



Newsletter

No. 31 – APRIL 2015

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In the pipeline

17th Servais Concert Seeli Toivio and Nazareno Ferruggio

The Finnish cellist Seeli Toivio has been our guest in Halle more than once before. On June 6th she is coming to our town, this time together with the Italian pianist Nazareno Ferruggio. Both musicians have already given numerous successful performances all over the world. The duo will perform the best pieces from the chamber music repertory of Franz Liszt, Camille Saint-Saëns and Arvo Pärt. And of course the work of the Halle cellist-composer Servais, whose 208th birthday we shall be celebrating this year, will also feature in the programme.



Practical information:

Saturday June 6, 2015 at 8 p.m.

Council Chamber of the Halle New Town Hall

Tickets (€ 14) are available at the cc 't Vondel, Possozplein 40,

1500 Halle, (+32)(0)2 365 98 27 or online : www.vondel.be.

Members of the Servais Society can buy two tickets at € 12 via the Servais Society.

Any questions and queries should be addressed to the Servais Society.

18th Servais Concert with the Jan Niklaaskoor, the Bhag-ensemble and Benjamin Glorieux

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 Basilica, the cradle of the celebrated orchestra.

Looking back

Festival VioloncellenSeine

From December 12th to 14th the third edition of the festival VioloncellenSeine took place at the Paris Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional. Also this year the Association Française du Violoncelle organized a cello competition, a competition for cello makers, masterclasses and concerts. As a matter of course, the Servais Society was present with a stand which succeeded in attracting a lot of inquisitive visitors interested in Servais. On Sunday afternoon December 14th Peter François gave a presentation on Servais' life and work, followed by a performance by Didier Poskin and Cédric Lorel of two pieces by Servais: *Souvenir de Spa* and the *Fantaisie Burlesque ou Le Carnaval de Venise*.

www.violoncellenseine.fr



Opening of the festival year 'The Halle wind orchestra, 225 years'

The festival year celebrating the 225th anniversary of the Halle wind orchestra opened with a festive meeting in the Halle town hall. This was also an occasion to present the book 'Servais! fils de l'Harmonie'. On February 7th the Halle wind orchestra performed the première of Servais' *Souvenir de Spa* at the cultural centre in a version duly arranged for a wind orchestra performance by Ward Opsteyn.



Miscellaneous news

» den AST opened its doors on March 1st as the new home basis for the Halle Museum and the city archives. Also music is given its due place with displayed compositions dedicated to Our Lady of Halle by François and Franz Servais, Emile Houssiau, Charles Dekoster, Remi Ghesquière and some others.

www.denasthalle.be

» Peter François gave a talk on Servais at the Royal Conservatory in the Hague on January 8th 2015. His listeners were students who were attending the 'Master's Cycle' conducted by Martin Prchal. They are presented with practical cases from the research field, while they are also given an opportunity to present their personal research.

» For the very first time there will be a Queen Elisabeth Competition for cello in 2017. The news travelled pretty fast in the cello world. This prestigious competition will undoubtedly contribute to the ever increasing popularity of this instrument. Naturally, our society will keep you informed.

» The second 'Four Day Cello Event with Servais' will take place at the Servais Academy between April 7th and 10th 2016. More information will be shortly available.

» On March 10th the cello octet 'La cheville affolée' gave their first performance in Brussels. This ensemble consists of cello teachers of the Royal Brussels Conservatory and is named after the Brussels cellists association from the 1930's and 40's. They will be playing in the summer season in Chimay (June 27th), Hastière (August 21st), Pairi Daiza, an amusement park in the province of Hainaut

(September 24th, 25th and 26th) and Lasne (September 27th). In Chimay, Hastière and Lasne the programme also features Servais' *Souvenir de Spa*.

In the showcase

Peter François, Servais! fils de l'harmonie.

On the occasion of the 225th anniversary of the Halle wind orchestra Peter François describes the close link between the orchestra and the Servais family. The Halle cellist François Servais is one of the most prominent virtuosi of the 19th century, who was appreciated for his artistic talents all over Europe. Yet, he always used to return to his native town. From his early youth till his death he had good contacts with



the Halle wind orchestra, presumably first as a musician and conductor, afterwards as an honorary member and a president. Also his father and sons were acquainted with the orchestra. The author, himself a historian and musicologist, drew on twelve years of research in the records and so was able to lay bare some fascinating and unknown facts.

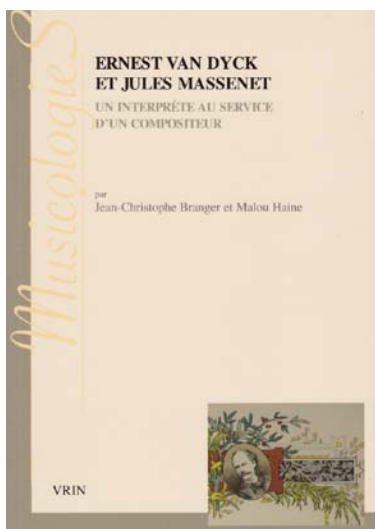
Actually the case of the Halle wind orchestra is also indirectly useful for the study of the history of the Belgian amateur music associations in general. In this context the book reveals the close contacts there were between the wind orchestra and the church orchestra, which was also the case in numerous other towns and parishes. Another finding concerns the cooperation between the band and the town authorities in Halle and other places as well. The numerous samples of 19th century concert programmes prove the repertoires and above all the concerts themselves to have been devised quite differently as compared with the present time. Particularly striking is the fact that a music association is an instance of collaboration of people – musicians, the conductor, the management and the audience, year after year.

Peter François, Servais! fils de l'harmonie. De familie Servais en de Halse Harmonie. Halle, Koninklijke Harmonie Sinte-Cecilia Halle, 2015 (178 p.), 141 illustrations.

Can be ordered through the Servais Society: 20 euros + shipping costs.

Jean-Christophe Branger & Malou Haine, *Ernest Van Dyck et Jules Massenet, un interprète au service d'un compositeur*

In 2014 a particularly interesting book appeared dealing with the relationship between the Belgian tenor Ernest Van Dyck (1861-1923) and the French composer Jules Massenet (1842-1912). The authors are Jean-Christophe Branger, who graduated as a Doctor of Musicology at the University Jean-Monnet of Saint-Etienne (Fr), and Malou Haine, also a Doctor of Musicology with a marked interest in music between 1750 and 1940.



Ernest Van Dyck was married to Augusta Servais, François Servais youngest daughter. He was a talented and very popular tenor, who travelled all over the world and was a prominent interpreter of Richard Wagner's operas. He was also the favourite tenor of Cosima Wagner, who became the utterly demanding leader of the "Bayreuther Festspiele" after the death of her husband Richard. Before Malou Haine had already written *Ernest Van Dyck, un ténor à Bayreuth. Suivi de la correspondance avec Cosima Wagner (Lyon, Symetrie, 2005)*.

In the first part of *Ernest Van Dyck et Jules Massenet* we learn that the link between Van Dyck and Massenet was initially a professional one, as a matter of course, which gradually developed into close friendship. This part also contains interesting biographical data about both men. So we can read that van Dyck was also a competent reviewer and that he was even the writer of the scenario of the ballet called *Carillon*. The second part consists of a collection of letters from various prominent people, all of them addressed to Ernest Van Dyck; very regrettably, there is no correspondence written by Van Dyck himself. In one of the enclosures we find the text of the ballet *Carillon*. The book is lavishly illustrated with photos and images of scores and some other documents.

Jean-Christophe Branger & Malou Haine, Ernest Van Dyck et Jules Massenet. Un interprète au service d'un compositeur. Paris, Vrin, 2014 (176 p.). www.vrin.fr, ISBN 978-2-7116-2547-5.

Calendar

June 6, 2015 – 17th Servaisconcert

Seeli Toivio (cello) & Nazareno Ferruccio (piano)
Work by Servais: to be determined.
Halle, New Town Hall, 8 PM

www.servais-vzw.org

June 27, 2015 – La cheville affolée

Cello-octet 'La cheville affolée' & Laure Delcampe (soprano)
Work by Servais: Souvenir de Spa (arr. Bernard Delire).
Chimay, Castle of Chimay, 7.30 PM

August 21, 2015 – Festival Eté Mosan

Cello-octet 'La cheville affolée' & Laure Delcampe (soprano)
Work by Servais: Souvenir de Spa (arr. Bernard Delire).
Hastière, Romaanse Abdijkerk

www.етemosan.be

September 27, 2015 – Festival Musical de Lasne

Cello-octet 'La cheville affolée' & Laure Delcampe (soprano)
Work by Servais: Souvenir de Spa (arr. Bernard Delire).
Lasne, 5 PM

www.lasnefestival.com

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

Jan Nikolaaskoor, 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

*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

Focusing on a new acquisition: a portrait of Servais by Charles Baugniet

Peter François

The Servais Society has recently acquired a framed portrait of François Servais from 1838 by Charles Baugniet. It bears the marks of a long history.

In 1838 the Halle cellist François Servais found himself at the beginning of an international career, which allowed him to develop into one of the most famous cello virtuosi in 19th century Europe. By that time he had already given successful performances in his country, in Paris, in London and the Netherlands. Servais was only thirty when Charles Baugniet made this portrait of the artist, sitting with two important attributes on either side: the cello on the right and a manuscript of a 'Concerto de violoncelle' on the left. From 1838 the drawing circulated as a lithograph and was included in the series 'Galerie de contemporains illustres'. This series, consisting of thirty lithographs, was brought out by the Société des Beaux-Arts in Brussels in 1839 together with accompanying biographical notes. Servais is flanked by the painters Horace Vernet and Jacques Joseph Eeckhout, the sculptors Eugène Simonis and Jean-Pierre Dantan and the musicians Charles-Auguste de Bériot, Henri Herz, Valentin Bender and Jules Godefroid.



Servais had already been portrayed several times before; one of the artists was Baugniet, who drew him for the periodical 'L'Artiste'. Baugniet's second litho got widely spread. The copy which has been acquired for the Servais Collection bears a dedication signed by Servais "à mon Père" in the bottom corner on the right. Father Jean-Baptist Servais had immersed his son in the world of music from early childhood.

He died unexpectedly on March 18th 1838 just a few days after he had received the lithograph.



This picture also bears another dedication on a piece of paper attached in the left-hand bottom corner, and is dated "Paris mai 1843"; it is a laudatory poem by Jules Lardin.

*que son génie ardent soit empreint de tristesse,
d'honneur ou de gaité, dans les mille et un tours
où se transforme sa souplesse
le naturel, le vrai, resplendissent sans cesse
brillant comme soleil, riches comme velours
plus étonnants encor qu'une incroyable adresse,
nouveau caméléon d'une bien rare espèce,
Il ne trompe jamais et vous ravit toujours.*

Paris. mai. 1843.

Lardin added the following comment: "Ce portrait portant pour étiquette à mon père m'a été donné par Servais après la mort de son père à qui il a appartenu".



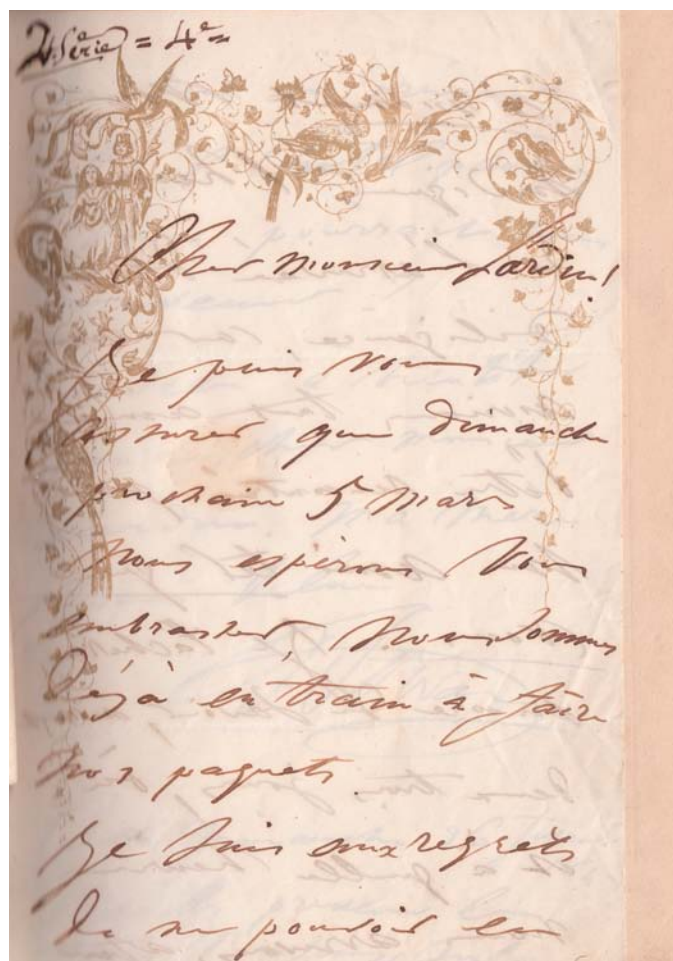
Jules Lardin was a Paris friend of Servais'. When Servais visited Paris in 1833-1834 and 1836 he had already acted as a kind of impresario. In the thirty years that followed Lardin always assisted Servais whenever he stayed in the French capital to give a performance. Lardin also visited Servais in Halle more than once. So he was present at Servais' return from Russia in 1842 and at the laying of the foundation stone of the Villa Servais on August 20th 1847. When they did not see one another they maintained a lively correspondence. In early 1843 Servais was back in Paris for the first time since 1836. On this occasion he performed on March 20th and on April 5th, 20th and 30th in the Salle Herz.

On the evening before Servais' departure on May 3rd 1843 Jules Lardin gave a banquet to honour the Halle cellist. Presumably this was the occasion for Lardin to put his laudatio to paper. He may have received the portrait during the musician's visit, unless he had already obtained it in July 1842, when Servais returned to Belgium after his second Russian trip.

Lardin attended Servais' funeral in Halle on November 29th 1866. Half a year later he had collected number of his texts about Servais in a booklet, to which he added a printed report about Servais' concerts in Paris during the winter season in 1847, as well as a few letters of Servais addressed to him. The collection also contains an "Inscription pour le portrait de François Servais", dated "Paris mai 1843", which exactly corresponds with the dedication on the portrait that we have recently been able to acquire.

Lardin distributed the booklets among a number of persons and organizations that had kept close relations with him or Servais. Thus far we know of five copies, directed to 1) the Halle "Koninklijke Koorkring Roland de Lattre", 2) the "Société royale de la Grande Harmonie d'Anvers", 3) François-Joseph Fétis, principal of the Royal Conservatory of Brussels, 4) "Lays" from Antwerp, probably Henry Leys, the well-known painter of this city, and finally 5) Henri Possoz, a Halle citizen and student of Servais, who had been very busy in the Antwerp music scene from the 1850's.¹

Jules Lardin died around 1873. It is still unknown who obtained the portrait afterwards. Several decades later it was part of the collection of the French cellist Maurice Maréchal (1892-1963). He was a famous soloist and was a music teacher at the Paris Conservatory. In February 2014 the Servais Society purchased the portret from the Paris violin maker Bernard Sabatier, who had been given it by Maréchal's heirs in 1975.



On February 28th 1843 Servais informed Jules Lardin about his departure for Paris. "Cher Monsieur Lardin! Je puis vous assurer que dimanche prochain 5 mars nous espérons vous embrasser. Nous sommes déjà en train à faire nos paquets. (...)"

© Servaiscollectie Halle

References

Various present-day sources.

Peter François, 'Ah! Le métier de donneur de concerts!' Adrien François Servais (1807-1866) als rondreizend cellovirtuoos. Halle, Servais Society, 2007.

Malou Haine, 'Musicien, mécène et imprésario. Les concerts du violoncelliste Adrien-François Servais et leur promotion par Jules Lardin'. In Hans Erich Bodeker, Patrice Veit & Michael Werner (red.). Le concert et son public. Mutations de la vie musicale en Europe de 1780 à 1914 (France, Allemagne, Angleterre). Paris, Editions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 2002, p. 93-119.

Aline Wachtelaer, Charles Bagniet, L'élégance du siècle, www.charlesbagniet.be.

Written information from Bernard Sabatier and Aline Wachtelaer.

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¹ The first two booklets are kept in the Halle Servais Collection, the third in the Belgian Royal Library, the fourth in the library of the Royal Conservatory in Antwerp, while the fifth belongs to a private collection.