

Couperin (1668-1733) was a French organist, harpsichordist, teacher and composer who divided his time between Paris and court at Versailles (Louis XIV and XV). Most surviving French music during the Baroque era was composed to meet the needs of court and aristocratic life (Boismortier being an exception). Couperin published method books to elucidate fingering and use of ornaments for keyboard, and to offer rules for realizing figured bass. He wrote a number of superlative harpsichord pieces, which were published during his lifetime in elegantly engraved editions. About 150 years after his death Brahms edited a complete edition of Couperin's harpsichord pieces.

Fasch (1688-1758) came from a family of church kantors, and held a succession of posts as a violinist in Germany. He was a contemporary of J.S. Bach and Handel. None of his music was published in his lifetime and much of it has been lost, but Telemann and J.S. Bach performed his music in Hamburg and Leipzig, respectively. J.S. Bach apparently held Fasch's music in high esteem, and copied out five of his orchestral suites. Fasch had a penchant for wind instruments and often used them in pairs.

Scarlatti (1660-1725) was born in Sicily. He gained the protection of Queen Christina of Sweden (who at the time was living in Rome), and became her maestro di cappella. In 1684 he became maestro di cappella to the viceroy of Naples, through the influence of his sister, an opera singer, who was the mistress of an influential Neapolitan noble. Here he produced a long series of operas, as well as other music for state occasions. His son, Domenico, also became a composer.



Instruments & Front Cover

Divertimenti is playing with "period instruments", which means they are reproductions of Baroque era instruments (such as portrayed in the front cover paintings). We enjoy talking about our instruments, so feel free to ask about them!

Bassoon: "Der Fagottspieler", Harmen Hals (1611 - 1669)

Recorder: "Flute Player", Jan Kupetzky (1667 - 1740)

Oboe: Anonymous (first half of 18th century)

Harpsichord: "Harpsichord Lesson", Jan Steen (1626 - 1679)

Program design by Suzanne Siebert (www.symbolicsolutions.com); notes abstracted from various sources including *Companion to Baroque Music*.

Divertimenti

www.divertimenti.org



December 28, 2008, 4:00 p.m.

1828 Virginia St., Berkeley, California

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Sonata IV Joseph Bodin de Boismortier

Vivace–Presto–Largo–Presto

Moira Little, Leonora Gillard, Suzanne Siebert: oboes

Arthur Ungar: bassoon

Ruth Ungar: harpsichord

Dix-huitième Ordre François Couperin

La Verneuil

Leonora Gillard: harpsichord

Sonata in E minor Johann Friedrich Fasch

Adagio–Allegro–Affetuoso–Presto

Moira Little, Suzanne Siebert: oboes

Arthur Ungar: bassoon

Ruth Ungar: harpsichord

Sonata 3a, Opus 50 Joseph Bodin de Boismortier

Moderato–Corrente–Minuetto (theme & 4 variations)

Arthur Ungar: bassoon

Ruth Ungar: harpsichord

Sonata V Joseph Bodin de Boismortier

Andante–Presto–Adagio–Allegro

Suzanne Siebert, Leonora Gillard, Moira Little: recorders

Arthur Ungar: bassoon

Ruth Ungar: harpsichord

Dix-huitième Ordre François Couperin

Soeur Monique

Leonora Gillard: harpsichord

Sonate Alessandro Scarlatti

Adagio–Allegro–Minuet

Suzanne Siebert, Leonora Gillard, Moira Little: recorders

Arthur Ungar: bassoon

Ruth Ungar: harpsichord



J.B. de Boismortier



F. Couperin



J.F. Fasch



A. Scarlatti



Program Notes

Boismortier (1689-1755) was born in the south of France. Little is known of his youth and musical training. He relocated to Paris in about 1724 and was among the most popular composers of 18th-century France. He published over one hundred major works which were printed and reprinted. His popular success made him the butt of many jokes among the musical “establishment”. Although his works aimed to please listeners, Boismortier was a knowledgeable composer.

The first piece we play by Boismortier was written with flutes or recorders intended as the three trebles, but we have transposed it down (from D to C) to fit more comfortably for three oboes. We think the three program pieces by Boismortier are very different, and hope you agree!