



Report of the Clavichord Day in Aigle on 16 October 2021

A small number of enthusiasts and interested parties gathered on Saturday, October 16, 2021, around the clavichord in the music school of Aigle, which its foundation council had graciously allowed to be used for the occasion. Through the diversity of the clavichords exhibited and played, the public could form a precise and complete picture of the possibilities and to expand its knowledge of the instrument (cf. List of the instruments exhibited). In addition, the exchange between amateur and experienced musicians on the one hand and instrument makers on the other hand was rich.

The day began with a presentation of instruments by Michel Bignens, who outlined the complete panorama of the history of the clavichord, addressing both connoisseurs and novices. Adrien Pièce then performed several works on the clavichords after Praetorius and Pisarenensis. Among others, he performed Toccatas and variations on various Renaissance standards by Frescobaldi and Sweelinck (whose 400th anniversary of death was celebrated on this day). The rest of the programme featured improvisations on various ostinato basses of the same provenance.

The concert was a perfect illustration of the presentation that Michel Bignens had given earlier. This was followed by instrumental workshops for clavichord novices, during which some piano and organ students were able to explore the specific characteristics of the instrument. The exchange was fruitful.

In the afternoon, the programme was centred around a presentation by Ambrosius Pfaff on his Clavichord-Pantaleon, which Norberto Brogginì played during the final concert. The audience - which was limited to connoisseurs - appreciated this moment of discovery and exchange between making and playing, and made the practitioners of the latter aware, once again, of the extent of the influence of technical developments in instrument making on musical production.

The day ended with a concert by Norberto Brogginì, who made the Pfaff clavichord-Pantaleon register sound brilliant. The programme included works well known to clavichord connoisseurs by Beethoven, Mozart, Carl-Philipp-Emmanuel Bach. A very nice moment enjoyed by everyone present.

Samuel Cosandey, SSC-SCG

The five main protagonists



Michel Bignens in his overview of the early clavichord from the 15th to the 18th century



Ambrosius Pfaff demonstrates the Pantaleon-Clavichord made by him



Adrien Pièce during the morning session dedicated to the music of the early period



Norberto Brogginì during his performance at the end of the day dedicated to J.S. Bach and W.A. Mozart



Samuel Cosandey during the Workshop



An extract from a multitude of instruments on display



Clavichord according to M. Prätorius, Syntagma Musicum 1619, copy made by: Martin Kather, Hamburg



Clavichord according to M. Prätorius, copy made by: Yannik van Hove, Le Brassus



Clavichord according to Pisarenis, copy made by : Yannik van Hove, Le Brassus



Clavichord from 18th Vienna, anonymous, copy made by Pierre Cosandey, Bex



Clavicorde -Pantaleon, copy made by: Ambrosius Pfaff, Locarno



Historical clavichord, anonymous, probably from a monastery in the Alps



Anonymous clavichord (Tosi, 1568?), copy made by: Nicolas Macheret 1990, revised by Stéphane Treilhou, 2019



Clavichord after J.H. Silbermann, 1775, GNM Nuremberg, copy made by: Pierre Cosandey, Bex