

L'Achéron



François Joubert-Caillet

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In Greek mythology Acheron is the river that Orpheus crossed to rescue Eurydice from the underworld. As its name implies, L'Achéron wants to open a path between two apparently opposed worlds: that of the living and that of the dead, the past and the present, idealism and reality.

Created in 2009 by François Joubert-Caillet, L'Achéron is made up of a young generation of musicians from very varied backgrounds, all of them having studied in some of the best known schools for ancient music (Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, the Paris and Lyon National Conservatories, the Royal Music Conservatories of Brussels and The Hague, etc.). Some of these musicians have other artistic talents : acting, theatre direction, contemporary as well as renaissance and baroque dancing, writing, drawing, improvisation, puppeteering, instrument making and sound mixing, make up the range of passions present in the group.



L'Achéron seeks to strengthen ties between the musicians and the public by making ancient music more accessible, without denaturing it but to the contrary, by exploring the variety of musical instruments and genres of the renaissance and baroque periods. By trying to render the many nuances of this rich and vibrant music, L'Achéron proposes a journey through time and the senses where the flavours of the past are brought to life. Initially L'Achéron was a viola da gamba consort and has worked since 2013 in collaboration with the instrument maker Arnaud Giral on the construction of a typically English consort. Until now, five instruments have been brought to life, giving the consort a unique cohesion and harmonic depth. A virginals and a positive organ will join them soon...

L'Achéron regularly works with artists from other spheres : in *L'Orgue du Sultan*, it collaborated with the ensemble Sultan Veled in a meeting between elizabethan and ottoman musics, the *Lachrimæ Lyræ* with the master of greek lyra Sokratis Sinopoulos ; it will also take part in the creation of *Gilgamesh Epopee* from Zad Moutaka and in a album of electronic music with DJ Marc Romboy and Tamar Halperin.

L'Achéron is based in Nancy (France). It's regularly invited to perform in various festivals and musical seasons in Europe such as Saintes, Sablé and Royaumont Festivals, Auditorium du Louvre, Arsenal de Metz, Tage Alter Musik Regensburg, Festival Bach de Lausanne, Bruges' Concertgebouw, Oude Muziek Utrecht, Warsaw Philharmonie, etc.

L'Achéron records for Ricercar – Outhere and has released so far *The Fruit of Love* devoted to Anthony Holborne, the *Ludi Musici* by Samuel Scheidt (winner of the Diapason d'Or), Johann Caspar Kerll's *Requiem* with the ensemble Vox Luminis, *Ouvertures* by Johann Bernhard Bach (Echo Klassik), *Pièces Favorites* by Marin Marais from whom François Joubert-Caillet started to record the integrality of the *Pièces de Virole* (the *1st Book* has been awarded by a Diapason d'Or and a Choc de Classica). Last release in october 2017 : *Fancies for the viols* by Orlando Gibbons.



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After studying the recorder, piano and double bass, François Joubert-Caillet studied the viola da gamba with Paolo Pandolfo at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, where he equally studied baroque improvisation with Rudolf Lutz. He was awarded First Prize as well as the Public's Award at the Bruges International Chamber Music competition and teaches at Nancy's Conservatoire.

François Joubert-Caillet has played with numerous formations with whom he has recorded for the labels Ricercar, Harmonia Mundi, Ambronay, K617, ZigZag Territoires, Arcana, Winter&Winter, Aparté, Glossa, Sony, Naïve, etc.

François Joubert-Caillet leads L'Achéron with which he performs in several formations, in particular the viol consort. His CDs *Le Nymphé di Rheno* (Johannes Schenck) in duo with Wieland Kuijken, *The Fruit of Love* (Anthony Holborne), the *Ludi Musici* (Samuel Scheidt) and the *Ouvertures* Johann Bernhard Bach are released by Ricercar - Outhere.

Since the autumn of 2014, François Joubert-Caillet has begun recording the complete works of Marin Marais *Pièces de Virole* for Ricercar : this huge project (five books, over 600 pieces, about 20 CD's), saw the light in 2016 with a CD of *Pièces Favorites*, the *1st Book* has been released in the spring 2017 (Diapason d'Or and Choc de Classica).

{DIVINE RAPTURES}

The apogee of English viola da gamba consort

The English viol consort experienced its' golden age at the beginning of the XVIIth century, a period when a spectacular amount of music was composed for this sort of ensemble. During these decades an art of playing the viol consort developed in tandem with musical and instrumental practices, described in particular by Thomas Mace in his *Musik's Monument* (1676): he describes these musical moments with passion and provides us with a precious source of information.

Since 2012 L'Achéron, in collaboration with the instrument maker Arnaud Giral (Bristol, UK), has endeavoured to create the most authentic possible viol consort by precisely following the indications given by Thomas Mace and comparing them with other authors of the time. Over a period of five years the instrument maker has provided L'Achéron with a new viol every year, assiduously taking into account accumulated musicological references. As a result the consort has gradually created a unique sound and identity; it can be considered a world first.



One of the technical characteristics of these viola da gamba is their proportions: the smallest – the treble – measures half the size of the bass while the tenor measures two thirds. Similarly to organ pipes these instruments are thus “harmonised”, which gives the ensemble exceptional homogeneity, resonance, harmonics and strength, enabling a completely new approach to the music.

Thomas Mace's descriptions concern not only technical aspects but also playing techniques, and he describes the concert programmes given at the time. He names the composers, the type of music – and sometimes which in particular – and the accompaniment by harmonic instruments such as the organ: the latter, much as the virginal, has specifics in England that give it a very different sound than those of its continental counterparts.

2018 has seen the birth in the workshops of Jean-François Brun (Paris) and Dominic Gwynn (Nottinghamshire, UK) of a typically English virginal and organ, for accompanying L'Achéron's viols. This programme brings them together to play the “divine raptures” (in Thomas Mace's terms) that this rare ensemble and sublime repertoire produce.

8 musicians: 6 viols, consort-organ and virginals

Fantasias, Ayres and dances by Alfonso Ferrabosco, John Ward, Thomas Lupo, William White, Richard Dering, William Lawes, John Jenkins, Christopher Simpson, Giovanni Coperario & Claudio Monteverdi

L'Achéron

François Joubert-Caillet, treble viol & direction
Lucile Boulanger, treble viol
Andreas Linos, tenor viol
Marie-Suzanne de Loye, tenor viol
Myriam Rignol, bass viol
Sarah van Oudenove, bass viol
Yoann Moulin, virginals
Philippe Grisvard, organ

