

Program

Marin Marais (1656-1728)
Pièces de violes 4^e livre
- Paris 1717
La Biscayenne

Mathurin Régnier (1573-1613)
La Cour

Marin Marais
Pièces de violes 1^{er} livre
- Paris 1686
(suite in d minor)
Prelude
Fantaisie
Allemande
Double
Courante
Sarabande
Rondeau

François Mainard (1582-1646)
Mon âme, il faut partir

Caix d'Hervelois (1680-1760)
Pièces de violes 3^e livre - 1731
(suite in G major)

Prelude; Lentement-vite
La Surgere; Musette en Rondeau
Sarabande
La Boussac; Gaiment
Rigaudon - 2^e Rigaudon
La Monguichet; Gravement et marqué
- vite - Grave - Gaiement

Interval

(drinks served near the fountain at the rear of the Chapel)

Marin Marais
Pièces à deux violes 1^{er} livre
- 1686 (suite in d minor)

Prelude
Allemande
Sarabande
Gigue
Gavotte
Menuet

Saint Amant (1594-1661)
La Pluie

Robert de Visée (c.1650-c.1732)
Les Sylvains de Mr. Couprin

Marin Marais
Pièces de violes 1^{er} livre
- 1686 (suite in D major)
Chaconne

“Marin Marais: A Life's Work”

Directed by Jennifer Eriksson

Concert 2

Sunday 29 October 2000

Jennifer Eriksson ~ viola da gamba

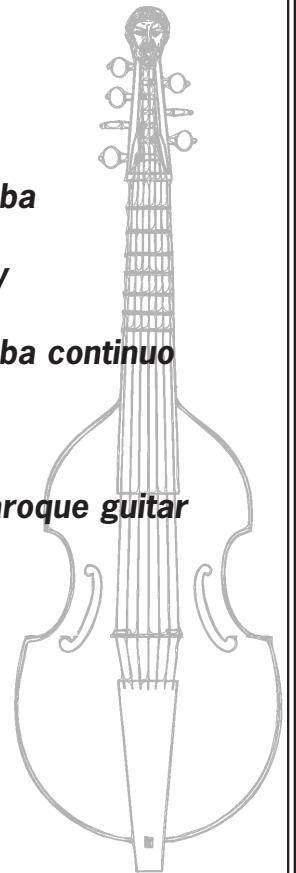
Nicole Bannister ~ french poetry

Catherine Tabrett ~ viola da gamba continuo

Monika Kornel ~ harpsichord

Tommie Andersson ~ theorbo & baroque guitar

St Scholastica's Chapel
2 Arcadia Rd
Glebe



Marin Marais (1656-1728): A Life's Work

Concert 2

Having commenced the Marais Project last concert with music from each of the five volumes of Marais' viola da gamba music, today's concert concentrates mainly on Marais' first Book, along with some music of his peers such as de Visée and Caix d'Hervelois.

In preparing for this concert I found that the early Book I pieces have a charm all of their own. In some ways the music seems underdeveloped, yet showing signs of great things to come. For example, in the d minor suite Marais makes extensive use of the gamba's lower register, rarely ascending to the higher realms of the instrument. Although the melodies have a distinct character they remain angular and not as singable as those of the composer's maturity. Except for the two chaconnes in Book 1, most of the pieces are short in length and follow the classical sequence of dances. In comparison, in the latter Books one can find several substantial compositions such as "La Folia" in Book 2 and the famous "Le Labyrinthe" in Book 4.

Already in the D major Chaconne from Book 1 (performed in today's program), which is published directly after the d minor suite, one can hear stylistic and technical development. In this work the composer begins to explore the upper register of the instrument and takes more risks in structuring harmonic progressions. However, there is a sense here that Marais is still finding his feet artistically. The constant shifts from major to minor are almost overdone. And although there are moments of virtuostic flare, these again seem to lack confidence.

The pieces for two viola da gambas are found at the end of Book 1. From the opening moments of the Prelude with its long sustained chords, to the following dances in which the melodies begin to capture the audience's attention, we start to glimpse the real genius of the master gambist. As a contemporary, Hubert le Blanc (1740) noted, "Marais founded and solidly established the empire of the viol!"

Orchestrating the continuo

Marais does not indicate which instruments are to accompany his works, but we know the French gamba school made extensive use of the theorbo as well as the harpsichord. In fact, the theorbo was Marais' preferred continuo instrument. So in preparing this concert, we the performers have orchestrated each piece so as to expose the many sonorities of the viola da gamba and, indeed, the continuo instruments! At various times you will hear one gamba and the theorbo, two gambas and harpsichord, two gambas alone, and all four instruments. The baroque guitar, a five-string precursor to the modern classical guitar, was also a favourite instrument of the French Court and it too makes an appearance during the concert.

Marais and his time

As part of the ongoing Marais Project one of my aims is to explore the works of Marais' contemporaries. Unfortunately for Caix d'Hervelois (1680-1760), he was at his peak during the years when the gamba commenced its decline. He was no Marais, however. The beauty of his music rests on its simplicity, the delicacy of its melodic profile and its grace. For these reasons his music make a welcome change from the intensity Marais generates.

Another aspect of understanding the milieu of an artist is developing an awareness of the other art forms of the time. In Concert 1 we were fortunate to experience the refined graciousness of French Court Dance, for Concert 2, I have decided to feature poetry. Although the works to be read today are a little earlier than the music performed, they open the era up to us in yet another way.

Jennifer Eriksson

Eriksson

Jennifer Eriksson completed her initial musical studies at the NSW State Conservatorium of Music studying cello with Barbara Woolley. In 1985 she left Australia to study the viola da gamba with Jaap ter Linden at the Rotterdam Conservatorium where she completed post-graduate studies in baroque music. Whilst in Europe she performed regularly in Holland and Germany including a guest appearance at the Utrecht Festival.

Since returning to Australia in 1988 Jennifer has performed as a soloist with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, the Australian Chamber Orchestra, the Victorian State Opera Orchestra and Salút. She is highly sort after as a continuo player and has appeared with Opera Australia, the Renaissance Players, the Early Dance Consort, the Sydney Consort, The Musicke and numerous other ensembles. Jennifer has also performed in regular live broadcasts for the ABC and tours for Musica Viva in the ensemble "Sounds Baroque".

Nicole Bannister arrived in Sydney newly wed to Hugh 30 years ago, and was born in Paris a couple of decades prior to that. After obtaining her Diploma in Commercial Studies in France, she worked in Germany as a translator and in Australia initially for medium-sized companies, then in the financial sector and later in large government and private corporations as Personal Assistant. After the birth of her two children, Keith and Corinne, she taught French as a foreign language to HSC students for over 10 years. She is presently involved in volunteer work with North Sydney Council's bush regeneration program, SPOC and independent environmental groups.

Monika Korneł studied piano in Poland where she received her Diploma from the Conservatorium of Music, later performing concertos by Bach and Rachmaninov with Polish Orchestras in the 1980s. After furthering her studies at the Academy of Music in Lodz, she completed a Bachelor of Music degree at the NSW State Conservatorium of Music. Here she broadened her keyboard studies to include the harpsichord, taking lessons with Paul Dyer and Raymond Harvey. In 1995 she participated in master classes with Robert Wooley in London and Bob van Asperen in Amsterdam. In December of that year she was invited to perform the harpsichord concertos of J.S. Bach with several established chamber orchestras in Poland.

Monika performs regularly as a soloist and chamber music artist with a number of well known ensembles including the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestra of St Laurence, and appeared at the recent Bach Festival. She has also completing a Master of Music in performance with Paul Dyer at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

Tommie Andersson was born in Sweden and is a graduate of the State Conservatorium of Music in Gotëborg (Gothenburg), Sweden and the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis. He is widely recognised as Australia's leading specialist in lute and early guitar and is in great demand both as a soloist and as a continuo player. He performs regularly with the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Opera Australia, the Brandenburg Orchestra, the Song Company and Sydney Philharmonia amongst others. Tommie appears on numerous discs and has released a solo compact disc of Baroque lute and guitar music on the Swedish label, Musica Rediviva. He lectures in lute at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

Catherine Tabrett commenced studying cello with Dorothy Sumner and subsequently, Georg Pedersen, obtaining her AmusA in 1990. As a member of the SBS Youth Orchestra she toured Europe, Taiwan and the Pacific and participated in several recordings for SBS Television. Catherine completed her Bachelor of Music (honours) at Sydney University in 1997, performing the Saint-Saëns' cello concerto no. 1 with the Sydney University Orchestra. She has also made several chamber music recordings for 2MBS FM and ABC FM.

During this period, Catherine commenced learning the viola da gamba with Jennifer Eriksson. She has since performed on the instrument in several ensembles including The Renaissance Players, the Conservatorium Baroque Orchestra, Salút, The Sydney Consort and Sarabande.

Next Concert – The Marais Project will continue in 2001.

Please write your contact details in the book at the rear of the Chapel if you would like to be kept informed about future concerts.

Phone enquiries: 9809 5185