

Reviews

Edited by Janet Scott

G098

Louis de Caix d'Hervelois, *Suite A-Dur op. 6, 1 für Traversflöte oder Pardessus de Viole und Basso continuo*, ed. Donald Beecher. Edition Güntersberg (G098) 2006. ISMN: M501740987. One realized full score, two unrealized scores, and facsimile (1 page). € 16.00

Because there are so few modern editions or facsimiles available for the pardessus de viole, Güntersberg's latest publication of the first suite from Louis de Caix d'Hervelois's opus 6, edited by Donald Beecher, is a very welcome addition. Die-hard fans of the pardessus de viole will no doubt recall Mr. Beecher's edition of the second suite from this same collection for Dovehouse Editions, 1980. These same fans will also be aware of the facsimile edition of the entire work published by Fuzeau in 1991.

Before examining this edition, I feel it is necessary to provide some background. Published in 1736 under the title *Sixième oeuvre contenant quatre suites pour la flûte-traversière, avec la basse, qui conviennent aussi au pardessus de viole* (Opus 6 containing four suites for the flute with bass which are also suitable for the pardessus de viole), it is one of the earlier works for pardessus de viole. The first musical publication to include the pardessus de viole was *Sonates* (1722) by Joachim Michault Chamborn (fl. 1722–1725).

This particular work by Caix d'Hervelois has provided us with vital information about his professional and personal life. The title page is the same as that of the sonatas for pardessus by Joseph Bodin de Boismortier, which appeared at roughly the same time, and both composers are listed as living at the same address. It is very likely that Caix d'Hervelois was influencing Boismortier's knowledge of the instrument, and Boismortier most likely had a hand in Caix d'Hervelois's decision to compose for the flute. It is important to bear in mind that opus 6 is primarily for the flute, as shown by the title, although a passage in the second suite descends below the range of that instrument. Almost twenty years later, he published music written primarily for the pardessus: *Sixième livre de pièces pour un pardessus de viole à cinq et six cordes avec la basse, contenant 3 suites qui peuvent se jouer sur la flûte* (op. 9, 1751) and *Septième livre de pièces pour un pardessus de viole à cinq et six cordes* (op. 10, 1753). These were written in treble clef, as opposed to opus 6, which was written in French violin clef.

It is likely that Caix d'Hervelois studied with Marin Marais, when one considers his elegant French style and his thorough understanding of harmony, although his technique would probably not have matched that of Forqueray. However, Michel Corrette made several remarks in his *Méthode pour apprendre facilement à jouer du pardessus de viole* (1748) that hint at Caix d'Hervelois's influence on the evolution of the instrument. Corrette wrote that the inventor of the five-stringed

pardessus de viole is a "Mr. ***, a man of rare merit who possesses the same depth of musical knowledge as the most able masters of the art and adds an extraordinary execution and all the delicacy that Mr. Forcray [Forqueray] and Marais have on the viol."

The Güntersberg edition of op. 6, no. 1 is well presented and easy to read. It includes a complete score with solo voice and a fully realized continuo part presented on two staves. In the case of the Muzette (discussed below), the independent bass voice appears on an individual staff. The two separate identical parts contain the solo and continuo parts (without realization) on two staves. There are no awkward page turns, and the barring and slurring of the original parts have, for the most part, been preserved. I could only find several minor faults in the realization, but these do not hamper the performance at all and will be evident to most players familiar with realizing figured bass. The realization of the continuo part is relatively clutter-free and allows for those who would like to improvise their own part to use it as a guideline. For those comfortable with realizing their own figured bass, the separate parts provide all the figures.

The fifth movement, the Muzette, presents an interesting editorial and performance practice puzzle. As is often found in the pardessus, flute, and viol works of Caix d'Hervelois, there is an independent bass part for the continuo viol throughout the movements. When the performer encounters this type of writing, with two parts written on the continuo staff, the harpsichord traditionally performs the lower of these two voices. In the case of the Muzette, the composer has assigned a total of five figures to the upper voice (which would be repeated when this material is used again at the end of the Muzette), and two figures to the lower voice. One can only assume that the continuo viol is to provide chords (at least thirds or sixths) on these particular notes. The lower voice needs no figures at all, because all the chords would be in root position, except two cadential notes which require a 6/5 and a sharp 3. Unfortunately, the figures in Mr. Beecher's edition are placed below the continuo staff, rather than above, as they are in the facsimile. On the other hand, one might also interpret the placement of figures as an indication that the upper voice should be realized by the harpsichord, and the lower played by the continuo viol. Fortunately, the facsimile of the Muzette is included in the edition, allowing the performer to examine it and come to his or her own conclusion.

In the introduction, Mr. Beecher lists the publications of Caix d'Hervelois, but I would like to add two more which were inadvertently omitted: *Deuxième recueil de pièces pour la flûte traversière, bc* (Paris, 1731) and *Septième livre de pièces pour un pardessus de viole à cinq et six cordes, op. 10* (Paris and Lyons,

1753).

These small criticisms aside, I was very pleased to see this edition, and I must say that it prompted me to get out all my books of Caix d'Hervelois again and play through them, as we often overlook this composer. What we sometimes also forget is that Caix d'Hervelois published six books of music for either viola da gamba or pardessus de viole after Marais's death, the last of which appeared almost thirty years afterwards. French musical tastes had changed and Caix d'Hervelois was writing what pleased his public. **Seen in any light, these pieces are still thoroughly enjoyable.**

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