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Robert de Visée
La Musique de la Chambre du Roy
VOLUME 2

MANUEL STAROPOLI · MASSIMO MARCHESE
ROSITA IPPOLITO · MANUEL TOMADIN

Robert de Visée: Musique à la Cour de Versailles

We know little about this composer's life, and even the dates of his birth and death are somewhat uncertain (c.1655–1732/3). Possibly a pupil of Francesco Corbetta's, he is known to have played the guitar, the lute, the theorbo and the viola da gamba, and was a singer as well as a composer. The earliest reference to him dates back to 1680, when he was described as the 'Célèbre Jouer de Théorbe', worthy of mention alongside illustrious musicians such as Mouton, Chambonnières, Couperin and Sainte Colombe. Following his appointment that year as chamber musician to King Louis XIV, he continued to play a number of important roles within the court, and in 1719 was named guitar master to King Louis XV. This latter assignment involved playing the guitar for the king in the evening when he went to bed.

Several of De Visée's manuscripts and printed works have survived, and the *Pièces de Théorbe et de Luth mises en partition, dessus et basse* chosen for this recording – an amalgamation of two earlier collections: *Livre de Guittarre dédié au roi* (1682) and *Livre de Pièces pour la Guittarre* (1686) – were published in Paris in 1716. The collection consists of ten suites grouped according to pitch, and reveals just how much the guitar was loved at the French royal court. The extensive number of pieces would have provided the performer with plenty of material from which to choose a suitable programme of his own.

In opting to include a harpsichord among the instruments, we have tried to create an atmosphere that differs from that of the first volume of suites. The chamber ensemble could include various instruments for playing the basso continuo, each of which could be played solo where necessary, to introduce one of the movements of the suite. It was thus possible to widen the range of timbre, and thereby gratify the listener with greater variety.

Although the *Avertissement* preceding the *Pièces de Théorbe et de Luth mises en partition, dessus et basse* does suggest the harpsichord, the viola da gamba or the violin for the *dessus*, in the frontispiece De Visée does not specify any particular instrument, which leaves plenty of leeway in the choice of the solo instrument. Jacques-Martin Hotteterre le Romain's *Premier Livre de Pièces pour la Flûte Traversière*, an important period source published in Paris in 1708, provides us with an interesting insight into how these things worked at the time: 'Although these *Pièces* are composed for the flute, they lend themselves just as well to all the *dessus* instruments, such as the recorder, the oboe, the violin, the viola da gamba, etc...'

Indeed, the range of the *dessus* is well centred for the use of wind instruments – ideal for the flute

in all the suites, and well suited to the family of recorders (without any need for transposition). Recorders were extremely popular wind instruments during the Baroque period, especially the treble recorder. Apart from this latter, we have included the descant and the bass recorders. The bass is tuned to F, precisely one octave below the treble. The fact that the number of baroque bass recorders that have come down to us is surpassed only by that of their treble counterparts suggests that the instrument was commonly used not only as an accompaniment for the basso continuo, but also for solo parts. A case in point is the famous sonata by C.P.E. Bach for bass flute, viola and basso continuo.

A few of these pieces were included in earlier publications for the theorbo and guitar. In this edition, however, the entablature is missing, and instead the bass and *dessus* parts are written on separate staves. This could be attributed to the decline of the use of entablature, as De Visée himself mentions in his *Avertissement*.

The theorbo used for this recording has the same features as the one used by Robert de Visée: 14 courses, six of which are on the keyboard, and eight chromatic strings, known as bourdons, on the long neck. The characteristic reentrant tuning involved lowering the first two strings by an octave, which allowed the player to produce tight, sonorous harmonies and *campanelas* to great virtuoso effect.

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Recording: June 2012, Ancelle della Carità, Rome

Pitch: A = 415 Hz

Producer and sound engineer: Giovanni Caruso

Editing: Manuel Staropoli, Massimo Marchese

Musical supervision: Dario Paolini, Giovanni Caruso

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Manuel Staropoli graduated in recorder after studying at the Conservatorio ‘G. Tartini’ in Trieste with Stefano Casaccia; he went on to postgraduate study with Kees Boeke, Gudrun Heyens and Lorenzo Cavasanti. In 2000 he graduated in recorder, traverso and early music at the School for Advanced Musical Studies in Saluzzo, also studying baroque flute at the Conservatorio ‘G. Verdi’ in Turin (with Francesca Odling) and baroque oboe with Giovanni Caviglia and Paolo Faldi. He has participated in masterclasses and seminars with musicians including Barthold Kuijken, Dan Laurin, Walter van Hauwe and Christophe Rousset.

Staropoli has performed as a soloist, and in chamber ensembles and orchestras, in more than 600 concerts in Italy and abroad, taking part in major international festivals and music festivals (these include Festival van Vlaanderen; Festival de Arte Sacro, Madrid; Festival International de Musique Ancienne, Sion; and Segni Barocchi Festival, Foligno, to name but a few). He performs with Accademia del Ricercare, always taking prominent solo roles, and also works with, among others, I Sonatori della Gioiosa Marca, Orchestra Montis Regalis, Ensemble Aira, Collegium Pro Musica and the orchestra Terg Antiqua (based in Trieste and directed by Manuel Tomadin, with whom he has collaborated as a duo for over 15 years).

He is a founding member of the Italian recorder quartet Icarus and a member of the Italian symphonic power metal group Rhapsody of Fire. He has recorded for the labels Sony, Stradivarius, Tactus, Amadeus, Pizzicato, Rugginenti, Carrara, Brilliant Classics and Dynamic – recent, critically acclaimed releases include Vivaldi’s Trio Sonatas and the first volume of De Visée’s *La Musique de la Chambre du Roy* (Brilliant Classics).

Since 2007 Staropoli has contributed to the quarterly flute magazine *FaLaUt*, and he has also written articles for the Italian early music magazines *Orpheus* and *CD Classics*. In 2008 and 2009 he gave masterclasses and seminars on the recorder, baroque flute and the interpretation of early music at the Musikhochschule in Mannheim, in 2010 at the Muzička Akademija in Zagreb and in 2011 at the Musikhochschule in Duisburg-Essen. Since 2005 he has led the International Early Music Course in Romano Canavese. A professor at the Conservatorio ‘A. Steffani’ in Castelfranco Veneto, he also collaborates with the Conservatorio ‘N. Paganini’ in Genoa.



Massimo Marchese was born in Savona. Drawn to the lute at an early age, he studied with Jakob Lindberg, obtaining a diploma at the Royal College of Music in London. He also took a degree in Music at the Istituto Superiore di Studi Musicali ‘F. Vittadini’ in Pavia, Italy.

Marchese has worked in recitals with singers such as Nigel Rogers, Lia Serafini, Patrizia Vaccari, Patrizia Pace and Pietro Spagnoli, and with musicians such as Jakob Lindberg, Danilo Costantini, Gaetano Nasillo, Enrico Gatti, Lorenzo Girodo and Flavio Emilio Scogna. He is a regular member of several baroque ensembles, including StilModerno and Guidantus, and has performed in

numerous Italian cities as well as other European countries such as France, Switzerland, Spain, Bulgaria, Finland and the UK. He has also visited South America. Marchese has taken part in important concert series and festivals such as ‘SettembreMusica’, ‘Piemonte in Musica’, ‘Festival Internazionale delle Arti barocche’ and the Sofia Music Weeks, to name but a few.

He has recorded for RAI, Bulgarian National Radio, RCA, the Buongiovanni, Stradivarius, Tactus, Indesens/Solstice, Concerto, Brilliant and Enchiriadis labels, and Centaur Records. He was a member of the ‘Dodekachordon – lute orchestra’, directed by Jakob Lindberg. His activities also comprise musicological studies and research, including the various methods of teaching music (such as those of Orff and of Goitre).

For several years Marchese has been involved in the training of future music teachers. A former chairman of S.I.E.M. (Società Italiana per l’Educazione Musicale) in Alessandria, he has participated in several conferences, and in 2005 he founded C.I.M.A.Al (Centro Italiano di Musica Antica di Alessandria), with which he organises and directs the Festival Europeo di Musica Antica (Piemonte Orientale).

Marchese has taught lute at the Prato and Ravello international summer courses and at the Conservatorio ‘A. Vivaldi’ in Alessandria. He has worked closely with the Conservatorio Statale di Musica ‘L. Perosi’ in Campobasso, and has acted as Ottavio Dantone’s assistant for the ensemble music course held within the Corsi internazionali di Pamparato. He has also taught and directed at the Accademia di Musica Antica in San Giovannino at Alessandria (1993–96).



Following a diploma in viola da gamba at the Conservatorio 'L. Cherubini' in Florence under Paolo Biordi, **Rosita Ippolito** went on to study with Cristiano Contadin and Vittorio Ghielmi. Since 1998 she has performed as a soloist and basso continuo player with various Italian and foreign early music ensembles, including *Modo Antiquo*, *La Venexiana*, *La Pifarescha*, *l'Orchestra Barocca di Bologna* and the *Accademia Diapason*, both in Italy and abroad.

She has performed with internationally renowned conductors such as A.L. King and Claudio Cavina, taking part in leading early music festivals in Italy and elsewhere – including the Festival dell'Accademia Bizantina, where in 2009 she was the soloist in a performance of J.S. Bach's Sonatas for viola da gamba (BWV 1027–1029). She has appeared with musicians from a wide variety of backgrounds, such as Angelo Branduardi for the *Futuro Antico V* and *VI* projects. Forays into contemporary music have led her to work closely with Daniele Furlati, Emanuele de Raymondi and Antonio Jasevoli.

Rosita has contributed to the composition and arrangement of music for various theatrical events, including *Gli occhi, gli alberi, le foglie* (2010), with music by Daniele Furlati; *Zero* (2007), written by and starring Massimiliano Bruno; and musical poetry readings with Edoardo Sanguineti (2008), Matteo Belli (2009), Davide Rondoni (2006) and others. She has recorded for the labels EMI Classics, Brilliant, Tactus and Sony.

Winner of countless awards, **Manuel Tomadin** is one of the most esteemed organists of his generation. His musical education led to first-class diplomas in both piano and organ, organ composition and harpsichord, as well as a first-class degree in harpsichord.

He has taught organ and organ composition at the Conservatorio 'G. Nicolini' in Piacenza, the Conservatorio 'Nino Rota' in Monopoli, and the Ceglie Messapica, a branch of the Conservatorio of Lecce. He has also taught harpsichord at the Conservatorio 'B. Marcello' in Venice.

Problems relating to the performance of Renaissance and Baroque music have always been central to his interests, leading him to ongoing studies of period treatises and instruments. From 2001 to 2003 he took masterclasses with Jean-Claude Zehnder at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis



(Switzerland). Further studies with Ferruccio Bartoletti and Andrea Marcon were also of great importance.

Throughout Italy and Europe he has performed regularly in concerts as a soloist, as part of ensembles and as an accompanist. He has recorded 11 CDs for the Historic Organs of Friuli Venezia Giulia series, a CD of Vivaldi Sonatas for viola da gamba and harpsichord for the Toondrama label with Michele Veronese (viola da gamba), and a CD of keyboard works 'Tasteristico No.2.'

He teaches courses in chamber music for early instruments, harpsichord and historic organs at the *Vacanze musicali* at Sappada and at the Organ Academy of Belgrade. He is also artistic director of the Giovanni Battista Candotti International Organ Festival in Friuli and the Antonio Vivaldi Festival in Trieste. He is the organist at the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and has won four national and six international organ awards, including the Fussen-Breitenwang-Mittenwald prize in Germany, the Paul Hofhaimer award in Innsbruck (in both 2004 and 2010) and the Schnitger Organ Competition in Alkmaar, Holland (2011). In 2012 he was nominated for European Organist of the year by ECHO.

Translations: Kate Singleton

Instruments

Manuel Staropoli: Descant recorder after Thomas Boekhout (1666–1715), copy made by Thomas Prescott (tracks 7–12, 29); alto recorder after Peter Bressan (1663–1731), copy made by Hans Schimmel (tracks 20–21, 24); alto recorder after Jacob Denner (1681–1735), copy made by Adrian Brown (tracks 1–3, 5–6, 26–28); bass recorder after Rottenburgh (1672–1736), copy made by Yamaha (tracks 4, 22–23); baroque flute after Jacob Denner (1681–1735), copy made by Philippe Allain-Dupré (tracks 14–18)

Massimo Marchese: Theorbo after Mattheus Buechenberg (d.1628), copy made by Stephen Gottlieb

Rosita Ippolito: Viola da gamba after Michel Colichon (Paris, 1691), copy made by Carlo Chiesa

Manuel Tomadin: Harpsichord after Pascal Taskin, copy made by Andrea di Maio