

## Toronto Early Music News

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Presse internationale

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### Jean-Férey REBEL & François REBEL

#### Rebel De Pere En Fils

Ensemble Les Surprises

Ambronay AMY303

[www.ambronay.org](http://www.ambronay.org)

Jean-Férey (1666-1747) and his son François (1701-1775) are joined by François' composer pen-partner François Francoeur (1698-1787) in a wonderfully programmed recording by this young dynamic ensemble. Ambronay is justly celebrating their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary for they are widely credited with helping to launch the careers of many young euro-early music artists. Ensemble Les Surprises take their name from the Rameau opera *Les Surprises de l'Amour* and are all former students of Christie, Rousset or Niquet. They are dedicated to 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century repertoire. The instrumentation is two violins and flutes, viol da gamba, contrabass, theorbo, bassoon and harpsichord. The leaders of Les Surprises are Juliette Guignard (viol) and Louis-Noël Bestion de Camboulas (harpsichord). Two singers add to the charm of this new disc, soprano Juliette Perret and bass Étienne Bazola.

The CD's only works that have any profile are the *Les Caractères de la danse* and *Tombeau de Monsieur de Lully* by Jean-Férey Rebel, which have both been recorded and performed internationally. The numerous excerpts from the co-authored Rebel-Francoeur operas that fill out the recording are all very high quality and contain the major theatrical scenes of the tragédie lyrique form: tragic, magic, dance, descent of the gods, graceful airs, love and storm scenes. The pieces are taken from *Ballet de la Paix* (1738), *Scanderberg* (1735), *Le Prince de Noisy* (1749). The compositions of the Rebel-Francoeur team have not enjoyed a revival in our own day. Francoeur was also a director of the Paris opera and his music had gone out of fashion by the time he died, just before the Revolution. His suites for the marriage celebrations of the Comte d'Artois (Hugo Reyne CD) are very beautiful. But the many operas Rebel-Francoeur composed have been forgotten. It is such a pleasure to hear these excerpts played in a chamber setting by these refined young virtuosi. The recording plainly states the case for further exploration of this repertoire more fully. This disc is an excellent introduction to lost master-works and a new ensemble dedicated to their revival. Bravo tous!

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