

A survey of Michel Corrette's contributions to French chamber music in the eighteenth century.

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URI: <http://hdl.handle.net/123456789/2242>

Date: 2012-12-07

Abstract:

Chamber music flourished in the eighteenth century in France, Italy, and Germany. New musical forms, such as the concerto and solo sonata developed, exposing the capabilities of wind and string instruments. It was a time of splendor and grace as reigning nobility patronized the arts, raising them to a level of supremacy previously unknown. This research discusses one French composer whose influence and importance represented some of the elements of French chamber music common to the era. Michel Corrette, an organist and composer is best known for his many treatises and chamber works. In addition, Corrette's contribution includes the earliest use of scordatura violin tuning. The research also offers a brief insight into the musical courts of Louis XIV and XV and the new public concerts, such as the Concert Spirituel. They helped expose new music of the time. Particular attention is given to the influences of Italian composers upon French compositions, a vogue that influenced Corrette. Four representative chamber works of Corrette are analyzed. Elements of form, harmony, and melody are discussed as they demonstrate Corrette's style. All four compositions exhibit his musical qualities. Therefore, the research successfully proves Corrette's importance to French chamber music, but leaves the question of why so little is written about him in standard reference works.

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