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News

Recording release date: April 10, 2020

Harpsichordist Jory Vinikour Surveys Couperin Keyboard Suites on ‘L’Unique’ from Cedille Records April 10

Grammy-nominated artist plays three of the French Baroque master’s innovative ‘Ordres’

Chicago-born, French-trained harpsichordist Jory Vinikour plays groundbreaking works by François Couperin on his first album-length exploration of the French Baroque master’s innovative suites.

On *L’Unique: Harpsichord Music of François Couperin*, available April 10, 2020, the two-time Grammy Award nominee plays several of the composer’s suites — Couperin called them “Ordres” — combining traditional French Baroque dance movements with witty and atmospheric character pieces, essentially miniature tone poems for solo harpsichord (Cedille Records CDR 90000 194).

L’Unique showcases three suites that Vinikour finds especially captivating: Couperin’s Sixième (Sixth), Septième (Seventh), and Huitième (Eighth) Ordres. He calls them “remarkable for their harmonically driven melodic invention and atmospheric unity within each suite.”

His selection of suites comprises 26 movements in total, including the Huitième Ordre’s “Sarabande l’Unique,” from which the album takes its title.

Vinikour performs these on a harpsichord created for him in 2012 by England’s Tony Chinnery, modeled after an instrument by French builder Pascal Taskin (1723–1793). “Its rich sound is ideally suited to 18th-century French repertoire,” he says.

‘Shimmering, Kaleidoscopic’

Highlights include Couperin’s best-known piece today, the celebrated “Les Barricades Mystérieuses” from the Sixième Ordre, which England’s *The Guardian* calls “shimmering, kaleidoscopic and seductive, a sonic trompe l’oeil.”

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The compelling “Les Amusements” from the Septième Ordre is irresistibly sweet and melancholic. The set constitutes “one of the warmest, and undoubtedly one of the happiest, in Couperin’s opus,” according to the album’s liner notes by Julien Dubruque.

The Huitième Ordre offers masterful examples of established forms, culminating with a dramatic “Passacaille.” With its “theatrical contrasts” and “harmonic audacity,” the movement “is a masterpiece, not just of Couperin’s but of harpsichord literature in general,” Dubruque writes.

Recording Team

L’Unique was recorded by Grammy-nominated producer James Ginsburg and Grammy-nominated engineer Bill Maylone June 26–27, 2019, in the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts at the University of Chicago.

Jory Vinikour

Two-time Grammy Award-nominated harpsichordist Jory Vinikour studied in Paris with Huguette Dreyfus and Kenneth Gilbert on a Fulbright Scholarship. First Prizes in the International Harpsichord Competitions of Warsaw (1993) and the Prague Spring Festival (1994) brought him to the public’s attention. He has since appeared in festivals and on concert stages throughout much of the world.

His debut recording for Sono Luminus, *The Complete Harpsichord Works of Rameau*, was nominated in 2012 for a Grammy Award in the category of Best Classical Instrumental Solo, an honor also accorded his album *Toccatas: Modern American Music for Harpsichord* in 2014.

Vinikour’s 2019 Cedille album *20th Century Harpsichord Concertos* drew international acclaim. *Fanfare* hailed it as “a terrific new release.” *Classical Music Daily* (UK) found Vinikour’s playing “truly spellbinding,” while *Gramophone* applauded the “outstanding, superbly engineered performances.” *Classics Today* asserted, “This is surely one of the discs of the year,” while praising Vinikour’s talent for “selecting instruments that invariably suit the music, and sound terrific in their own right.”

His website is joryvinikour.com.

Cedille Records

Launched in November 1989, Grammy Award-winning Cedille Records (pronounced say-DEE) is dedicated to showcasing and promoting the most noteworthy classical artists in and from the Chicago area.

A highlight of Cedille’s 30th anniversary season, 2019–2020, is its first-ever Emerging Artist Competition. Individual performers and ensembles from the Chicago area are competing for the opportunity to make a recording produced by and released on the award-winning label. Semifinal

and final rounds of judging will take place during public performances by the contestants.

The audiophile-oriented label releases every new album in multiple formats — physical CD, 96 kHz , 24-bit, studio-quality FLAC download, and 320 Kbps MP3 download — and on major streaming services.

An independent nonprofit enterprise, Cedille Records is the label of Cedille Chicago, NFP. Sales of physical CDs and digital downloads and streams cover only a small percentage of the label's costs. Tax-deductible donations from individual music-lovers and grants from charitable organizations account for most of its revenue.

Cedille's headquarters are at 1205 W. Balmoral Ave., Chicago, IL 60640; call (773) 989-2515; email: info@cedillerecords.org. Website: cedillerecords.org.

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L'Unique: Harpsichord Music of François Couperin
Jory Vinikour, harpsichord
Cedille Records CDR 90000 194

François Couperin:
Sixième Ordre (23:11)
Septième Ordre (26:11)
Huitième Ordre (28:56)