



The Instrument



Colin Tilney

FROBERGER 1649: SUITES, FANTASIAS, AND A LAMENT



COLIN TILNEY HARPSICHORD

Froberger 1649: Suites, Fantasias, and a Lament

Suite No. 1 in A minor		Suite No. 5 in C	
1. Allemande	3:15	19. Allemande	2:23
2. Courante	1:39	20. Courante	1:15
3. Sarabande	2:13	21. Sarabande	1:46
4. Fantasia 5	3:30		
Suite No. 2 in D minor		Suite No. 6 in G (Auf die Mayerin)	
5. Allemande	2:58	22. Variation 1	1:27
6. Courante	1:52	23. Variation 2	1:28
7. Sarabande	2:38	24. Variation 3	1:11
8. Gigue	1:29	25. Variation 4	1:21
		26. Variation 5	1:18
9. Toccata 3	3:47	27. Variation 6	1:39
		28. Courante	1:26
		29. Sarabande	1:35
Suite No. 3 in G		30. Lamento sopra la dolorosa perdita della Real Maestà di Ferdinando IV, Rè de Romani +c	3:19
10. Allemande	2:47		
11. Courante	1:49		
12. Sarabande	1:47		
13. Canzon 2	4:52		
14. Toccata 4	3:24		
Suite No. 4 in F			
15. Allemande	2:49		
16. Courante	1:48		
17. Sarabande	1:26		
18. Fantasia 2	4:21		

Total time: 1:08:45

Acclaimed Early Music Performances on *Music & Arts*:

CD-1034(1) MUSICA DA CAMERA: UNKNOWN WORKS OF 17TH AND 18TH CENTURY ITALIAN CHAMBER MUSIC. Clementi: *Fortepiano Trio in F, Op. 27, No. 1*; Galuppi: *Sonata for cembalo in G*; Guerini: *Sonata for cello, Op. IX, No. IV*; Anon, (ca 1640): *Solo Cantata Miro del mio bel*; Savioni: *Solo Cantata Didone Piangente*; Rossi, *Solo Cantata Chi Consiglia un Dubbio Core*, and Boccherini: *Sonata in D, Op. 12, No. IV*. The Streicher Trio (Carla Moore, violin, Sarah Freiburg, cello, and Charlene Brendler, fortepiano and harpsichord) with Judith Nelson, soprano. All works previously unrecorded; the three vocal compositions are performed from manuscripts and the four instrumental compositions from rare 18th century scores. (DDD) UPC # 0-17685-10342-1.

CD-1037(1) AN HOUR WITH C.P.E. BACH. Sonata in G major for flute and continuo, H 554/Wq 127; Trio in A major for flute, violin and continuo, H 570/Wq 146; Sonata in C minor for harpsichord, H 209/Wq 60; Trio in E major for flute, violin and continuo, H 580/Wq 162; Sonata in D major for viola da gamba and continuo, H 559/Wq 137. Les Coucous Bénévols (Toronto): Elissa Poole, flute, Linda Melsted, violin, Sergei Istomin, viola da gamba, Colin Tilney, harpsichord, with, in the last sonata, Margaret Gay, cello (DDD). UPC # 0-17685-10372-8.

CD-1055(1) CLEMENTI: FORTEPIANO WORKS. Muzio Clementi: Sonatas, Op. 40: No. 1 in G major; No. 2 in b minor & No. 3 in D major; Four Monferrinas: No. 3 in E, No. 5 in A, No. 6 in d & No. 7 in D. John Khouri, fortepiano (DDD) UPC # 0-17685-10552-4.

CD-4825(1) COUPERIN: MUSIQUE DE CHAMBRE. From *Les Nations*: "L'Espagnole" and "La Piémontoise" and from *Les Gouts-réunis*: "Treizieme Concert." The Musical Assembly (Robert Claire, flute; Michael sand, violin & viola da gamba; Martha McGaughey, viola da gamba & Arthur Haas, harpsichord). (DDD) UPC# 0-17685-48252-6.

CD-1121(1) AMERICAN BAROQUE PLAYS MOZART QUARTETS FOR STRINGS AND WINDS with Stephen Schultz, flute; Gonzalo X. Ruiz, oboe; Elizabeth Blumenstock, violin; Katherine Kyme, viola; Tanya Tomkins, cello. Oboe Quartet in F K370, Flute Quartet in C K285b, Quartet in G K285a, Oboe Quartet in F after K496. (DDD). UPC #0-17685-11212-6

CD-1124(2) J.S. BACH: THE FRENCH SUITES, BWV 812-817, selected Preludes, BWV 923, 999, 815a, and three Preludes from the Well-Tempered Clavier, performed by David Cates, harpsichord. (DDD). UPC #0-17685-11242-3

CD-1224 (1) FUGUE: BACH AND HIS FORERUNNERS. BACH: The Art of Fugue, Contrapunctus 1-5, 8, 9, 11; L. Couperin: Prelude in d; Frescobaldi: 2 Capriccios; Gabrieli: Fuga del Nono Tono; Froberger: Ricercar 5. Colin Tilney, hpschd. [DDD]. UPC #0-17685-1226-0

CD-1268(2) BACH: THE SIX FRENCH SUITES with COLIN TILNEY, clavichord. J. S. Bach: BWV 812-817 and select ions from the Suites BWV 818a in A minor & BWV 819a in E flat major. 1895 Dolmetsch five-octave unfretted clavichord, based on one or more instruments by Johann Adolph Hass (1713–1771) CD 1 (60:21) French Suites, Nos. 1-3 and Selections from BWV 819a in E flat major CD 2 (63:08) French Suites. Nos. 4- 6 and Selections from BWV 818a in a [DDD] Total. UPC # 0-17687-12682-4.

Recorded June 15-18 2010 in the Phillip T. Young Recital Hall,
University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada
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Photos of instrument: Michael Jarvis
Harpsichord after the Ruckers school by Hubert Bédard and David Ley, Maintenon, France, 1976

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“People loved him because of his good nature, even if they did not understand his art.” The writer is Sibylla, Duchess of Württemberg, Froberger’s last patron and his “humble forsaken pupil”. The sentence comes from a letter she wrote to the great Dutch diplomat and polymath, Constantijn Huygens, shortly after Froberger’s death in May 1667, and in it she places a finger squarely on two fundamental aspects of Froberger’s life: his modest and unostentatious character and the extreme subtlety of his music. He seems to have made little or no effort to publish what he had written, evidently fearing that if he did, it would be badly played, and preferring to guide would-be performers by personal instruction. There were therefore no seventeenth-century prints until 1693 and nothing approaching a complete edition until Adler’s 1897 publication; and it is only in the last half-century that more and more keyboard players have started to feel the persuasion of this secret and inward music.

Froberger was of course no stranger to the powerful and immodest. Educated and trained at the Duke of Württemberg’s court in Stuttgart, where his father was Kapellmeister, he became in 1637 at the age of 21 one of four organists in the service of the Holy Roman Emperor in Vienna. An imperial stipend that same year sent him off to Rome to work with the great organist of St Peter’s, Girolamo Frescobaldi, a course of study that lasted for the next four years. While there, letters suggest, he may also have taken composition lessons from Giacomo Carissimi, in addition to making useful contact with potential employers among the upper clergy and aristocracy. Between 1641 and 1645, on his return from Rome, his name appears regularly in the court accounts as “organist of the Imperial Chamber”. The next few years are obscure, although Froberger mentions in a letter a second journey to Italy. In 1649 he is back in Vienna, presenting his *Libro Secondo* to Ferdinand III, chiefly presumably to underline his own artistic success, but possibly also to console the emperor for the recent loss of his wife. Subsequent visits to Brussels, London and Paris are marked by occasional pieces - toccatas, allemandes and *tombeaux* - that give thanks for favors received, grieve over the death of colleagues and patrons or, more often, just track his own misfortunes.

In 1657 his emperor died and in the following year Froberger was sacked. The new monarch,

Leopold I, may have thought it time to economize on organists; perhaps he felt slighted by the plainness of Froberger's job-seeking gift of a book of *capricci* and *ricercari*, severely contrapuntal and without any of the gorgeous calligraphy of the earlier offerings to his father; just possibly he was put off by Froberger's more than usually servile dedication ("prostrate at your Imperial Majesty's feet" etc.) At any rate, Froberger fell into "kaiserliche Ungnade" (imperial disfavor), and emperor and organist parted company, the only recorded instance of Froberger's finding anything lacking in the upper classes. Up till then the devotion had been mutual. The house of Hapsburg had attracted Froberger to Vienna, added to his value in Rome, sent him on diplomatic missions round Europe with other members of the imperial family and presumably subsidized at least part of the cost of his lengthy and wide-ranging travels. In return, as well as officiating in church, he celebrated their births and coronations and wrote heartfelt dirges when they died. (An exceptionally beautiful and authoritative manuscript belonging to the Sing-Akademie in Berlin has recently added a number of sumptuous and detailed titles to what were once simple unadorned allemandes). And after the break with Leopold it was a noblewoman, the dowager Duchess Sibylla, who rescued the composer from ruin, sheltering him in her castle until his death and giving us in her letters a rare inside picture of him as a teacher and a man.

The present recording explores some of the music in the earliest of the three surviving Froberger autographs housed in the Austrian National Library, the *Libro Secondo* of 1649. Originally there must have been five of these presentation volumes, of which #1 and #3 are now lost. The fourth (*Libro Quarto*) was dedicated to Ferdinand III in 1656 and the fifth - the fateful last attempt to secure work from the Hapsburgs - is dated 1658, the year of Froberger's dismissal. In each of the three books that we have - and presumably also in the two that have vanished - Froberger is his own scribe, ending each piece with the words *manu propria* (in my own hand). The writing is impeccably clear and accurate, the fairest of copies for the greatest of princes, the first two that survive obviously a labor of love for a master who may also have been a student of Froberger's and was certainly an outstanding amateur musician. (Could the last three notes of Froberger's 1657 elegy represent the three syllables of the emperor's unspoken name - Ferdinand?) Each category (*parte*) of the manuscript consists of six pieces and for each the notation is different. Froberger sets his toccatas (*stilus phantasticus*) in Italian thirteen-line tablature, six lines for the right hand, seven for the left; his four-voice polyphony (*fantasie* and *canzone*) in score; and the

Like *My Lady Nevell's Book* for William Byrd, Froberger's 1649 collection is a way-station in his life. It must contain music from recent years, as well as possibly some overflow from Froberger's earlier stay in Rome; it has no commemorative pieces - the only *tombeau* to be made public, even in a limited sense, will be the 1656 elegy for the emperor's son; the suites are mostly less adventurous than those in the following book or the later ones found only in other hands; there is no music of the quality of the lament for Ferdinand III or the *Meditation sur ma Mort future*. We are highly fortunate, however, to have it as an introduction to the music of this very private public servant, who visited so many countries at a time when travel was unimaginably difficult, left so important a legacy to subsequent musical history and made so many friends at all levels of society. One of those friends, Sibylla again, wrote after he died: "His critics said that too much had been done for him, and this was not right, as he no longer belonged to our religion and things like that, but I take no notice of what they say, because for his rare gifts and his good heart he deserves, on the way to his last rest, to have the honest company of those whom he served, not to speak of what I personally have received from him. And besides, after all, he was a Christian and led a good life. His death has hurt me very much and it brings me endless sorrow when I think of how much has died with him." So much for the man, what about the teacher? How can we face Sibylla's warning that without Froberger sitting at our side, it is hopeless to think of playing his music? Should we heed it? I think not.

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Colin Tilney is internationally known for his harpsichord, clavichord and fortepiano playing, with many solo recordings on DG (Archive), EMI Electrola, Decca, Hyperion, Dorian, Doremi and CBC SM 5000. Originally working in London as an accompanist and répétiteur, in 1979 he moved to Canada, first to Toronto, where he taught at the Royal Conservatory of Music and founded the chamber group *Les Coucous Bénévoles*; more recently (2002) to Victoria where, in addition to playing continuo for the Victoria Symphony, he is on the staff of the Music School at the University of Victoria. For Music & Arts he earlier recorded Bach's English Suites on an antique Italian harpsichord, the French Suites on clavichord, an album of fugues by Bach and his forerunners, and a Scarlatti disc.

who had not learned from him, the late Herr Froberger, could play with the right *discretion*". Some things would have been familiar to the audience - *tombeaux* to the French lutenists, for instance - but other elements of his vocabulary might have surprised and delighted them (the three repeated notes on the same pitch or the frequent anapestic falling and rising figure, both heard clearly in the allemande of Track 1 - that allemande has all the fingerprints). Possibly in the first (lost) book Froberger's toccatas may have shown closer resemblance to those of his teacher, but by 1649, when the second volume was ready, the form appears set, alternating free sections with a regular metrical counterpoint whose brilliant figuration is found almost nowhere in Frescobaldi. Even less do the suites resemble in detail Chambonnières or Louis Couperin, displaying more dramatic gestures and a profounder use of dissonance. When in a 1968 article printed in *L'Organo* the Dutch organist and harpsichordist, Gustav Leonhardt, a great lover and promoter of the composer, declared so forcibly: "Froberger's music is always unmistakably Froberger", he was essentially right, though it may have taken someone of his experience and passion to be so absolutely sure.

All six suites from 1649 are recorded here, together with two toccatas, two fantasias and a canzona, roughly half the contents of the book. One extra piece from outside the *Libro Secondo* has been added: the lament for the young Ferdinand IV, not written until 1654 and included in the 1656 collection. This example of Froberger's *avec discretion* style, which takes the place of an allemande in Suite 12, serves to remind us of a unique and essential part of his expressive range, but also gives voice to the two top notes of the Flemish harpsichord, so far unheard, which represent the top two rungs of Froberger's ladder - a C major scale - up which the dead emperor is climbing to heaven. In only two of the six suites is there any change from the standard pattern of allemande-courante-sarabande: the second ends with a lively gigue and in the sixth, all three movements of which are based on a folksong, Froberger replaces the allemande with a set of variations. The last of these, curiously for a sequence of increasing virtuosity, is suddenly slow, doleful and full of twisting chromatics. Possibly it was intended as a tribute to Ferdinand's dead queen; was *Auf die Mayerin* perhaps a favorite song of hers? All three polyphonic pieces are in the minor and show Froberger at his most eloquent, even in forms which in other hands can seem arid: his melodies stay in the mind and their treatment can be followed easily and with pleasure.

suites in our present-day two staves of five lines. The last two notations thus preserve the traditional distinction between strict counterpoint, where voices can be transcribed for non-keyboard instruments, and the freer kind of dance music, where notes are added to voices or taken away at will and transcription is hazardous. A further mark of esteem for Ferdinand must have been the rich decorated titles and end-pieces that complement the musical text. These are of such high quality that there was for a long time serious doubt about whether they also could plausibly be attributed to Froberger's "hand"; they have now been ascribed to a professional illustrator, Johann Friedrich Sautter, another native of Stuttgart. (See Siegbert Rampe's introduction to his edition of Froberger's keyboard works, Bärenreiter, 1993).

Sautter also supplies the decorative flourishes for the title page, with its dedication - a far more restrained affair than the desperate appeal of *Libro "Quinto"* - and its defining place and date ("In Vienna li 29 settembre A.1649"). That date places the completion of the book at least two years before Froberger's first visit to Paris, when he met many leading French musicians, including possibly Chambonnières, certainly Louis Couperin and the organist Roberday, and a number of influential Parisian lutenists. Froberger's historical importance is sometimes thought to lie mainly in his having somehow been the first to introduce Frescobaldi to Paris and then to have forwarded French music onward to other countries in Europe. Frescobaldi's first book of toccatas dates back to 1615, however, and even if it had been still unpublished in 1651, copyists had been copying manuscripts for centuries. But the couriers couldn't play the music they carried in their saddlebags and Froberger could. What excited the French *clavicinistes* and organists was surely the chance of learning the secrets behind Frescobaldi's notation from someone who had known and studied with him, someone who could explain the true meaning with his fingers. And equally, in his further travels, he would be welcomed as someone who could reliably unravel the mysteries of Louis Couperin's whole-note unmeasured preludes. In that sense - but not so much in the other - he really was the great pollinator. "Manu propria", again.

Froberger, of course, didn't bring only Frescobaldi to Paris or take Couperin on with him to London: he must have produced and played his own music as well, clarifying the free rhythms in the toccatas and demonstrating in the allemandes and laments how to be deeply expressive without making the pulse incoherent - those nuances, Sybilla says to Huygens, that "nobody



ORIGINALHANDSCHRIFT FROBERGER⁹ IN DER K.K. HOFBIBLIOTHEK.
(Seite III, vgl. Recensionsbericht DORLANGE 9)