



18th-Century Flemish
Harpsichord Music

Ewald Demeyere

Joannes Daniel Dulcken Harpsichord,
Vleeshuis Museum Antwerp

18th-Century Flemish
Harpsichord Music

Ewald Demeyere

Joannes Daniel Dulcken Harpsichord,
Vleeshuis Museum Antwerp



JOSSE BOUTMY (1697-1779)

Sixième Suite from: Troisième Livre de Pièces de Clavecin (ca 1750)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------|
| [1] Vivace | 2:42 |
| [2] Menuet 1 & 2 | 2:04 |
| [3] Andante – Vivement – Andante | 8:58 |
| [4] Air Gracieusement | 5:25 |

ANONYMUS

from: Deel eener verzameling v muziekstukken voor clavecimbel piano of orgel

- | | |
|-------------|------|
| [5] Andante | 6:00 |
|-------------|------|

DIEUDONNÉ RAICK (1703-1764)

Suite V from: Six Suites de Clavecin Premier Œuvre (Brussels, 1745?)

- | | |
|-------------------|------|
| [6] Vivace | 3:28 |
| [7] Menuet 1 & 2 | 3:44 |
| [8] Largo | 1:54 |
| [9] Gavotte 1 & 2 | 3:59 |

ANONYMUS

from: Deel eener verzameling

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------|
| [10] Legrement | 1:21 |
| [11] Glockenspiel allegro | 2:29 |
| [12] Arieta un poco Allegro | 2:05 |
| [13] Air 3te toni allegro | 1:40 |

F.I. DE BOECK (1697?-1775?)

from: Suite Pour le Clavecin ou L'Orgue Opera Prima (ca 1735)

- | | |
|------------------------|------|
| [14] Allegro | 3:01 |
| [15] Siciliano andante | 2:37 |

F.I. DE BOECK

from: Six Suites Pour le Clavi-Cembalo ou l'Orgue Opera Seconda (1735)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| [16] Menuet (from: Sonata II) | 1:01 |
|-------------------------------|------|

FERDINAND STAES (1748-1809)

Sonata II from: Trois Sonates pour le Clavecin ou Forte Piano avec accompagnement d'un Violon Œuvre IV (Brussels, 1777)

- | | |
|-----------------------|------|
| [17] Allegro moderato | 4:38 |
| [18] Rondeau allegro | 1:57 |

F.I. DE BOECK

from: Six Suites Pour le Clavi-Cembalo ou l'Orgue Opera Seconda

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| [19] Allegro (from: Sonata V) | 3:28 |
|-------------------------------|------|

CHARLES-JOSEPH VAN HELMONT (1715-1790)

from: Pièces de clavecin Œuvre Premier (1737)

- | | |
|--|------|
| [20] La Lisette Rondeau Tendrement (from: Seconde Suite) | 2:06 |
|--|------|

ANONYMUS

from: Deel eener verzameling

[21] Le luttin allegro

[22] Allegro

NATALIS VANDER BORCHT (1729-1785)

from: Six Suites pour le Clavecin Œuvre Deuxième

[23] Gratoso con Variatione (from: Suite VI)

total time 74:20

2:10

3:17

4:08

Eighteenth-century Flemish harpsichord music today is mostly identified with the Pièces de clavecin of 1731 by Joseph-Hector Fiocco (1703-1741). Although this collection, consisting of two major harpsichord suites, undoubtedly forms the high point in the genre, I want this CD to show that Fiocco was certainly not the only good Flemish harpsichord composer. (For those interested in Fiocco's harpsichord works, I refer to my complete recording of his Pièces de clavecin (ACCENT 24176, 2007)). The repertoire of this CD is the result of an artistic research project I carried out into eighteenth-century Flemish harpsichord music, based on the rich collection of the Antwerp Conservatory library.

Josse Boutmy (1697-1779) was born into a musical family. Both his father and his grandfather were organists in Ghent, and, in 1714, his eldest brother

Jacques-Adrien (1683-1719) followed Guillaume a Kempis as organist of the Collegiate Church of St. Michael and St. Gudula (since 1962 St. Michael's Cathedral) in Brussels, when Peter Hercules Bréhy was choirmaster there. (After Bréhy's death he would be succeeded by Joseph-Hector Fiocco.) After the unexpected death of Jacques-Adrien, Josse followed his elder brother as organist in the same church. He remained there until 1733, when he was succeeded by the Brussels organist and composer Charles-Joseph Van Helmont (for whom Jean-Laurent Krafft published, in 1737, a collection of Pièces de clavecin, from which I have recorded La Lisette for this CD). From 1736 Boutmy entered the service of Prince Anselm Franz von Thurn und Taxis, and, from 1744 to 1777, he was first organist at the Chapel Royal of Brussels under Charles of Lorraine. He was also appointed by the latter Master

Harpsichordist for public and private concerts. He apparently enjoyed great prestige as a harpsichordist, for he taught tous les jeunes Seigneurs et Dames de la Cour. Like Fiocco, Boutmy also gave harpsichord lessons to the children of the Duke d'Arenberg.

Boutmy portrayed himself primarily as a composer of harpsichord music, which is confirmed by the publication of the *Petites suites de pièces de clavecin* and three books of *Pièces de clavecin*. Of the *Troisième livre de pièces de clavecin*, from which I have recorded the sixth suite, there are currently only two copies extant, although the subscription list contains 106 subscribers. One copy, which has not withstood the test of time very well, was part of the private collection of the Antwerp lawyer and judge Jean Auguste Stellfeld, which has been in the library of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor since 1954.

Although the second known - and well preserved! - copy has been in the Antwerp Conservatory library for decades, several sources have mentioned incorrectly that the only surviving copy would be that from the Bibliotheca Stellfeldiana. (On the Resonant website, the centre of expertise about the Flemish musical heritage, we read: "Although, according to the subscription list – a practice that stems above all from the 18th century – there were at least 106 customers for his [Boutmy's] third harpsichord book, only one copy is known". Likewise, Marie Cornaz mentions in *Les éditions musicales publiées au XVIIIe siècle à Bruxelles (1706-1794)* that the U. S. copy is the only one of this volume. This error was, however, put right in the first newsletter of the Royal Conservatory in Antwerp, and then Resonant added this correction as a footnote to the page about Boutmy's

third harpsichord book, while the accompanying text was unfortunately not corrected.) A facsimile of this precious score, which was printed around 1750, will be published by Musik Produktion Höflich Munich.

The subscription list for Boutmy's *Troisième livre* shows a number of notable names, which indicates the reputation of the composer: the Duke d'Arenberg, the carillon player and composer Pierre-Joseph Le Blan (who wrote a *Livre de Clavecin*, his only known work published in 1752, but the musical quality of which was not high enough for me to include it in this recording), the organist and carillon player Jean-Joseph Colfs (whose very mediocre *March Xavier van Elewyck* included in his *Collection d'Œuvres Composées par d'anciens et de célèbres Clavecinistes Flamands* of 1877), the carillon player Iohannes de Gruijters (who compiled a carillon

book in 1746, now in the Antwerp Conservatory Library, featuring works by Jean-Joseph Colfs, Arcangelo Corelli, François Couperin, George Frideric Handel, Pietro Locatelli, Jean-Baptiste Lully, Joseph-Hector Fiocco, Dieudonné Raick and Antonio Vivaldi), the harpsichordist and composer François Krafft (nephew of the publisher Jean-Laurent Krafft, who edited *Pièces de clavecin* by Fiocco and Van Helmont among others; François Krafft wrote masses, motets, arias, symphonies, chamber music and two sonatas for harpsichord), the organist and composer Dieudonné Raick (the fifth suite from his opus 1 is included in this recording), and the publisher John Walsh Jr. (who was working in London, and whose publications include works by Handel).

As was common in eighteenth-century Flemish harpsichord music, both French and Italian styles were

used, sometimes in the same piece. Flemish composers were, on the one hand, influenced by French colleagues such as Francois Couperin, Jean-Philippe Rameau, Jean-François Dandrieu and Jacques Duphy, but, on the other hand, they were seduced by the works of Handel, Domenico Scarlatti and Vivaldi. In my opinion, we should, however, note the systematic wish to pin down one style (of a certain composer) to a Flemish pièce de clavecin. In some of these pieces the influence of French and/or Italian style is still rather implicit. Moreover, the performance of a piece can sound rather French – via notes inégales coupled with more legato playing – or rather Italian – using vivid articulation and adding improvised passage work – regardless of its writing. And we should not forget that – admittedly to a lesser extent – égalité appears in French music and inégalité in Italian music ...!

Of the six harpsichord suites from Boutmy's third book, I consider the last suite, in G minor, the strongest musically. This suite opens with a Vivace, an Italian term, using a rather French texture. Yet it also includes Italian features, most notably the unexpectedly high incidence of harsh dissonances. The two minuets are very obviously French, which is emphasized by the presence of quaver triplets, which suggests that ordinary quavers should be played inégales. The petite reprise at the end of the two minuets is also a typical French characteristic. The next two pieces, Andante and Vivement, are the highlight of this suite. The Andante is written in what I call the 'Flemish andante texture', a method of writing that goes back to Fiocco and was adopted by a large number of Flemish harpsichord composers: in a 2/4 or 4/4 time, with a cantilena in the treble over repeated quaver chords. Unlike

a Fiocco andante, however, Boutmy used here a harmonic language that leans toward the Empfindsamen Stil of the two eldest sons of Bach, the most striking characteristics of which were the large number of appoggiaturas and the regular use of the expressively augmented sixth chord. The Vivement that follows is by contrast clearly Sturm und Drang. Boutmy wants the Andante played again after the Vivement, but I have opted, given the length of this piece, to play only the A-part of the da capo, especially because it ends on the tonic. After this there is an Allegro in the edition, which I have omitted, because it is, due to its (too?) long sequences, of lower quality compared to the other movements of the suite. The suite ends with a beautiful Air Gracieusement followed by five variations of gradually increasing difficulty, and characterized by rich textures and harmonies.

On this CD I play a number of works from an intriguing anonymous manuscript in the Antwerp Conservatory library collection, entitled onbekend Deel eener verzameling v muziekstukken voor clavecimbel piano of orgel (anonymous Volume of a collection of pieces of music for harpsichord, piano or organ) with the caption Copy 18th or early 19th century. Contrary to what the title suggests, this book still contains a number of pieces for which the composer is known: two organ transcriptions entitled Fuga from the Allegros in the Second and Fourth Sonatas from the opus 5 of Arcangelo Corelli, and a Chaconne by the illustrious unknown M. Veras.

The Andante, which closes this anonymous collection, is a gem written in the 'Flemish andante texture'. The musical language, however, is a bit more modern than in the comparable movement by Boutmy. Certain

moments in the Andante give rise to thoughts of Haydn himself.

The Legrement [sic] on the other hand could be an undiscovered Scarlatti sonata. Here the composer uses a 3/8 time together with a typical allegro texture à la Scarlatti with scale figures, parallel thirds and broken chords.

The glockenspiel [sic] presto which opens the Deel eener verzameling, is a charming, unpretentious piece. The title is evoked clearly in the right hand, where the bells are represented by simple semiquaver motifs in the upper register of the instrument. The left hand is more like a musette with repetitive use of broken chords in the bass, whereby glockenspiel is somewhat reminiscent of the Air Champêtre from La Castelmore by Claude-Bénigne Balbastre (1727-1799). To create the sound of a carillon as far as possible on the harpsichord, I

recorded this piece, as was suggested by Tonmeister Bert van der Wolf, using just the four foot register.

The Arieta [sic] un poco Allegro has the same musical quality and disarming naïvety of La Malesherbe Ariette Gracieuse by Balbastre.

The Air 3^{te} Toni. Allegro is a whipped up, étude-like piece seemingly inspired by the Solfeggietto in C minor H 220 of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1788).

With Le Luttin [sic] we take a step backwards in musical history. It is a simple but well-written character piece not, as the title suggests, in the French style but more Italian. Jacques Hotteterre 'Le Romain' wrote one piece of the same name, Rondeau Le Lutin, but, apart from a happy atmosphere in both pieces, there are no other similarities.

The Allegro in E flat major is unquestionably the best composition in Deel eener verzameling. It uses a simple sonata form, and has been written in early Classical style, somewhere between that of Bach's sons and Haydn. The handwriting of the Allegro, however, is particularly poor and contains many errors, which requires a painstaking analysis by the performer to obtain a good musical text.

Dieudonné Raick (1703-1764) was apparently a man with a bad temper. When he was fourteen years old, in 1717, having gone from his home town of Liège to Antwerp to be a choirboy in the cathedral, he was reprimanded and threatened with dismissal even before he was permanently accepted – a reputation which would continue to affect his career. In the same year he was obliged to learn the harpsichord. He probably took lessons from the

cathedral organist Jacob La Fosse (1671-1721), whom Raick succeeded as organist after his death in 1721. In 1726, the year he was ordained priest, he resigned after several conflicts with the singing master, an immigrant from the Netherlands, William Fesch (1687-1761), who seemed to be just as fiery as Raick. He moved from the Antwerp Cathedral to the Collegiate Church of St. Peter in Leuven, where he also worked as an organist until 1741. That same year he opted for Ghent and became the organist at the Saint Bavo Cathedral. In 1757 he returned to Antwerp to succeed Christiaan Balthazar de Trazegnies (1691-1757) as organist, a position he would retain until his death in 1764. During this period we find, in the cathedral archives, more evidence of Raick's fiery temperament. In 1759 Raick was apparently again at loggerheads with the then choirmaster, André Joseph Blavier from Liège, whereupon the

chapter instructed the two men to apologise to each other and determined a punishment.

Raick was primarily, like Boutmy, a harpsichord composer, which resulted in the publication of three harpsichord books among others. Of Raick's *Six Suites de Clavecin Premier Œuvre* there is an undated copy, printed in Brussels (in the Brussels Conservatory library), and a manuscript by an unknown scribe dated 1745 (in the Antwerp Conservatory library). Marie Cornaz makes the following somewhat vague suggestion regarding the dating of the printing: ca 1730 (Marie-Rose von Harrach was born on the 20 August 1721), but before 1741 (when he left his position at the Collegiate Church of St. Peter in Leuven). On the other hand, Philippe Mercier and Godelieve Spiessens, in their article on Raick in Grove Music Online give "c. 1740", a date which is probably

closer to the truth. It seems unlikely that Raick would have dedicated his opus 1 to a nine year old girl. Van den Borren gives 1748 as a publication date for Raick's opus 1, but does not give a source. Whether the date on the title page of the manuscript, 1745, is also the year of printing, is not known, yet, not impossible in my opinion. I find Cornaz's argument for a printing date before 1741 unconvincing since Raick could supervise the printing taking place in Brussels equally well from Ghent or from Leuven.

Mercier and Spiessens define Raick's style as follows: "Raick's brilliant style shows the influence of Rameau, Handel and Scarlatti rather than that of the Italian pre-Classical sonata". It is true that Raick opts, like most of his fellow harpsichordists, for a mixed style, which is evident from the opening *Vivace* of his fifth suite in F minor from opus 1. In general

the writing is more Italian, driven by rhythm, but the abundance of decorations recalls the French influence, for which *inégales* semiquavers seem appropriate. The two minuets demonstrate the great elegance of the French style. The *Largo* is again rather Italianate (Handel?), although successive ties over pairs of quavers, combined with the presence of quaver triplets, seem to suggest *inégalité*. The suite ends with two gavottes, which are, according to van den Borren, "spicy pieces, perfectly constructed and very delicate", with which I fully agree.

Very little is known today about F. I. De Boeck. He is one of those unfortunate composers who is not even listed in the Grove Music Online or in *die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. Thanks to the recent, not yet published research work of Dr. Godelieve Spiessens, we are a bit less in the dark

with regard to the (probable) identity and life of De Boeck. It is likely that we are dealing here with the Franciscan Friar (I(oannes) De Boeck (1697-1775), who was the organist of the Antwerp Friary from 1726 to 1735 and, around 1738, was working as a priest in Maastricht. The Amsterdam publisher Gerhard Fredrik Witvogel published two volumes by De Boeck, both of which are undated: a *Suitte* [sic] *Pour le Clavecin ou L'Orgue Opera Prima* and *Six Suittes* [sic] *Pour le Clavi-Cembalo ou l'Orgue Opera Seconda*.

The title pages of both works rather suggest French-inspired compositions: both title pages are written in French (except for the Italian indications of *Opera Prima* and *Seconda*, and *Clavi-cembalo*), and announce *Suittes*. However, the individual movements clearly show that these pieces are in fact not *Suittes* but *Sonates*: most compositions have an Italian tempo

marking, and are written in that style. Still, most of the Suites include at least one French dance, but spelt the Italian way, which results in a mixed musical style (menuet, giga, gavotta).

Despite Witvogel's fame as a publisher, the overall quality of these works is rather low, and, moreover, De Boeck did not succeed in writing a convincing musical argument in all the movements of a suite/sonata. Some individual pieces, however, are too interesting to take the view that, if certain parts of a suite are not strong enough, the entire suite should be sacrificed. For this recording, therefore, I decided to put together a Suite (or Sonata) in F major. I used the first two movements from De Boeck's opus 1, Allegro and Siciliano andante, and the Menuet from Sonata II of opus 2. These three pieces correspond closely to the way that Handel wrote for keyboard, and

are characterized by a relentless forward motion. Even in the slow movement De Boeck ensures a continuous rhythmic drive.

In my view the best piece in the two opuses is the Allegro from Sonata V in G minor opus 2. Composed throughout in Italian style, De Boeck puts down a strong sonata form, with a captivating sequence of keys, rousing rhythms and strong motivic material.

Ferdinand Staes (1748-1809) was the son of organist Guillaume Staes, with whom he studied before being apprenticed to Ignaz Vitzthumb. From a certificate signed by, among others, "Josse Boutmy, organiste de la Cour" and "Charles-Joseph Van Helmont, maître de musique des SS. Michel et Gudule" it appears that Guillaume was appointed second organist at the Chapel Royal of Brussels in 1758, when the first organist was Josse

Boutmy. On the death of the latter in 1779, Guillaume Staes was promoted to first organist for life, and he also made sure that his son would obtain the same position of first organist after his own death. But as the Royal Chapel was dissolved in 1794, and Guillaume was still in service as the first organist, Ferdinand never enjoyed this regard. For the sake of completeness, it must be said that, in 1768, Ferdinand was "assistant to his father" there.

In 1772, Ferdinand Staes obtained a full appointment as organist at the Madeleine church in Brussels. Charles Burney heard him play in July of that year, and made the following observation about Staes's excellent reputation as a keyboard player: "... there was a mass, in music, performed in the little, but neat and elegant, church of Mary Magdalen; ... the organ was played in a masterly manner,

by M. Straze [sic], who is esteemed the best performer upon keyed instruments in Brussels".

Ferdinand Staes did not only establish himself as a successful organist. As a harpsichordist, he was heard in the Concert bourgeois, at the Académie de musique, and also before the Duke of Lorraine, "to general acclaim". As a composer he focused mainly on the keyboard sonata with accompaniment of violin and/or cello. This resulted in the publication of opuses 1 to 5, each opus containing three sonatas. Besides that he wrote a volume of songs and keyboard transcriptions of opera overtures and arias. He also composed a harpsichord concerto, opus 6, for which most of the orchestral parts are unfortunately lost, and Idées de Campagne, opus 7, an apparently programmatic work also for keyboard and instrumental accompaniment.

For this recording I have chosen Staes's very elegant, two-part Sonata in F major opus 4/2. In his discussion of the compositions, which Xavier van Elewyck included in his *Collection d'Œuvres Composées par d'anciens et de célèbres Clavecinistes Flamands*, van den Borren wrote the following about this sonata: "... the Sonata (violin ad libitum) by Ferdinand Staes (1748-1809), organist at the Royal Chapel in Brussels: playful and even fresh compositions, whose lightness reminds us of those by Pleyel, Dussek and Clementi".

Although Staes specified that his opus 4 was written for le Clavecin ou Forte Piano avec accompagnement d'un Violon, it is in line with the then tradition, as van Elewyck had already noticed, that the violin part can be omitted without losing something musically essential. In fact, these sonatas were written in the tradition of

the French, early-Classical, keyboard sonata with violin and/or cello ad libitum, of which the most important exponent was Johann Schobert (c. 1735-1767). For this recording, therefore, I have chosen to perform the sonata Charles-Joseph Van Helmont (1715-1790) was born, lived, worked and died in Brussels. He was for seven years a choirboy in the Collegiate Church of St. Michael and St. Gudula under Bréhy, where, barely eighteen, he succeeded Josse Boutmy as organist. On the death of Bréhy, Van Helmont, in 1737, unsuccessfully applied for the position of choirmaster at the Collegiate Church. Joseph-Hector Fiocco was appointed, and when Van Helmont applied for the same position at Antwerp cathedral, which was vacant after Fiocco's departure for Brussels, he failed again. Van Helmont had to be content with a less prestigious appointment, that of Choirmaster at the Notre Dame de

la Chapelle in Brussels, for which he had to give up his post as organist at St. Gudula. After the untimely death of Fiocco, however, in 1741, Van Helmont could still achieve his initial ambition, and became the new Choirmaster of the Brussels collegiate church, a post he retained until 1777, after which it was held by his son Adrien-Joseph (1747-1830). In his position as Choirmaster Van Helmont presents himself primarily as a composer of religious music, with more than 500 manuscripts preserved in the archives of St. Gudula.

In addition, he also wrote six overtures for strings and continuo, two symphonies, an opera which is lost, six fugues for organ and Pièces de clavecin opus 1, published in January 1737.

Despite the promising ornate frontispiece which the printer Krafft provided for Van Helmont's oeuvre premier, the

musical quality is very disappointing. In this clearly French-influenced collection, consisting of two short suites, Van Helmont could barely manage to hold the attention after an often initial good idea. Nevertheless, one piece, La Lisette, is really successful. In this Rondeau, marked *Tendrement*, we hear the same melancholy that we find so often in the harpsichord works of François Couperin.

Natalis Vander Borcht (1729-1785) is today, like De Boeck, an illustrious unknown not included in the Grove Music Online or in the MGG. We find discussions of Vander Borcht's life and work, however, in a number of nineteenth-century works on which I have relied for his biographical details: *Histoire de la facture et des facteurs d'orgue* and *Les Artistes-Musiciens Belges au XVIII^{me} et XIX^{me} siècle* by Edouard Gregoir, and *Bibliographie universelle de musiciens* by François-

Joseph Fétis. Vander Borcht was harpsichordist, organist and carillon player at St. Gertrude's Church in Leuven, the city where he was born and where he worked all his life. He was greatly respected as a musician, and saw the appearance of two books, each containing six harpsichord suites, opus 1 and 2, which Gregoir esteemed highly: "M. Van der Borght [sic] ... is a worthy contemporary of Kraft [sic], Raick, Van den Gheyn, Van Helmond [sic], Robson, Van den Bosch, Boutmy and so many others who illustrate the development of the Belgian School, not only by their talents as performers, but also by their works. Chance has brought to our attention a dozen harpsichord pieces by this master, of which many are distinguished". I must confess that my enthusiasm for the work of Vander Borcht is much more moderate than that of Gregoir, and a comparison, for instance, with the work of Raick or Boutmy, is very

unfavourable to Vander Borcht. Besides mediocre ornamentation, the harmonic imperfections and clumsinesses are the biggest weaknesses in his writing. Despite the rather constant low quality of the music, one piece positively jumps out from his opus 2 (published in 1750), viz. the *Gratoso con Variatione* from the sixth suite in E flat major. This charming composition is harmonically much stronger and more varied than the rest of his oeuvre, and, moreover, Vander Borcht shows himself inventive with regard to texture in the variations.

Ewald Demeyere



Joannes Daniel Dulcken and the historical harpsichord today

In the eighteenth century the harpsichords of Joannes Daniel Dulcken (Wingehausen 1706 - Antwerp 1757) were very highly regarded. Charles Burney wrote in 1772, during his visit to Antwerp, that after Ruckers, Dulcken was the most renowned harpsichord builder. A century later, however, little of that fame remained. Harpsichords became extinct, and the first revival instruments were far from the old sound ideals.

Wanda Landowska had already given harpsichord recitals of music by Bach, Couperin and Rameau before the First World War, and a new sound emerged, which dominated the scene until around 1970. The new instruments were built by piano manufacturers such as Neupert and

Pleyel; they were heavy, and, in spite of their sometimes huge size, produced relatively little sound.

In the 1950s, various historically informed harpsichord makers were inspired to build copies, based above all on the instruments of Dulcken. Most prominent were Frank Hubbard in Boston and Martin Skowronek in Bremen. Gustav Leonhardt, who, in 1953, made his first Bach recording on a Neupert harpsichord, was the first harpsichordist, in the early sixties, to make the Dulcken copies of Skowronek internationally famous, and then systematically chose instruments based on historical examples. Concerts and recordings of these instruments were so convincing that the sixties and seventies ushered in a Renaissance for the historical harpsichord.

The sound of the Dulcken harpsichord enchanted listeners and musicians

both in the eighteenth and in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Is there also an explanation for the fact that these instruments sound so exceptional? Construction of the Dulcken harpsichords is in many ways fascinating. The most striking peculiarity is the double-curved bent side. With this construction Dulcken avoids having to fasten the soundboard all along the edge to a rigid case construction. Along the curved edge he glued the soundboard to an extra inner rail, which is only nailed to the case on the underside. The upper side of the inner rail stood completely free, which perhaps influenced the tension of the soundboard favourably. Dulcken experimented constantly with similar principles. The time when Dulcken was working also offered additional opportunities. Antwerp makers built partly in the great tradition of the early seventeenth century, driven by the

unusually rich harpsichord literature from the first half of the eighteenth century. On the other hand, around the middle of the century, almost impossible demands were made of the instrument, demands which would gradually lead to the end of the harpsichord era.

Karel Moens



Ewald Demeyere studied at the Royal Conservatoire of Antwerp (Artesis University College Antwerp), where, besides winning first prizes in solfège, written and practical harmony, counterpoint and fugue, he obtained his master's degree for harpsichord in Jos van Immerseel's class.

On completion of his studies in 1997, he was engaged as a teacher of harmony, counterpoint and fugue by the Royal Conservatoire of Antwerp. In 2002 he succeeded Jos van Immerseel as Professor of Harpsichord, and teaches harpsichord there on the instruments in the famous collection of the *Vleeshuis* Museum.

As a player of chamber music he has worked with, among others, Barthold, Sigiswald and Wieland Kuijken, and with Paul Dombrecht. For many years he has been a member of *La Petite Bande* (Sigiswald Kuijken) and *Il Fonda-*

mento (Paul Dombrecht). In July 2004 he was Guest of Honour at the Festival of Flanders Musica Antiqua in Bruges.

Ewald Demeyere has taken part in many recordings for radio and television. Among his CD recordings, for the ACCENT label, are *Eight Keyboard Sonatas* by Thomas Augustine Arne, *Sonatas & Fugues* by Wilhelm Friedmann Bach, *Sonatas for Flute and Harpsichord* by Johann Sebastian Bach (with Barthold Kuijken), *Johann Sebastian Bach – the Young Virtuoso*, the complete *Sonatas for flute and basso continuo* by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (with Barthold Kuijken), *Pièces de Clavecin* by Joseph-Hector Fiocco, a disc of *Sonatas* by Domenico Scarlatti and *Flute Sonatas by the Bach Sons* (with Barthold Kuijken).

In 2007 he founded the Baroque orchestra *Bach Concentus*, which has already appeared in Belgium, Italy and

Spain. *Bach Concentus* realized until now two CD recordings, both for ACCENT. In March 2008 a first double CD appeared with overtures by Johann Bernhard Bach and Georg Philipp Telemann. In January 2010 a new CD by *Bach Concentus* was released, entitled *La Bouffonne*, with vocal and orchestral works by Georg Philipp Telemann inspired by the *commedia dell'arte* (with Dorothee Miels, soprano). In the spring of 2012 a recording will appear, again for ACCENT, with symphonies of the sons of Johann Sebastian Bach.

Apart from his work as a harpsichordist and conductor, Ewald Demeyere is active in the field of musical theory. He is principally interested in the influence of the theories from the Baroque era on instrumental practice, and in particular on the interpretation of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. He has published two articles in the *Dutch Journal of Music Theory* (Amsterdam University

Press): *Ebenezer Prout: Bach as a Model for the Teaching of Fugue* (2003) and *The Art of Fugue: Exemplary or Experimental?* (2005).

In 2007 he wrote an article *The Partimento Fugue: Exercise or Composition?* for the book *Les Écritures Musicales* (Éditions Mardaga, 2007), and *On BWV 1080/8: Between Theory and Practice* (Eighteenth-Century Music, 2007).

In 2009 he obtained a PhD at the University of Antwerp and the Royal Conservatoire of Antwerp, when he presented his thesis *A Contextual, Text-Critical Analysis of Johann Sebastian Bach's Art of Fugue – Reflections on Performance Practice and Text-Critical Analysis, and the interaction between them*.

In the spring of 2013 his doctoral dissertation will be published by Leuven/Cornell University Press.

This High Definition Surround Recording was Produced, Engineered and Edited by Bert van der Wolf of NorthStar Recording Services, using the 'High Quality Musical Surround Mastering' principle. The basis of this recording principle is a realistic and holographic 3 dimensional representation of the musical instruments, voices and recording venue, according to traditional concert practice. For most older music this means a frontal representation of the musical performance, but such that width and depth of the ensemble and acoustic characteristics of the hall do resemble 'real life' as much as possible. Some older compositions, and many contemporary works do specifically ask for placement of musical instruments and voices over the full 360 degrees sound scape, and in these cases the recording is as realistic as possible, within the limits of the 5.1 Surround Sound standard. This requires a very innovative use of all 6 loudspeakers and the use of completely matched, full frequency range loudspeakers for all 5 discrete channels. A complementary sub-woofer, for the ultra low frequencies under 40Hz, is highly recommended to maximally benefit from the sound quality of this recording.

This recording was produced with the use of Sonodore microphones, Avalon Acoustic monitoring, Siltech Mono-Crystal cabling and dCS Converters.



www.northstarconsult.nl

Executive producer: Bert van der Wolf

Recorded at: Vleeshuis Museum Antwerpen, Belgium

Recording: Northstar Recording Services

Recording dates: March 28-31/2011

Recording producer, engineer & editing: Bert van der Wolf

Liner notes on 18th-Century Flemish Harpsichord Music: Ewald Demeyere

De Nederlandse versie van deze tekst is te vinden op:

http://www.artesis.be/conservatorium/upload/docs/Forum_6_1011_web.pdf (deel 1)

en http://www.artesis.be/conservatorium/upload/docs/Forum_1_1112_web.pdf (deel 2)

Liner notes on Dulcken: Karel Moens

Translations: Christopher Cartwright

Cover photo: Hans Morren

Photos of the harpsichord: © Collectiebeleid Musea Antwerpen

Art direction: Marcel van den Broek, new-art.nl

www.ewalddemeyere.be / www.museumvleeshuis.be

www.turtlerecords.com / www.challengerecords.com

