

## Paul Beier – Concert Proposals 2016-17



### **Johann Sebastian Bach – Three French Suites transcribed for lute**

#### **French Suite No. 1, BWV 812**

Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Menuet I-II, Gigue

#### **French Suite No. 2, BWV 813**

Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Air, Menuet, Gigue

#### **French Suite No. 3, BWV 814**

Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Menuet-Trio, Anglais, Gigue

From an early age, ever since hearing Julian Bream play the first two Bach lute suites in the early 1960s, it has been my lifelong ambition to play the lute works of J. S. Bach. By the late 1990s I had recorded the complete solo lute works on two CDs published by Stradivarius. Since then I have returned to these works often, and they still provide me great pleasure, but lately I have been on the lookout for some new material from the pen of the Cantor of St. Thomas. The obvious choice, of course, is to arrange the solo works for 'cello or violin for the lute. This can work very well but it requires some adjustment, the baroque lute being a chordal instrument characterized by its set of deep bass notes, and the violin and 'cello being mostly capable of playing single melodic lines. So the arranger has to fill out the texture by adding harmony and bass notes. The alternative is to look at Bach's copious output for keyboard, but here the problem is the opposite, the musical texture is too thick - think of the harpsichordist's ten fingers producing sound on a keyboard, as opposed to the lutenist's mere four fingers of the right hand that produce the sound on a lute. Bach's French Suites occupy a middle ground. They seem to have been first conceived as a wedding gift to his second wife, Anna Magdalena, who was a singer and amateur harpsichordist, so they were written in a much lighter and more easily approachable manner than the six "English" suites that preceded them or the Partitas that followed in the chronology of Bach's composition. Indeed they were called "French" (but never by Bach himself) because of their brevity and charm, to distinguish them from the more severe and academic style of the English suites. Yet in trying to set them on the lute I still encountered some major difficulties. For one thing, the musical texture often occupies a span of over four octaves, whereas the lute is only really capable of three. For another, Bach's use of the left hand: it is always active with scales and arpeggios, or sustaining a middle voice as well as the bass. The single right hand thumb of the lutenist, which alone is responsible for the entire bass tessitura of the lute, could not possibly compete with this. So in arranging these suites for the lute, I was obliged to follow the opposite approach from that needed when arranging from the 'cello or violin: instead of expanding the music to fit the instrument, I had to contract it – retaining the essential musical material but distilling it to a form that is coherent with the style of lute music in Bach's day.

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## John Dowland and Henry Purcell – Unquiet Thoughts

*Michael Chance, countertenor Paul Beier, lute and theorbo*

Many people consider John Dowland and Henry Purcell to be the finest composers of the solo song in the English language. This program brings together some of their best songs, such as Dowland's *In darkness Let Me Dwell* and Purcell's *O Solitude*, in a program that has entertained audiences throughout Europe. Chance and Beier can be heard on three CDs published by Stradivarius, the most recent of which, released in 2015, features late works by John Dowland.

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## Un sì dolce morire - Italian Songs of the early Cinquecento

*Iason Marmaras, voice Paul Beier, renaissance lute*

It was a hot summer day when the Tuscan town of Chiusure welcomed us in its only *ristorantino*. The thick pasta and ample vegetables had given place to fresh figs, *cantuccini* and sweet *vin santo*, when Paul started tuning his beautiful renaissance lute. I sang several madrigals to his delightful playing, and as the afternoon grew more drowsy under the Italian sun, soft accents and warbling passages stole into our music as if to evoke a time long past. And so our first collaboration was born, a program of Verdelot madrigals printed in an intabulation by Wilaert in 1536 and extemporaneously ornamented by Paul and myself. Paul will also play lute music by the incomparable Francesco da Milano. In the poetry of the madrigals the renaissance idea of sweet death is prevalent. Like as the poet's love causes him to die and be reborn within the same poem, within a single night, so do these madrigals, which were born out of their creators' love and died out as musical taste shifted in the late Seicento, have their own renaissance here in the company of the two of us.

*Iason Marmaras*



## “Melante” - Baroque Lute Duets

*Paul Beier and Earl Christie*

The famous duets by Georg Philipp Telemann, under the pseudonym Melante, are combined with other great baroque lute duets of the period.

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**Paul Beier** graduated from the Royal College of Music, London under Diana Poulton. He has performed in Europe, North and South America and Australia as soloist, director of *Galatea*, member of various groups and as continuo player in orchestral and opera productions. His solo lute repertoire extends from the Italian *Cinquecento* to the music of Bach and Weiss. Founder and director of *Galatea*, he has also collaborated with *Aglaia*, *Aurora*, *La Cetra*, *Ensemble Concerto*, *Nova Ars Cantandi*, *Pacific Baroque*, *La Risonanza*, etc. His CDs have been well received, earning recognition such as “Disque du Mois” of *Répertoire*, 5 *Diapason*, 5 stars of *Goldberg*, “La Scelta” of *Amadeus*, etc. Since 1981 Mr. Beier has taught lute, continuo and ensemble at the *Scuole Civiche di Milano*. He is a founding member of the Italian Lute Society, and is a consulting editor of the *Lute Society of America Journal*.

For more information, photos and audio clips and reviews, see: [www.musico.it/lute](http://www.musico.it/lute)

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## Discography

### Lute solo and lute-songs

- 1988 **Michelagnolo Galilei**  
*Sonate da Il Primo Libro d'Intavolatura di liuto (1620)* (1<sup>st</sup> ed. Nuova Era. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. magnatune.com)
- 1990 **Simone Molinaro**  
*Intavolatura di liuto Libro Primo* (1<sup>st</sup> ed. Nuova Era. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. magnatune.com)
- 1992 **Alessandro Piccinini**  
*Intavolatura di Liuto Libro Primo* (1<sup>st</sup> ed. Nuova Era. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. magnatune.com)
- 1994 **Laurencinus Romanus**  
*Il Cavaliere del Liuto* (1<sup>st</sup> ed. Stradivarius STR 33447, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. magnatune.com)
- 1996 **Adam Falckenhagen, Silvius Leopold Weiss**  
*Works for Lute* (Stradivarius STR 33448)
- 1998 **Johann Sebastian Bach**  
*Works for Lute*, volume 1 (Stradivarius STR 33468)
- 1999 **Francesco da Milano**  
*Intavolatura da Leuto (c. 1530)* (Stradivarius STR 33515)
- 2000 **Johann Sebastian Bach**  
*Works for Lute*, volume 2 (Stradivarius STR 33469)
- 2003 **Giovanni Antonio Terzi**  
*Il Secondo Libro di intavolatura di liuto (1599)* with **Craig Marchitelli** (Stradivarius STR 33590)
- 2005 **Sylvius Leopold Weiss**  
*L'Esprit Italienne* (Stradivarius STR 33731)
- 2007 **Francesco da Milano, Perino Fiorentino**  
*Quanta Beltà* (Stradivarius STR 33787)
- 2011 **Esaias Reusner**  
*Delitiae Testudinis* volume 1 (Stradivarius STR 33867)
- 2013 **John Danyel**  
*Like as the lute delights* with **Michael Chance** (Stradivarius STR 33903)
- 2014 **Esaias Reusner**  
*Delitiae Testudinis* volume 2 (Stradivarius STR 33994)
- 2015 **John Dowland**  
*In Darkness* with **Michael Chance** (Stradivarius STR 33867)

## *Galatea*

- 1995 **Biagio Marini**  
*Allegrezza del Nuovo Maggio* (Emanuela Galli) (Stradivarius STR 33446)
- 1998 **Barbara Strozzi**  
*Diporti di Euterpe* (Emanuela Galli) (1<sup>st</sup> ed. Stradivarius STR 33487, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. magnatune.com)
- 2000 **Biagio Marini**  
*Curiose Invenzioni dall'Opera Ottava* (Monica Huggett) (Stradivarius STR 33549)
- 2002 **Giovanni Battista Buonamente**  
*Balli, Sonate & Canzoni* (Monica Huggett, Bruce Dickey) (Stradivarius STR 33603)
- 2009 **Bovicelli, Maschera, Mainerio, R. & F. Rognoni, Virgilliano, Bassano, de Selma, Dowland**  
*Con Gratia et Maniera* (Michael Chance, Monica Huggett, Bruce Dickey) (Stradivarius STR 33822)