

Her Way

Voices of female composers

Somewhere between the courts of Versailles, the salons of Paris and the convents of northern Italy, we discover women who against every social convention of their time, wrote music.

In a concert full of arrangements for recorder, cello and theorbo, the ensemble will take the audience on a journey through the stories and music of these remarkable composers. The program is built in a circular form, a shape that resonates with the feminine nature. Through opening and closing with variations on the familiar period melody "Une jeune fillette" ("A young girl."), We ask: Who were these incredible women?

Our journey begins with Julie Pinel, a fascinating figure in 18th-century French music - a composer, poet, and harpsichord teacher who carved out a unique space for the female voice in a male-dominated society. Pinel operated within a sophisticated network of aristocratic patronage, specifically serving the Prince de Soubise, while establishing herself as a professional teacher and poet. This program will feature many songs from her most significant work, published in 1737: *Nouveau recueil d'airs sérieux et à boire*. This collection is exceptional not only for its musical merit but for Pinel's rare claim of authorship for the majority of the poetry she set to music.

From the atmosphere of the French salons, we move to a figure whose greatness was recognized in her own lifetime: Elisabeth Jacquet de La Guerre, celebrated as a prodigy of extraordinary imagination. She became the first woman in France to publish widely across multiple genres, forged an international reputation, and boldly pursued large-scale forms few women had attempted before. Though she was denied university-level education due to her gender, she maintained royal protection and hosted influential concerts in her own home. Her career was a unique triumph of talent over the systemic barriers of her time, as she successfully competed with, and often surpassed her male contemporaries.

At the peak of our arch we encounter perhaps the most prolific of all: Suor Isabella Leonarda (1620–1704). Born into a noble family, she joined the Ursuline Convent in Novara at the age of 16, where she became Mother Superior and director of music. Leonarda composed nearly 200 works: Masses, motets and instrumental pieces. Her sonatas, which one of them will be played, are the first sonatas published by a female composer. While her music was well known locally in Italy, her reputation did not extend internationally, unlike contemporaries such as Arcangelo Corelli, which raises the question: what would the Baroque repertoire look like today, had women been free to publish and build musical careers on equal footing with their male counterparts.

As we go back through a mosaic of songs and sonata movements of these women, we return at last to where we began -to "Une jeune fillette". Having traveled through the music of these three incredible women, we have given them perhaps the recognition they deserve and that they should have received in their time.

Programme *Her way*

Alessandro Piccinini (1566-1638)

Partite variate sopra quest'aria francese detta l'Alemana ,*Une jeune fillette*' (1623)

Julie Pinel (1710-1737)

Songs from „*Nouveau Recueil d'Airs Sérieux et à Boire*“ (1737) (arranged for the ensemble)

“Echos indiscrets taisez vous”

“Sombres lieux obscures forêts”

“Fuyons la grandeur souveraine”

Elisabeth-Claude Jacquet de La Guerre (1665-1729)

Sonata No. 1 in d minor from „*Sonates pour le Violon et pour le Clavecin*“ (1707)

I. Prelude

II. Presto

III. Adagio

IV. Presto

Isabella Leonarda (1620-1704)

Sonata Duodecima a Violino solo, Op. 16

Elisabeth-Claude Jacquet de La Guerre

Sonata No. 1 in d minor

V. Presto

Julie Pinel

from „*Nouveau Recueil d'Airs Sérieux et à Boire*“ (1737) (arranged for the ensemble)

Après m'avoir formé

Elisabeth-Claude Jacquet de La Guerre

Sonata No. 1 in d minor

VI. Presto

Julie Pinel

from „*Nouveau Recueil d'Airs Sérieux et à Boire*“ (1737) (arranged for the ensemble)

Musette pour un berger

Musette pour une bergère

Elisabeth-Claude Jacquet de La Guerre

Sonata No. 1 in d minor

VII. Aria

Phillipe Friedrich Böddecker (1615-1683)

Sonata sopra La Monica ,*Une jeune fillette*'