

LES NOUVEAUX CARACTÈRES



LEÇONS DE TÉNÈBRES

François Couperin 1668-1733

"Leçons de Ténèbres is undoubtedly one of the most spiritual and intimate works of François Couperin. In French music of the 18th century, they are a gem, pure emotion where two voices unite in sumptuous vocalizations"
Sébastien d'Hérin - chef d'orchestre

Created for Holy Week in the 18th century, Leçons de Ténèbres are intended to prepare the faithful for Easter. From the texts of the Lamentations by Jeremiah of the Old Testament, they are true exhortations to repentance and meditation. In the Christian liturgy, they symbolize the loneliness of Christ at the time of his suffering.

François Couperin created his Leçons de Ténèbres in 1714 at the Abbey of Longchamp, which became a sacred, famous work that was quickly defined as the quintessence of baroque music for soprano voices. Among Couperin's three lessons, two call for a single voice; the third, written for two voices, is recognized by musicologists as one of the peaks of the vocal art of the baroque period.

The complete program includes the temporary composer André Campra's *Quam Dilecta* as well as *La Pompe Funèbre*, both through the lens of François Couperin, as pieces for harpsichord as well as a symphony for viola by Louis Couperin, his uncle. "Les Leçons de Ténèbres" are thus placed in the context of their time, surrounded by the works of the close contemporaries of their author.

Like the tradition of the Tenebrae, during which candles were extinguished one after the other as the first rays of dawn were appearing, symbolizing the darkness that covered the earth when Jesus died on the cross, Sébastien d'Hérin directs this work with the idea of bringing it to life in the night in order to little by little step out of the darkness.

PROGRAM

François Couperin

Leçons de Ténèbres for Holy Wednesday

André Campra *Quam Dilecta*

Louis Couperin *Pieces for harpsichord and symphony for viol*

François Couperin *La Pompe Funèbre*

Musical direction, harpsichord & organ Sébastien d'Hérin

Soprano Caroline Mutel & **Mezzo soprano** Karine Deshayes (depending on date)

Cello Hagar Hanana

Viola da gamba Martin Bauer

Optional violin Jasmine Eudeline

5 desks, 2 piano benches

Orchestra warm-up 1h30

Pitch 415

1/5-comma meantone temperament