

## French Baroque Music

**Start date** Friday 1 July 2022**End date** Sunday 3 July 2022**Venue** Madingley Hall  
Madingley  
Cambridge  
CB23 8AQ**Tutor** Dr David Ponsford**Course code** 2122NRX093**Director of Programmes**

Sarah Ormrod

**For further information**[inteng@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:inteng@ice.cam.ac.uk)

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### Tutor biography

**Dr David Ponsford MA, PhD, FRCO, ARCM** is both a scholar and a professional organist and harpsichordist, and is an authority on music of the 17th and 18th centuries. An exhibitioner at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, he studied organ with Peter Hurford, Lionel Rogg and Piet Kee, and harpsichord with Kenneth Gilbert and Gustav Leonhardt. He was awarded a PhD at Cardiff University where he was Associate Lecturer in Performance Practice as well as Conductor of Cardiff University Chamber Orchestra. In September 2021, he was appointed a professor at the Royal Academy of Music, London. His edition of Biber's *Mystery Sonatas* was published by Ut Orpheus, Bologna, in 2007, and his book 'French Organ music in the Reign of Louis XIV' was published by Cambridge University Press in 2011 (paperback edition, 2016). In 2020 his edition of Nicolas de Grigny's *Premier livre d'orgue* was published by Ut Orpheus, Bologna, and he has recently been commissioned to write three pedagogical volumes for Wayne Leupold Editions, North Carolina. In association with Nimbus Records, he has made seven recordings of French Baroque organ repertoire on historical French organs. In teaching and performing, he aims to combine executant skill with intellectual understanding, to bring the music alive with authority and meaning.

## Course Programme:

### Friday

Please plan to arrive between 16:30 and 18:30. You can meet other course members in the Terrace Bar which opens at 18:15. Tea and Coffee making facilities are available in the study bedrooms.

19:00 Dinner

**20:30 – 22:00** **Introduction:** French musical culture at the time of Louis XIV; musical organisations at Versailles; the importance of dance; the successive waves of enthusiasm and rejection of Italian music; the literary battles between French and Italian styles; the importance of performance practices; the pivotal role of François Couperin.

22:00 Terrace Bar open for informal discussion

### Saturday

08:00 Breakfast (for residents only)

**09:00 – 10:30** **François Couperin:** his concept of the 'Perfection of Music', based upon a mixture of French and Italian styles, illustrated by *L'Apothéose de Lully*.

10:30 Coffee

**11:00 – 12:30** **French performance practice:** the mysteries of *notes inégales*; the contrasts with Italian music; French and Italian styles in the music of Henry Purcell and JS Bach.

12:30 Free time

13:00 Lunch

14:00 Free time

16:00 Tea

**16:30 – 18:00** **Harpsichords and organs:** instruments; music by Louis Couperin, François Couperin, Louis Marchand, Louis-Nicolas Clérambault.

19:00 Dinner

**20:30 – 22:00** **Harpsichord recital:** Louis Couperin, JS Bach, François Couperin

22:00 Terrace Bar open for informal discussion

### Sunday

08:00 Breakfast (for residents only)

**09:00 – 10:30** **Michel-Richard de Lalande:** music for the Chapelle Royale at Versailles.

10:30 Coffee

**11:00 – 12:30** **Nicolas de Grigny:** the greatest of the organ composers; his organ mass (1699) and the copies of it made by JG Walther and JS Bach; challenges of creating an edition of the music.

12:45 Lunch

**The course will disperse after lunch**

## Course syllabus

### Aims:

The course will allow you to:

1. gain an insight into the extraordinary cultural life and multifarious musical genres that were cultivated during the reign of Louis XIV
2. understand French styles, performance practices and the influence of Italian music during the period
3. appreciate the qualities, the importance and the characteristics of French composers such as Louis Couperin, François Couperin, Lalande, Charpentier and de Grigny, and to recognise their importance and influence on such composers as Henry Purcell in England and JS Bach in Germany

### Content:

The focus of this course will be French Baroque music during the reign of Louis XIV. Through architecture, sculpture, painting, landscape gardening, as well as wars, Louis XIV was intent on establishing hegemony in Europe. Music was promoted so as to be included in this political programme, both in compositions, publications and performances. The music at Versailles was highly organised: *Musique de chambre*, *de la chapelle*, and *pour le grande écurie*. We will study their organisation, functions, and some of the music written for them. Performance practice of French music in this period was highly stylised and unique to France. This will be studied in detail so that course members will be able to grasp some of the issues that have frustrated both performers and scholars in modern times. Repertory to be studied: chamber music by François Couperin - *L'apothéose de Lulli*, choral music by Charpentier and Lalande, harpsichord music by Louis Couperin, François Couperin and Rameau, and the finest of all the organ composers – Nicolas de Grigny. Also to be considered will be the influence of Parisian musical publications in the rest of Europe, particularly England and Germany. The course will include a recital of French and German harpsichord music consisting of works by Louis Couperin, JS Bach and François Couperin.

### Presentation of the course:

1. Lectures introducing the various topics and particular works
2. Listening to CD recordings
3. Analysis of scores
4. Class discussion
5. A live concert of harpsichord music

**As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:**

1. Know about the musical institutions and organisation of music at Versailles.
2. Know about French Baroque organ, harpsichord, chamber and sacred music repertoires through analysis of particular pieces.
3. Understand French performance practices.
4. Understand the influence of Italian music in Paris, and the use of these styles in François Couperin's chamber and organ music.
5. Appreciate the scope, breadth, as well as the refined styles of French Baroque music, and the importance of French Baroque musical styles in England and Germany.

## Reading and resources list

Listed below are a number of texts that might be of interest for future reference, but do not need to be bought (or consulted) for the course.

Author	Title	Publisher and date
Anthony, James R.	<i>French Baroque Music</i>	Amadeus Press, 1997
Tunley, David	<i>François Couperin and 'The perfection of Music'</i>	Ashgate, 2004
Ponsford, David	<i>French organ music in the reign of Louis XIV</i>	Cambridge University Press, 2011/2016