Les Festes Champêtres

Margaret Little, viola da gamba
Christophe Gauthier, harpsichord

(photo © Johanne Mercier)

It is an invitation to the Sun King's garden party with "muzettes" and tambourines, surrounded by birdsong and badminton games. Under the shade of a tree, a baby is being lulled to sleep with Couperin's “Le Dodo ou l'amour au berceau” (The Dodo or Love in the Cradle). Oh, but the old uncle is taken ill and needs emergency surgery! This will be Marais' “Tableau de l'opération de la Taille.” Quite a challenge, without anesthesia, but “Les Relevailles” will be joyful.

We also offer a more introspective and oh-so-eloquent moment: the “Tombeau pour M. de Ste-Colombe,” whose story was told in the film “All the Mornings of the World.” However, the program ends on a playful note with the famous Folies d'Espagne, a great “hit” of Baroque music.

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PROGRAM

Muzette	Marin Marais (1656-1728)
Feste Champestre	
Rondeau – Muzette – Tambourin – Rondeau	
Le jeu du volant	
Les Sylvains	François Couperin (1668-1733)
Chaconne La Buisson	Antoine Forqueray (1672-1745)
Le Gazoüillement	François Couperin (1668-1733)
Les Bergeries	
Tombeau pour M. de Ste-Colombe	Marin Marais (1656-1728)

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Le Tableau de l'Opération de la Taille	Marin Marais (1656-1728)
Le Rappel des oiseaux	Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764)
Le Dodo ou L'amour au Berçeau	François Couperin (1668-1733)
Muséte de Choisi et Muséte de Taverni	
Les Papillons	François Couperin (1668-1733)
La Poule	Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764)
Les Folies d'Espagne	Marin Marais (1656-1728)

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.

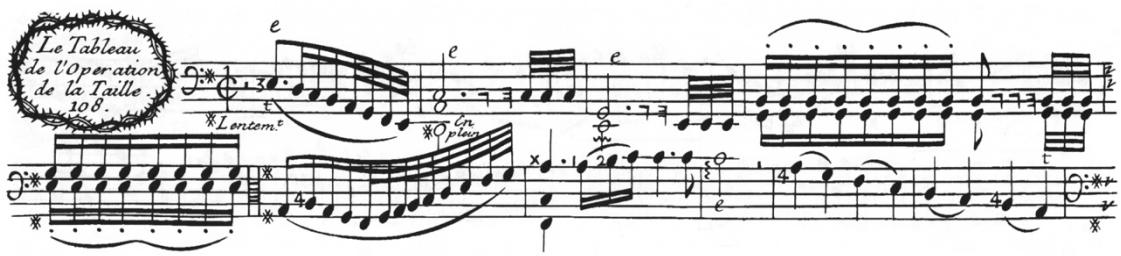
In the 1990s, Margaret founded the viola da gamba ensemble Les Voix humaines with Susie Napper. Together for more than thirty years, they have redefined the art of the viola duo, recording over forty albums and performing on stages around the world. Their musical complicity has made them outstanding 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.

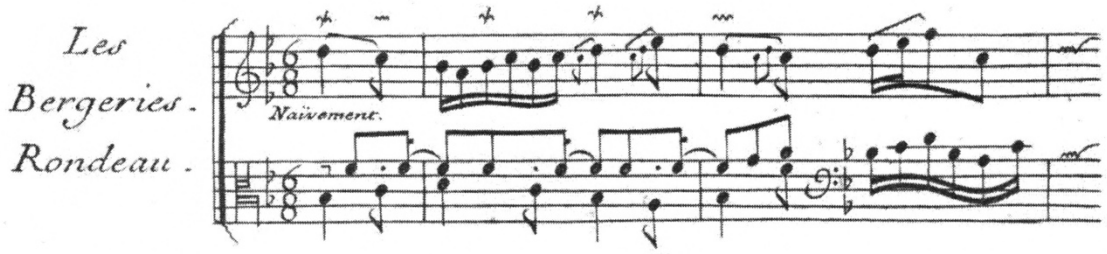


CHRISTOPHE GAUTHIER

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 one 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.*