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CLASSICS

Boismortier

The Court and the Village
Chamber Music

Cappella Musicale Enrico Stuart

JOSEPH BODIN DE BOISMORTIER 1689–1755

Trio Sonata in D Op.37 No.3

1	I. Allegro	1'36
2	II. Largo	2'02
3	III. Allegro	1'56

Concerto à cinq parties in E minor Op.37 No.6

4	I. Allegro	2'58
5	II. Adagio	1'36
6	III. Allegro	3'38

Concerto in D Op.38 No.1

7	I. Allegro	1'30
8	II. Allegro	2'05
9	III. Adagio	2'15
10	IV. Allegro	1'54

Cinquième Suite in E (from *Diverses pièces* Op.31)

11	I. Prélude	2'08
12	II. Allemande	2'39
13	III. Air	1'30
14	IV. Gavotte en Rondeau	1'28
15	V. Menuet	0'56

16 Pièce en rondeau 'La Puce'

(No.2 from *Troisième Suite in E minor* in *Pièces de clavecin* Op.59)

Sonata à 4 in E minor Op.34 No.3

17	I. Andante	2'08
18	II. Presto	1'46
19	III. Adagio	1'23
20	IV. Allegro	1'11

Deuxième Suite in E minor (from 6 Suites à 2 muzettes Op.17)

21	I. Prélude	1'50
22	II. Gigue	0'56
23	III. Rondeau I/II	4'56
24	IV. Branle	0'41
25	V. Rigaudon I/II	1'54
26	Pièce en rondeau 'La Rustique'	2'09

(No.3 from *Deuxième Suite in D minor* in *Pièces de clavecin* Op.59)

Concerto in E minor Op.38 No.2

27	I. Allegro	2'23
28	II. Largo	1'23
29	III. Allegro	1'56

Quatrième Balet in G (from 4 Balets de village en trio Op.52)

30	I. Rondement – II. Gaiment – III. Légèrement	6'15
31	IV. Doucement – V. Mouvement de chaconne	3'28

66'41

Cappella Musicale Enrico Stuart

Enrique Gómez-Cabrero Fernández *violin* P. Collins after Guarneri

Chiara Strabioli *flute* A. & S. Weemaels after J. Denner

Carolina Pace *recorders* alto: E. Meyer after P. Bressan · soprano: L. de Paolis after E. Terton

Andrea Lattarulo *viola da gamba* J. Kraft after G. Barbey

Michele Carreca *theorbo & guitar* theorbo: H. Hasenfuss · guitar: S. Zanchi

Marco Vitale *harpsichord* C. Tuzzi after A. Vater

Romeo Ciuffa *recorders & flute · direction*

flute: R. Tutz after G. A. Rottenburgh · soprano: F. Li Virghi after E. Terton · alto: F. Li Virghi after T. Stanesby

In musical history, **Joseph Bodin de Boismortier** (23 December 1689, Thionville–28 October 1755, Roissy-en-Brie) is more than an exceptional figure.

Natives of the suburbs of Berry, the modest Bodin family settled in Thionville, where the composer's father, a former military officer, became a confectioner. Towards 1691, the family moved to Metz, where Boismortier was to receive his musical education. From whom? We now know that it was Joseph Valette de Montigny (1665–1738), an accomplished motetist, and not Henry Desmaret. In 1713 Boismortier followed his *maître* to Perpignan, in the heart of the Catalan countryside... to work as a receiver for the Royal Tobacco Control – a far cry from any musical post! During his 10-year tenure in this position the adopted Catalan left several traces of his musical activity. Two of his airs (*Airs à boire*) were published by Ballard, Paris in 1721 and 1724, proving that Boismortier had already written a great number of his compositions in his Perpignan years, which he tested on the Parisian public from the heart of his Catalan province.

On the recommendation of Viscount d'Andrezel, the Senior Commissariat Officer of Roussillon and future ambassador of the King in Constantinople, Boismortier settles his affairs in Perpignan and relocated with his wife and daughter to the Court of the Duchesse du Maine in Sceaux, and later to Paris, where he issued his first chartered edition on 29 February 1724. He published his earliest manuals for two flutes and the first of his French cantatas, the manuscripts of which had already been circulating in Paris for a year. This was the beginning of a prodigious career in the capital: a career as much criticised as it was admired. Jean-Benjamin de La Borde, the famous theorist and Boismortier's contemporary, painted a charming and realistic portrait of the composer in his essay *On Ancient and Modern Music* (1780):

Boismortier existed in a time when it was felt music should be simple and easy to listen to. This skilful musician made the most of the prevailing tastes and composed a multitude of airs and duos for flute, violin, oboe, musette, hurdy gurdy... This was very successful; but unfortunately, he wasted too many of these bantering harmonics, some of which were peppered with pleasant outbursts. He so abused his numerous clients that at the end one said: 'Bienheureux Boismortier, dont la fertile plume peut tous les mois, sans peine, enfanter un volume.' (Happy is Good Sir Boismortier, whose prolific quill each month, with almost no pain, conceives a new ditty at will.) In reply to the critics, Boismortier said, 'I'm earning money'. This musician was pleasant, ingenious and good company; he put together his verses like Scarron, several of which were well known in society.

He finally became a theorist, publishing a flute manual as well as one for the viola. Boismortier did not hesitate to follow trends – certainly as a result of his taste for new experiences – and to compose for nearly every instrument. Here we rediscover his recently edited sonatas, as well as the collections for musette and hurdy gurdy (two pastoral instruments in vogue at the time). The majority of his work however remains dedicated to the flute, which in the beginning of the 18th century had a prominent role, along with the harpsichord.

Boismortier matured in a bubbling Paris, inundated with Italian music, the influence of precursors like Couperin, and characterised by a lifestyle affording a certain degree of pleasure willingly encouraged by the Regent. This was a time when spacious rooms in apartments became intimate, and everything was *pretty* rather than *beautiful*. And if Évrard Titon du Tillet, in the last supplement to his *Parnasse françois* (1756), referred to Boismortier as one of its most illustrious members – 'Here's to the memory of one of the most illustrious French poets and musicians' – we must surely restore to this composer the importance he once had. Thus, the Cappella Musicale Enrico Stuart decided to record this CD, an example of the variety and richness of Boismortier's musical production. The programme features pieces in a serious mood with a nobility easily linked to courtly life, and others with evident connections to popular folk traditions. Freshness, inventiveness, the richness of his colours, melodies and harmonies, all combined with the good taste that was his great gift and a gift to us, today...

As in a well-served meal, we serve up these dishes alternating elaborate courses with lighter fare, to provide as much satisfaction as possible. Enjoy!

Romeo Emanuele Ciuffa



In 1998 Romeo Ciuffa and Giancarlo delle Chiaie founded the CAPPELLA MUSICALE ENRICO STUART (C.M.E.S.), a group with a changeable set-up, specialising in 17th- and 18th-century repertoire in which wind instruments play a central role. The ensemble takes its name from an important personality who lived during a turbulent time in European history: Henry Stuart, Duke of York, son of James Stuart, heir to the throne and brother of Bonnie Prince Charlie, who had tried at various times, without success, to retake the throne. The Stuart family, of Catholic faith, chose Rome for their place of exile and there formed a close relationship with the papal courts. Henry, already nominated a Cardinal by Pope Benedict XIV, became Cardinal-Bishop of Frascati, near Rome, a place he then enriched with a continuous cultural project in which music had a very strong presence. Amongst the most significant composers interpreted by the C.M.E.S are H. Purcell, C. Monteverdi, G.B. Pergolesi, M.-A. Charpentier, M.R. Delalande, S. de Brossard, J.-P. Rameau, J.-B. Lully, A. Vivaldi, G.F. Handel, G.P. Telemann, and J.B. de Boismortier. The C.M.E.S has performed in Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom, Spain, Canada, Syria, Zambia, Russia, France, Finland, Holland and the Czech Republic, *etc.*

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