



# LE CLAVECIN FRANÇAIS



*Pièces de Clavecin*  
**Jean-Philippe Rameau**

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**Arthur Haas**, *Harpsichord*  
*Ioannes Ruckers (Antwerp, 1627)*  
*Nicolas Dumont (Paris, 1707)*

PLECTRA  
MUSIC

JEAN-PHILIPPE RAMEAU (1683-1764)

## *Pièces de Clavecin*

Arthur Haas, Harpsichord

### Disc 1

#### Premier Livre de Pièces de Clavecin (1706)

Ioannes Ruckers Harpsichord, 1627

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| 1. Prélude                                     | 2:42 |
| 2. Alemande                                    | 4:54 |
| 3. 2 <sup>e</sup> Alemande                     | 1:49 |
| 4. Courante                                    | 1:53 |
| 5. Gigue                                       | 2:29 |
| 6. 1 <sup>ère</sup> & 2 <sup>e</sup> Sarabande | 2:25 |
| 7. Vénitienne                                  | 2:03 |
| 8. Gavote                                      | 1:54 |
| 9. Menuet                                      | 2:04 |

& Double [A. Haas]

#### Pièces de Clavessin (1724)

Nicolas Dumont Harpsichord, 1707

- |                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
| 10. Allemande        | 3:58 |
| 11. Courante         | 1:38 |
| 12. Gigue en Rondeau | 4:03 |

& 2<sup>e</sup> Gigue en Rondeau

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| 13. Le Rappel des Oiseaux                        | 2:53 |
| 14. 1 <sup>er</sup> & 2 <sup>e</sup> Rigaudon    | 2:20 |
| & Double du 2 <sup>e</sup> Rigaudon              |      |
| 15. Musette en Rondeau                           | 2:48 |
| 16. Tambourin                                    | 1:20 |
| 17. La Villageoise                               | 3:03 |
| 18. Les Tendres Plaintes                         | 3:13 |
| 19. Les Niais de Sologne                         | 6:55 |
| 1 <sup>er</sup> & 2 <sup>d</sup> Double de Niais |      |
| 20. Les Soupirs                                  | 5:29 |
| 21. La Joyeuse                                   | 1:19 |
| 22. La Follette                                  | 2:10 |
| 23. L'Entretien des Muses                        | 6:16 |
| 24. Les Tourbillons                              | 2:38 |
| 25. Les Cyclopes                                 | 3:46 |
| 26. Le Lardon                                    | 0:51 |
| 27. La Boiteuse                                  | 1:25 |

Total Time: 78:18

### Disc 2

#### Nouvelles Suites de Pièces de Clavecin (1728)

Nicolas Dumont Harpsichord, 1707

- |                                   |      |  |       |
|-----------------------------------|------|--|-------|
| 1. Allemande                      | 7:43 | 15. Menuet en Rondeau <sup>1</sup> (1724)                  | 0:47  |
| 2. Courante                       | 4:07 | 16. Les petits marteaux                                    | 1:46  |
| 3. Sarabande                      | 2:59 | de M. Rameau <sup>2</sup>                                  |       |
| 4. Les trois Mains                | 5:31 | 17. La Dauphine (1747)                                     | 4:25  |
| 5. Fanfarinette                   | 3:27 |  |       |
| 6. La Triomphante                 | 1:52 |  |       |
| 7. Gavotte                        | 8:01 | Total Time:  | 74:49 |
| & Doubles de la Gavotte (1-6)     |      |  |       |
| 8. Les Tricotets                  | 5:06 |  |       |
| & L'Indifferante                  |      |  |       |
| 9. Menuet & 2 <sup>e</sup> Menuet | 3:17 | 1. from <i>De La Mechanique des Doigts Sur</i>             |       |
| 10. La Poule                      | 7:21 | <i>Le Clavessin</i> , in <i>Pièces de Clavessin</i> (1724) |       |
| 11. Les Triolets                  | 4:06 |  |       |
| 12. Les Sauvages                  | 2:02 | 2. from <i>Recueil d'airs choisis de plusieurs</i>         |       |
| 13. L'Enharmonique                | 8:29 | <i>operas accommodés pour le clavecin par</i>              |       |
| 14. L'Egiptienne                  | 3:50 | <i>Mr. Balbastre, organiste de la Paroisse St.</i>         |       |
|                                   |      | <i>Roch de Paris</i>                                       |       |
|                                   |      | (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Vm <sup>2</sup> 2108)      |       |

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: KAREN FLINT

PREMIER LIVRE DE PIÈCES DE CLAVECIN (1706)

Session Producers: George Blood, Karen Flint

Post-Session Producers: Karen Flint, George Blood

Engineer / Editor: George Blood

Production Assistants: Tadashi Matsuura & Andrew Schlegel

Harpsichord Tuning: Barbara Wolf, A=392

Fifth-comma homogenous French temperament

PIÈCES DE CLAVESSIN (1724) / NOUVELLES SUITES DE PIÈCES DE CLAVECIN (1728)

MENUET EN RONDEAU / LES PETITS MARTEAUX / LA DAUPHINE (1747)

Session Producers: John Phillips, Karen Flint, Peter Nothnagle

Post-Session Producers: Karen Flint, Peter Nothnagle

Engineer / Editor: Peter Nothnagle

Harpsichord Tuning: John Phillips, A=408 - Tempérament ordinaire

PRODUCTION MANAGER & DESIGN: ROBERT MUNSELL

Cover & Booklet: Soundboard details - Nicolas Dumont Harpsichord, 1707

Booklet back cover: Jean-Jacques Caffieri, *Jean-Philippe Rameau*, inv CA1094

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Editorial note: Spellings and capitalizations follow original texts.

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## FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE TO THE THEATRE THE HARPSICHORD MUSIC OF JEAN-PHILIPPE RAMEAU

Jean-Philippe Rameau has always been known as one of the most significant music theorists of the common practice era. His *Traité de l'harmonie* (1722) and subsequent theoretical writings, as well as his formulation of the idea of the *basse fondamentale* — that all harmony arises from the bass — have influenced musicians for centuries. More recently Rameau has also come to be considered one of the finest composers of the eighteenth century, not just in France but anywhere. His operas are produced in mainstream opera houses as well as early music festivals. His music is performed regularly by both specialists and non-specialists of Baroque music.

The keyboard music owes its success to many factors. It is innovative: Rameau mixes French and Italian styles more convincingly than any of his predecessors had done. His melodies are always based on and influenced by the underlying harmony, which leads to some of the most expressive music ever written. His technical innovations brought keyboard technique to new heights. Most important, Rameau's theatrical sense infuses all the keyboard music he ever wrote.

Little is known of Rameau's youth. He was born in Dijon into a family whose roots stretched back many generations in the area. His father, Jean Rameau, was an organist who held some of the more



important organ positions in the city. It is said that as a boy, Jean-Philippe knew his notes before he knew his letters. He was sent to a Jesuit school but evidently was such a mediocre student that his parents were asked to remove him. It seemed that he always wanted to sing and to write music, and at the age of 18, he decided to become a professional musician with his father's blessing. In 1701, a significant turning point in Rameau's life, his father sent him to study music, not to Paris but instead south to Italy. One can only speculate about the father's motives, but certainly opera was preeminent in Italy. The young Jean-Philippe would have heard the finest singers in Europe. Corelli was in his prime, writing virtuoso string music full of fanciful ornamentation, improvisations, and chromatic harmonies. Italy provided an environment where instrumental music was daring and innovative, and where theater and voices combined more convincingly than anywhere else in Europe at the time.

Rameau, however, stayed in Italy only a short time, a mere six months or so, then moved around a great deal in the next 20 years. While he was in Italy, he joined a touring theatrical company near Milan as a violinist. We know that he went to Montpellier, where he supposedly took figured bass lessons. He then worked briefly as an organist, in a temporary position in Avignon. In 1702 Rameau got his first real job, when he was named organist at the Cathedral in Clermont, the capital of the Auvergne region of central France. The contract was for six years, but by 1706 he had relinquished that position to go to Paris.

Later that same year, he held two organ posts in the French capital and had already published his *Premier Livre de Pièces de Clavecin*. This stay in Paris was short as well; Rameau returned to Dijon in 1709 to take over his father's duties at the cathedral when Jean Rameau retired. By 1713 Jean-Philippe had moved yet again, this time to Lyon for a few years and then, in 1715, back to Clermont where he signed a long-term contract at the Cathedral. It was here, in this small provincial capital hundreds of miles south of Paris, that Rameau formulated many of his most important theoretical ideas and wrote his *Traité de l'harmonie*. In 1723, Rameau finally returned to Paris, where he stayed for the rest of his life. Rameau's early training and experience in the south, living and working in places where Paris was not the defining cultural capital, had an enormous impact on his compositions throughout his life.

His first collection of harpsichord pieces, *Premier Livre de Pièces de Clavecin* (1706) was published when Rameau was in his early 20's. It consists of eight dance movements preceded by a prelude, and certainly can be considered a suite even if the composer didn't give it that title. The music is remarkable; it already illustrates Rameau's attempts to combine Italian and French styles, and shows a mature understanding of harmonic movement and how dissonance and consonance can be used to build and release tension.

The prelude begins in traditional French unmeasured fashion where vertical chords and snippets of melody combine with whirling



ornaments to build strong harmonic climaxes. This free section moves without a pause into an Italianate two-voice gigue-like section with typical three note figures reminiscent of the final movement in an Italian *concerto grosso*.

The dances that follow show Rameau's mastery of French dance rhythms and styles. An allemande of the *grave* or noble style in 4/4 time is followed by a second allemande in 2, in the *gaye* or more light-hearted character. This light-hearted character is more typical of allemandes written for non-keyboard instruments, for example, in François Couperin's *Concerts Royaux* and *Goûts-réunis*. The sarabandes are typical of the two types of French sarabandes prevalent at that time: the *Première Sarabande* in A minor is more of the *tendre* type, flowing in a moderate tempo and written primarily in just two voices, while the second, in A major, is slower and has a noble character, reminiscent of the sarabande *grave* style. It is more chordal than the first, has richer harmonies, and features dramatic pauses on some of the interior beats.

One curiosity in this suite is the piece entitled *Vénitienne*, whose title suggests a dance or character from Venice. Its Italianisms, such as three-note slurred figures and the simple two-voice structure, contrast with its French *rondeau* form. Rameau strays far from the home key of A major in the second reprise, which is filled with F# minor and exquisite C# major chords, all in the alto and soprano range of the harpsichord.

The *Premier Livre* ends with a simple menuet, to which I have chosen to add a *Double* or virtuoso variation. Rameau ends the previous movement, a gavotte, with a *double de la basse* in which he transforms a left hand of mostly simple quarter notes into rapidly running eighths, dotted notes, and big leaps. This suggests to me the possibility of something similar for the menuet. In Rameau's later books of harpsichord pieces, there is always at least one variation set that is notable for highly innovative and virtuosic writing: *Les Niais de Sologne* of 1724 and the *Gavotte & Doubles* from his 1728 collection, for example. The figuration in my *Double* of the menuet is similar to that of Italian virtuoso keyboard music written around the turn of the century by Alessandro Scarlatti and his contemporaries. Although Scarlatti lived in Naples, a manuscript of his keyboard toccatas is preserved in Milan. It is not too far-fetched, therefore, to assume that Rameau may have heard and been impressed by some of this music, and so it seems appropriate to add this type of variation to the music of his first book of 1706.

Rameau's *Pièces de Clavessin* (1724) continues the composer's brilliant writing for harpsichord. This book is divided into two parts. The first set of pieces consists mainly of a dance suite in E major/minor, while the second is a series of character pieces in D major/minor. It is in this publication that Rameau's daring and innovative ideas of both harmony and melody come to the foreground. The melodies clearly arise

from the harmony. Rameau states that it is harmony that stirs the passions, and melody derives its strength from a harmonic source.

The book begins with a preface which consists of a method of how to play the harpsichord, followed by an ornament table, a pedagogical *Menuet en Rondeau*, and a brief discussion of some of the composer's technical innovations found in the later pieces in the volume. Rameau then starts his book with what we assume will be a typical court dance suite in E minor. The bi-partite allemande *grave* is a model of *stile brisé* or broken-chord style writing, with clear harmonic direction and abundant ornamentation. This is followed by a classic French courante, with varying rhythmic accent patterns from one measure to the next. Unlike Italian courantes which tend to be rapid, French courantes are more moderate in tempo and have a serious or *grave* character.

After the *Courante*, Rameau suddenly plunges us into an entirely different world – a world that will occupy the rest of his musical life no matter the medium for which he writes. Rameau's music, driven by emotions, is ruled by the theater, by nature, and by his attempts to place the listener in scenes taken from daily life. This new world starts with the two *Gigues en Rondeau* that follow the *Courante*. The first, in E minor, is not the boisterous rhythmically active gigue to which we are accustomed, but is more of a *gigue louré* – moderate in tempo with slurred triplets and touching deceptive cadences. Each couplet shows a different character: the first has big overhauled chords reaching to the very lowest

range of the harpsichord, while the second is more intimate and higher in range, with a myriad of shivering trills and far-flung harmonies that wander far from the original key of E minor. The second *Gigue* not only shows markedly different characters in its interior couplets, but also diverges from the classic concept of a gigue at the beginning, with its powerful rustic musette bass complete with repeated octaves, giving a strong sense of rhythm and harmony. Here one finds Rameau's (and the Enlightenment's) idea that art imitates nature and arouses our passions sometimes even more strongly than nature itself.

These hints in the gigue, of music being an imitation of nature, become even more apparent in the following character piece, *Le Rappel des Oiseaux*. Rameau interrupts the series of dances to take us out to the fields and forests where birds have congregated and are alive with conversation. Raucous figuration, brilliant passagework, and tricky, noisy trills combine with harmonic dissonance and tension. The composer even figures out a way to freeze the motion outright near the beginning of the second half as if the birds have been frightened by an approaching predator. The music is at the same time stunningly theatrical and also very much like the real world.

After the *Rappel*, Rameau returns to the world of the dance, but no longer strict court dances. He depicts the countryside, with two *Rigaudons* and a fleet *Tambourin*. These are followed by a tender folksong-like rondeau, *La Villageoise*, which depicts a simple

countrywoman or a village scene. Even here, Rameau shows us that life is not so simple. The virtuoso ending of the second reprise, with large left hand leaps and accented octaves, hints at a passing thunderstorm or perhaps another more human village drama.

Countryside and theater are in fact not so far apart: Rameau later transcribed both the *Tambourin* and the *Musette en Rondeau* in *Les Fêtes d'Hébé* (1739). The *Musette* is extremely expressive with its rich tonic and dominant chords over a deep E pedal point in the bass. The third reprise is almost entirely in the soprano register of the harpsichord. It sounds like two flutes, imitating birds, but this time with cooing and sighing rather than with the raucousness of *Le Rappel des Oiseaux*. By this point in the 1724 volume, Rameau has set us up for the second half of this collection, which consists entirely of character pieces. His depiction of these different characters is powerful and direct.

While the first half of the *Pièces de Clavessin* intersperses a few character pieces into a dance suite, the second half of the book is entirely given over to descriptive theatrical works. The wealth of emotions and drama is truly astonishing. In *Les Tendres Plaintes*, gentle chordal harmonies are used to depict heartfelt melancholy. Similarly, a slow rocking motion over minor triads urges us to sympathize with the limping person depicted in *La Boiteuse*. The omnipresent suspensions and offbeat syncopations realistically and profoundly evoke the sighs of an unhappy lover in *Les Soupirs*.

These latter pieces illustrate how well Rameau depicts a single emotion. But his true gift for the theater comes out even more clearly in other multi-faceted pieces throughout this book. *La Follette*, for example, takes us through the changing moods of a mad person, reminiscent of Henry Purcell's dramatic mad songs. Here, a simple folk-like melody gives way to alternating short bursts of bombast and pining.

Rameau is also capable of injecting humor into his music. Brilliant scales and arpeggios depict little whirlwinds tossing to and fro in *Les Tourbillons*. Humor mixes with innovative virtuosity in *Les Niais de Sologne*, or the “simpletons” from the Sologne region of France. The gavotte-like opening with straightforward rhythms and pulses, along with repeated figures, is followed by two *Doubles* or variations which make you wonder whether the composer might be hinting that looks can be deceiving and that these simpletons are perhaps not so simple after all. The first *Double* features 3 against 2 cross rhythms, rather unusual in the early 18th century, but definitely trending in the direction of complexity rather than simplicity. The second *Double* is one of Rameau's most technically challenging movements with huge leaps, asymmetrical patterns and sweeping arpeggios spanning the entire length of the keyboard.

*Les Cyclopes* combines virtuosity, anger, humor and even a depiction of the one-eyed monster's metal forging skills in a breathtaking display of Rameau's compositional prowess. Rameau has translated into music what the Greek myths expressed through literature.



Only a few years separate the 1724 *Pièces de Clavessin* from the *Nouvelles Suites de Pièces de Clavecin* of 1728, yet in this, Rameau's last major harpsichord publication, the composer reaches new heights of profundity, emotional sophistication and theatricality. The 1728 book is divided in a similar fashion to that of 1724. The first half consists of a dance suite in A major/minor with a few character pieces. This is followed by a collection of character pieces in G major/minor.

The opening *Allemande* is one of the most convincing examples of Rameau's premise that melody arises from the harmony. The piece is filled with scalar movement, arpeggios, thick textures and sequences, all accompanied by a wealth of ornaments. This allemande is the lushest of all of Rameau's harpsichord pieces — so lush in fact that he felt the need to balance this richness with simple single voice melodic triplets at the end of each half of the piece that serve to bring the listener back to earth.

The sarabande, too, is built upon a kaleidoscope of written-out arpeggios, as well as on the strong rhythmic accents typical of French sarabandes. Yet as Rameau shows in his previous collection of harpsichord pieces, the mood can turn in an instant from powerful nobility to soft intimacy, as he varies the range and the key area of the music. Where most of the A major *Sarabande* is written with big swaggering chords and dotted rhythms that stay close to the home key of A, the second half opens high in the treble range and travels to such

“foreign” keys as F# minor and C# major before returning to the tonic of A major.

*Fanfarinette* also shows this duality in Rameau's harpsichord pieces. The general mood of the piece is tender, with gentle rolling chords and lilting melodies. Yet several times in the second half, Rameau interrupts this mood with strong accented rhythms and big fanfare-like chords. As in the sarabande, he also exploits darker key areas in the latter section of the piece. The enigmatic title could refer to a little fanfare, while the “nette” might indicate the diminutive of a character's name.

In my discussion of Rameau's duality of emotion in a number of the previous pieces, I made allusion to darker key areas, or “foreign” keys. A word of explanation might be in order here: in his theoretical writings, Rameau discusses tuning and temperament quite extensively, and until the mid 1730's he was a strong advocate for unequal temperament, which favors certain keys over others. In an unequal temperament certain keys are meant to sound more “in tune” than other keys. In the *Sarabande* just discussed, for example, the beauty and clarity of A major contrasts particularly starkly with the darker colors evoked by C# major and F# minor chords if the harpsichord is tuned unequally. As Rameau states in his *Nouveau système de musique théorique* (1726), “One chooses these excesses [of harmony] to render the passage more expressive. Major thirds, which are normally joyous to the ear, anger us if too wide. Minor thirds, which usually bring us feelings

of sweetness and tenderness, make us sad if they are too narrow. Knowledgeable musicians understand how to use these different effects of intervals. “We hear this joyousness of the major thirds clearly in the rondeau and first reprise of *La Triomphante*, as the brilliant A major contrasts with the excess of the F# minor and C# major chords of the second reprise. This is yet another way that Rameau uses harmonic means to be expressive. His championing of equal temperament is often discussed, but in fact the composer never clearly advocated for equal temperament until his *Génération harmonique* of 1737 – almost ten years after the publication of his last harpsichord collection. This change in his way of thinking might have corresponded to his becoming a full time composer of opera. Music for full orchestra and singers clearly has different requirements from that for a solo harpsichord, and it is safe to say that equal temperament was not one of Rameau’s preoccupations earlier in his career when he was writing harpsichord music.

Virtuosity plays a large role in the dance suite of this collection, from the large dotted note leaps and cascading scales of the courante and cross hand acrobatics of *Les trois Mains* to the most well-known work in this collection – the *Gavotte & Six Doubles*. The opening gavotte itself is extremely expressive. It is one of the few pieces in the book that Rameau indicates should be played slowly. The listener (and the player!) might thus be unprepared for the rapid technically challenging doubles that follow. Quick scales, virtuoso figuration and repeated notes are

blended together around the gavotte melody and rhythmic patterns. It is a fitting end to the most complex of Rameau’s suites of dances.

The G major/minor half of the 1728 book opens with a pair of dance-inspired pieces. *Les Tricotets* refers to a fast dance said to have rapid foot movements like the movement of knitting needles. This contrasts with *L’Indifférente*, which conjures up a blasé lover — perhaps like the one in the painting by Antoine Watteau of the same name. Although Rameau does not expressly ask for this, I link the two pieces together in an ABA format. I feel they work well as a single unit. This concept also connects them to the two Menuets which follow.

*Les Sauvages* is a much more theatrical dance, said to have been inspired by an exposition in Paris in 1725 in which two American Indians from Louisiana were brought to France and put on view to the public. Percussive rhythms dominate this dance, and shocking dissonances and sudden pauses perhaps make allusion to these “primitive” visitors from the new world. *L’Égyptienne*, probably evocative of gypsies rather than Africans, employs similar musical traits to *Les Sauvages*. Leaps and forceful rhythms dominate this virtuoso dance.

It cannot be stressed enough how much Rameau was influenced by the theater in his keyboard works. He transcribed for orchestra a total of eight pieces from the *Pièces de Clavessin* and the *Nouvelles Suites de Pièces de Clavecin* in his theatrical vocal works. *L’Entretien des Muses*, the *Musette* and *Tambourin* turn up *Les Fêtes d’Hébé* (1739). *Les Tendres*

*Plaintes* and the *Sarabande* of 1728 are heard in *Zoroastre* (1749). *Les Niais de Sologne* is found in *Dardanus* (1739), *Les Sauvages* in *Les Indes Galantes* (1735), and *Menuet I* (1728) in *Castor et Pollux* (1737).

The remaining pieces in the *Nouvelle Suites de Pièces de Clavecin* conjure different images from theatrical ones. *Les Triolets* is another piece that Rameau indicates should be played slowly. It is very meditative in nature, with sweetly flowing thirds in the treble, almost like a flute duet. The title could refer to these thirds or to a type of poetic form in use during the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Rameau spends almost half of the preface to this book discussing the harmonic effect he is aiming for in one piece, *L'Enharmonique*. The title refers to a musical theory term where a single note can be spelled in two different ways, for example A# or Bb. This is, of course, the same note on a keyboard. In *L'Enharmonique*, the same sounding chord but spelled differently totally changes harmonic direction, and A major moves seemingly by magic towards F minor. Rameau highlights this passage by asking the performer to slow down expressively and actually pause on the new chord. Rameau comments on this phenomenon: “The effect will not be to everyone’s taste, but as one gets used to the sound, all the beauty in this passage will overcome any initial repugnance one might feel.”

*L'Enharmonique* is one of Rameau’s most expressive offerings. Sighing dissonances coat the plaintive melody line. The composer states

that certain measures must be played relatively strictly, which implies that the rest should be played freely using *rubato* without a strict sense of beat.

Rameau’s realistic depiction of nature continues in this 1728 collection of harpsichord pieces. Instead of placing us in the tree branches as he did in *Le Rappel des Oiseaux*, he practically shoves us into the barnyard in *La Poule* – following the daily routine of a hen as she cackles, pecks at the ground and looks with darting glances around the yard. Her movements become more and more frenetic until the piece ends in a flurry of squawks with feathers flying. Rameau achieves all this with jerky non-equal repeated notes, quick ornaments on quarter beats, big chords, rapid arpeggios, and violent changes of note values, all over very logical chord progressions that keep the piece in balance. Once again Rameau and his sense of humor have us not merely observing nature but participating in it.

Almost 20 years separate *La Dauphine* (1747) from the *Nouvelles Suites* of 1728. During those years, Rameau had become a formidable and successful composer of operas and ballets. Starting with *Hippolyte et Aricie* in 1733, he wrote three *tragédies-lyriques*, five *opéra-ballets*, as well as several other large-scale vocal works during that 19-year span. He also wrote more books and numerous articles defending his theories about music. He moved away from writing keyboard music. Yet when the *Dauphin*, the heir to the French throne, was to be married for a second



time, Rameau wrote a harpsichord piece to commemorate the event: *La Dauphine*. It is one of his most improvisatory pieces. Each of its two sections is filled with a variety of technical and musical challenges. In the midst of celebratory fast scales, arpeggios, and repeated notes, the composer takes time at the beginning of the second half of the piece to write a menuet-like dance – lyrical, and simple in its nobility – perhaps to honor the new princess.

The improvisatory nature of *La Dauphine* harkens back to the first piece Rameau ever wrote – the prelude from the 1706 book. In the intervening years, the composer has left us pieces of unmatched creativity and expressivity, breathtaking lyricism, technical prowess, and harmonic sophistication not seen before in French keyboard music. He has given us vivid depictions of nature and theatrical images full of artifice and drama. These were glory years for French harpsichord music, and Rameau ranks among the finest of composers in the genre.

Arthur Haas  
New York, October 2013

ARTHUR HAAS, harpsichordist, is widely known as a performer and teacher of Baroque music. He holds a master's degree in musicology from UCLA, where he studied harpsichord with Bess Karp. He also studied with Albert Fuller at The Juilliard School and with Alan Curtis in Berkeley and Amsterdam. Mr. Haas is Professor of Harpsichord and Early Music at Stony Brook University, where he directs the award winning Stony Brook Baroque Players. Since Fall 2012, he has been teaching harpsichord at the Yale School of Music. He is also on the faculty of the Mannes College of Music and The Juilliard School.

Mr. Haas was awarded the top prize in the Paris International Harpsichord Competition in 1975. While living in France, he performed in many European early music festivals and taught at the Ecole Nationale de Musique in Angoulême. In Paris, he joined the Five Centuries Ensemble, known for performing and recording early and contemporary music. In 1985, his formal American debut at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall was highly praised by the New York Times.

He is a member of the Aulos Ensemble, whose recordings of Bach, Vivaldi, Telemann, and Rameau have received critical acclaim. He is also a member of Empire Viols and Aula Harmoniæ. Mr. Haas has recorded the Bach Goldberg Variation Canons with Alan Curtis and suites for two harpsichords by Gaspard LeRoux with William Christie. His solo CD's of *Pièces de Clavecin* by Jean-Henry D'Anglebert; *Suites de clavecin* of Forqueray; Henry Purcell and his contemporaries; and music by Elizabeth Jacquet de la Guerre and François Couperin have been widely praised.

Mr. Haas has performed with such distinguished musicians as Marion Verbruggen, Jaap ter Linden, Julianne Baird, Laurence Dreyfus, Bruce Haynes, Wieland Kuijken and Dawn Upshaw. Annual summer workshops and festivals take him to the International Baroque Institute at Longy and the Amherst Early Music Festival, where he directed the Baroque Academy from 2002-2011.

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#### IOANNES RUCKERS HARPSICHORD, ANTWERP, 1627

Ioannes Ruckers (1578-1642), the most famous member of the illustrious Flemish family of harpsichord makers, built this two-manual instrument in Antwerp in 1627. Ioannes was the son of Hans Ruckers (c.1550-1598), founder of the Ruckers dynasty. The 1627 Ioannes Ruckers harpsichord was in the Château de Villebon for many years. This chateau in the Loire Valley was once the seat of the Duc de Sully (1560-1641), the great minister of Henri IV.

Originally the instrument had two registers with non-aligned keyboards sharing one 8-foot and one 4-foot choir, pitched a fourth apart. The instrument was almost certainly restored by Nicolas Blanchet in Paris, who installed new keyboards, dated 1701; modified the jacks and range; and added a new stand, lid and black exterior decoration. The range is GG/BB-c<sup>'''</sup>, with a bass short octave and a split Eb key. The exceptionally beautiful Villebon Ruckers was restored to its early 18<sup>th</sup>-century state by John Phillips of Berkeley, California in 2009.

#### NICOLAS DUMONT HARPSICHORD, PARIS, 1707

Little is known about the life of the important Parisian harpsichord builder Nicolas Dumont (active from 1675–1707) except that he married in 1673, became a master in the instrument makers guild in 1675 and had died by February, 1711. Three Dumont two-manual harpsichords survive, dated 1697 (Paris, Musée de la musique), 1704 (Paris, private collection) and 1707 (USA, private collection). The 1697 was originally a small Flemish-inspired instrument, since enlarged. The 1704 and 1707 instruments are the earliest examples of the standard model for eighteenth-century Parisian harpsichords. The 1707 harpsichord is the first with a five-octave (FF-e3) range.

Records of the Château du Touvet in Isère (Southern France) show that the 1707 Dumont harpsichord was purchased in 1719 by Count Pierre de Marcieu for his country estate. During the French Revolution it was tucked away in a granary where it was rediscovered in the 1970's and restored by Hubert Bédard in 1975-1976 and by Dominique Laperle in 1996. Despite 80-odd years of service, 180 years in the granary and three restorations, the 1707 Dumont remains in substantially original musical condition, with its original stand and decor. It was restrung and re-voiced in 2002, and completely restored in 2012 by John Phillips, Berkeley, California.