

French Bassoon Corner

With Dirty Pierre

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ALLO, ALLO, MES AMIS, AND BONNE CHANCE AVEC YOUR CROISSANT KEYS!

Today let us consider some of the great compositeurs who wrote pour le basson Français.

Jean-Baptiste LULLY (1632-1687): see *Bruits de Trompettes, Sinfoinies pour les Patres, Le Temple de la Paix*, etc. pour les partitions énergétiques.

Michael-Richard DELALANDE (1957-1726), the composer royal de Louis XIV and XV at Versailles wrote extensively in the tenor register: eg *Symphonies Pour Les Soupers du Roy, Caprices*, etc.

François COUPERIN (1668-1733): solo pièces, duets et musique de chambre.

Jean-Philippe RAMEAU (1683-1764): the baroque basson français est très fort in the tenor register: he wrote often for four bassoons in unison up to top A. (Mon Dieu!) See *Les Paladins, Les Indes-Galantes, Les Boreades* etc.

Joseph Bodin de BOISMORTIER (1689-1755): duets, sonatas and concertos.

François DEVIENNE (1759-1803): sonatas, chamber music and a concerto.

Luigi CHERUBINI (1760-1842): Prenez garde! Dangerous low solos in masses and *Requiem*.

Antoine-Joseph REICHA (1770-1836): teacher of Berlioz; he wrote a sonata and many horifiques solos in his wind quintets.

François-Adrien BOIELDIEU (1775-1834): see *La Dame Blanche* et panique!!

Saverio MERCADANTE (1795-1870): chamber music and a concerto.

Gaetano DONIZETTI (1797-1848): *Una Furtiva Lagrima* – laisser tomber un pleur for your reed boîte.

Hector BERLIOZ (1803-1869): is there a better orchestral writer for the basson français? “A dry rustle like a witch’s broomstick” is how he described the basson.

Frederic-François CHOPIN (1810-1849): solos merveilleuses in his deux piano concertos.

Giuseppe VERDI (1818-1901): many solos in his operas, but his finest moment for the basson section comes in his *Requiem*. What better way to introduce the *Libera Me* than une quartette à bassons? Vraiment *un die illa tremenda!*

Charles GOUNOD (1818-1893): *Petite Symphonie pour Vents* demands la délicatesse du basson français.

Camille SAINT-SAENS (1835-1921): apart from his *Sonate* magnifique there are many solos in his orchestral works and *Samson et Dalila* opens with a solo tenor F#.

Georges BIZET (1838-1875): “Entrée des Dragons” in *Carmen*.

Edward ELGAR (1857-1934): he wrote the *Romance* as an apology for all the fiendish solos in the symphonies and *Enigma Variations*. Bien sur, he played basson français well.

Paul DUKAS (1865-1935) the most famous bassoon tune of all time in *L'Apprenti Sorcier*.

Charles KOECHLIN (1867-1950): rush out and buy CPO999-434-2, a CD by Ekhart Huber of *Silhouettes de Comedie, Trois Pieces* and the *Sonate*.

Ralph VAUGHAN-WILLIAMS (1872-1958): *Five Tudor Portraits* contain a little known drunken bassoon solo. The symphonies are full of great bassoon moments, and there are the *Six Studies on English Folksong* to be heard on SCS022 played by **Roger Birnstingl**.

Maurice RAVEL (1875-1937): some of the plus terrifying solos sur le planet.

Ermanno WOLF-FERRARI (1876-1948): a *Concertino* and some jolie bits in *Italian Serenade*.

Manuel de FALLA (1876-1946): passages merveilleux in *Tricornes* and *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*.

Ottorino RESPIGHI (1879-1936): for those of you with a disposition nerveuse, stay well away from *Trittico Botticelliano*.

Heitor VILLA-LOBOS (1887-1959): *Ciranda Das Sete Notas*, peut-être le most neglected basson concerto of all, et aussi the great flute and basson *Bachianas Brasileiras*.

Arthur HONEGGER (1892-1955): Pacific 231 – the anorak s'animé.

Joaquin RODRIGO (1901-1998): solos au tour les plus belles notes du basson français in his deux famous pieces pour guitare et orchestre.

Andre JOLIVET (1905-74): the concerto pour le fin de temps – ou votre career.

FROM DIRTY PIERRE'S DANS-BOÎTE:
(DIRTYPIERREFRENCHBSN@YAHOO.CO.UK)

Dear M. Pierre

Did Stravinsky write *Le Sacre* for French bassoon and is it easier to play than on the German?

Phil Bart

Manchester

Dirty Pierre replies:

Les Russes took up the German system immédiatement and Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, etc. all wrote pour le Heckel. Stravinsky still habité en Russe when he wrote *Le Sacre* so he must have had the Mumblephone in mind when he wrote the solo. It is no easier, unless you try Le Sandwich du Mois (below).

C'est printemps! Et toujours there is *Le Sacre de Printemps*! Chaque month, Dirty Pierre has come sous La Manche to your foggy country for a high-level editorial conference with Minsieur Fairbairn. Dirty Pierre is très fatigué with you horrible cuisine so once again:

Dirty Pierre proposes: le sandwich du mois, pour jouer *Le Sacre de Printemps*.

Croque Monsieur Paul Hongne.

Pain blanc, deux tranches

Bosse de Beurre

Tranche de Fromage: cheddar ou sourciere

Saumure (Branston ou Piccalilli)

Vingt Gauloises ou Gitanes (sans filter)

Demi-Bouteille de Cognac

1. Jetez le sandwich dans la poubelle
2. Fumez le Cigarettes
3. Buvez le Cognac
4. Vous est maintenant ready jouer *Le Sacre du Printemps*.

Bon achat pour le cadeau. **Dirty Pierre**



Paul Hongne, just finishing his gitanes prior to performing the Stravinsky with the Paris Opéra Orchestra.