire thinking; Philippe Beaussant calls him a monomaniac. Piron explained that: "His heart and soul were in his harpsichord; once he had shut its lid there was no one home."

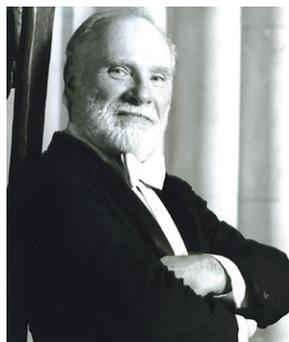
Physically, Rameau was tall and exceptionally thin, as can be seen by the sketches we have of him, including a famous portrait by Carmontelle. He had a "loud voice." His speech was difficult to understand, just like his handwriting, which was never fluent. As a man he was secretive, solitary, irritable, proud of his own achievements (more as a theorist than as a composer), brusque with those who contradicted him and quick to anger. It is difficult to imagine him among the leading wits, including Voltaire – to whom he bears more than a passing physical resemblance. His music was his best passport and it made up for his lack of the social graces.

Rameau's 1722 "Treatise on Harmony" initiated a revolution in music theory. Previous treatises on harmony had been purely practical; Rameau added a philosophical dimension. The composer quickly rose to prominence in France as the "Isaac Newton of Music." His fame

subsequently spread throughout all Europe, and his treatise became the definitive authority on music theory; forming the foundation for instruction in western music which persists to this day.

ABOUT EARLY MUSIC NEW YORK, FREDERICK RENZ – Director

Early Music New York (EM/NY; formerly known as New York's Ensemble for Early Music) was founded in 1974 and performs music and music drama from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance as well as orchestral repertoire of the baroque and classical periods. Profiled on award-winning national news programs ABC News Nightline and CBS News Sunday Morning, EM/NY tours regularly throughout the United States and abroad. It has won critical acclaim, with return engagements, at international festivals, including Athens, Brisbane, Caramoor, Charleston, Edinburgh, Hong Kong, Ilmajoki, Jerusalem, Kraków, Paris, Ravinia, Regensburg, Rome, San Antonio, Spoleto, and Tokyo. EM/NY is in residence at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, New York, where it presents an annual subscription concert series. Since its inception, Early Music New York has presented numerous concerts of repertoire appropriate to the collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Frederick Renz, EM/NY's director and the founder of the Early Music Foundation (EMF), researches and performs music and music drama from the eleventh through the eighteenth centuries. Internationally acclaimed for his work

as a conductor, producer, director, and performer, Renz has received commissions from the Spoleto Festival, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, producer grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Ingram Merrill Foundation, and an honorary doctorate from the State University of New York.

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Early American Musik

Odes, Anthems, Jigs & Reels

Saturday, November 1, 2008 at 8 PM

Sunday, November 2, 2008 at 3 PM

A Baroque Christmas

17-18th Century Carols & Noels

Saturday, December 6 at 8 PM

Sunday, December 14 at 3 PM

Sunday, December 21 at 3 PM

Saturday, December 27 at 8 PM

Sunday, December 28 at 3 PM

At St. James' Church

A Classical Valentine

Fiddlers' Bows & Cupid's Arrows

Saturday, February 14 at 8 PM

Sacrebleu!

Spiritual Motets for French Royals

Saturday, April 18 at 8 PM

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