



Jean-Philippe
Rameau



Les Indes Galantes
Cinq Pièces
La Dauphine

Steven Devine
harpsichord

Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764)

Les Indes Galantes & other solo works

Steven Devine *harpsichord*

with

Robin Bigwood *harpsichord* tracks 20 & 26-27

*Double-manual harpsichord by Ian Tucker of an instrument by Andreas Ruckers of Antwerp (1636)
with ravalement by Henri Hemsch of Paris (1763). Tuning a=415, Tempérament Ordinaire.*

About Steven Devine:

*'[Devine] is authoritative, suave, technically dazzling and delivers immaculately
manicured ornaments that lend brilliance and expressive introspection when required'*
BBC Music Magazine

*'[The harpsichord's] sonorities are clear and penetrating yet never strident,
and lend themselves both to the music and and to Devine's meticulous technique'*
Gramophone

Les Indes Galantes

1. Ouverture	[4:36]
2. Air Polonois	[2:03]
3. Musette en Rondeau	[1:34]
4. 1er et 2e Menuet	[2:59]
5. Air gracieux pour les Amours	[2:46]
6. Air pour les Amants et Amantes	[1:46]
7. 1er Air pour les Bostangis	[2:00]
8. 2e Air pour les Bostangis	[1:49]
9. Gavotte	[1:44]
10. 1er Air des Fleurs	[1:07]
11. [2e] Air tendre pour la Rose	[1:35]
12. [1re] Gavotte pour les Fleurs	[1:19]
13. [2e] Gavotte vive pour les Fleurs	[0:56]
14. Air pour Borée et la Rose	[1:37]
15. Air pour Zéphire	[0:25]
16. Air vif pour Zéphire et la Rose	[2:25]
17. Marche des Persans	[1:20]
18. Air pour les Esclaves affricans	[1:49]
19. Rigaudon en Rondeau	[1:24]
20. Tambourin	[1:27]
21. Air	[1:31]
22. Air Grave pour les Incas du Pérou	[2:53]
23. Rondeau gracieux	[1:08]
24. Première Gavotte – 2e Gavotte en Rondeau	[2:41]
25. Les Sauvages – Danse du Grand Calumet de la Paix	[2:18]
26. 1er et 2e Menuet pour les Guerriers et Amazones	[2:14]
27. Chaconne	[6:09]

Cinq Pièces (1741)

28. La Livri	[2:44]
29. L'Agaçante	[2:48]
30. La Timide (1er et 2e Rondeau)	[5:39]
31. L'Indiscrette	[1:33]

32. La Dauphine (1747)

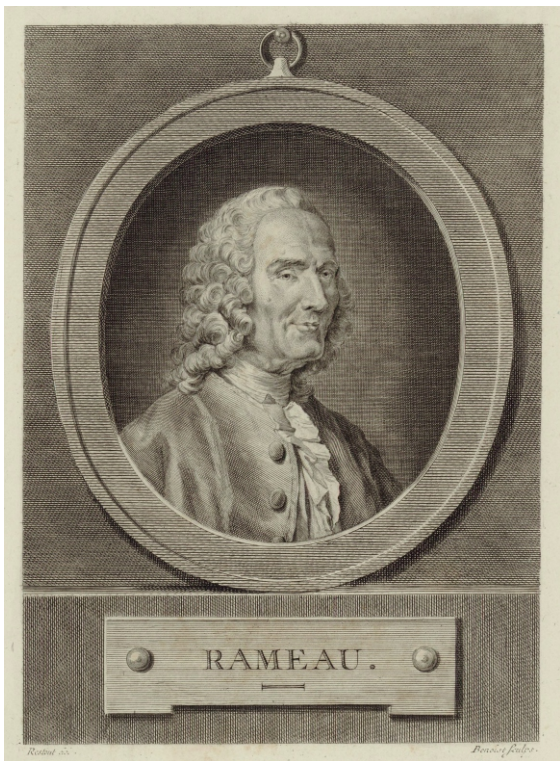
[3:30]

33. Appendix: Air pour Zéphire
transcription of original by Steven Devine

[1:22]

Total playing time

[73:28]



Rameau's Artful Transcriptions

Many collected editions – recorded and printed – of Jean-Philippe Rameau's works for solo harpsichord include the *Premier Livre de Pièces de Clavecin* (1706), *Pièces de Clavessin* (1724), *Nouvelles Suites de Pièces de Clavecin* (1726 or 1728/9), the arrangements of five (actually four) of the *Pièces de Clavecin en concert* (1741) and the extraordinary *La Dauphine* (1747).

Often overlooked are the twenty-or-so pieces Rameau arranged from his *ballet héroïque*, *Les Indes Galantes* published in 1735. These are rarely included in the canon of 'pure' keyboard music for several reasons: first, the collection is thought to be simply a short-score publication of the music for rehearsal purposes (there is vocal music amongst the pieces), as was standard for publications of stage works at the time. Second, several of the pieces were printed on three staves, or include textures impossible to realise with normal hand-sized hands. Thirdly, some of the textures appear, to first impression, incomplete or 'thin'. It is a curious collection: a mixture of full-score orchestral items, for example 'Adoration du Soliel', choruses with full orchestral scoring, choruses and vocal items with two-stave (presumably keyboard) accompaniment, and keyboard

arrangements of instrumental items. Graham Sadler, in his authoritative article 'Rameau's Harpsichord Transcriptions from *Les Indes Galantes*' (*Early Music*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Jan. 1979), pp. 18–24) highlights a number of reasons why this publication departs from the expected short-score format and was intended as a 'new' set of keyboard works to stand alongside previous publications.

In 1733 Rameau presented *Hippolyte et Aricie*, and soon afterwards his *Les Indes Galantes* was performed – and thus came the Revolution in French Musical Taste [...]. The old men, attached to the style with which they were familiar rose up strongly against this new phenomenon [...]. The more discerning people were divided, and ever since the French have split into two violent camps and extremely fierce camps.

Joseph La Porte, *Observations sur la littérature moderne* (1649) translated and quoted by Caroline Wood and Graham Sadler in *French Baroque Opera – A Reader* (Ashgate, 1999)

This divided opinion seems to have weighed on Rameau – his disappointment with the reception of the original stage production led to his desire to re-present the music to the public and familiarise them with it. By creating a new set of *Pièces de Clavecin*, in amongst the other items from the *Les Indes Galantes*, Rameau hoped to allow potential audiences to discover the pieces for themselves.

The pieces are arranged as *Quatre grands concerts* and pay little attention to the order in which the individual items appear in the original opera-ballet (to give it its recent classification by scholars). One of the most compelling arguments for this collection as a new source of harpsichord music is in Rameau's own preface in which he writes: 'The symphonies are even arranged as harpsichord pieces, and the ornaments in them are consistent with those of my other harpsichord pieces' (translated by Sadler in the *Early Music* article mentioned above). In nearly all other opera-transcriptions, Rameau uses the grace-note and cross (+) ornament sign, consistent with his vocal compositions. Here however, he uses his system of ornaments which he describes so thoroughly in the preface to the 1724 collection of harpsichord pieces. In addition, many individual items are reworked to a greater or lesser extent – additional (or fewer) bars, extra counterpoint and modified texture and harmony – as if the composer couldn't help but modify his original compositions if he felt moved to 'improve' them.

Stylistically these transcriptions are particularly interesting because of their date of preparation: the publication date of the *Nouvelles Suites de Pièces de*

Clavecin is given as 1726 by Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg (1718–1795), but the title page of the collection itself gives Rameau's residence as a place he didn't move into until 1728. These transcriptions from *Les Indes Galantes* date from 1735, six years before Rameau's next published transcriptions from his *Pièces de Clavecin en concert*. Therefore, these pieces represent an example of Rameau's keyboard work from a period from which no other examples exist.

The pieces from *Les Indes Galantes* feature a wide array of harpsichord textures – mirroring the complex and varied orchestration Rameau uses. Direct transcriptions of two-part pieces, for example 'Air pour Zephire' and 'Air vif pour Zephire et la Rose' contrast with the chordal texture of 'Air grave pour les Incas du Perou' and the second 'Air pour les Bostangis'.

The fascinating insights Rameau gives the player into his transcription methods are laid bare in four pieces which are contained within the 1741 volume of *Pieces de Clavecin en Concert*. The work is scored in three parts – violin, viol and harpsichord and there are instructions in the preface for a flute player taking over the violin part and a second violinist taking over the viol part if desired.

We also have printed harpsichord arrangements:

J'ai tiré de ces Concerts cinq petites pièces pour le Clavecin seul, à cause de quelques différences qui s'y trouvent lorsque le violon et la viole les accompagnent.

[I have taken five pieces from the Concerts for the harpsichord alone, because of some differences in the violin and viola that accompany them. (Rameau counts the two Rondeaux of 'La Timide' as separate pieces, hence 'five pieces')]

By this, the harpsichordist is meant to be guided by Rameau in how to deal with some of the more complex instrumental interplay when performing other pieces in the collection alone:

Ces Pièces exécutées sur le Clavecin seul ne laissent rien à désirer; on n'y soupçonne pas même qu'elles soient susceptibles d'aucun autre agrément: c'est du moins l'opinion de plusieurs personnes de goût et du métier que j'ai consultées sur ce sujet [...]

[These pieces executed on the harpsichord alone leave nothing to be desired; we do not even suspect they could be any other way: it is the opinion

of several persons of taste and of the profession which I consulted on this subject [...]]

Rameau's solo harpsichord examples of the *Pièces de clavecin en Concert* show an assuredness and confidence even greater than those from *Les Indes Galantes*. Chords are more finely balanced, contrasts more subtly striking. The charm and beauty of Rameau's musical language, combined with an idiomatic approach to keyboard transcriptions creates a wonderful addition to the collection of Rameau's harpsichord works.

La Dauphine

This striking work is an abstract form with sudden, rhetorical changes; almost operatic in its drama. It is thought to have been played (improvised?) on the occasion of the marriage of the Dauphin of France, son of Louis XV with Marie-Josèphe de Saxe (who became 'Dauphine') in 1747.

Performer's note

In this recording of Rameau's harpsichord transcriptions there are three movements unplayable by a single harpsichordist: 'Tambourin', the 'Menuet pour les Guerriers et Amazones' and the final 'Chaconne'. An



obvious solution was to transcribe these for two harpsichords, but I felt that this was contrary to the spirit of Rameau's intention of creating a 'domestic' version of the work. Rameau may have intended the music for a musical enthusiast who would perhaps have invited a friend or family member to join him or her at the same keyboard in the realisation of some of the larger numbers – in the manner of four-hand arrangements of Beethoven symphonies. In that spirit I invited Robin Bigwood to join me and supply one and sometimes two extra hands to create a more literal realisation of Rameau's transcriptions.

I have also tried to reflect something of the orchestral size in my choice of registration – including the 4' stop alone for the solo piccolo of the 'Air pour Zephyre'.

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Steven Devine

Steven Devine enjoys a busy career as a music director and keyboard player working with some of the finest musicians.

He is the Co-Principal keyboard player with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and also the principal keyboard player for The Gonzaga Band, Apollo and Pan, The Classical Opera Company and performs regularly with many other groups around Europe. He has recorded over thirty discs with other artists and ensembles and made six solo recordings. His recording of Bach's Goldberg Variations (Chandos Records) has received critical acclaim – including *Gramophone* describing it as 'among the best'. Volumes 1 and 2 of the complete harpsichord works of Rameau (Resonus Classics) both received five-star reviews from *BBC Music Magazine* and Steven's latest recording of Bach's Italian Concerto has been voted *Classic FM's* 'Connoisseur's Choice'. Future recording plans for Resonus include The Well-Tempered Clavier by Bach.

He made his London conducting debut in 2002 at the Royal Albert Hall and is now a regular performer there – including making his Proms directing debut in August 2007 with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. He has conducted the

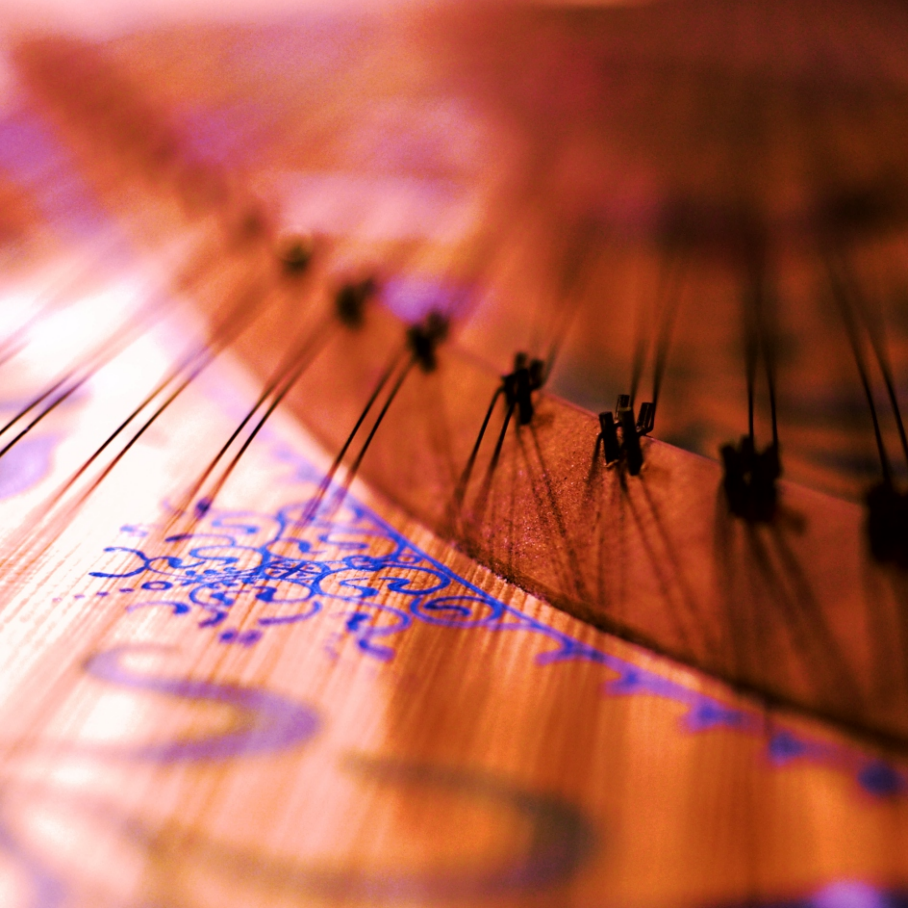
Mozart Festival Orchestra in every major concert hall in the UK and also across Switzerland. Steven is Music Director for New Chamber Opera in Oxford and with them has performed repertoire from Cavalli to Rossini. For the Dartington Festival Opera he has conducted Handel's *Orlando* and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*.

Steven works regularly with the Norwegian Wind Ensemble, Trondheim Barokk, the Victoria Baroque Players (BC, Canada) and Arion Baroque Ensemble (Montreal).

He teaches harpsichord and fortepiano at Trinity Laban Conservatoire in London and is Early Keyboard Consultant to the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and Royal Welsh Colleges.

www.stevendevine.com



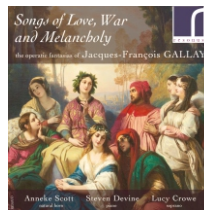


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Early Music Review

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Recorded in the Chapel of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge 29-30 August 2017,

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Producer, engineer & editor: Adam Binks

Session & instrument photography © Resonus Limited

Harpsichord supplied, maintained & tuned by Edmund Pickering

Recorded at 24-bit/96kHz resolution

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info@resonusclassics.com

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