



Newsletter

No 32 – OCTOBER 2015

Content:

In the pipeline

- > Festival Batta & Co
- > 18th Servais Concert
- > Four days with Servais
- > Servais 150/210

Looking back

- > Servais concert 6 June 2015
- > Servais in Chimay

In the showcase

- > Cd Tansman Cello Quartet

Concert Calendar



In the pipeline

Festival Batta & Co (6-8 November)

The Festival Batta & Co takes place in Maastricht between 6 and 8 November 2015. The compositions of the Maastricht cello composers Alexander Batta and Joseph Hollman constitute the main part of this festival. Both musicians also had close links with Brussels and the Belgian Cello School. So it is not surprising that on Sunday 8 November a work by Servais can be heard, performed by cellist Doris Hochscheid and pianist Frans Van Ruth, both of them the driving forces of the festival. Some more compositions are played, the scores of which are preserved in the Halle Servais Collection.

www.battaenco.nl

18th Servais Concert (14 November)

This 18th concert will be the festive conclusion of the festivities on the occasion of the 225th anniversary of the Halle wind orchestra. The “Jan Niklaaskoor” will perform Franz Schubert’s famous Ave Maria, Franz Servais, Emile Houssiau and Peter Benoit. Cellist Benjamin Glorieux will give a solo performance of the Fantaisie Caractéristique by François Servais, who was keenly involved in the local wind orchestra. At the end the “Jan Niklaaskoor” will appear on the stage together with the Bhag-ensemble and several soloists to perform Johann Sebastian Bach’s Magnificat. The setting of this festive concert is the Halle Sint-Martinus Basilica, the cradle of the celebrated orchestra.

Four days with Servais (7-10 April, 2016)

The Tansman cello quartet will visit Halle on the occasion of the second “Four-day Cello Festival with Servais” between 7th and 10th April. The four members, Marinela Doko, Fernando Lima, Didier Poskin and Karel Steylaerts will conduct master classes in the Servais Academy. The participants will give a performance during the final concert on Sunday afternoon. And those who would like to discover Halle as the town of Servais can join in a Servais walk. The detailed programme will be announced in due time. This four-day festival is an initiative of the Servais Society, cc ‘t Vondel and the Servais Academy.

Servais 150/210

Servais? Servais!

François Servais is regarded as one of the most prominent cellists of his age. With his cello he undertook concert tours all over Europe; he was very much concerned with the technical improvement of the instrument and left us an impressive body of romantic works. Even these days his compositions are practised worldwide, performed, recorded for cd and published. Servais was born in Halle on June 6th 1807, where he also died on November 26th 1866. So we commemorate the 150th anniversary of his death in 2016, and the 210th anniversary of his birth in 2017. This is no doubt an excellent opportunity for paying tribute to him.

Perhaps you are planning to do something yourselves to honour this great artist. We would like to help you with some advice and assistance for the promotion of your activities. Feel free to get in touch with us, even if your plan is still in an initial stage. Or perhaps you feel like contributing to one of our initiatives mentioned below?

November 26th 2016: concerts in honour of Servais

All cellists are welcome in Halle on Saturday November 26th 2016 to pay tribute to Servais, exactly 150 years after his death. In the morning (former) students of the Belgian Conservatories are given an opportunity to perform, preferably in an ensemble, while we can listen to performances given by the teachers themselves in the afternoon. More details can be found on the website under 'Activities'.

May–June 2017: Queen Elisabeth Competition

For the very first time the famous Queen Elisabeth Competition will be organized for the cello, in Brussels between May 8th and June 3rd 2017. In this context the Servais Society, together with the Fondation Eric Feldbusch and the EKHO, sets up an exhibition featuring the Belgian Cello School. We would also like to focus on the present-day generation of cellists, so we are calling on all of them to send in their CV and a photo, preferably with a cello. More details can be found on the website under 'Activities'.

Looking back

Servais concert 6 June 2015

Once again the famous Finnish cellist Seeli Toivio was our guest in Halle, this time accompanied by the Italian pianist Nazareno Ferrugio. They paid tribute to Servais, whose 208th anniversary was celebrated on that very day. The concert opened with a contemplative piece: *Spiegel im Spiegel* by Alvo Pärt. After the Belgian première of Sergio Ganzini's *Tema e Variazioni* the first cello sonata by Camille Saint-Saëns concluded the first half of the programme. That evening Franz Liszt's *Liebestraum* was undoubtedly a must. Seeli had already played that work on the occasion of the anniversary concert to celebrate '200 years of Servais' eight years ago. The YouTube video of that performance has already seduced two million viewers. The remaining part of the concert was devoted to compositions by Servais himself. The *Fantaisie sur des airs scandinaves*, which could be heard for the very first time for decades, was quite a revelation. Servais may have composed this work after his visit to Denmark and Sweden in 1862. Better known is his *Fantaisie sur la Fille du Régiment*, which was performed by Seeli with much bravura. The programme also featured one of the *Etudes*, the *Marche pour la Procession de Hal*. The musicians surprised their audience with an extra: they were given an opportunity to admire an electric cello. As a fully-fledged pop artist Seeli performed *The Swan* by Saint-Saëns and an Aria by Bach in her own specific style.



Photos: Wim Francois



Servais in Chimay

Only two Belgian castles can boast a theatre 'intra muros': the Royal Palace in Laken (Brussels) and the castle of the princes of Chimay in the province of Hainaut near the French border. This can seat some 170 people and has already hosted numerous artists since 1863. On 27 June 2015 the theatre was full to bursting for a performance of *La Cheville Affolée*, which consists of eight cello masters of the Conservatoire Royal de Bruxelles. Princess Elisabeth de Chimay was watching attentively from her lodge. The ensemble played works by two composers who used to have historic links with the princely family: Wagner and Servais.

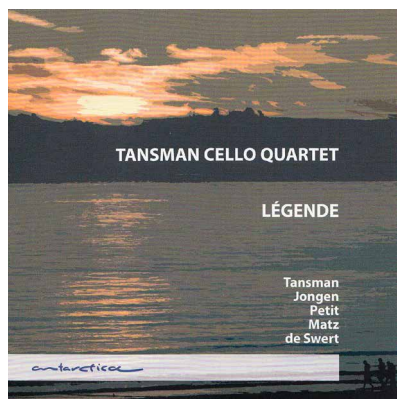


Wagner's oeuvre was very much appreciated by the Chimay family. Being great admirers of his work, they regularly attended performances in Chimay, Brussels, Paris or Bayreuth from the 1850's.

The contacts of Servais with the princes probably go back to the beginning of his career, first when he was a student and then a teacher at the Ecole Royale de Musique. François-Joseph de Riquet, the 16th prince of Chimay, was a member of the board of that institute. Later on Servais got to know his grandson, Joseph II de Riquet. Servais' son was good friends with prince Pierre de Caraman, who was his cello student. After Joseph's death Pierre was given the Stradivarius which both François and Joseph had played on.

In the showcase

Cd Tansman Cello Quartet



The Tansman Cello Quartet was founded in Briançon, France during the annual cello festival 'Violoncelles en folie'. Every year the members of the Quartet, Didier Poskin, Karel Steylaerts, Fernando Lima de Albuquerque and Marinela Doko, organize a ten-day

masterclass, while they also make music together. Their first cd was released on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the festival. The Tansman Quartet plays some magnificent pieces for four cellos worth listening to, such as the *Deux pièces pour quatuor de violoncelles* opus 89 by Joseph Jongen, or the *Suite pour quatre violoncelles* by Pierre Petit. As a matter of course, also Alexandre Tansman, who gave his name to the ensemble, is markedly present. The last item on the cd is *Pensée Elégiaque* by Jules de Swert, a student of François Servais. His elegy is dedicated to Joseph Servais.

Cd 'Légende – Tansman Cello Quartet', Antarctica, 2015.
www.antarctica-records.eu

Concert agenda

November 6-8, 2015 – Festival 'Batta & Co'

Doris Hochscheid, cello & Frans van Ruth, piano
 Maastricht, Theater aan 't Vrijthof

www.battaenco.nl

November 14, 2015 – 18th Servais Concert, '225 jaar Halse Harmonie'

Jan Niklaaskoor, Bhagensemble & Benjamin Glorieux (cello)
 Work by Servais: Fantaisie Caractéristique sur deux célèbres romances de Lafont, opus 8
 Halle, Basilica, 8 PM

www.servais-vzw.org

April 7-10, 2016 – Four Days with Servais

Masterclasses with the Tansman Cello Quartet
 Halle, Servaisacademie

www.servais-vzw.org

May 6-7, 2016 – Cello Competition Edmond Baert

Sint-Pieters-Woluwe, Music Academy

<https://academiewsp.wordpress.com/concours-de-violoncelle/>

Are you going to perform a composition by Servais in the near future or do you know about a performance; Please let us know!

Most recent info: www.servais-vzw.org

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 Servais Society, 2015

