Bach for two

J. S. Bach's sonatas for viola da gamba
and obbligato harpsichord

Margaret Little, viola da gamba
Christophe Gauthier, harpsichord

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PROGRAM

Sonata in G - BWV 1027 — Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

- Adagio
- Allegro ma non tanto
- Andante
- Allegro moderato

Sonata in D - BWV 1028

- Adagio
- Allegro
- Andante
- Allegro

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La Couperin — Jean-Baptiste Forqueray (1699-1782)

Chaconne La Buisson — Antoine Forqueray (1672-1745)

Sonata in g - BWV 1029 — Johann Sebastian Bach

- Vivace
- Adagio
- Allegro

BACH FOR TWO

“Bach for Two” bring together Margaret Little and Christophe Gauthier in three masterpieces of Baroque chamber music: Johann Sebastian Bach’s sonatas for viola da gamba and obbligato harpsichord. True contrapuntal jewels, these works offer a dialogue of remarkable eloquence between two instruments engaging on equal footing, revealing both the expressive depth and architectural refinement of Bach’s chamber writing.

The Sonata in G major, BWV 1027, showcases the grace and clarity of Bach’s intimate style, while the Sonata in D major, BWV 1028, unfolds with galant elegance and dance-like charm. More dramatic in character, the Sonata in G minor, BWV 1029, impresses with its concertante energy and a noble, suspended Adagio. Two pieces by Antoine Forqueray — *La Couperin* and *La Buisson* — complete the program with their virtuosity and distinctly French refinement.

Margaret Little and Christophe Gauthier offer a performance that is at once precise, flexible, and deeply expressive. Their musical rapport highlights the nuanced palette of the viola da gamba and the brilliance of the harpsichord, illuminating the emotional power of Bach and the radiant artistry of Forqueray in a performance that is both vibrant and elegant.

MARGARET LITTLE

Margaret Little is one of the leading figures on the viola da gamba scene in Canada and internationally. Renowned for her deep artistic commitment, musical intelligence, and expressive clarity of playing, she has devoted her career to promoting the viola da gamba, both as a soloist and in ensembles. She also plays the baroque viola.

In the 1990s, Margaret founded the viola da gamba ensemble Les Voix humaines with Susie Napper. Together for more than thirty years, they have redefined the art of the viola duo, recording over forty albums and performing on stages around the world. Their musical complicity has made them outstanding ambassadors for the viola repertoire. They have earned critical acclaim and several prestigious awards (Prix Opus, Adisq, Diapason d'Or, etc.).

More recently, Margaret has been playing in a duo with Christophe Gauthier (harpsichord), Sylvain Bergeron (lute), and Antoine Malette-Chénier (harp). She has explored the dialogue between music and dance with Stéphanie Brochard and contributed to the creation of the show Atempor/elle. She performs frequently on both sides of the Atlantic, either as a soloist or with ensembles such as the Studio de musique ancienne de Montréal, Clavecin en Concert, Les Violons du Roy, Les Boréades, Pallade Musica, Les Idées Heureuses, the Spinoza and Poiesis ensembles, and Capriccio Stravagante. She has performed in concert with renowned soloists such as Skip Sempé, Jordi Savall, Wieland Kuijken, Barthold Kuijken, Charles Daniels, Suzie LeBlanc, and Daniel Taylor. She is

regularly invited to perform the viola da gamba solos in J. S. Bach's Passions with various orchestras.

Margaret has recorded over a hundred albums (mainly on the ATMA label), including three solo albums, the most recent of which is devoted to J. S. Bach's sonatas for viola da gamba and obbligato harpsichord with Christophe Gauthier.

She has taught viola da gamba at Concordia University, Cegep Saint-Laurent, and Université de Montréal, where she has trained several young up-and-coming violists. In the summer, she teaches at the CAMMAC Music Centre. She gives workshops and master classes in Canada, the United States, Australia, Japan, and Mexico. Margaret regularly serves on juries for the Conseil des Arts et des Lettres du Québec, the Conseil des Arts de Montréal, Musicaction, and the Mathieu Duguay Competition in Lamèque.

Margaret Little plays a seven-string bass viol made by Judith Kraft and Bernard Prunier in Paris (1982) based on Colichon. Her bows are made by Quebec bow maker Louis Bégin.

CHRISTOPHE GAUTHIER

Born in Montreal, Christophe Gauthier studied at the Conservatoire de Montréal (harpsichord class of Mireille Lagacé) and completed his Bachelor's degree (under the guidance of Réjean Poirier) and Master's degree (under the guidance of Luc Beauséjour) at the University of Montreal.

His skills as a chamber musician led Christophe Gauthier to co-found numerous ensembles, including Opus Project and Le Consort laurentien, which performed at the 2021 Utrecht Early Music Festival in the Netherlands. He also performs as an organist and harpsichordist with the Studio de musique ancienne de Montréal, Arion Baroque Orchestra, Les Boréades, I Musici de Montréal, the Orchestre Métropolitain, and Philadelphia Orchestra.

As an educator, Christophe Gauthier teaches organ and harpsichord at the Cégep de Saint-Laurent. He is regularly invited to teach at the Lunenburg Academy of Music Performance in Nova Scotia. Occasionally called upon to conduct ensembles from the harpsichord, he is also the choir director of the Ensemble vocal Vivace. He has notably conducted operas such as *Dido and Aeneas* by Purcell, *Hercules* by Handel, and *David et Jonathas* by Charpentier. He can be heard weekly on Radio VM, hosting the *Musique classique* program.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

- *Access to the hall for tuning: four hours before the concert.*
- *Tuning adjustment one hour before the concert.*
- *One straight-backed chair with a flat seat and an adjustable piano bench, or two piano benches*
- *We bring our own music stands*
- *Adequate stage lighting to see our scores, but we can also bring music stand lights.*
- Light lighting in the hall so that we can see the audience.