



**'Souvent dans le plus doux sort': notes on a newly
discovered autograph letter and drinking song by
Francois Couperin**

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► **To cite this version:**

Denis Herlin. 'Souvent dans le plus doux sort': notes on a newly discovered autograph letter and drinking song by Francois Couperin. *Early Music*, 2013, 41 (3), pp.393 - 401. 10.1093/em/cat071 . halshs-03918232

HAL Id: halshs-03918232

<https://shs.hal.science/halshs-03918232>

Submitted on 1 Feb 2023

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Denis Herlin

‘Souvent dans le plus doux sort’: notes on a newly discovered autograph letter and drinking song by François Couperin

IN 1922 the *Revue de musicologie* devoted its third issue to a series of articles on the Couperin family. Among these was an announcement by C. F. Hennerberg, librarian of the Kungliga Musikhögskolan i Stockholm (Royal College of Music, Stockholm), of the discovery of seven autograph annotations by François Couperin. Hennerberg’s announcement was accompanied by a commentary by Julien Tiersot.¹

The annotations are found in an exemplar of Couperin’s first book of *Pièces de clavecin* (1713)² and indicate cross-references to his treatise *L’Art de toucher le clavecin* (1716/17).³ As Tiersot observed, this document is all the more valuable in that, apart from examples of the composer’s signature, ‘no [autograph] of his was previously known.’⁴ Given that the annotations were incorporated into the engraved plates of Book 1 when the fourth impression was prepared (a detail which Hennerberg and Tiersot evidently overlooked), it is highly likely that they were added to the Stockholm exemplar of the third impression by the composer himself.⁵ Since that discovery, there have been numerous studies devoted to Couperin, but until now no further example of his handwriting has been identified.

During a visit to the Library of Congress, Washington DC, in the course of compiling the *Catalogue thématique des œuvres musicales de Jean-Philippe Rameau*, my colleague Sylvie Bouissou and I came across a dossier comprising a series of 18th-century French manuscripts which originated from the library of the playwright and librettist Louis

Fuzelier (1674–1752).⁶ In this dossier I discovered a letter, signed ‘Couperin’ (see [illus.1](#)), which includes a hitherto uncatalogued air for solo bass (transcribed in [ex.1](#)). The text reads as follows:

On vous demande monsieur un second couplet sur le petit air de baccus qui vous plaist tant. J’en ay mis la musique icy bas, afin que vous vous conformiés aux brèves, et aux longues du premier couplet. Ayés la bonté de me l’envoyer au plutot, et me croyés tres assurement tout a vous, Couperin.

ce pâques au matin

You are requested, Sir, to provide a second stanza for the little drinking song that pleases you so much. I have set out the music of it below, so that you may adapt yourself to the longs and shorts of the first stanza. Would you be so kind as to send it to me as soon as possible. Yours most assuredly, Couperin.

This Easter morning

[Transcription of the textual underlay]⁷

*Souvent dans le plus doux sort,
Le plus tendre amour s’endort
Sy baccus ne le reveille[.]
L’himen tient son feu de l’amour.
L’amour quelquefois à son tour
Doit le sien au dieu de la treille.*

[Often in the sweetest circumstances, / The most tender love falls asleep / Unless Bacchus awakens it. Hymen takes his ardour from Love. / But sometimes, in turn, Love / Gets his from the God of the vine.]

4: D.

on vous demande maintenant un second couplet
sur le petit air de Bacchus qui vous plaît tant.
j'en ay mis la musique icy pour afin que
vous vous conformiez aux brèves, et aux longues
du premier couplet. ayez la bonté de
me l'envoyer au plutôt, et me croyez très
affectionné tout à vous, Couperin.



Souvent dans le plus doux sort, le plus tendre amour s'en-
dormit. Le Bacchus ne le réveille. Le bûcher tient son
feu de l'amour. L'amour quelquefois à son tour doit le
rien au Dieu de la veille. Le bûcher tient son feu de la
main; L'amour quelquefois à son tour doit le rien au
Dieu de la veille.

ca pâques au matin

Ex.1 Transcription of the air notated in François Couperin's letter^a

Sou - vent dans le plus doux sort, le plus ten - dre a - mour s'en - dort

Sy Bac-chus ne le ré - veil - le L'hi - men tient son feu de l'a -

-mour. L'a-mour quel-que - fois à son tour doit le sien au dieu de la treil - le. L'hi-men tient son

feu de l'a-mour. L'a - mour quel-que - fois à son tour doit le sien au dieu de la treil - le.

^aMy thanks to Pascal Denécheau for his assistance with typesetting

The letter is written on a separate leaf (22 × 16.5 cm), the reverse of which is blank. The watermark represents a griffin, in a design known to have been used in the late 1710s.⁸ This page is immediately preceded in the dossier by three loose leaves of similar format on which are copied, in a different hand, 'parodies' of harpsichord pieces by François Couperin, two of them with notated melodies, as listed in Table 1.⁹ (In this context the term 'parodie' indicates words added to an existing melody, and carries no pejorative associations.)

That the letter formed part of a numbered sequence which includes *parodies* of Couperin's own pieces supports the assertion that it is in the composer's hand and that the recipient was Louis Fuzelier, as I will demonstrate.

First, we should note that the two *parodies* with notated melodies include several significant variants compared with the versions published by Ballard in 1718 and 1719. In 'La Voluptueuse' the rhythmic structure is different: in the printed version the melody starts on the first beat, whereas in the manuscript it begins with an anacrusis, as in the eponymous harpsichord piece. Moreover, the Ballard edition introduces a *siciliana* rhythm which does not feature in the manuscript version or indeed in the harpsichord piece. (Compare *illus. 2*, first beat of bar 3, and *illus. 3*, second beat of bar 2.)

In the case of 'Les Délices', the musical texts of the manuscript and printed versions also present a few interesting rhythmic variants, but it is in line 8 of the first stanza that we find a more significant difference: the text 'L'un et l'autre enchantent nos cœurs' in the manuscript becomes 'L'un par l'autre, ils ont nos vainqueurs' in the Ballard print. Such discrepancies between these manuscript versions and the printed text show that the Library of Congress *parodies* were not copied from the Ballard edition. It thus seems reasonable to suppose that Fuzelier was the author of these three *parodies*.¹⁰

Furthermore, the myth of Cythera, so beloved of French painters, musicians and writers during the first decades of the 18th century, is referred to in the text of the *parodie* 'Les Délices', beginning with the first line, 'Tout Cythère est dans ce beau séjour'.¹¹ Now, Fuzelier did not spurn this fashion. In August 1713 he presented a comedy entitled *Les Pèlerins de Cythère* at the Foire Saint-Laurent,¹² together with others written for the same occasion: a *Parodie de Psyché* in one act, *Colombine devineresse* in two acts and *L'Opéra de campagne* in three.¹³ Admittedly, no link has hitherto been established between Couperin and Fuzelier, who nevertheless worked with numerous composers of the day, notably Campra (*Ballet des Ages*, 1718), Matho (*Arion*, 1714), Collin de Blamont (*Les Fêtes grecques*

Table 1 Couperin *parodies* in Library of Congress, Washington DC, ML96 Fuzelier, Louis. Column 2 shows the numbering system on the recto of these folios. In column 3 and elsewhere in this article, the initial numbers in square brackets correspond to those in the appendices to Moroney, 'The *Parodies* of François Couperin's harpsichord pieces' (see n.9).

f.1r-v	'1. A.'	[iv/1/iv] 'La Voluptueuse' [2nd <i>Ordre</i> , Book 1 (1713); published in <i>Recueil d'airs sérieux et à boire</i> , Paris: J. B. C. Ballard, November 1718, p.212]	'Dieu d'amour éclaire les beaux jours'	D minor
f.2r-v	'2. A.'	[xi/2/iii] 'Les Délices De Couperin' [7th <i>Ordre</i> , Book 2 (1717); published in <i>Recueil d'airs sérieux et à boire</i> , Paris: J. B. C. Ballard, July 1719, p.132]	'Tout Cythere est dans ce beau séjour'	C major
ff.2v-3r, f.3v blank		[xi/2/ii] 'Parodie' ['nouvelle parodie sur l'air des Délices de la table'; published in <i>Recueil d'airs sérieux et à boire</i> , Paris: J. B. C. Ballard, November 1720, p.218]	'Votre soin / cher amy, va trop loin'	New <i>parodie</i> of 'Les Délices' without musical notation
f.4r, f.4v blank	'4: D.'	Couperin's letter, ex.1	'Souvent dans le plus doux sort'	A major

et romaines, 1723), Rameau (*Les Indes galantes*, 1735) and Mondonville (*Le Carnaval du Parnasse*, 1749). But in the light of the present letter and the three associated *parodies*, it seems extremely likely that the two men did indeed collaborate in this particular repertory.

Seen from this perspective, then, one passage in Couperin's preface to his third book of *Pièces de clavecin* (1722) takes on a whole new meaning:

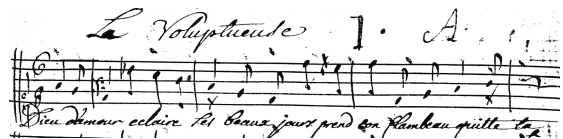
I should never have thought that my pieces would achieve immortality; but since several famous poets have done them the honour of parodying them, this mark of favour could well, in days to come, cause these pieces to enjoy a reputation that they originally owed only to the charming *parodies* that they inspired. Thus, to my well-disposed associates I record in advance my extreme gratitude which such a flattering alliance inspires in me, by providing in this third book a broad scope for them to exercise their Muse.¹⁴

In fact, Fuzelier enjoyed a considerable reputation and was doubtless one of the 'famous poets' referred to in this passage. As Davitt Moroney points out, Couperin's remarks have often been interpreted in an ironic sense.¹⁵ The newly discovered letter, on the contrary, reveals that the composer approved of and encouraged this practice, since he took the trouble to notate the melodic line so that Fuzelier could adapt his verse 'to the longs and shorts of the first stanza'.

As for the vocal piece included in this letter (see [illus.1](#) and [ex.1](#)), it adopts the format of a drinking song for solo bass, or *récit de basse à boire*, to use the terminology employed in Ballard's monthly collections of *airs sérieux et à boire*. Its notation includes characteristics which, to my knowledge, appear only in the work of François Couperin. One of these can be seen in bar 2, where a dotted quaver is followed by two notes with



2 Couperin, 'La Voluptueuse', [iv/1/i] *Recueil d'airs sérieux et à boire* (Paris: J. B. C. Ballard, November 1718), p.212. (The page number '220' in the Ballard edition is a misprint.)



3 Couperin, 'La Voluptueuse', [iv/1/iv] Library of Congress, Washington DC, ML96 Fuzelier, Louis



4 Couperin, 'La Harpée', *Ordre* 21, Book 4 (1730), p.16, bars 12–14

four beams instead of the conventional three; another appears in bar 12, where the two notes after the dotted semiquaver have five beams instead of four. Both these notations recur, for example, in bar 13 of his harpsichord piece 'La Harpée' (illus.4). Moreover, one of these—the dotted semiquaver followed by two notes with quintuple beaming—occurs only in Couperin's pieces written in 3/8, as in the present drinking song. This unusual notation appears in a number of such movements, all of them late works (see Table 2).

As Lucinda Braun has revealed,¹⁶ Couperin's trio sonata *La Convalescente* (the first version of *L'Impériale*) was copied by the violinist Johann Georg Pisendel in the autumn of 1714 from Couperin's autograph, now lost. It is thus interesting to note that, in Pisendel's copy, the 'Air gracieusement' in 3/8—i.e. the movement which was to become the 'Légerement' of *L'Impériale* (see Table 2)—does not include this idiosyncratic notation: rather, the equivalent passages are notated conventionally as dotted semiquavers followed by two hemidemisemiquavers. Assuming that Pisendel did not 'correct' the rhythm in such passages, Couperin must have modified his notation in the process of preparing *L'Impériale* for publication in 1726 as part of his collection *Les Nations*. It would thus seem that this notational peculiarity is primarily a characteristic of his late works.

This observation thus adds a new perspective to the present investigation. Couperin had clearly developed a high degree of sophistication in the notation of rhythm in the interests of an ever more precise interpretation. This is an aspect of his output which, to my knowledge, has hitherto been little explored, yet it reveals the composer as

a significant innovator in his use of non-standard quintuple or even, on occasion, sextuple beaming.¹⁷

We should further note that, in the course of composing his harpsichord music, Couperin had an increasing tendency to adopt the 3/8 metre for brisk but tender pieces. This time signature, though seldom found in his first three books, is used in almost a quarter of the pieces in the fourth book.¹⁸ By way of comparison, Marin Marais uses this signature only rarely in his first four books of viol music,¹⁹ and not at all in his fifth.

A further trait that points to François Couperin has to do with the initial 'anacrusis' which stretches over the first two bars, the keynote *a* reappearing only at bar 3; this is one of several Couperin fingerprints identified by David Fuller.²⁰ Note, too, that after the double bar, with its cadence in E major, the melody modulates rapidly towards the key of B minor. This same procedure is also found, for instance, in 'Le Drôle de corps' (*Ordre* 16, Book 3, [1722]), a piece in G major whose first section ends in D major and continues in A minor.

Questions remain as to the nature of this *air à boire*. Is it an original work by Couperin or a *parodie* of an unpublished keyboard piece? In our present state of knowledge, too little of the composer's secular vocal music has survived to allow a full appreciation of his style in this domain. Even so, the melodic idiom of the air 'Souvent dans le plus doux sort' recalls that of the *brunette* for *dessus* and continuo 'Zephyre, modere en ces lieux', especially in the notation of the vocal ornamentation.²¹ As for the chosen format, no continuo bass is required, since this piece follows the model of the unaccompanied *récits de basse* that Ballard often included in his *recueils d'airs sérieux et à boire*.²² The absence of an independent continuo reinforces the idea that this is an autonomous vocal air rather than a *parodie* of a harpsichord piece. Thus the music of 'Souvent dans le plus doux sort', as presented here, is complete, though of course it lacks the second stanza which Fuzelier was asked to provide. Furthermore, it is tempting to read the opening phrase of Couperin's letter—'You are requested' (*on vous demande*)—as implying that the request came from Jean-Baptiste Christophe Ballard, publisher of these monthly collections.

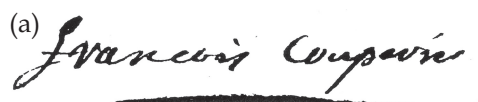
Table 2 Movements in 3/8 including dotted semiquavers followed by quintuple beaming

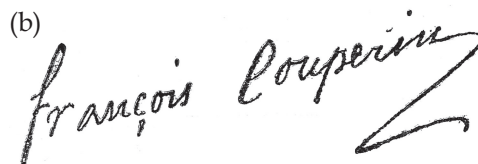
Title and location	Publication	Bar numbers
'Prélude', 5e concert	<i>Les Goûts-réunis</i> (1724)	31, 47, 51
'Entouziaste de Corelli causé par les eaux d'Hypocrène', <i>Le Parnasse ou l'Apothéose de Corelli</i> (fourth movement)	<i>Les Goûts-réunis</i> (1724)	151, 153, 166, 174, 178
Rondeau, 'Légèrement', <i>L'Impériale</i> (fourth movement)	<i>Les Nations</i> (1726)	117, 118, 132, 133, 191, 192
'Passacaille ou Chaconne', 1ère suite	<i>Pièces de violes</i> (1728)	180
'La Sezile', <i>Ordre 20</i>	<i>Quatrième livre de pieces de clavecin</i> (1730)	41
'La Harpée', <i>Ordre 21</i>	<i>Quatrième livre de pieces de clavecin</i> (1730)	13

Yet despite my own researches and those of Davitt Moroney, to whom I am most grateful, no trace of this drinking song has been found among the *recits de basse* in the Ballard collections.²³

It remains to establish the date of Couperin's letter. Apart from the somewhat vague indication 'this Easter morning', the text contains nothing that allows us to date it precisely. Taking into account the evidence provided by the watermark (late 1710s), Ballard's publication of the three associated *parodies* between November 1718 and November 1720, and especially the remarks on the unusual rhythmic notation, we can envisage a dating somewhere between 1720 and 1724. This would situate it within the broader period extending from the publication of Couperin's vocal pieces in the Ballard *recueils d'airs sérieux et à boire* (1711 and 1712) and the *parodies* of his harpsichord pieces in the same series (between 1715 and 1724).²⁴ Furthermore, the signature on the present letter (*illus.5c*) comes closer to the one on a legal document signed by the composer on 3 March 1717 (*illus.5a*)²⁵ than to another, dated 1729 (*illus.5b*).²⁶

We should nevertheless note the two different forms of the letter 'p'. In *illus.5a* and *5b* the downstroke is straight, whereas in the letter (*illus.5c*) it is slightly looped. Yet if we compare these samples with the annotations on the Stockholm exemplar of Book 1 discussed above, we again find both forms of the letter 'p', one of them looped as in the autograph letter, the other straight as in the signatures of 1717 and 1729 (*illus.6*).

(a) 

(b) 

(c) 

5 (a) Signature dated 3 March 1717; (b) Signature dated May 1729; (c) Signature on the new letter

The newly discovered letter and drinking song plus the annotations on the Stockholm exemplar—all undoubtedly in the composer's hand—open up some interesting perspectives, not least their potential value in identifying further Couperin autograph manuscripts. And thanks to this discovery, we must now add a new piece of secular vocal music to the corpus of 14 items (not counting the *parodies* and the *intermèdes* to *Mirtyl et Mécerte*)²⁷ that have already been identified: the nine pieces published in Ballard's *Recueils*



6 'La Milordine', *Ordre 1*, Book 1 (1713), p.6, bars 4–5

d'airs sérieux et à boire and five canons, two of which (*Les agioteurs au désespoir*²⁸ and *Héraclite, Démocrite, Diogène*²⁹) have only recently been discovered. Moreover, the discovery of 'Souvent dans le plus doux sort' adds support to the idea that Couperin was genuinely interested in this genre,

whether in the guise of canons or of *airs sérieux ou à boire*.³⁰ Far from being minor works, these brief vocal pieces 'reveal much about the sources of his musical style'³¹ and exhibit 'aspects of his personality not apparent elsewhere'.³²

Finally, this document invites us to reflect on the links which François Couperin clearly maintained with the literary figures of his time, as the titles of a number of his harpsichord pieces and sonatas lead us to suppose. That the composer was interested in poetry and literature is confirmed by the posthumous inventory of his estate, which includes twelve volumes of the works of Marie-Catherine Desjardins, dite Madame Villedieu (1640–83), *La Princesse de Clèves* by Madame de La Fayette, Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes* and Lesage's *L'Histoire de Gil Blas*.³³

Translated by Graham Sadler

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1 C. F. Hennerberg and J. Tiersot, 'Un autographe de François Couperin le Grand', *Revue de musicologie*, iii/2 (1922), pp.79–81, and iii/3 (1922), pp.114–17, in which five of the seven annotations are reproduced in facsimile.

2 This exemplar (S-Skma, Musik Rar) is of the third impression of the first book of *Pièces de clavecin*, where the points of sale are given thus: 'l'auteur rue S^t. Honoré, entre le Palais Royal, et la / rue des bons Enfants, aux Armes de Bourgogne. / Le sieur Belangé Marchand papetier rue Dauphine, / à la petite Vertu, Et le S^t. Foucaut en lad. rue S^t. Honoré, à la Règle d'or', RISM A/1/2, p.239 [C4281]. This exemplar is listed only in the supplement to RISM A/1/11, p.317 [C4281]. The classification of impressions adopted here is based on that in RISM A/1/2, pp.230–1

[C4278–4287]. Although RISM lists ten exemplars of this impression, three of them do not actually form part of it: one of the two exemplars in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris (shelfmark M.362), and another in the Bibliothèque de Lyon (shelfmark Rés FM27282 (1)) are of the fourth impression [C4282], while another in the Bibliothèque de Grenoble (shelfmark C1151) is of the second impression [C4280]. On these last two, see L. Guillo, *Catalogue de la musique imprimée avant 1801 conservée dans les bibliothèques de Lyon, Grenoble et la région* (Grenoble, 1986), p.43. Couperin lived at the address given on the title-page of the third impression from 1713, probably until 1715; see D. Herlin, 'François II Couperin', *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Personenteil (Kassel, 2/2000), iv, col.1748.

3 On the dating of *L'Art de toucher le clavecin*, see D. Moroney, 'Couperin et les Contradictes. La révision de *L'Art de toucher le Clavecin*', in *François Couperin Nouveaux Regards*, ed. O. Memed (Paris, 1998), pp.163–86.

4 Hennerberg and Tiersot, 'Un autographe de François Couperin le Grand', p.80.

5 On these impressions, see n.2 above. While it is just possible that the annotations were added by a former owner of this volume, they appear to be in the same hand as that of the present letter, as explained towards the end of this article.

6 I am most grateful to Sylvie Bouissou for drawing my attention to this collection. The dossier (shelfmark ML96 Fuzelier, Louis) was evidently acquired

at a public sale, probably in Paris in the 1930s, as is indicated by a catalogue notice pasted to the folder in which the documents are gathered: '160. Musiciens du XVIII^e siècle. 1^o Copies, de la main de Fuzelier, des paroles de divertissements, menuets, cantates, etc. . . , mis en musique par des compositeurs de la première moitié du XVIII^e siècle, parmi lesquels on remarque: Rameau, Blaise, Royer, Alarius, Rebourg, de La Garde, etc. 2^o Réflexions sur les ballets, notes autog. de la main de Fuzelier, 36 p. in-4^o. Curieux dossier.' Unfortunately, I have been unable to identify the precise date of this sale.

7 The poem comprises two tercets, the first of them made up of heptasyllables, and the second of octosyllables.

8 This watermark resembles one found on paper used in 1717, described and illustrated in R. Gaudriault, *Filigranes et autres caractéristiques des papiers fabriqués en France aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (Paris, 1995), no.689, p.135 and pl.79.

9 On this subject, see D. Moroney, 'The *Parodies* of François Couperin's harpsichord pieces', in *L'esprit français' und die Musik Europas—Entstehung, Einfluss und Grenzen einer ästhetischen Doktrin*, ed. M. Biget-Mainfroy and R. Schmusch (Hildesheim, 2007), pp.608–33.

10 Although Ballard's collections often provide the composer's name, that of the poet is seldom given. Of the Couperin *parodies*, the identity of the poet is indicated on only two: [VI] 'La Marche des Gris-Vêtus' (*Recueil d'airs sérieux et à boire*, April 1721, p.63) and [XV] 'Sœur Monique' (*Recueil d'airs sérieux et à boire*, July 1721, p.126), both labelled: 'Les paroles sont de Mr. D. L. T' (doubtless M. de La Tour, as suggested in Moroney, 'The *Parodies*', p.615).

11 See Moroney, 'The *Parodies*', pp.614–15, citing G. Cowart, 'Watteau's pilgrimage to Cythera and the subversive utopia of the opera-ballet', *The Art Bulletin* (September 2001), pp.460–78. One of the pieces in Couperin's third book is entitled 'Le carillon de Cythère' (14th *Ordre*). The Cythera myth appears in several other *parodies*, notably [II] 'Les Pellerines' and [III] 'Les Solitaires'.

12 The autograph manuscript of this one-act comedy is preserved in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris (shelfmark Ms.9545 (2)). Although the handwriting bears some resemblance to that of the manuscript *parodies* in the Library of Congress discussed above, it is difficult to state with certainty that the latter are in Fuzelier's hand. On the performances at the Foire Saint-Laurent, see the César database (<http://cesar.org.uk/cesar2>: accessed 22 September 2009).

13 The autograph manuscript of the second act of this *vaudeville* is preserved in a private collection in Brussels (see *Catalogue Les Autographes* 118 (July 2006), no.125).

14 'Je n'aurais jamais pensé que mes Pièces dussent s'attirer l'immortalité; mais depuis que quelques Poètes fameux leur ont fait l'honneur de les parodier, ce choix de préférence pourroit bien, dans les tems à venir, leur faire partager une réputation qu'elles ne devroient originairement qu'aux charmantes parodies qu'elle auront inspirées, aussi marquay-je d'avance à mes associés bénévoles, dans ce nouveau livre, toute la reconnaissance que m'inspire une société aussi flatteuse, en leur fournissant, dans ce troisième ouvrage, un vaste champ pour exercer leur Minerve.'

15 Moroney, 'The *Parodies*', p.616.

16 L. Braun, '“Quelques manuscrits répandus dans le monde.” *La Convalescente*, sonate en trio de François Couperin', *Revue de musicologie*, xcvi/2 (2010), pp.473–80.

17 See, for example, the 'Sarabande' in the 11^e concert of *Les Goûts-réunis*.

18 Book 1 (1713): 4 pieces out of 76; Book 2 (1717): 7 out of 62 (including the 'vivement' section of the sarabande 'L'Unique' from the 8th *Ordre*); Book 3 (1722): 5 out of 57; Book 4 (1730): 12 out of 49.

19 Book 1 (1686–9): 1 piece out of 93; Book 2 (1701): 7 out of 142; Book 3 (1711): 1 out of 134; Book 4 (1717): 2 out of 107.

20 D. Fuller, 'La grandeur du grand Couperin', in *François Couperin Nouveaux Regards*, pp.51–2.

21 *Recueil d'airs sérieux et à boire* (Paris: C. Ballard, December 1711), p.227.

22 These *recueils* include numerous *récits de basse*—airs for solo bass voice without continuo. In the volumes for

1720, for example, there are no fewer than nine: Collet, 'Plus de maîtresse, plus de vin' (April, p.78); Dauphin, 'Impitoyable Amour, je quitte ton empire' (May, p.102); Duplessis, 'Ruisseau qui coulez dans ces plaines' (June, p.119); M. D. L. D. T., 'Non, il n'est rien dans l'univers' (July, p.127); Lemaire, 'Quand j'ay du vin et de la glace' (August, p.152); Charles, 'On dit partout que vous êtes fantasque' (September, p.174); Lemaire, 'Réjouissons-nous, amis buveurs' (October, p.198); Lemaire, 'Tandis que les fiers aquilons' (November, p.208); Duplessis, 'Que sert, enfants, de toujours boire' (December, p.234). Certain *récits de basse* are elsewhere arranged as duets, as in the case of Lemaire's 'Vaste mer, dont le calme perfide' (July 1722, p.123), which is prefaced as follows: 'Comme le Public a paru satisfait du Recit de Basse de cet Air, l'Auteur a cru faire plaisir de le donner en Duo, sans en changer aucunement le sujet' (As the public has seemed satisfied with the *recit de basse* version of this *air*, the composer thought it would be pleasing to present it as a duo, though without in any way changing the thematic material).

23 According to the inventory of Ballard's library, this series, inaugurated in January 1695 under the title *Airs sérieux et à boire* and subsequently as *Recueil d'airs sérieux et à boire*, was discontinued in December 1724. See L. Guillo, 'La bibliothèque des Ballard d'après l'inventaire de 1750 et les notes de Sébastien de Brossard', *Revue de musicologie*, xc/2 (2004), p.299. The Département de la Musique of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France possesses a complete series as far as 1721 (Vm⁷ 528–554), plus the issues for 1724 (Vm⁷ 557). For 1722, it has only the issues for January (Vm⁷ 555), June (Vm⁷ 556) and October (Vm. Coirault 379 [2]), though the one for July survives at the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal (M.776). Until the remaining issues for 1722 and those for 1723 are discovered, we cannot rule out the possibility that Couperin's *recit de basse* did eventually appear in the Ballard series. No comprehensive study of this series has yet been published, but see T. Eastwood, 'The French air in the eighteenth century: a neglected

area, *Studies in Music*, xviii (1984), pp.84–107; G. Garden, 'Variations d'un style reçu: les airs de Desmarest publiés dans le *Recueil d'airs sérieux et à boire* de Ballard (1702–1721)', in *Henry Desmarest (1661–1741) Exils d'un musicien dans l'Europe du Grand Siècle*, ed. J. Duron and Y. Ferraton (Sprimont, 2005), pp.355–74; and J.-P. Goujon, 'Les Recueils d'airs sérieux et à boire des Ballard (1695–1724)', *Revue de musicologie*, xcvi/1 (2010), pp.35–72.

24 See the chronological list in Moroney, 'The *Parodies*', Appendix 2, p.631.

25 See the 'Traité passé entre Jean-Baptiste Henry d'Anglebert (ordinaire de la Musique de la Chambre du Roy pour le clavecin) et François Couperin (organiste de la Chapelle du Roy et cy devant Me de clavecin de Mgr le Dauphin, duc de Bourgogne)', Archives nationales de France, Minutier central, CXVII, 284. I am grateful to Érik Koccar for supplying me with the text of this document.

26 This signature, dated 1729, is reproduced in C. Bouvet, *Nouveaux documents sur les Couperin* (Paris,

1933): 'Une signature de François Couperin', pp.113–16. Bouvet rightly refutes the idea that one of the two copies of Couperin's *Règles de l'accompagnement* is in the composer's hand, a conclusion supported by the present autograph letter. On Couperin's treatise, see also I. Wjuniski, 'Les *Règles pour l'Accompagnement* de François Couperin', in *François Couperin Nouveaux Regards*, pp.105–28.

27 On these *intermèdes*, see B. Coeyman, 'The stage works of Michel-Richard Delalande in the musical-cultural context of the French court, 1680–1726' (PhD diss., City University of New York, 1987), pp.216–40 and 460–6. E. Higginbottom, in 'Couperin, François', *New Grove II*, vi, p.592, is less convinced by the attribution to Couperin of these *intermèdes*, which were published in the Ballard *Recueil d'airs sérieux et à boire* in February 1699. On the other hand, D. Moroney ('The *Parodies*', p.623) accepts Coeyman's attribution.

28 See F.-P. Goy, *Fonds musicaux anciens conservés en*

Champagne-Ardenne, 1500–1800 (Paris, 2000), pp.143–5, and G. Garden, 'Un canon inédit de Couperin', *Bulletin de l'Atelier d'études sur la musique française des XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles*, x (2001–2), pp.16–17.

29 See G. Sadler, 'A philosophy lesson with François Couperin? Notes on a newly discovered canon', *Early Music*, xxxiv/4 (2004), pp.541–6.

30 Sylvie Bouissou makes a similar comment with regard to Rameau's airs and canons, likewise few in number; see S. Bouissou and D. Herlin, *Catalogue thématique des œuvres musicales*, i (Paris, 2007), p.19. Note, however, that in this catalogue the attribution to Couperin of the canon *L'Épouse entre deux draps* is questioned and the piece reattributed to Rameau.

31 Higginbottom, 'Couperin, François', p.592.

32 Sadler, 'A philosophy lesson', p.541.

33 See M. Antoine, 'Autour de François Couperin', *Revue de musicologie*, xxxiv/2 (1952), pp.122–3.

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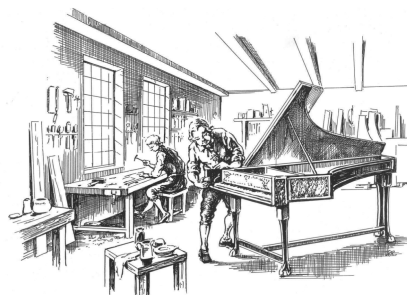
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