



David Ponsford

Claude Balbastre *Livre de Dijon*

Organ of Dijon Cathedral



Volume 9



# *The Riepp/Schmid/Jurine organ at St-Bénigne Cathedral, Dijon*

*Pierre Dubois*

The celebrated organ builder Karl-Joseph Riepp (1710-1775) was born in Eldern, Swabia, in south-western Germany. He trained in Strasbourg and, in 1741, married Anne-Françoise Ève de Jouhe, a wealthy heiress, in Dole, Burgundy. The couple settled in Dijon, where Riepp worked with his brother Rupert. King Louis XV granted the Riepp brothers French citizenship in 1747 and gave Karl-Joseph the title of 'Organ-builder to the King' in recognition of the quality of his work. Riepp managed to purchase some of the best vineyard plots in Burgundy and began trading wine with the abbeys of Citeaux, Salem and Ottobeuren. He corresponded with the celebrated organ-builder and Benedictine monk Dom Bédos de Celles, author of the justly famous treatise *L'Art du facteur d'orgues* (1766-1778). Among the organs that Riepp built are the two instruments in the Abbey of Ottobeuren, and those of the collegiate church of Dole, Besançon Cathedral, Chalon-sur-Saone Cathedral, and the Abbey of St-Bénigne, Dijon, which became the cathedral in 1792.

St-Bénigne, as we know it today, is a large Gothic church that replaced the Romanesque Basilica that had collapsed in 1272. The new building was consecrated in 1394. It contains a large five-bay nave, flanked with two lower aisles. A triforium runs around the nave from the transepts and chancel, and the reverberation period has been calculated to be approximately eight seconds.

The organ of St-Bénigne was erected between 1740 and 1745. At the time, it was the largest organ built in the French provinces, and based on a 32' *montre* on the *Grand Orgue*. Having trained in Strasbourg, Riepp built organs in the French style, although in Ottobeuren he attempted a synthesis between the French and German schools. The

stunning oak *Grand Orgue* and *Positif* cases in Dijon were probably constructed by Guillaume Marlet after a design by Riepp, while his brother Edme Marlet produced all the decorative sculpture. Initially, the Dijon organ had four manuals – *Grand Orgue*, *Positif*, *Récit* and *Écho* – and contained 47 stops. The organ was received by Dom Bédos and Claude Rameau (Jean-Philippe Rameau's brother), who was the first *titulaire* organist. The *Grand Orgue* façade contains five semi-circular towers, the tallest (24 feet) being on the extremities, and containing 67 pipes from the 32', 16' and 8' *montres* of the *Grand Orgue*.

As soon as 1787, Jean Richard from Troyes rebuilt the instrument. He extended the manual compasses from 51 to 54 notes, replaced the wind-chests, added two ranks to the *plein jeu* and rebuilt the reed-battery. Other restorations and alterations by Daublaine-Callinet from 1846 to 1848 and by Joseph Merklin in 1860 followed, but most of the original pipe-work was preserved. However, the *tierces* were removed and replaced by flue-work, and a new enclosed division replaced the *Récit* and *Écho* divisions. Merklin transferred the 32' *montre* from the *Grand-Orgue* to the Pedal, replacing it with an 8' *flûte harmonique*, and Barker machines were installed. In 1902, the firm of Kuhn and the organ-builder Dreschler electrified the winding system. Riepp's pipe-work was listed as a 'historical landmark' and theoretically protected.

However, in 1953, when André Fleury was appointed *titulaire*, a large restoration was carried out by the Roethinger firm under the authority of the Historical Organs Commission and the supervision of Félix Raugel. The instrument was deeply transformed. The mechanical action was replaced by electro-pneumatic action and a new *plenum* was created using the best pipes from the *Grand Orgue* and *Positif*, switching pipes from one division to the other. The organ was now restructured over three manuals and revoiced in the neo-classical style by Robert Boisseau.

A new restoration was envisaged by the new *titulaire*, Maurice Clerc (a disciple of the famous organist and composer Jean Guillou), who was appointed in 1972. The work was carried out between 1987 and 1996 by Gerhard Schmid, from Kaufbeuren (who had

charge of the maintenance of the Riepp Ottobeuren organs). The organ was restructured back to the disposition it had at the end of the eighteenth century, and a separate *Récit expressif* was added and located behind the main organ-case, so that the organ now boasted five manuals and 73 stops. The 32' *montre* was relocated in the *Grand Orgue*; six wedge-bellows were reconstructed and the mechanical action rebuilt, while an electric stop-combination system was added.

Gerhardt Schmid's restoration stirred up controversy, however, as it was deemed that he had not respected the brief, which stipulated that the three major historical and archaeological states of the organ had to be taken into account. In particular, the reeds had not been voiced in the French style associated with Riepp's original work, so that the *Grand Chœur* did not sound at all with the magnificence it was supposed to have had. Michel Chapuis, who had been nominated *rapporteur* for the work, expressed his dissatisfaction and denounced the 'regression of the tonal state' of the instrument after its restoration.

Between 2021 and 2023, Michel Jurine (from Rontalon, near Lyon) effected a new restoration of the instrument, the main objective of which was to restore the splendour of the *Grand Chœur*, i.e. the six-stop reed chorus in the *Récit expressif* and the ten eighteenth-century reeds spread over the other manuals and pedal department. In the *Récit expressif*, a large number of tongues by Roethinger, dating back to 1956, were replaced with brass. Copies of a *clairon* and a *clarinette* after Merklin were also provided. As for the eighteenth-century reeds, they had to be reorganised, and Bertrand Cattiaux, the specialist in eighteenth-century French organs, lent his assistance and advice. Two-thirds of the shallots and all the tuning wires, which were oxidised, had to be replaced. The bellows were re-leathered and a few minor adjustments made to the stop-list (the third *Bombarde trompette* was replaced by a *flûte harmonique* 8', and the *Récit fourniture* III replaced by a *clarinette* 8'). The whole organ was entirely revoiced, and now boasts five manuals of 61 notes and a pedalboard of 34 notes.

From what precedes, it is obvious that the so-called Riepp organ in Dijon Cathedral is not an authentic ‘historic’ instrument. It is, rather, a compound organ, based upon Riepp’s original work, but with later additions. With its symphonic *Récit expressif*, a total of 73 stops over five manuals and pedals (the largest provincial organ in France) and the addition of a modern solid-state memory system, it can efficiently cope with all the modern repertory. In addition, its magnificent Riepp-based reed *Grand Chœur* has been restored, and it has recaptured all its distinctive French eighteenth-century character.

The choice of this instrument seemed particularly appropriate to record Claude Balbastre’s *Livre de Dijon*. Balbastre was organist of the original cathedral of Dijon, St-Étienne, at the time when Riepp erected the organ in St-Bénigne, whose first *titulaire* organist was Claude Rameau, Balbastre’s own organ teacher. The organ in St-Étienne was also by Riepp and the *Livre de Dijon* was probably composed with that instrument in mind. Moreover, it was Dom Bédos – who mentions Balbastre in his *Art du facteur d’orgues* – who received the St-Bénigne organ. There is no doubt that Balbastre played the Riepp organ in St-Bénigne at the time of its erection, and it may be surmised that some of the organ pieces in the *Livre de Dijon* may have been influenced by the aesthetic character of the brand-new organ. The dates match closely, since the *Livre de Dijon* bears the date 1749, only four years after the completion of Riepp’s master-piece and just before Balbastre’s departure for Paris. Balbastre and Riepp were evidently on good terms; Riepp gave Balbastre’s name as a recommendation for his work in a letter to the abbot, Coelestin Wahl, of the Cistercian abbey of Salem in 1766, and Riepp also submitted a tender for the restoration of the organ in St-Roch, Paris, whose organist was Balbastre himself. All the registrations, either suggested or implied, for the pieces in the *Livre de Dijon* can be effectively used on the St-Bénigne organ. Dom Bédos explained in his book that Balbastre was consulted about the best and most used registrations, and for the present recording, the registrations indicated in Dom Bédos’s treatise have been used. The stunning, reconstructed *Grand Chœur* is the perfect vehicle for the numerous powerful and dramatic *Grand jeu* pieces together with the fugues, while the flue-work

provides the ideal colours for the more meditative and pastoral pieces, and the various bright and fiery *cornet*, *tierce* and solo reed sonorities bring vitality to the *duos*, *trios* and *basses de trompette*. Balbastre's music is optimistic, ebullient and flamboyant, and obviously intended for a large, powerful mid eighteenth-century French organ such as the Riepp organ in St-Bénigne, which followed the general tendency, after Thierry's rebuilding of the organ in Notre-Dame in Paris (1733), of French organ-builders to build ever larger organs with very powerful reeds. It is exciting to be able to celebrate the tercentenary of Balbastre's birth (1724) with a recording of excerpts from his first major organ book, performed on an organ that he knew and now beautifully restored by a first-rate French organ-builder, who has demonstrated his knowledge, understanding and respect for the style of French organ building from Balbastre's own time.

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## SPECIFICATION

### I - Positif de dos (61 notes: GG- g<sup>'''</sup>)

1. Bourdon 16
2. Viola 8
3. Bourdon 8
4. Flûte 8
5. Prestant 4
6. Flûte 4
7. Nazard 2 2/3
8. Doublette 2
9. Tierce 1 3/5
10. Larigot 1 1/3
11. Cornet V
12. Fourniture IV
13. Cymbale III
14. Carillon III
15. Trompette 8
16. Cromorne 8
17. Voix humaine 8
18. Clairon 4

### II – Grand Orgue (61 notes: GG-g<sup>'''</sup>)

19. Montre 32
20. Montre 16
21. Bourdon 16
22. Montre 8
23. Bourdon 8
24. Flûte à fuseau 8
25. Flûte harmonique 8
26. Gros nazard 5 1/3

27. Prestant 4
28. Grosse tierce 3 1/5
29. Nazard 2 2/3
30. Doublette 2
31. Quarte de nasard 2
32. Tierce 1 3/5
33. Grand cornet VI
34. Cornet V
35. Grande fourniture III
36. Petite Fourniture IV
37. Cymbale V
38. Bombarde 16
39. 1ère Trompette 8
40. 2ème Trompette 8
41. Clairon 4

### III - Récit expressif (56 notes: C - g<sup>'''</sup>)

42. Gambe 16
43. Bourdon 8
44. Flûte harmonique 8
45. Salicional 8
46. Gambe 8
47. Voix céleste 8
48. Octave 4
49. Flûte octaviant 4
50. Gambe 4
51. Octavin 2
52. Piccolo 1
53. Sesquialtera II

- 54. Plein-jeu V
- 55. Bombarde 16
- 56. Trompette 8
- 57. Basson-hautbois 8
- 58. Clarinette 8
- 59. Voix humaine 8
- 60. Clairon 4

**IV – Récit classique** (39 notes: f - g<sup>'''</sup>)

- 61. Bourdon-flûte 8
- 62. Cornet V
- 63. Hautbois 8

**V - Écho** (39 notes: f - g<sup>'''</sup>)

- 64. Flûte 8
- 65. Cornet V
- 66. Trompette 8

**Pédale** (34 notes: GG, AA-f)

- 67. Flûte 32
- 68. Flûte 16
- 69. Flûte 8
- 70. Flûte 4
- 71. Bombarde 16
- 72. Trompette 8
- 73. Clairon 4

Pos/Péd; G.O./Péd; Récit expressif/Péd.  
Pos/G.O.  
Récit expressif/G.O.  
Pos Tremblant doux.  
Récit exp. Tremblant fort.  
Écho Tremblant.



## *Claude Balbastre (1724-1799) and the 'Livre de Dijon'*

Born in Dijon on 8 December 1724, Claude was the sixteenth child of Bénigne Balbastre (1670-1737) and his second wife, Marie Millot (?-1776). Long mistaken for his brother Claude-Bénigne, born 1727 and who died before the age of ten, Claude received his first music lessons from his father Bénigne, who from 1691 to 1737 was organist of Saint-Étienne in Dijon (which became the Cathedral in 1731). The boy then became the pupil of Claude Rameau, younger brother of the famous composer Jean-Philippe Rameau. On 11 May 1743, Claude Balbastre succeeded his father as organist of Saint-Étienne Cathedral, a position he held for nine years. In 1750 he left Dijon for Paris, where he enjoyed the protection and the teaching of his countryman Jean-Philippe Rameau, soon acquiring an excellent reputation and obtaining several prestigious positions. In 1755 he became the first incumbent organist of the *Concert Spirituel*, where he performed transcriptions of opera airs and overtures and the first-ever organ concertos played in France. Balbastre performed at the *Concert Spirituel* no fewer than 184 times until 1772. On 26 March 1756 he was appointed organist of Saint-Roch, a position he kept until the French Revolution. He was also appointed at the Abbey of Panthémont, an establishment for polite young ladies, and in 1760 he also became organist of Notre-Dame Cathedral alongside Armand-Louis Couperin and Louis-Claude Daquin. Together with Daquin, Balbastre was by then considered to be the foremost organist in Paris. In 1762, he was ordered by Archbishop Christophe de Beaumont du Repaire to abstain from playing *noëls* on the organ at St-Roch at Christmas, because his performances drew too large a crowd and caused unacceptable disorder. He was also one of the first French keyboardists to introduce the fortepiano in France and even conceived the 'organised fortepiano' with organ-builder François-Henri Clicquot. When the French Revolution broke out, Balbastre paid due allegiance – probably to avoid trouble – and he was officially appointed to oversee the protection of Parisian organs that deserved to be saved, but

he lost his positions as organist and died in poverty and obscurity.

Balbastre's publications were few : *Premier livre de clavecin* (1759) ; *Recueil de Noël's formant quatre suites avec des variations* (1770) ; *Romance*, published in Dom Bédos's *L'Art du facteur d'orgues* (1766-78) ; *Quatre sonates en quatuor pour le clavecin ou le forte-piano avec accompagnement de deux violons, une basse et deux cors ad libitum* (1779) ; and finally his famous *Marche des Marseillais et l'air « Ça ira »* for the pianoforte (1793). The remainder of his works – essentially keyboard music – have come down to us only in manuscript.

This is the case with his first organ pieces, composed in Dijon. Four manuscript books from 1748-50 are known, of which the largest and most important is the *Livre contenant des pièces de différent genre d'orgue et de clavecin par le S.<sup>r</sup> Balbastre organiste de la cathédrale de Dijon* ('Book containing Pieces in Different Kinds for the Organ and Harpsichord, by Mr. Balbastre, Organist of the Cathedral of Dijon'), dated 1749, and from which all the pieces on this recording are taken. The 'Dijon' manuscript contains 70 pieces on 139 pages, constituting a real compendium of Balbastre's early keyboard works, and showing the varied facets of his talent: pieces for organ and harpsichord; pieces for harpsichord with violin accompaniment; three sets of variations on *noëls*, and even airs of 'parodies' - pieces to which words were added afterwards. Through this gesture at the age of 25, on the eve of his leaving Dijon for Paris, the young Balbastre was asserting his creative potential and ambitions as a composer, thereby demonstrating his capabilities. The manuscript opens with 36 organ pieces (19 of which are recorded here) grouped by keys (fifteen pieces in D major and minor, seven in A major and minor, two in E, five in F, five in G major and minor, two in B flat, and a final one in C).

In terms of compositional intention, the most striking piece is the long and ambitious four-movement *Concerto* in D major (Prélude-Allegro-Gavotte-Allegro). The title is significant, indicating that it was intended for a public concert rather than for the Church, Balbastre thus distancing himself and the organ from the traditional

Magnificat Suites and Organ Masses that were the standard genres composed by French *Ancien Régime* organist-composers. With this organ concerto - the first ever composed in France, following a pattern established by Handel in England - Balbastre opened a new path, which he was later to pursue at the *Concert Spirituel*, the important venue for Parisian musical development in the eighteenth century. Written as pure music, without reference to any religious context or plainchant themes, Balbastre's organ concerto was composed in an orchestral manner, with clear contrasts between *solo* and *tutti* enabled by contrasting the *Positif* and *Récit* against the *Grand jeu* on the *Grand Orgue*. With this impassioned concerto the young Balbastre established himself as an innovative and virtuoso composer. If he does not always shy away from facile effects, he knows the instrument well and draws wonderful sonorities from it.

Another original piece is the *Trio à trois mains* (in B flat). The traditional *trio à deux dessus* and *trio à trois claviers* are here replaced (assuming this was Balbastre's intention and not a copyist's error) by a trio for three hands, specifying the top part played on the *Récit cornet séparé*, the second part played on the *Grand-Orgue Flûte*, and the bass on the *Cromorne* (traditionally placed in the *Positif*). Balbastre may have relished the idea of writing a piece that could be performed by two organists together, as *quatuors* were often played, or he simply intended to place the cromorne part in a different position (in the bass). On this recording, the trio is performed by David Ponsford alone, so the disposition adopted is that of the standard *trio à trois claviers*.

The various pieces intended for the *grands jeux* of the organ can be grouped together, and whether titled *Grand Jeu*, *Dialogue* or *Tapage*, they all call for the full power of the instrument. The French organ in the second half of the eighteenth century was even more powerful than its late seventeenth-century and early eighteenth-century equivalents, with the frequent addition of more reed stops, *bombardes*, etc., which Balbastre used to advantage. Whatever their spirit – joyful, dramatic, exuberant or martial – his *dialogues* and *grands jeux* are primarily intended

to show off the sheer power and beauty of the registration. Many of these pieces are diptychs, following the standard pattern found in offertories by Clérambault and Dandrieu from the previous generation, with a slow prelude followed by a lively allegro (Trks. 1 & 2, *Prélude et fugue*), and sometimes in *rondeau* form (Trks. 20 & 21, *Dialogue* in G). In the latter, the parallel sixths in the right hand evoke a peal of bells, while the following allegro in 3/8 time, with its dialogue between *cornet/cromhorne* and *grands jeux*, is written in the style of Domenico Scarlatti's harpsichord sonatas. Without a prelude, the majestic *Grand Jeux* in A minor (Trk. 18) also adopts the shape of a *rondeau*. Anticipating the age of the *Galant*, to which he was later to contribute, Balbastre seeks variety and shifts in mood as prerequisites to good taste. In the Dijon book, we witness the first music to signal a positively populist intent.

The *Tapage* in C major concludes the organ section of the *Livre de Dijon*. The title, which can be translated as 'din' or 'racket,' is supposed to have evoked the huge clamour that arose in the world on the birth of the Christ-child. Together with Jean-François Tapray, who also composed a *tapage* in the middle of his *noël* '*Une vierge pucelle*', Balbastre's piece, a *tapage* proper on the *Grand jeu*, frames a *rondeau* in the spirit of a French *noël*, before the *tapage* proper resumes as a conclusion.

Balbastre's music is indicative of the important changes in French musical taste that took place in the eighteenth century. His long life and career made him the contemporary of Bach, Handel, Rameau, Haydn and Mozart, and while his *duos*, *basses de trompette* and *de cromorne* clearly belong to the French Baroque organ tradition, other pieces testify to the influence of Pergolesi (Trk. 22), Vivaldi (Trk. 21), Domenico Scarlatti (Trks. 14 & 21) and Rameau (Trk. 13), as well as sequences and *figurae* from the pre-Classical period that are heard in many pieces. Balbastre composed for the organ as though he were freely transcribing music composed for other instruments, as he did when transcribing Rameau's works for the *Concert Spirituel*. His organ music is orchestral in character. It fluctuates between the two essential polarities of striking powerful effects on one hand (e.g. the *Prélude et Fugue* in D minor, the

*Grands Jeux* or the *Tapage*), and gentle, graceful simplicity on the other, as in the *Air* in G minor (Trk. 22), the *Concert de flute et la voix humaine* (Trk. 19), and the *Récit* in F (Trk. 4). Not unlike Gluck, whose operas were to prove such a determining factor in the shaping of the late eighteenth-century musical taste, style and sensibility, Balbastre truly captures the spirit of the age. The previously water-tight frontiers between the sacred and the secular were beginning to break down.

A remark made in a letter by Mme de Deffand to the Duchesse de Choiseul encapsulates the expectations of many of her contemporaries with regard to music. She explained that she spent an evening in the company of Balbastre and that he played several *noëls* and a *pastorale*, composed for the Duchesse, in a ‘ravishing manner’, and adds that this piece must have pleased Mme de Choiseul, because ‘it is not one of these learned compositions that [she] [Mme du Deffand] abhor[s].’ The aesthetic priorities were simplicity and the ‘natural’ quality promoted by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and not formal, elaborate or complex music. Balbastre’s music should be approached as a mix of joyful popular simplicity and elegant refinement that can speak directly to all kinds of listeners today. Situated at the turning point between the Baroque and Classical periods, Balbastre contributed significantly to this important change in sensibilities. A charming, ‘polite’ man, outstanding virtuoso and endearing composer, Balbastre – long ignored or disparaged – can guide us in our understanding of the French musical Enlightenment.

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**French Organ Music from the Golden Age - Volume 9**  
**Claude Balbastre (1724-1799)**  
**David Ponsford, organ of Dijon Cathedral**

1-2	Prélude et fugue in D minor	1:38 / 4:52
3	Duo in D minor	1:54
4	Récit in F major	3:17
5-6	Prélude et Fugue - Grand Jeux et Fugue in D minor	0:49 / 3:10
7	Fugue – Basse de trompette in F major	2:47
8	Duo in F major	1:53
9	Trio à trois mains in B-flat major	5:29
10	Fugue in F major	2:07
11-14	Concerto in D major	16:20
	I Prélude 2:54 II Allegro 7:02	
	III Gavotte 3:40 IV Allegro 2:44	
15	Duo in A minor	1:45
16	Fugue - Gravement in D minor	4:02
17	Trio – Basse de cromorne	1:45
18	Grand jeux in A minor	3:31
19	Concert de flûte avec la voix humaine	3:06
20-21	Dialogue et rondeau in G major	1:15 / 2:50
22	Air in G minor	3:25
23-24	Prélude et Dialogue in D minor	1:27 / 2:21
25	Trio - Giga in A minor	2:31
26	Tapage in C major	5:33

Total playing time: 78:00

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Editions of the music: Les Éditions Outremontaises and David Ponsford

Consultant: Pierre Dubois

Organ tuning: Adrien Parret

Photography: Pierre Dubois and David Ponsford

## Registrations

### **Prélude et fugue**

G.O. 34, 38, 39, 40, 41.

Pos. 16, 11, 15, 18.

Récit 62.

Péd 71, 72, 73.

Pos/G.O., G.O./Péd.

### **Duo**

G.O. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 28, 29, 31, 32.

Pos. 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 7, 9, 10.

Péd 67, 68, 69, 70.

### **Récit**

G.O. 23.

Pos. 3, 7.

### **Prélude et Fugue**

G.O. 34, 38, 39, 40, 41.

Pos. 3, 16, + 15, 18, 11 [repeat].

Récit 62.

Péd 71, 72, 73.

G.O./Péd.

### **Fugue – Basse de trompette**

G.O. 27, 39, 40, 41.

Pos. 2, 3, 5, 8, 10, 7, 9.

### **Duo**

G.O. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 28, 29, 31, 32.

Pos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 7, 9, 10.

### **Trio à trois mains**

G.O. 34.

Pos. 16.

Péd 69, 70.

### **Fugue**

G.O. 20, 21, 22, 23, 27, 29, 31, 32.

Pos. 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 7, 9, 10.

Péd 67, 68, 69, 70.

Pos/G.O., G.O./Péd.

### **Concerto:**

#### **Prélude & Allegro**

G.O. 34, 38, 39, 40, 41.

Pos. 3, 16/11, 15, 18.

Récit 62.

Péd 71, 72, 73 / 69, 70.

Pos/G.O.

#### **Gavotte**

G.O. 23, 29, 31.

Pos. 3 / 16.

Récit 62.

#### **Allegro**

G.O. 33, 34, 38, 39, 40, 41.

Pos. 5, 11, 15, 16, 18.

Péd 71, 72, 73.

Pos/G.O., G.O./Péd.

### **Duo**

G.O. 21, 22, 23, 27, 26, 28.

Pos. 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10.

**Fugue**

G.O. 27, 34, 39, 40, 41.

Pos. 11, 15, 16, 18.

Péd 71, 72, 73.

Pos/G.O., G.O./Péd.

**Trio – Basse de cromorne**

G.O. 22, 23.

Pos. 16.

**Grand jeux**

G.O. 33, 34, 38, 39, 40, 41.

Pos. 5, 11, 15, 16, 18.

Récit 62.

Péd 71, 72, 73.

Pos/G.O., G.O./Péd.

**Concert de flûte avec la voix humaine**

G.O. 23.

Récit Exp. 43, 59.

**Dialogue et rondeau**

G.O. 21, 22, 27, 30, 35, 36, 37 / 34, 38, 39, 40, 41.

Pos. 2, 5, 8, 12, 13 / 3, 16.

Récit 62.

Péd 72, 73, + 71.

Pos/G.O., G.O./Péd.

**Air**

Pos. 3.

Récit 61, tremulant.

**Prelude & Dialogue**

G.O. 21, 22, 27, 30, 35, 36, 37 / 22, 27, 30.

Pos. 2, 5, 8, 12, 13 / 2, 5, 7, 8.

Péd 72, 73 / + 71.

Pos/G.O., G.O./Péd.

**Trio-Giga**

G.O. 16, 22, 23, 27, 41.

Pos. 2, 3, 5, 18.

**Tapage**

G.O. 33, 34, 38, 39, 40, 41 / 23, 29, [31].

Pos. 11, 15, 16, 18 / 3, 16.

Récit 62.

Péd 71, 72, 73.

Pos/G.O., G.O./Péd.



**David Ponsford** is an organist, harpsichordist, musicologist and conductor, and an authority on keyboard music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He held the Greenwood Exhibition at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and was extremely fortunate to be able to study organ with Peter Hurford, Lionel Rogg and Piet Kee, and harpsichord with Kenneth Gilbert and Gustav Leonhardt. His first post after graduating from Cambridge was as Assistant Organist at Wells Cathedral. Later, he studied for a PhD on performance practice in French Baroque organ music with Professor Peter Williams. For 17 years he delivered courses in Performance Practice and Notation & Editing at Cardiff University, as well as conducting the University Chamber Orchestra and the University Choir. He also taught at Bristol University, and since 2000 has given several series of lectures on Baroque music at Madingley Hall, Cambridge. Since 2021, he has taught organ and harpsichord & organ continuo at the Royal Academy of Music, London.

David has made a considerable number of recordings, both on organ and harpsichord. In April 2023, the complete Bach Harpsichord Partitas were re-released on the Heritage label, for which the CD was awarded a 5-star review and was described as ‘playing of the highest integrity’ in *Choir & Organ*. He has recorded all four parts of J. S. Bach’s *Clavierübung*, the complete series of Bach violin sonatas with Jacqueline Ross, ‘Parthenia’ (1612), and the complete Handel recorder sonatas with Alan Davis. He has played recitals extensively in cathedrals and concert halls in the U.K., Europe, and the U.S.A., combining his performing career with research into performance practice. His book ‘French Organ Music in the Reign of Louis XIV’ was published by Cambridge University Press in May 2011 (paperback edition, 2016). Among his editions are Biber’s *Mystery Sonatas* (Ut Orpheus, Bologna, 2007), Nicolas de Grigny’s *Premier livre d’orgue* (Ut Orpheus, 2019), and the complete organ works by Nicolas Lebègue (Lyrebird Music, 2025).

In March 2024, David was awarded The Medal of the Royal College of Organists – the college's highest award – in recognition of 'distinguished achievement in organ performance and scholarship'.

The present CD is volume 9 in the series 'French Organ Music from the Golden Age', performed by David Ponsford on French historic organs and released on the Nimbus Alliance label. Previous issues are:

**Vol. 1: François Couperin NI 6213**

*Messe pour les couvents*, and Pierre Du Mage, *Premier livre d'orgue*.

Organ by Lavasseur/Dangeville (1640/1772), restored 1996, in the Prytanée National Militaire, La Flèche, France.

**Vol. 2: François Couperin NI 6225**

*Messe pour les paroisses*, and Charpentier, *Messe pour les instruments* (1674), transcribed for organ by David Ponsford.

Organ by Lavasseur/Dangeville (1640/1772), restored 1996, in the Prytanée National Militaire, La Flèche, France.

**Vol. 3: André Raison and Louis-Nicolas Clérambault**

*Messe du premier ton* (1688) and *Suites du premier and du deuxième tons* (c.1710).

Organ by Jean Boizard (1714) in the Abbey of Saint-Michel-en-Thiérache, France.

**Vol. 4: Guillaume-Gabriel Nivers NI 6292**

*Suite du premier ton* (1665), *Offerte en fugue et dialogue* (1667) and *Suite du premier ton* (1675); **Nicolas-Antoine Lebègue**, pieces from *Troisième livre d'orgue* (1685).

Organ by Jean de Joyeuse (1694) / Jean-François Muno (1998) in Auch Cathedral.

**Vol. 5: Nicolas de Grigny, *Premier livre d'orgue* (1699) NI 6342**

Plainchant sung by L'école de Nivers with Philip Humphries (serpent).  
Organ by Jean-François Lépine (1752)/Bertrand Cattiaux (2005) in Sarlat Cathedral.

**Vol. 6: Jacques Boyvin NI 6358**

Suites from the *Premier* and *Second livres d'orgue* (1690, 1700).  
Organ in Saint-Michel, Bolbec, by Guillaume Lesselier (1631), restored by Jean-Loup Boisseau and Bertrand Cattiaux (1998).

**Vol. 7: Louis Marchand NI 6390**

*Pièces choisies pour l'orgue* (1740); Jean-Adam Guilain, *Pièces d'Orgue pour le Magnificat* (1706).  
Organ by Samson Scherrer (1748), restored by Bernard Aubertin (1992),  
in Saint-Antoine l'Abbaye.

**Vol. 8: Gaspard Corrette & Jean-François Dandrieu NI 6438**

*Messe du 8<sup>e</sup> ton & Magnificat*.  
Organ by Andreas Silbermann (1709), restored by Quentin Blumenroeder (2010),  
in Marmoutier Abbey, Alsace.

[www.DavidPonsford.org](http://www.DavidPonsford.org)

[www.wyastone.co.uk/all-labels/nimbus.html](http://www.wyastone.co.uk/all-labels/nimbus.html)



