



THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

GUSTAV LEONHARDT,  
harpichord

Wednesday, April 20, 1988  
8:00 pm  
Gartner Auditorium

Suite in F major (1705) Gaspard Le Roux  
Prélude c. 1650-1705/7  
Allemande  
Courante  
Menuet  
Chaconne

Prélude non-mesuré in D minor (1689) Jean-Henri d'Anglebert  
1635-1691

Pieces in G minor Antoine Forqueray  
La Marella 1672-1745  
La Clément  
La d'Aubonne  
Carillon de Passy—La Latour  
La Leclair

Intermission

Sonata in G major, S. 968/1005 Johann Sebastian Bach  
Adagio  
Fuga  
Largo  
Allegro assai

Harpichord by William Dowd, 1982,  
after Pascal Taskin

GUSTAV LEONHARDT performs on the Hradetzky organ at St. Paul's Episcopal Church (Coventry at Fairmount in Cleveland Heights) this Friday evening, April 22, at 8:00 pm. He plays works by Merulo, Frescobaldi, Fischer, Pasquini, Muffat, Zipoli, and Eberlin. The suggested donation at the door is \$5.00.

PROGRAM NOTES  
by Judith Eckelmeyer

If we take the term "baroque" at face value in its application to a historical era in music, we must wrestle with the idea of an unevenness, an irregularity, an asymmetry in the products of that art. The manifestations of this unevenness or asymmetry occur in different ways through music of that period. Usually bracketed for convenience within the years 1660 to 1750, the era abounds with examples of pieces showing almost kaleidoscopic variety and contrast in tempos, instrumental and vocal colors, textures, and volumes, all abutted with sequential treatment as if to dazzle the listener with the spectacle of resources posited by the composer. And, as with other arts of the period, there is in the music of the baroque a high priority on decorative potential, a delight in the spectacular and the intricate for their own sakes, as an enhancement to the structural substance of a work.

Although a form of harpsichord was described in writing from the fourteenth century, it entered the mainstream of music about 1520. Its chief structural characteristics were clear by that time: its strings were activated by plectra inserted in jacks, and it had several sets of strings and jacks with differing octave ranges. In the seventeenth century it was equipped with a second manual with its own set of strings and jacks; there were also different modes of altering the basic plucked sound so that, along with different combinations of strings from either manual, a variety of tone colors was possible on the instrument. The numerous terms related to stringed keyboards in the time from 1500 to about 1800 is indicative of the popularity of this type of instrument, of which the harpsichord was only one example! Many of the keyboard types were readily adaptable for the modest home environment; some were useful only as gentle accompanying instruments for chamber ensembles or voice. The harpsichord survived as a solo concert instrument until about 1800.

At the beginning of its emergence as a soloist, the harpsichord inspired some relatively uncomplicated literature. However, by the second half of the seventeenth century there was a considerable--and growing--body of literature for the instrument, distinctive unto itself and idiomatic to it. The sonata and the concerto of the late baroque constituted multi-movement works of an abstract nature; that is, not derived specifically from dances or vocal models. On the other hand, dance suites for keyboard and also works such as variations based on vocal pieces were composed in great number throughout the baroque era. By the second half of the seventeenth century, suites comprised both dance and non-dance movements. There were "typical" dances and orders in which the dances occurred, but there were many instances in which local traditions and preferences in content prevailed. In France, for instance, dance movements might not be named as such but presented with a title derived from a dedicatee or an object depicted in the music. We might see some of the kind of suite movements presented in tonight's program in the following manner:

#### NON-DANCES

PRELUDE--opening movement, no fixed expectation for texture or tempo, usually without repeats, often quite free in style; the freest, most expressive is the UNMEASURED PRELUDE, in which note values are not set in relation to a meter and have relative value to a phrase, and are treated entirely at the discretion of the performer.

CHACONNE--a type of variation, in fact having originated as a dance but losing the rhythmic aspect of that dance by the late seventeenth century; recurring harmonic pattern in a triple meter is the typical use of the term, but in France it



could also mean a type of RONDEAU, in which the recurring pattern returns between occurrences of short, two-phrase units called couplets. The recurring material is the RONDEAU.

#### DANCES

ALLEMANDE--moderate tempo, quadruple meter dance usually with a short pick-up, and with "running" motives.

COURANTE--by the seventeenth century in triple meter, although in France the meter might be triple or compound duple, and with duple-sounding sections, so that it is irregular sounding in its meter and rhythm.

MINUET--originated in Louis XIV's court as a formalized country dance, in triple meter and at a dignified pace; typically sets of two or even more minuets would appear in sequence in a suite, with the first repeated after the others have been performed.

SARABANDE--slow triple meter dance beginning on a downbeat with the second beat note prolonged into the third beat; the dance originated in Mexico and entered Europe through Spain, where its original lewd associations were divested from it and its style "cleaned up" for genteel folk.

DOUBLE--French term for an ornamented variation of a dance movement.

An aspect of the baroque literature for the harpsichord is ornamentation, a feature which contributes to the sense of unevenness or irregularity

in the surface sound of the music. French composers such as d'Anglebert and Couperin used ornaments or *agréments* extensively in solo harpsichord works; it was the French composers at the court of Louis XIV who systematized the ornaments and their symbols in the seventeenth century.

In the solo harpsichord literature, ornaments serve several purposes. First, of course, they pleasantly engage the true members of the melody and point up the pitches by approaching them from different directions; often the ornamental pitches are dissonant, even stridently so, while the true melody pitch is consonant in the given harmonic context. Second, because the harpsichord's tone decays so quickly, the ornaments serve in some cases to sustain the perception of a melody pitch by artifice; a trill, for example, will contain the principal pitch and neighboring pitch in alternation, so that one is always aware of the true pitch because it is recurrent, not sustained. The ornaments could also be used to smooth out large distances between important pitches and to give a sense of expressivity to a work, particularly in a slow tempo. In their best application, ornaments sound "dreamed up" for the particular situation--improvised, almost off-the-cuff. This, of course, is far from the truth for most of today's performers. The myriad shorthand markings, squiggles, slash marks, and slashes-with-squiggles all have quite specific names and meanings, and take diligent study and practice to incorporate into what appears to be the "real" musical notation. A successful performance results when the "realized" music has the grace, charm, and rhythmic vitality of the age of elegant intricacy.

As the body of idiomatic literature grew for the harpsichord and other maturing instruments of the late seventeenth century, a paradox arose in the increased interest in borrowing from one performing medium to another. We know that the voice was a paramount model for string composition and performance at that time: what do we make of a string concerto transcribed for a



non-sustaining keyboard; a solo violin which produced the effects of chords and contrapuntal lines as if it were a keyboard? There are many examples of these exchanges of performing media by the end of the baroque; there appears to have been a real delight in the capability of a particular instrument or ensemble to take on the attributes of another instrument and transcend the idiomatic difference, subsume the style, and make over a work into a new set of timbres. This grand tradition of transcription permeates the output of many composers, especially that of Johann Sebastian Bach and Handel.

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Gaspard Leroux, Jean-Henri d'Anglebert, and Antoine Forqueray *le père* were all associated with the court of Louis XIV, whose reign is synonymous with lavish decorative practice. These composers' works were very much in keeping with the taste of Louis' court. Of Leroux, a master harpsichordist, very little is known. His *Pièces de Clavessin* [sic] were published in 1705 and influenced not only French composers but Graun, Krebs, and Handel in Germany, among others. Leroux made possible several modes of performing the works in this set by providing not only a score for a single harpsichord, complete in itself, but also a modified version of the original supplemented with a part for a second harpsichord; thus the compositions could be heard in a variety of interesting and new ways, depending on the mode the performer(s) chose.

Jean-Henri d'Anglebert was a pupil of Chambonnières and succeeded him in serving the Sun King. An organist and harpsichordist, he wrote for both instruments. His *Pièces de Clavecin* were published in 1689, but contained some transcriptions from Lully's opera in addition to his own four suites and organ works. The unmeasured preludes in the suites are fine examples of the contemporary reliance on improvisatory style, for they elicit an expressive, even dramatic interpretation from the performer.

Antoine Forqueray was a renowned viol player, and he wrote five suites for that instrument with continuo. They were published in 1747 as *Pièces de viole*, but were also transcribed for harpsichord. They contain movements with dedicatory or descriptive titles rather than specific dance names, although most are fast dances. La Marella, La Clément, La d'Aubonne, Le Carillon de Passy, and La Latour are all from the fourth suite, while La Leclair is from the second. La Leclair probably refers to Jean-Marie Leclair (1697-1764), the French composer, violinist, and dancer who was a friend of Forqueray's and who was appointed Louis XV's "ordinaire de la musique du roi" in 1733. La Clément refers to Charles-François Clément (1720-1782), a composer and theorist who dedicated his first published work to Forqueray's son and daughter-in-law.

Johann Sebastian Bach wrote his solo violin sonata in C major, S. 1005, during his Cöthen years (1717-1723). The sonatas typically eschew dance rhythms and titles, using the slow-fast-slow-fast sequence and textural changes for diversity. Bach's son Wilhelm Friedemann transcribed the first movement for the harpsichord, placing it in G major. As of the most recent publication of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, only the first-movement transcription has been identified in the corpus of either father or son

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I am indebted to Susan Hambley of the Jones Music Library, Dr. Elinore Barber of the Bach Riemenschneider Institute at Baldwin-Wallace College, and Deborah Greene and her assistants at the Audio/Music Services of the Cleveland State University Library for their kind assistance with information on the French works in this program.



