

## Rameau chez la Pompadour

### Le Retour d'Astrée

One ballet act opera – Jean-Philippe Rameau

### Les caractères de la Folie

Prologue – Bernard de Bury

2021 worldwide recreation

During the reign of Louis XV, music in court was a women business ! Two powerful ladies defended the arts in Versailles and in all the royal places : Queen Marie Leszczyńska and the famous Marquessa of Pompadour. The two favourites competed and challenged their imagination to attract the Court to their concerts, where they presented their latest musical creations.

From 1747, The Marquessa of Pompadour created the « Small Apartments Theater », for which was built an ephemeral theater down the Ambassadors stairs. The Marquessa herself played lead parts, surrounded by great opera singers, orchestra, choir and dancers.

The King's Music Surintendant did everything in his power to help the trendy composers (Rameau, Mondonville, Mouret...) create new works but also to bring back to light great past successes by Lully, Destouches...

The third season of « Small Apartments Theater » opened in 1748 with a new opera by Rameau « Les Surprises de l'Amour » : « Le Retour d'Astrée » prologue presented the fight between the goddess Astrée, who brought peace, and cyclops. This ballet act hasn't been played since so it will be a première worldwide recreation.

Bernard de Bury was one of the great harpsichordists and composers of the XVIIIth century (even if he is not well-known nowadays ). And he was choir master at the « Small Apartments Theater ». He composed a lot pieces of work for the Royal Academy of Music, and for some shows in Court. His work « L'Amour et la Folie » is the prologue for the opera « Les Caractères de la Folie », staging fights between Vénus, L'Amour and la Folie.

Has never played since then, this is also a première worldwide recreation.

**Coproduction Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles - Festival Sinfonia en Périgord – ensemble Les Surprises**

**With support from the Caisse des Dépôts et the Orange Foundation**

Soloists :

2 sopranos

2 baritones

Orchestra and choir (27)

Louis-Noël Bestion de Camboulas, harpsichord and conductor



**Ensemble Les Surprises - Louis-Noël Bestion de Camboulas, artistic direction**

Founded in 2010 by Juliette Guignard and Louis-Noël Bestion de Camboulas, the ensemble Les Surprises seeks to convey its passion for the music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries through varied and original programmes. In borrowing its name from the opéra-ballet by Jean-Philippe Rameau *Les Surprises de l'Amour*, the group has placed its destiny under the lucky star of this composer, with the aim of exploring operatic music in all its shapes and forms ! The work of the ensemble is anchored in a process of musicological and historical research, indeed Louis-Noël Bestion de Camboulas wishes to highlight scores that have never been released since the 18th century, thanks to music libraries such as Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF) or Bibliothèque de l'Opéra de Paris.

Les Surprises is an ensemble of varying size, which can metamorphose from a chamber group to one of orchestral dimensions. Its members were all trained at leading European conservatories.

In 2014 Les Surprises received the « Révélation musicale » (new discovery) prize awarded by the French critics' circle for the performing arts (« Syndicat professionnel de la critique de théâtre, musique et danse »).

The ensemble Les Surprises recorded five discs in the label *Ambronay Éditions* : they all received warm praise in the national and international press (Diamant d'Opéra-Magazine, 5 de Diapason...). The next release will take place in november 2019 with « Issé », by André-Cardinal Destouches, never recorded until now. The ensemble also works with the label Alpha : in 2018 with « Bach Inspiration » with the flutist Juliette Hurel, and in 2021 with the soprano Véronique Gens, for a project about Lully and his students.

Since its foundation, it has appeared in numerous concert halls and festivals, including Opéra royal de Versailles, Opéra de Massy, Auditorium de Radio France, Opéra de Montpellier, Ambronay festival, Sinfonia en Périgord festival, Saintes festival, Rencontres Musicales de Vézelay, Sanssouci

festival, Bozar, Saint John's Smith Square, Bourgie concert hall (Montréal), Beirut Chants Festival, Singapore...

In 2020, Les Surprises will begin a partnership with Sinfonia en Périogr festival, in association with the Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles.

The Caisse des Dépôts is the main sponsor of the ensemble Les Surprises, which is also supported by the Orange Fondation. The ensemble receives help from the Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication – Direction Régionale des Affaires Culturelles Nouvelle Aquitaine, the City of Bordeaux, the Conseil Régional of Nouvelle Aquitaine, the Conseil Départemental of Gironde, and punctually from the ADAMI, SPEDIDAM, SACEM, Musique Nouvelle en Liberté, the CMBV (Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles) and the Office Artistique of Nouvelle Aquitaine. The ensemble is member of FEVIS and PROFEDIM. The ensemble is associated to the Ambronay Editions Label.

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