



JEAN-MARIE LECLAIR

GREG EWER

THE COMPLETE
SONATAS
FOR
TWO VIOLINS

ADAM LAMOTTE



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Six Sonatas for Two Violins, Op. 3

Sonata 1 in G Major

- | | | |
|----|---------------------|------|
| 1. | I. Allegro | 2:44 |
| 2. | II. Allegro ma poco | 2:36 |
| 3. | III. Allegro | 2:21 |

Sonata 2 in A Major

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|------|
| 4. | I. Allegro | 2:26 |
| 5. | II. Sarabanda: Largo | 2:17 |
| 6. | III. Allegro | 2:34 |

Sonata 3 in C Major

- | | | |
|----|------------------|------|
| 7. | I. Adagio Vivace | 4:56 |
| 8. | II. Adagio | 2:46 |
| 9. | III. Allegro | 3:34 |

Sonata 4 in F Major

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|------|
| 10. | I. Allegro assai | 2:51 |
| 11. | II. Aria: andante grazioso | 4:18 |
| 12. | III. Giga: allegro moderato | 2:55 |

Sonata 5 in E minor

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------|------|
| 13. | I. Allegro ma poco | 3:16 |
| 14. | II. Gavotte: andante grazioso | 1:46 |
| 15. | III. Presto | 2:31 |

Sonata 6 in D Major

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------|------|
| 16. | I. Andante | 1:28 |
| 17. | II. Allegro | 2:36 |
| 18. | III. Largo | 2:01 |
| 19. | IV. Allegro ma non troppo | 3:38 |

Six Sonatas for Two Violins, Op. 12

Sonata 1 in B minor

- | | | |
|---------|---------------------|------|
| 1 (20). | I. Allegro | 3:38 |
| 2 (21). | II. Allegro ma poco | 3:28 |
| 3 (22). | III. Allegro | 2:14 |

Sonata 2 in E Major

- | | | |
|---------|-----------------------------------|------|
| 4 (23). | I. Allegro ma poco | 3:51 |
| 5 (24). | II. Largo | 3:13 |
| 6 (25). | III. Minuetto: Non troppo allegro | 4:42 |
| 7 (26). | IV. Allegro | 3:25 |

Sonata 3 in D Major

- | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|------|
| 8 (27). | I. Un poco andante | 2:22 |
| 9 (38). | II. Un poco andante | 3:02 |
| 10 (29). | III. Sarabanda: Largo | 2:13 |
| 11 (30). | IV. Giga: Prestissimo | 2:44 |

Sonata 4 in A Major

- | | | |
|----------|----------------------|------|
| 12 (31). | I. Andante | 2:37 |
| 13 (32). | II. Allegro moderato | 2:53 |
| 14 (33). | III. Largo | 3:07 |
| 15 (34). | IV. Vivace | 4:40 |

Sonata 5 in G minor

- | | | |
|----------|--|------|
| 16 (35). | I. Allegro | 3:27 |
| 17 (36). | II. Aria Gratoso: Andante -
Un poco piu allegro - Piu andante | 4:16 |
| 18 (37). | III. Allegro assai | 2:34 |

Sonata 6 in B Flat Major

- | | | |
|----------|------------------------|------|
| 19 (38). | I. Allegro | 3:07 |
| 20 (39). | II. Allego moderato | 2:24 |
| 21 (40). | III. Andante: Dolce | 4:19 |
| 22 (41). | IV. Allegro non presto | 2:23 |



JEAN-MARIE LECLAIR (1697-1764)

Sonatas for Two Violins Op. 3 (1730) and Op. 12 (1746)

Born into a musical household in Lyon in 1697, Jean-Marie Leclair was one of six siblings, five of whom established careers as professional musicians. He is often referred to as “the elder” in order to set him apart from a younger brother, also known as Jean-Marie, who would go on to a professional musical career in his native city.

The historical record of Leclair’s earliest years doesn’t reveal much, but we do know that for a decade he was employed as a dancer and violinist at the Opera de Lyon. In 1722, he travelled to Turin where he was hired as premier danseur and ballet master. While in Italy Leclair came into contact with Johann Joachim Quantz, and studied violin with Giovanni Battista Somis, a pupil of Corelli and teacher of several notable French violinists including Louis-Gabriel Guillemain and Jean-Pierre Guignon. Somis also taught the important Italian violinist Gaetano Pugnani.

As such, it can be asserted that through his pedagogical work, Somis created a connecting link between the Italian and French styles. Through Somis’ French pupils, the Italian style of composition and performance found its way to Paris, although such links had begun to be established a generation earlier, with Jacques-Martin Hotteterre visiting Corelli in Rome, and also through Jean-Baptiste Lully. Lully was Italian by birth before leaving for France, where, as Louis XIV’s court composer, he created the French national style.

The French style typical of the seventeenth-century emphasized fast, rhythmic bowing that grew out of dance rather than the more vocal, lyrical style of the Italians that favored slower, more legato bowings. Italian tempi were also typically more extreme, with slow movements performed very slowly, and fast movements performed very briskly. In France, tempi on both ends of the spectrum tended to be more conservative.

Leclair’s own contribution to the development of the French school of violin playing was pivotal. When Corelli’s violin sonatas found their way across Europe in the late seventeenth-century, it was said that it took three French violinists to play them, as multiple-stops were completely unheard of in France at the time. Leclair’s own playing helped to raise the standard of playing in France immeasurably. His use of multiple stops throughout his own music indicates that he had



assimilated much from his time in Italy. To what extent he integrated Italian elements into his own playing style, we'll never know, but his compositions are Italianate enough to assume that he mastered both playing styles equally well.

By the 1730s, a new generation of French violinists had developed a style of playing and teaching whose influence extended all the way to the nineteenth-century. Leclair's own violin playing, and more importantly, his compositions, had an enormous impact on the direction of French music.

The two collections of duos, Op. 3 and Op. 12, are interesting in a number of ways. The Italian influence is present throughout, with many virtuoso elements, and the use of harmonic sequences typical of Italian music. There is plentiful double stopping throughout, which along with Leclair's clever use of voicing, creates the illusion that there are more than two violins playing. Leclair plays with our ears in a fascinating way, dealing with the absence of a bass line by deftly writing lines that allow the listener to fill in missing voices using the imagination. The writing doesn't favor one voice over the other. Rather, the two lines are given equal importance.

And for whom were these works written? Leclair was not known for his collaborative nature, often quarreling with his colleagues, such as Guignon, with whom he was supposed to share the post of premier

violin of the orchestra in Versailles. The two decided to settle the dispute by alternating as leader of the orchestra each month. Guignon allowed Leclair to lead the orchestra first, but when the month was over, Leclair couldn't bear to move to the second desk, and promptly quit. Since the duos were engraved and published, we can assume that they were written for the enjoyment of amateurs, proving that the standard of contemporary amateur violin playing was likely quite high!

All in all, Leclair's contribution to music history cannot be overstated. His innovation revolutionized the French school of violin playing. By weaving together elements of Italian and French music, he created an entirely new compositional style. His duos influenced later composers such as Mozart, de Bériot, Viotti, and closer to our own time, Bartok and Berio.

Sadly, Leclair's life ended in tragedy. In 1764 he was murdered in his home in Paris. The crime was never solved, though the strongest suspicion was that it was a nephew, Guillaume-Francois Vial, who stabbed him in the back. Leclair contributed so much during his 67 years on earth, leaving us only to imagine what he might have produced had he been able to expire naturally.

Matthias Maute



GREG EWER

is well known to audiences for his regular appearances with the Oregon Symphony, Portland Baroque Orchestra, Third Angle New Music Ensemble and Pink Martini. He is also the founder and artistic director of 45th Parallel, a highly acclaimed chamber music series featuring musicians of the Pacific Northwest. He holds faculty positions at Reed College and Lewis & Clark College.

Greg began his musical career at the age of seventeen with the Houston Grand Opera Orchestra. He was also the fiddler in the Houston-based bluegrass band, Classical Grass.

Greg has appeared as a guest recitalist at Yale University and at the National Library in Mexico City. He has performed at numerous summer festivals including the Tanglewood Music Center, San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival, Grand Teton Music Festival, Moab Music Festival and the Montana Baroque Festival. Recent recordings include the six string quintets of Giuseppe Antonio Capuzzi for Cinnabar Records, and a compilation of pieces by contemporary Chinese composer Chen Yi with Third Angle New Music Ensemble. Mr. Ewer performs on a Cremonese violin from 1738, attributed to Lorenzo Guadagnini

ADAM LAMOTTE

has been hailed by critics for his expressive and compelling playing. He has appeared as soloist, concertmaster, and conductor of numerous orchestras throughout the country, including the Northwest Sinfonietta in Seattle, String Orchestra of the Rockies, Astoria Festival Orchestra, Portland Baroque Orchestra, and the Maggini String Orchestra in Houston.



Adam's ever-widening interest in repertoire of all styles has led him to found The Orchestra, a conductorless ensemble which creates "tapestry" programs, combining drastically different pieces into a single concert experience. As Artistic Director of the Montana Baroque Festival, he brings world-class period instrument performances to the rural Montana community. Adam has co-founded two critically-acclaimed ensembles, in Portland and in Houston, and continues to produce many chamber music and chamber orchestra performances. He can be heard on Cinnabar Records, Warner Brothers, and Sono Luminus. In collaboration with ensembles such as Portland Baroque Orchestra, Ars Lyrica Houston, El Mundo and Chanticleer, Mr. LaMotte performs on period instruments, using a fine Italian instrument made in 1730 by Bernardo Calcagni.



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