

FRANÇOIS COUPERIN'S *NEUVIÈME CONCERT*, "RITRATTO DELL' AMORE":

A PERFORMANCE GUIDE AND EDITION FOR FLUTE AND KEYBOARD

Ieng Wai Wong, B.M., M.M.

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APPROVED:

Terri Sundberg, Co-Major Professor

James Scott, Co-Major Professor

Don Taylor, Committee Member

John Holt, Chair of the Division of
Instrumental Studies

Jaymee Haefner, Director of Graduate Studies
in the College of Music

John Richmond, Dean of the College of Music

Victor Prybutok, Dean of the Toulouse
Graduate School

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François Couperin (1668-1733) was one of the earliest French Baroque composers to merge the Italian style into the French tradition. He had great influence on the development of French Baroque music from the end of the seventeenth century until his death. Couperin's four *Concerts Royaux* and the ten *Concerts Nouveaux* (published in 1722 and 1724) were written for the enjoyment of Louis XIV. Those suites were popular in the court before they were published, as they were requested to be performed every Sunday during the years 1714 and 1715 to give pleasure to the king. *Ritratto dell' amore* is the ninth suite out of the fourteen suites. The purpose of this study is to provide a performance guide and a practical edition of François Couperin's *Neuvième Concert Ritratto dell' amore*. It also contrasts Italian style and French tradition in the Baroque period, and how Couperin blended both styles together in his *Neuvième Concert*. In addition, this dissertation summarizes the general principles of Baroque performance practice that one may encounter in *Neuvième Concert*, including *notes inégales* (unequal notes), ornamentation, over-dotting, and other issues. It is especially important for one to understand the performance style of French Baroque music in order to perform these works appropriately, since its notation did not adequately notate rhythmic expectations as traditionally understood and the realization of ornamentations in this period and style is highly specific. The tradition was indeed lost in terms of aural transfer and has been reconstructed through published scholarly work in the last century that is based on treatises of the time. Ongoing scholarly and artistic work should bring us ever closer to the ideals of the period.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Music in France was largely controlled by Louis XIV during his long reign from 1643 to 1715. He intentionally nationalized music and other arts for political stability, possibly because of the trauma from being forced to flee Paris during the Civil War from 1650 to 1653.¹ During Louis XIV's reign, the nobles were required to participate in frequent court events such as social dancing and theatre, perhaps to give them less time to concern themselves with politics. Foreign music was not welcome and was deemed to be contrary to Louis XIV's intention for political control. Therefore, France had developed its own "respectable" musical style that was perceived by other European countries as quintessentially French.²

However, Parisians were exhausted by the politesse of the French traditional style, and were inspired by the engaging and entertaining quality of Italian music and theatre performances. They started to pursue freedom of entertainment for their own pleasure. Italian style became a fashionable trend by the eighteenth century, and it brought great influence into the French music style.

As one of the most prominent French composers in the Baroque era, François Couperin (1668-1733) was among the earliest composers to merge Italian style with the French tradition. He was the organist and composer in the court of Louis XIV, and the harpsichord teacher to Louis XIV's three children, who later became important advocates for Italian music performance in Paris in the eighteenth century. Couperin had great influence on the development of French Baroque music from the end of the seventeenth century until his death. He mentioned that it was

¹ Wendy Heller, *Music in the Baroque* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2014), 138.

² Heller, *Music in the Baroque*, 116.

not prudent to write music in Italian style during the time of Louis XIV, especially since his duty in the court was to console and entertain Louis XIV.³ Nevertheless, he had composed music in Italian style in secret based on the inspiration from the sonatas by Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713). Part of his *Les Nations* was from the Italian style trio sonatas that he composed under a pseudonym in 1692. They were not published under Couperin's real name until after the death of Louis XIV. In addition, his *Concert instrumental sous le titre d'Apothéose composé à la mémoire immortelle de l'incomparable Monsieur de Lully* (published in 1725) demonstrates the contrast between the French and Italian compositional styles by putting them together in one piece. This work has been cited in many scholarly publications such as David Tunley's *François Couperin and 'The Perfection of Music'* and Wendy Heller's *Music in the Baroque* to discuss the contrast between the Corellian Italian style and Lullian French style. In addition to his compositions, Couperin's treatise *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord* has remained one of the most important sources for French Baroque performance practice up to the present time and serves as a major resource for this paper.

This dissertation provides a performance guide and a practical edition of Couperin's *Neuvième concert "Ritratto dell' amore"* from his *Nouveaux Concerts*. Couperin's four *Concerts Royaux* and the ten *Nouveaux Concerts* were written for the enjoyment of Louis XIV. They were not published until several years after the Sun King died, when Couperin was no longer working at Versailles. The four *Concerts Royaux* were published in 1722, and the ten *Nouveaux Concerts* were published in a volume called *Les Goûts-Réunis* with his later compositions including *Le Parnasse* and *L'Apothéose de Corelli* in 1724.⁴ These fourteen concerts were published with

³ Heller, *Music in the Baroque*, 210.

⁴ David Tunley, *François Couperin and 'The Perfection of Music'* (New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2016), 80.

numbers that are in the order of their appearance. Although both *Concerts Royaux* and *Nouveaux Concerts* are titled as “concerts,” for which the direct translation to English might be considered concerti, each of these pieces has dance movements, which when combined into the concerts more closely resemble Baroque dance suites. Therefore, some scholars referred to them as suites instead of concerts. Those suites were popular in the court between 1714 and 1715, before they were published, as every Sunday they were requested to be performed to give pleasure to Louis XIV. The instrumentation of these works was not specified. Couperin said that a violinist, oboist, bass violist, and a bassoonist originally performed them, with him accompanying on the harpsichord.⁵ Two or more instruments played together as an ensemble, or they alternated to perform as soloists in different movements. Although many modern published editions of these works include keyboard parts, Couperin only composed the melodic line and a bass part with the figures. *Nouveaux Concerts* was published as part of *Les Goûts-Réunis*, which means the reunion of French and Italian “taste.”⁶ In addition to the most basic dances in a Baroque suite, which include allemande, French courante or Italian corrente, sarabande, and gigue, these suites included other French dance types such as forlane, menuet, gavotte, etc. This genre was highly popular in France and became the tradition of the court during the realm of Louis XIV. Furthermore, Couperin provided some poetic French titles for some of the movements from his concerts to specify their characters, a practice that also contributed to the continuation of the French tradition. Lully had also given poetic titles to some of his works such as *Le triump de l’Amour* (The Triumph of Love) and *Le temple de la Paix* (The Temple of Peace). Michel Blavet (1700-1768), a French flutist and composer from the early eighteenth century, also maintained

⁵ Tunely, *François Couperin and ‘The Perfection of Music’*, 80.

⁶ Heller, *Music in the Baroque*, 202.

this tradition giving programmatic titles in his flute sonatas, such as *Les Tendres Badinages* (The Tender Banter) and *L'Invincible* (The Invincible) from his piece, Flute Sonata in A Minor No. 6, Op. 2.

Ritratto Dell'Amore is the ninth suite of the fourteen suites. While Couperin incorporated the Italian compositional style into the quintessential French style, he clearly maintained his respect for the French tradition. British-American researcher, David Lasocki, even said that these suites are more in the French style than the Italian style in the preface of his edition of *Nouveaux Concerts*.⁷ The *Neuvième Concert* has an Italian programmatic title meaning “Portrait of the Beloved,” but it has eight brief movements with French titles, such as *Le Charme* (The Charm), *L'enjoüement* (Joyfulness), *La Vivacité* (Liveliness), etc. These programmatic titles seemingly describe the character of the woman being portrayed by the music. Most of them are dance movements, including the Corellian-type allemande (the second movement, *L'Enjouement*), French courante (the third movement, *Les Grâces*), Sarabande (the sixth movement, *La Noble Fierté*), forlane (the seventh movement, *La Douceur*) and minuet (the last movement, *L'et coetera*), clearly generating an overall form suggestive of French dance suites.⁸ This blended compositional style became the norm for French music in the high Baroque period. Therefore, Couperin's *Concerts Royaux* and *Nouveaux Concerts* serve as excellent examples for scholars and performers as they seek to develop a knowledge of French Baroque music from the early eighteenth century.

This dissertation aims to guide flutists in acquiring knowledge of French Baroque performance practices to interpret Couperin's *Neuvième Concert* appropriately. Comparison is

⁷ David Lasocki, *Preface of Les Goûts-Réunis ou Nouveaux Concerts* (Breitkopf & Härtel, 2000).

⁸ Tunley, *François Couperin and 'The Perfection of Music'*, 85.

provided in the third chapter for the ideas from Couperin and other writers and scholars such as C.P.E Bach (1714-1788), Leopold Mozart (1719-1787), Johann Joachim Quantz (1697-1773), Jacques-Martin Hotteterre (1674-1763), Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg (1718-1795) and various modern authors about the subject of different types of ornamentation, rhythmic inequality, and other elements. The comparison sheds light on the particular aspects of Couperin's music and can be used to determine the performance decisions most appropriate in realizing the composer's intentions. The six preludes included in *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord* are valuable references to study the specific ornamentation notation system in Couperin's music. It is especially useful to study the modern-notation realizations of the ornaments above or below the original staff in Halford's edition. Couperin provided abundant guidance for playing his preludes in *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord* in order that students learn them correctly. He stated that "In playing six pieces correctly, one will develop the ability to play many others... a larger number (of young people, above all) who practice them fast will then sound very disorderly, which will take great pains to recover from."⁹ Likewise, this performance guide will also serve as an example and resource to develop a required taste for French music and to perform in good style his other thirteen suites of *Concerts Royaux*, *Nouveaux Concerts*, and French Baroque music in general.

State of Research

At the present time, there is very little scholarly research about the *Concerts Royaux* or the *Nouveaux Concerts*. David Tunley, Australian musicologist, only discussed the *Concerts Royaux* as a part of his chapter "Chamber Music" from his book *François Couperin and 'The*

⁹ François Couperin, *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, (CA: Alfred Pub. Co., 1995), 39.

Perfection of Music.’ In the chapter, he provided basic information regarding the background of *Concerts Royaux* and *Nouveaux Concerts* and the compositional style of Couperin, which is a good place to start.¹⁰ In addition, *François Couperin and the Classical Tradition* by British musicologist Wilfrid Mellers provided general comments on each work from Couperin’s *Concerts Royaux* and *Nouveaux Concerts* such as the dance types that can be found in specific movements, descriptions of the characteristics of each dance that appears in these concerts and discussion on the reconciliation between French and Italian style in Couperin’s music.

There are at least four published performing editions for various instruments of the Ninth Suite: *Ritratto Dell Amore*, including editions by Claude Crussard, Paul Dukas, David Lasocki, and an edition co-edited by Maurice Cauchie, André Schaeffner, and Amédée Gastoué. Crussard’s edition is for violin, cello, and harpsichord, Dukas’s edition for violin and harpsichord or piano, and Lasocki’s for flute, oboe or violin, and basso continuo. The fourth, co-edited version is from the first collected edition of Couperin’s works and is scored for a solo instrument, a bass instrument, and keyboard. Each of these editions was useful in creating the practical performance edition included in this study. The facsimile of *Concerts Royaux* and *Les Goûts-Réunis* published by Editions Fuzeau Classique serves as a primary source for these works.

However, too many editorial additions, such as legato indications, will need to be reconsidered in Dukas’s edition. The harmony in the keyboard part in his edition is generally too thick. According to Halford’s foreword of *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, Couperin did use the technique of thickening the texture with added voices to increase the volume, since the harpsichord does not respond to attempts to play louder and softer. However, Dukas did not limit

¹⁰ Tunley, *François Couperin and The Perfection of Music*, 80-86.

his thickening of textures to such a specific purpose. He used many continuous parallel thirds to accompany the higher voice of the keyboard part (see Example 1) frequently throughout many movements, or gave two consistent voices to the right hand parts while the left hand plays the basso continuo part, which is not appropriate for Couperin's composition style. Also, Dukas often indicated the dynamic as *piano* while the texture is unnecessarily thick, which contradicts Halford's observation about the relationship between dynamics and texture in Couperin's music.¹¹ This realization of the keyboard part is supposed to be for piano as an alternative instrument for harpsichord, but playing this part on the modern piano would cause a serious balance problem for the performers. The thickness of the harmony in the keyboard part would easily drown out the flute part in a performance. In addition, Dukas filled in many additional sixteenth notes in between the eighth notes for the right hand of the keyboard part. This unnecessary complication leaves very limited flexibility for the performer of the upper voice to practice the rhythmic inequality, and its heaviness from the thick harmony makes it more challenging for the keyboardist to perform certain movements in fast tempos.

Example 1: Couperin, *Neuvième Concert*, Mvt. II, mm. 1- 3, Parallel thirds



Crussard mostly used the originally basso continuo part as an individual cello part and provided a straightforward keyboard part to create a trio in which the bass line of the keyboard

¹¹ Couperin, *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 24.

part is essentially by a doubling of the cello part. The edition becomes problematic because of the many legato indications added by the editor, such as slurring by six or more than six sixteenth notes in the fast movements, or slurring between notes forming large leaps including octaves. In addition, the general texture is considerably too thick. Compared to other editions, the upper voice of the keyboard part is likely to be placed above the solo part. While this practice was very common in the period, it can lead to balance issues, especially with the heaviness of the instrumentally played bass line doubling the left hand of the pianist.

In Lasocki's edition, there are errors such as wrong notes, and missing ornamentation markings, although he intended to remain true to everything Couperin notated. Lasocki's edition also has a few low C sharps, a note not available on baroque flute. This edition provides a realization of a keyboard part by the German-American organist, Gerhard Krapf, with an indication to double the bass part played by viola da gamba, cello, or bassoon. It is generally close to Couperin's composition style, which offers a valuable reference for the practical performance edition of this dissertation. Kraf has developed an individual keyboard part that has a newly composed right hand part more musically equal to the solo part. He frequently filled in fast notes in the keyboard while the solo part has rests or notes that are longer in value, so that both parts are more interactive (see Example 2). However, the activeness of the keyboard leaves very limited flexibility for the soloist to practice rhythmic inequality in this edition.

Example 2: Couperin's *Neuvième Concert*, Mvt. I, mm. 12-14, Sixteenth and thirty-seconds

Oeuvres Complètes de François Couperin (published in 1933), a collection edited by Maurice Cauchie and other musicologists including André Schaeffner and Amédée Gastoué, contains an arrangement of *Neuvième Concert* for solo instrument, bass instrument, and keyboard. In this edition, the solo part maintains the original articulation, ornamentation markings and phrase markings that can be found in Couperin's manuscript. The editors assigned a part for bass instrument to double the basso continuo part. The function of the keyboard part in this edition is purely to harmonize the basso continuo. Unlike Lasocki's edition, the editors did not add any additional sixteenth or thirty-second notes between the eighth notes from the original basso continuo part or any additional musical content to complicate the keyboard part. The bass and the keyboard parts maintain the homophonic texture throughout all movements. Therefore, this edition leaves great flexibility to the soloist to practice rhythmic inequality. However, this edition is not published separately from the complete works and remains unavailable to most musicians who might want to access it.

Additionally, the International Music Company published an edition of the Concert Royal No. 4 edited for flute and piano by the legendary French flutist, Jean-Pierre Rampal and his French harpsichordist partner, Robert Veyron-Lacroix. This publication could be considered a model for transcribing the other *Concerts Royaux* and *Nouveaux Concerts* for flute and keyboard, in that it was designed for two players rather than three. Its usefulness has its limits, though, since it lacks adherence to modern performance practice principles.

Context

In order to perform Couperin's suites in good style and with the appropriate taste, one must understand various aspects of French Baroque style, since its notation does not account for rhythmic conventions understood at the time. Couperin stated that while the Italians notated the

true rhythmic values in their scores, the continuous diatonic eighth notes in French music needed to be performed unequally even though they were notated as equal.¹² Therefore, it is essential to learn the rules of this particular performance practice, known as *notes inégales* (rhythmic inequality). The tradition was indeed lost in terms of aural transfer and has been reconstructed through published scholarly work in the last century, based on treatises of the time. Ongoing scholarly and artistic work should bring us even closer to the ideals of the period.

This performance guide mostly focuses on four of the main issues of Baroque performance practice: rhythmic inequality, articulation, ornamentation, and over-dotting. Performance suggestions are provided based on the rules from the treatises by Couperin, Quantz, Hotteterre, C.P.E. Bach, Leopold Mozart and various modern authors. This study uses Couperin's *L'Apothéose de Lully* and works by Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-1687) and Corelli as references to explain the difference between Italian style and French style and to examine both Italian influence and the French tradition regarding *Neuvième Concert*. Finally, this dissertation includes a performance edition for flute and keyboard, which is based on the research that has been done in this study. It includes appropriate additional articulations, a keyboard part that allows the performers to play in an appropriate style, brief commentary for where to apply rhythmic inequality and its ratio (the proportion between the first note and the second note in inequality patterns), the appropriate tempos, the application of over-dotted notes and other guidance for performing this suite. Along with the performance edition and commentary, analysis of the styles for each movement such as their French and Italian characteristics,

¹² Betty B Mather. *Interpretation of French Music From 1675 to 1775 for Woodwind and other Performers* (McGinnis & Marx Music Publishers, 1973), 6.

characters based on their dance types and the titles, citing comparisons with individual dance types as they appear in other works.

CHAPTER 2

COMPOSITIONAL STYLES

French and Italian

Couperin had mentioned in the preface of *Les Nations* that Corelli's sonatas were his inspiration for composing these pieces, and that throughout his lifetime he loved these sonatas as well as the French works by Lully.¹³ As the most influential French composer in the early Baroque era, Lully rejected foreign influences to maintain and protect the French tradition in his compositions while Italian music was spreading through other parts of Europe. Couperin respected the style on which Lully had been insisting, but he was also interested in including the Italian style in his compositions. Couperin demonstrated a technique of blending the French and Italian composition styles by allowing the two styles to coexist in different voices in his *L'Apothéose de Lully*. In this chamber work, Lully was purportedly meeting Corelli and Apollo, who were supposed to be the arbiters of taste. Lully and Corelli were persuaded that merging Italian and French styles together would lead to the perfection of music.¹⁴ There are two duets from *L'Apothéose de Lully* that imitate the composition styles of Corelli and Lully (see Example 3). The title of the first duet is "Lully, Playing the Subject; Corelli, the Accompaniment," as if Corelli and Lully were playing together. The second duet is titled; "Corelli Plays the Subject, in turn, that Lully Accompanies."

¹³ Heller, *Music in the Baroque*, 200.

¹⁴ Heller, *Music in the Baroque*, 210.

Example 3: Couperin, “Lully, Playing the Subject; Corelli, the Accompaniment”

Lully, jouant le Sujet; et Corelli l'accompagnant

Air léger

Corelli jouant le Sujet, à son tour, et que Lully accompagne

Second Air

The tonal and harmonic structures are relatively simple in the first duet, “Air léger,” which represents the French style. The upper voice of the first duet is supposed to be an imitation of Lully’s compositional style with the accompaniment part in the style of Corelli. The duet starts in G major and moves to D major before going back to tonic in the last four measures. In comparison to the first duet, the tonality in the second duet is more chromatic from the second

half. It is written in G minor, but he tonicized the various keys. In the second half of this duet, it is C minor, D major, and C minor again before it goes back to the principal key three measures before the end. Seventeenth century French musicologist, François Raguet (1660-1722), said that French music always aims to stay in the same tonality in a formal section, so that the music would be flowing and coherent.¹⁵ He also said that modulations required both a “compelling musical reason” and “correct preparation.”¹⁶ Raguet mentioned that Italian compositions often boldly pass to different keys without enough preparation.¹⁷ Michel Pignolet de Montéclair (1667-1737) said that he admired the beautiful modulation and agreeable harmony of Lully’s works. He described Italian music as consisting of “roundabout modulation, harshness of chords, fracas and confusion.”¹⁸

Montéclair also admired the naturalness and noble simplicity in Lully’s melodies, which can be perceived in Couperin’s imitation of Lully, such as the passing appoggiatura, the melodic lines of “Air Léger” being mostly stepwise, and the use of small intervals.¹⁹ His melodies are often smooth and elegant in both their ascent and descent with many stepwise intervals, as is the classic characteristic of the French school in the early Baroque era. On the contrary, the Italian melodies often use distinct rhythmic patterns and memorable ideas to develop thematic materials, such as the upper voice in the beginning of “Second Air.”

Some concrete Italian traits can be found in the voice of Corelli from Couperin’s *L’Apothéose de Lully* such as the frequent use of arpeggios, sequences, recurring patterns and

¹⁵ Curtis Webb Coffee, *The Sonatas for Flute and Bass of Michael Blavet* (Boston University), 21.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Coffee, *The Sonatas for Flute and Bass of Michael Blavet*, 21.

¹⁸ Coffee, *The Sonatas for Flute and Bass of Michael Blavet*, 22.

¹⁹ Betty Bang Mather and David Lasocki, *Free Ornamentation In Woodwind Music* (McGinnis & Marx), 16.

wide leaps. In addition, the phrases in “Second Air” are generally longer than those in “Air léger,” which also makes this second movement more Italianate. Couperin used a sign that is similar to a breath mark to indicate when the phrase ends if there is no rest that would create a separation between phrases. He explained in his third book, *Pièces de Clavecin* that the performer needs to separate the phrases by creating a “little silence.”²⁰ In the duets, there are more phrase markings in “Air Léger,” and there are mostly four-measure phrases or two-measure phrases. By contrast, the “Second Air” has two four-measure phrases, and it ends with an eight-measure phrase.

Example 4: Corelli, Sonata Op. 5, No. 1 for Violin and Harpsichord, mm. 1-11, Arpeggios over tonic



There are other characteristics for both styles that can be perceived in the actual works by Corelli and Lully. A short *allegro* section in the beginning of Violin Sonata, Op. 5, No. 1, by Corelli sufficiently shows several different Italian traits (see Example 4). Long sustained notes in the accompaniment part that offer a creative moment for the soloist to be expressive or to demonstrate virtuosity freely is a distinguishing feature of Italian style. The basso continuo part

²⁰ Couperin. *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 22.

in the *allegro* section of this sonata is a long-sustained D for seven measures, and the violin part has a technical passage that consists of rapid recurring sequencing arpeggios. This can also reflect Italian vocal music, where the vocal lines are often melismatic and virtuosic. On the contrary, French composers from the seventeenth century much preferred syllabic vocal parts, and the accompaniment part usually moves in a pace similar to its vocal part.

Italian music generally has wider melodic range than French music in the seventeenth century. In Corelli's Violin Sonata No.1, the melodic range is often quite large within short passages. For example, the range of the *allegro* section in the violin part is from A3 to D6 within seven measures, which is much larger than the typical French style range. In addition, Italian music generally has faster harmonic rhythm than French music in metric sections, except in passages in which the accompaniment part is holding a sustained chord part. In the *adagio* section that appears later in the first movement of Corelli's Sonata Op. 5, No. 1, the harmony changes from every half note to changing every quarter notes (see Example 5).

Example 5: Corelli, Sonata, Op. 5, No. 1 for Violin and Harpsichord, mm. 24-29, Harmonic rhythm

The image shows a musical score for the Adagio section of Corelli's Sonata, Op. 5, No. 1, measures 24-29. The score is written for Violin and Harpsichord. The Violin part is in the upper staff, and the Harpsichord part is in the lower staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The word "Adagio" is written above the first staff. The Harpsichord part features a sequence of chords and arpeggios, with fingerings indicated by numbers 1-7 and sharps (#). The Violin part features a melodic line with various ornaments and trills.

On the contrary, French Baroque music generally does not frequently use sequences, arpeggios, or recurring melodic or harmonic patterns. The range of French style melody is generally within a single octave. The phrasing is mostly clear and often symmetrical. One can notice the small range, evenly paired phrases, smoothness, and gracefulness of the French style in Lully's instrumental work, *Overture and Suite from Thésée* (see Example 6).

Example 6: Lully, Prelude from *Overture and Suite from Thésée*, French characteristics

The image shows a musical score for three woodwinds: Ob 1 (Oboe 1), Ob 2 (Oboe 2), and Fg (Flute). The score is for a Trio section, starting at measure 7. The music is in a 3/4 time signature. The woodwinds play a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, with various ornaments (trills) marked above the notes. The woodwinds are labeled 'Ob 1', 'Ob 2', and 'Fg'. The word 'Trio' is written above each staff.

French music was also known for being specific for its ornamentation. Quantz suggested that advanced performers should learn to play French music before they try to ornament melodies since the ornamentation is already written down in the notation.²¹ C.P.E. Bach believed that the accuracy and brilliance of French ornaments and the smoothness of Italian singing make the best performance on any instruments.²² The German music theorist and composer, Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg, also admired how French ornamentation was carefully notated, and how much one could learn from playing it.²³ Hotteterre suggested that one could learn ornamentations by playing French pieces that have ornamentation markings to develop a better sense of where they sound best in order to be able to ornament melodies by improvising.²⁴

French Tradition and Italian Influence in Couperin's Concerts

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Lasocki stated that *Concerts Royaux* and *Nouveaux Concerts* by Couperin are more in the French style than Italian style, although he does not give any details to support this argument. It makes sense historically, as Louis XIV shifted

²¹ Johann Joachim Quantz. *On Playing the Flute*, trans. Edward R. Reilly (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2001), 163.

²² Robert Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music* (Norton, 1989), 127.

²³ Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 128.

²⁴ Jacques-Martin Hotteterre, *Principles of the Flute, Recorder & Oboe* (New York: Dover Publications, INC., 1968), 47.

his attention from theatre works to chamber music in his late reign, and Couperin's fourteen suites were performed for the king's pleasure. Some analysis work on these suites in comparison with other French and Italian works can help determine the validity of Lascoki's argument.

It is found in both *L' Apothéose de Lully* and Corelli's sonatas that Italian composers utilize many large leaps and arpeggios almost constantly. Even though *Concerts Royaux* and *Nouveaux Concerts* also include some large intervals in both the upper voice and basso continuo, many of the melodic lines in the upper voice are written in mostly stepwise motion or small intervallic skips in both ascending and descending lines (see Example 7). The most common large leap being used in the suite is the octave (see Example 8). Couperin utilized large leaps much less frequently in comparison to Corelli's sonata. Arpeggios occasionally appear in the upper voice of the suites but more often in the basso continuo part.

Example 7: Couperin, *Neuvième Concert, Les Graces*, mm. 1-3, Stepwise melody

Les Graces
Courante française

Example 8: Couperin, *Neuvième Concert, L'enjouement*, mm. 24-29, Octave interval use

24

27

29

Many scholars have acknowledged that French music has remarkably specific notations for ornamentation. Halford provided two charts in her edition of *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord* concerning *Pièce de Clavecin* by Couperin that explain all the different kinds of ornamentation that appear in Couperin's eight preludes. There are twenty-nine different types of ornamentations in the charts, and they are notated frequently in Couperin's compositions. Unlike the Italian and German composers such as Corelli, J.S. Bach, Georg Philipp Telemann, etc, who left many ornamentation choices up to the performers' discretion, Couperin was very specific about ornamentation in his compositions. All of his suites have very dense ornamentation markings in the melodic lines. Some of the phrases in his *Neuvième Concert: Ritratto dell' amores* have ornamentation markings on at least one note in every measure (see Example 9). It also includes many different types of ornamentations, such as passing *appoggiatura*, moderately quick *appoggiatura*, trills, mordents, etc. Many of the mordents or trills are on sixteenth notes even in the fast movements. In contrast, there are fewer ornamentation markings in music by J.S. Bach or Telemann. For instance, the *Six French Suites for Keyboard* by J.S. Bach generally do not have ornamentation markings in every measure. Bach also tended to ornament only the notes that have relatively long-time values (see Example 10).

Example 9: Couperin. *Neuvième Concert, La Douceur*, mm. 7-12, Ornamentation



Example 10: Bach, *French Suite No. 1, Menuet I*, mm. 1-5, Minimal ornamentation



Compared to his French peers such as Hotteterre, Couperin's ornamentation is far more particular. In Couperin's *Nouveaux Concerts*, the ornamentation in some of the movements is so dense that it would seem to be overdone for the performers to add any more. In fact, Couperin refused to accept ornamental improvisation in his music.²⁵ In the preface of his third book of *Pièces de Clavecin*, he stated:

I am always surprised, after the pains I have given myself for marking the ornaments which are suitable to my Pièces...to hear persons who have learned them without heeding my instructions. This is an unpardonable negligence... I declare that my pieces they [*sic*] ought to be played as I have marked them...²⁵

Compared to Lully's music, both melody and harmony in Couperin's *Concerts Royaux* and *Nouveaux Concerts* are more chromatic. However, all the movements in most of the suites either stay in the same principal keys or move to the parallel major or minor keys. Their modulations are relatively similar between movements that are sharing the same mode. All the movements that are in major keys modulate to their dominant keys, and sometimes they go to their relative minor key as well. The movements that are in minor keys must go to their relative major keys at some point. For instance, the first five movements of *Neuvième Concert* are in E major, and they all modulate to B major before they go to other keys. Among these five movements, only the fourth movement *Les Graces* does not move to the relative minor key (C sharp minor). In addition to the dominant key and the relative minor key, some of these movements are more chromatic and go to other keys as well. The second movement, *L'enjouement*, moves briefly to F sharp minor between the dominant key and the relative major passages, and *Les Graces* goes to its subdominant key (A major) after the dominant key section ends. The last three movements of *Neuvième Concert* are in E minor, the parallel minor of the

²⁵ Couperin. *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 14.

principal key of the piece, although it returns to E major in the second minuet of *L'et Coetera*. All three movements modulate to their relative major (G major). However, *La Douceur* (the seventh movement) moves to A minor from G major, and *L'et Coetera* briefly stays in b minor after the G major passage ends.

In many Italian works, the solo parts often dominate the musical texture although accompaniment parts occasionally are highly interactive with the solo part. In Couperin's *suites*, the basso continuo parts are highly interactive and generally move at a similar pace to the higher voices, sometimes forming canons, as in the second movement of *Neuvième Concert* (see Example 11). Generally, both parts are equally important to the musical content in these suites.

Example 11: Couperin, *Neuvième Concert*, *L'enjoüement*, mm. 1-4, Canon



There are many courantes included in Couperin's fourteen suites. Some of them are specified as French courantes, but many of them are only titled as *courante*. In some composers' music, this could refer to either a *French courante* or an *Italian corrente*. However, all of the *courantes* in Couperin's fourteen suites have concrete characteristics of the French *courante*. The French *courante* are always in compound meter (mostly 3/2 or 6/4). The rhythm frequently shifts between duples and triplets, and sometimes counted in three or in two. For instance, *Les Graces* from *Neuvième Concert*, which is specified as a French courante, should be performed as 3/2 meter (in three) at the beginning until it changes to 6/4 (in two) in the third

measure of the movement (see Example 12). French *courante* has to be performed in a steady tempo in order to emphasize this rhythmic sophistication. The rhythm in Italian *corrente* is much more straightforward, and is supposed to be played in a quick running tempo.²⁶

Example 12: Couperin, *Neuvième Concert*, *Les Graces*, mm. 1-3, Duple and triple



Nevertheless, there is still some Italian influence that can be clearly perceived. Utilizing sequences and recurring patterns are concrete Italian traits that can easily be found in Corelli's sonatas or Vivaldi's concertos. In Couperin's *Concerts Royaux* and *Neuvième Concerts*, these two Italian characteristics exist in almost every movement. In addition, Italian music often uses certain rhythmic motives as content-generating devices within movements. The same rhythm sometimes comes back for multiple times in different keys or with different notes, and even develops to a different melody. For instance, the rhythmic theme of the second movement of *Neuvième Concert*, *L'enjouement* modulates from E major to B major. When the theme appears the second time, the primary rhythmic motive develops into a different melody after two measures with constant sixteenths, which reduce the rhythmic definition as the melody develops (see Example 13). In the sixth movement, *La Noble Fierté*, the rhythmic theme appears for the second time after the first repeat as a different melody but with the same rhythmic pattern (see Example 14).

²⁶ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 328.

Example 13: Couperin, *Neuvième Concert, L'enjouement*, mm. 1-4, 6-10, Development in Melody

L'enjouement
Gayement

II

The musical score for Example 13 is presented in two systems. The first system contains measures 1-4, and the second system contains measures 6-10. The music is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The tempo is marked 'Gayement'. The score is for piano, with a treble and bass clef. The melody in the right hand is characterized by eighth and sixteenth notes, often with grace notes. The bass line provides a steady accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes. The piece is marked with a Roman numeral 'II'.

Example 14: Couperin, *Neuvième Concert, La Noble Fierté*, mm. 1-2, 6-10, Rhythmic melody

The musical score for Example 14 is presented in two systems. The first system contains measures 1-2, and the second system contains measures 6-10. The music is in G major (one sharp) and 3/8 time. The tempo is marked 'Allegretto'. The score is for piano, with a treble and bass clef. The melody in the right hand is characterized by eighth and sixteenth notes, often with grace notes. The bass line provides a steady accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes. The piece is marked with a Roman numeral 'II'.

The unification of Italian and French style is a ubiquitous characteristic of Couperin's composition. The purpose of this discussion is to help readers to identify the characteristics in both styles and to perceive how Couperin and other French composers bring the Italian style into the French tradition. More importantly, it gives perspective of the unique style of French Baroque music and the diversity of national styles in the Baroque period.

CHAPTER 3

PERFORMANCE PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS

This chapter includes the principles that are relevant to performing Couperin's *Neuvième Concert* in an appropriate style from various influential treatises including *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord* by Couperin, *On Playing the Flute* by Quantz, *Principles of the Flute* by Hotteterre, *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing* by Leopold Mozart, *Essay on The True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments* by C.P.E. Bach, and publications by modern scholarly writers such as Robert Donington, Betty Bang Mather, David Lasocki, and others. Among all of the resources, it would be reasonable to consider Couperin's *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord* and *Principles of the Flute* by Hotteterre as the most relevant to the French performance style. In his treatise, Quantz specified certain appropriate principles when playing French style music, and historically, his experience of traveling in France makes his principles regarding the French style more reliable than other German writers. It is also important to include resources from foreign writers such as C.P.E. Bach and Leopold Mozart as comparisons to see what principles differ between French and German writers, and what makes the French style distinct. Modern publications tend to be more objective, as they are generally written using a wider range of resources for reference. Sometimes they acknowledge contradictory opinions and leave it to the readers to decide what to believe, which is important and beneficial for the research on this subject.

Rhythmic Inequality – *Notes Inégales*

In Baroque music, the practice of rhythmic inequality allows musicians the rhythmic freedom to perform melodies with elegance by playing a group of notes that are notated in equal

value unevenly.²⁷ The practice provides emphasis on principal tones over the passing tones and auxiliary tones. It was the appropriate performance style in this era, according to many Baroque composers and theorists including Couperin, Quantz, and others modern authors. It is possible that composers notated successive fast notes equally because it was challenging and impractical to notate the exact rhythm they intended.²⁸ Therefore, this practice leaves the flexibility for performers to decide the ratio between the longer notes and the shorter notes, and where they should apply this practice in the music. However, there are certain guiding principles that performers need to consider in order to practice rhythmic inequality in an appropriate manner.

Rhythmic inequality is appropriate when there is a group of successive short notes in stepwise motion or small intervals that are notated in equal time value without interruption by rests or notes of different values.²⁹ In general, performers should only apply rhythmic inequality on notes that are shorter in rhythmic value than the lower figure of the time signature.³⁰ Regardless of the number of quick notes appearing together, the application of the principles of rhythmic inequality calls for organizing the notes into pairs, stressing the first of each pair with extra length taken from the value of the second. If there are original *legato* markings notated over pairs of notes that are suitable for rhythmic inequality, it is an indication to perform unevenly with the original articulation as notated (see Example 15). Therefore, a performer needs to perform these pairs of notes with inequality regardless if inequality is applied on the other un-slurred notes with the same value. However, passages that are taken unequally need to

²⁷ Couperin, *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 10.

²⁸ Moelants, Dirk. (2011). The Performance of Notes Inégales: The Influence of Tempo, Musical Structure, and Individual Performance Style on Expressive Timing. *Music Perception*, 28 (5), 449.

²⁹ Couperin. *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, trans. Margery Halford (London: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc, 1974), 11.

³⁰ Ibid.

be slurred in pairs.³¹ When the first note of the group is an upbeat with a rest before, one should take the rest as the first note, and perform the upbeat later and shorter so that the rest of group can align with the long-short pattern.³²

Example 15: Couperin, *Neuvième Concert, La Vivacit m*, mm. 9-10, *Legato* pairs



However, there are circumstances in which inequality is forbidden, such as groups of notes with large leaps, groups with original *legato* markings over more than two notes, groups with interruptive rests, and groups of triplets.³³ Rhythmic inequality is not suitable for movements in extremely fast or slow tempos, as they may sound too frantic or sluggish.³⁴ In addition, Halford mentioned in her foreword to Couperin’s *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord* that “many authorities forbid inequality in *Allemandes*... Some forbid it in accompaniment parts.”³⁵

Unequal notes are generally performed in the form of “long-short”, although “short-long” is allowed in some rare circumstances. In the table of ornaments from Couperin’s *Pi ces de Clavecin*, there is an indication that if a group of notes that are eligible for rhythmic inequality and they are slurred in pairs with dots on top of the second notes of each pair, the second notes needs to be stressed and longer than the first notes.³⁶ The ratios between the longer notes and the

³¹ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 386.

³² Quantz. *On Playing the Flute*, 131.

³³ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 392.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Couperin. *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 11.

³⁶ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 392

shorter notes are left to the performer's discretion. The most common suggestions from the writers of the period and from current scholars are 3:2, 2:1, 3:1, etc. The performer can decide the ratio based on the character or expression of the movement. The inequality can be greater when the movement is lively or, cheerful, while they should be less unequal when melody is tender and graceful.³⁷ Also, if there are dotted rhythms in the same movement with notes that are eligible for rhythmic inequality, it is recommended to perform the latter with a more equal ratio, and to over-dot exaggeratedly the dotted rhythm to differentiate both features.³⁸ The other solution is to perform the over-dotting rhythm less sharply to align with the shorter note of the inequality pattern, especially when both features occur in different voices at the same time (see Example 20 from the paragraph of over-dotting).

In any case, rhythmic inequality can only be applied with a single value in a movement. The performer needs to decide if rhythmic inequality should be applied to the eighth notes or the sixteenth notes when they are intermixed in the same movement. The tempo of the movement and the intervals between the notes are the determining factors. For example, when the intervals between the sixteenth notes are constantly stepwise but the intervals between eighth notes are not, only the sixteenth notes should be played unevenly. Also, the tempo of the movements can affect rhythmic inequality. If the tempo is fast, the performer is less likely to be able to play the sixteenth notes noticeably unequally. Conversely, the ratio between long notes and short notes can be more contrasting in the slow movements. Unlike Italian music, French music often does not have obvious tempo indications with terms such as *allegro*, *presto*, etc. In Couperin's *Concerts Royaux* and *Nouveaux Concerts*, he often uses terms that are more poetic to describe

³⁷ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 393.

³⁸ Lasocki, *Preface*.

the character of the movement, such as *gravement*, *gayement*, *noblement*, which give the general idea of the tempo. While some of the movements in these suites do not have specific indications for tempo, their dance titles imply their tempos. For example, *Allemande* is usually in a moderate tempo, the tempo of a *Sarabande* is relatively slow; a *Gigue* tends to be relatively fast, etc.

Donington provides the metronome equivalents for the tempos of various dances based on Quantz's comparison between the human heart beat (Donington considered it as eighty pulses per minute) and the appropriate pulse of the dances (see Table 1). Donington mostly used the pulse of quarter notes or dotted quarter notes to reflect the pulse, but they are more a general reference rather than precise indications. The tempos are for the values in common time signatures. Performers may need to change the value for each pulse based on the meter. For example, French *courante* is usually in 3/2 meter, so the pulse must be counted by half notes, or it would be too slow. Since the *menuets* from Couperin's *Neuvième Concert* are in 6/8, the metronome tempo of 160 would only make sense if they are counted by eighth notes.

Table 1: Donington, *Interpretation of Early Music*, Metronome equivalents of Quantz's dance tempos.³⁹

Bourrée [C or 2]:	♩ = 160
Canarie:	♩. = 160
Chaconné:	♩ = 160
Courante:	♩ = 80
Entrée:	♩ = 80
Furie:	♩ = 160
Gavotte:	about ♩ = 120
Gigue:	♩. = 160
Loure:	♩ = 80
Marche [C or 2]:	♩ = 160
Menuet:	♩ = 160
Musette [3-4]:	♩ = 80
[3-8]:	♩ = 80
Passecaille:	about ♩ = 180
Passeped [3-4]:	about ♩ = 180
[3-8]:	about ♩ = 180
Rigaudon [C or 2]:	♩ = 160
Rondeau [C or 3-4]:	about ♩ = 140
Sarabande:	♩ = 80
Tambourin:	about ♩ = 180

³⁹ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 337.

Sometimes performers can determine the tempos by the meters. For instance, C meter often indicates a slower tempo, so that the sixteenth notes have enough time value to be noticeably unequal.⁴⁰ In this case, the eighth notes should be played equally, and rhythmic inequality can be applied on sixteenth notes. The first movement of *Ritratto Dell' amore, Le Charme* can serve as an example. 3/2 meter usually indicates that the movement is slow and sentimental.⁴¹ When the smallest subdivision of a movement with 3/2 meter is the quarter note, the quarter notes should be played unequally. Likewise, if the sixteenth notes are the smallest subdivision in a movement in 3/2, the sixteenth notes should be performed unequally.⁴²

Articulation

Articulation is another element that performers do not perform exactly as notated. Baroque composers sometimes gave a fair number of legato markings in their compositions, which are recommended for the performers to follow, but they also left many of the articulations to the performer's discretion especially for the successive quick notes. However, there are certain articulation patterns deemed preferable to others regarding Baroque performance practice. Slurring by twos was the most common articulations pattern at the time.⁴³ Three slurred and one tongued was also common, but one tongued and three slurred was less common.⁴⁴ Slurring by fours and longer slurs were rare during this period.⁴⁵

In addition to slurring, the length of the notes that are neither slurred nor sustained can be

⁴⁰ Mather. *Interpretation of French Music*, 9.

⁴¹ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 18.

⁴² Couperin. *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 11.

⁴³ Mather. *Interpretation of French*, 43.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

problematic. Donington mentioned that modern performers often either over-articulate with forceful *staccato*, which loses the sense of line, or under articulate it as modern string instruments' playing *detaché*, which sounds too “stickily” for music of the time.⁴⁶ C.P.E Bach encouraged performers to give liveliness to the detached notes to the fast movements.⁴⁷ He explained that notes are not slurred nor should sustained notes be played for half of their value.⁴⁸ According to what he suggested, eighth notes in Baroque music should be performed as sixteenth notes, and dotted quarter notes with an eighth note should sound like a quarter note with a eighth rest and a sixteenth note with a sixteenth rest, etc. However, it may not be practical to apply this concept for the sixteenth notes in movements with an extremely fast tempo, therefore, the lively and crisp articulations that oppose to the modern *detaché* could be considered as an alternative solution. C.P.E. Bach also said that for slow movements such as *adagio* ones need to use broader, more sustained and slurred notes, even when they are not marked.⁴⁹

Ornamentation

Appoggiatura

Appoggiaturas are ornaments that are notated as smaller notes that precede and are slurred to a principal note in the music. *Appoggiaturas* are often notated in conjunction with the main note of the melodies and create dissonance against the bass. *Appoggiaturas* give their main notes the function of resolving the dissonance. Quantz mentioned that *appoggiaturas* are both ornamental and essential dissonance devices to be used to rouse the ear when there are many

⁴⁶ Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 414.

⁴⁷ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 393.

⁴⁸ C.P.E. Bach, *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company INC, 1948), 157.

⁴⁹ Bach, *Essay*, 149.

consonances occurring in succession.⁵⁰ *Appoggiatura* need to be performed on the beat in most occasions, according to many writers such as F.W. Marpurg, C.P.E. Bach, and Quantz along with other modern scholars including Halford and Donington. They also need to be prolonged in order to delay the resolution an expressive manner.⁵¹ Generally, one should perform the *appoggiatura* and the main note evenly when the main note is not dotted in value or longer than the value of a half note. Quantz and Halford both mentioned that when the main note is a dotted quarter note, the *appoggiatura* could be performed as a quarter note and the main note follows after as an eighth note.⁵² The same proportions can also apply to dotted half notes. In addition, *appoggiaturas* must be performed more loudly than the note of resolution regardless of their time value, and should be slurred into their resolutions.⁵³

Moreover, some scholars argued that *appoggiaturas* between several notes with equal values that consist of descending thirds, could be performed before the down beat quickly and slurred to the main note. This type of *appoggiatura* is known as a passing *appoggiatura*, which is notated as normal *appoggiatura* with *legato* markings to the main note that it follows. Quantz explained the way to perform *passing appoggiatura* in *On Playing the Flute*. He said that it would be against the French style if one plays them on the down beats evenly with the main notes.⁵⁴ Edward R. Reilly, the editor and translator of Quantz's *On Playing the Flute*, believes that Quantz's statement regarding passing *appoggiatura* in French style is reliable, since Quantz visited Paris in 1726 and 1727 for his studying tour.⁵⁵ During the trips, he met Michel Blavet, the

⁵⁰ Quantz. *On Playing the Flute*, 91.

⁵¹ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 130.

⁵² Couperin. *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 16.

⁵³ Bach, *essay*, 88.

⁵⁴ Quantz. *On Playing the Flute*, 97.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

virtuosic French flutist, and enjoyed his performances during his visit. Reilly thinks that he may have heard the flutists and possibly other instrumentalists perform using the *passing appoggiatura*.⁵⁶ Leopold Mozart also mentioned in his treatise that the time for passing *appoggiatura* must be taken from the note before, but it is slurred to the following note (see Example 16).⁵⁷ According to his examples and description from his treatise, the passing *appoggiatura* needs to be played quickly, quietly, and smoothly with accents that lie on the main notes.⁵⁸ On the other hand, C.P.E. Bach was strongly against playing any ornamentation before the main note, except when a turn falls between two notes.⁵⁹ He explained in his *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments* that *appoggiaturas* can be performed quickly, but it should be always on the beat.⁶⁰ He said that in slow movements, *passing appoggiatura* can be played as the first eighth note of a triplet instead of a sixteenth note.⁶¹ F.W. Marpurg also said in his *Anleitung zum Clavierspielen* that all *appoggiatura* need to be played on the beat in any occasion, and that it is wrong to place it before the beat. According to his examples of *passing appoggiatura* in his treatise, they are supposed to be performed quickly on the beat.⁶² However, there is no evidence if Couperin agreed or disagreed with performing the passing *appoggiatura* according to the directions of Quantz and Leopold Mozart. Couperin did not specify the ideal length of *appoggiaturas*. Halford believes that performers can decide how to play *appoggiaturas*

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Leopold Mozart. *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin playing*, trans. Editha Knocker (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 177.

⁵⁸ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 393.

⁵⁹ Bach, *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, 84.

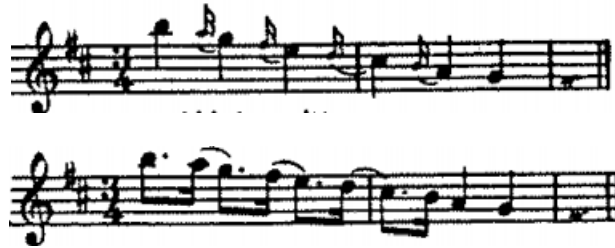
⁶⁰ Bach, *Essay*, 92.

⁶¹ Bach, *Essay*, 149.

⁶² Translation from: Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 163. “All *appoggiaturas*...in whatever progression they occur, must fall exactly on the beat. Therefore it is wrong...”

based on the musical context and their good taste.⁶³

Example 16: Mozart, *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing*, Realization of passing appoggiatura



Accents

The ornament that Couperin calls the “accent” is added small note that anticipates the note that follow it. They are commonly used in Baroque music, including Couperin’s suites. Accents are supposed to be performed lightly within the value of their main note without significant emphasis. Sometimes accents can be more than one notes, and all of them are supposed to be performed quickly regardless the numbers of the notes (see Example 17).

Example 17: Couperin, *Neuvième Concert, La Charme*, mm. 15 -17, Accents



Trills

Couperin clearly described in *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord* that a trill must always begin on the upper auxiliary, which is a whole-tone or semi-tone above the main tone.⁶⁴ Trills

⁶³ Couperin. *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 20.

⁶⁴ Couperin, *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 38.

generally consist of three parts, Couperin having identified as such: stress (*L'appuy*), repercussion (*Les batemens*), and the stopping point (*le point-d'arést*).⁶⁵ Couperin called the upper auxiliary the stress, which should be stressed and prolonged for its harmonic function on most occasions.⁶⁶ The number of repercussions can be flexible according to the performer's technique, but it needs to have at least four notes (including the upper auxiliary) and end on the main note.⁶⁷ One should perform trills by starting slowly and speeding up gradually with a general evenness if the time value of the trill allows the performer to do so.⁶⁸ The stopping point needs to be on the main note and be included inside the rhythmic value.⁶⁹ On some occasions, Baroque trills should be performed with termination especially when the following note is one step lower or higher and creates a cadence with the main note of the trill. Termination is a turn that follows the end of the repercussion of a trill to the lower auxiliary before going back to the main note (see Example 18). Terminations are sometimes notated following a trill, but it should be included inside the time of the trill and before the downbeat of the following notes. They can also be notated as fast notes with actual rhythmic value, or they do not have to be notated at all. In any case, termination should be *legato*. Quantz mentioned that these two little notes should be played at the same speed as the repercussion of the trill.⁷⁰

Example 18: Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music*, Termination



⁶⁵ Couperin, *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 39.

⁶⁶ Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 131.

⁶⁷ Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 17.

⁶⁸ Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 38.

⁶⁹ Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 35.

⁷⁰ Quantz, *On Playing the Flute*, 103.

In Couperin's works, there are many trills that are notated on eighth notes, and sometimes sixteenth notes in fast movements. Since it would be impractical to intend to prolong all of the upper auxiliaries in this situation, performers should play the trill as fast as possible and end it as early as possible.⁷¹ Scholars call this a half trill, or *pralltriller* in German. If the note before the trill has a *legato* marking and the upper auxiliary of the trill and the preceding note are the same notes, the performer needs to slightly delay the trill when the tempo allows one to do so (see Example 19). However, it is not possible to accomplish this practice on notes with small values and with fast tempo markings. Donington suggested that a solution is to simply play it without the delay, and to place the main note on the down beat, which means the trill will be made up of three notes (See Example 20).⁷²

Example 19: Bach, *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, Delayed trill



Example 20: Donington, *Interpretation of Early Music*, Fast trill without delay



Mordents

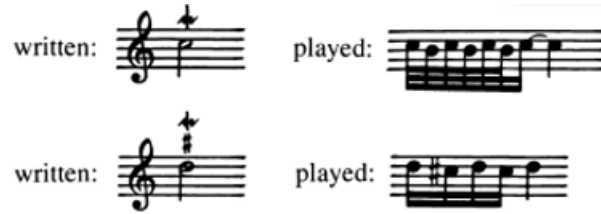
Mordents are performed in a similar manner to the trill in many ways, except they alternate with the lower auxiliary instead of the upper auxiliary. A mordent's more main note

⁷¹ Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 186.

⁷² Bach, *Essay*, 84.

before repercussion is prolonged, and played on the beat.⁷³ Mordents on shorter notes only have one repercussion with three notes in total, but they should have more repercussions when the duration of the note is longer.⁷⁴ The repercussions need to end before the main note passes its entire time value (see Example 21).⁷⁵

Example 21: Halford, *Preface* vs. Couperin's *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, Mordents



Accented Upper Turns

Another common ornamentation in Couperin's works is the accented upper turn. It starts on the upper auxiliary, then to the lower auxiliary by passing through the main note before returning to the main note again. It should be legato. Halford explained clearly in the foreword of her edition of Couperin's *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord* that Couperin's turns should be rhythmically divided equally over the duration of the note (see Example 22).⁷⁶ Further, Donington suggested accenting the initial note as it creates intended dissonance.⁷⁷

Example 22: Halford, *Preface* vs. Couperin's *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, Turns



⁷³ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 200.

⁷⁴ Bach, *Essay*, 149.

⁷⁵ Couperin. *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 15.

⁷⁶ Couperin. *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 18.

⁷⁷ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 211.

Over-Dotting

Halford noted that over-dotting produces a feeling of majesty and exhilaration.⁷⁸ It is a Baroque practice that was used on dotted rhythm. This tradition is to lengthen the dotted note, and to delay the following shorter note. Leopold Mozart mentioned in his treatise that a dotted note should be held longer than it is notated in slow pieces to prevent the performance from sounding sleepy.⁷⁹ Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1752-1814), eighteenth century German composer, said that when the dotted rhythm appears one after the other, one should emphasize the longer note by playing the short note as short as possible.⁸⁰ Donington also suggested that over-dotting should be practiced when the dotted rhythm becomes a distinct rhythmic figure in a musical context.⁸¹ The other occasion that over-dotting should be performed is when rhythmic inequality is practiced in the same movement that utilizes dotted rhythms, mentioned earlier in this chapter. The ratio between the dotted note and the short note is left to the performer's discretion. Quantz mentioned in his treatise that the duration of the short note in a dotted rhythm is not concrete.⁸² It also depends on the tempo of the movement. When the tempo of the movement is slower, it leaves more space for over-dotting to be less mathematical and extreme. C.P.E. Bach said in his essay that it is possible that the notated length of the note following the dot may be in its best form if the tempo of the movement is too quick to practice over-dotting.⁸³ On the contrary, Quantz said that the note after the dotted eighth, dotted sixteenth, or dotted thirty-second note must be played as a thirty-second note, or sixty-fourth note to express the

⁷⁸ Couperin. *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 24.

⁷⁹ Mozart. *A Treatise on the Fundamental*, 41.

⁸⁰ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 378.

⁸¹ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 375.

⁸² Quantz. *On Playing the Flute*, 67.

⁸³ Bach, *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, 157.

animation regarding the tempo is slow or fast.⁸⁴ In addition, while many scholars advise to lengthen the dot for over-dotting, Johann Carl Friedrich Rellstab (1759-1813), German composer from the eighteenth century, thought that the dot should be performed as rest in most occasions.⁸⁵

In addition to over-dotting, there are other forms of rhythmic alteration. For example, C.P.E. Bach said that it sounds insipid if an eighth note in *adagio* movements is not dotted when there are sixteenth notes that follow it.⁸⁶ According to his principle, notes that follow an eighth note in this situation should be performed in the most rapid manner.⁸⁷ Moreover, when there are duple notes against triplets in different voices in Baroque music, the duple notes should adjust to the triplets rather than causing cross rhythm.⁸⁸ For instance, if there are two duple eighth notes against triplet eighth notes, the two duple notes should be performed in triplet rhythm consisting of a quarter note and eighth note occupying the same temporal space, so that the second written “eighth note” in the duple rhythm can sound simultaneously with the last note from the triplet. Additionally, if a dotted eighth-sixteenth-note figure is found against a triplet in simple meter, the dotted rhythm needs to adjust to the triplet rhythm in a similar manner.⁸⁹ Even though there are no notated examples of this “duple against triple” pattern in Couperin’s suite, it is still possible to cause cross rhythm if one part is performed with rhythmic inequality while the other part is a dotted rhythm. The *sarabande* from the sixth movement of the Ninth suite has an example of this (see Example 23). In the beginning of the *sarabande, La Noble Fierté*, if the

⁸⁴ Quantz. *On Playing the Flute*, 67.

⁸⁵ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 379.

⁸⁶ Bach, *Essay*, 372.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 399.

⁸⁹ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 400.

basso continuo part is performed with rhythmic inequality with the ratio of 2:1, the eighth note in the third beat of the solo part would be either ahead of or behind the last eighth note of the basso continuo part, the former if the solo part is performed as notated, and the latter if over-dotting is applied to the dotted rhythm. Therefore, the solution is to make the eighth note after the dotted rhythm align with the last eighth note of the measure in the basso continuo part.

Example 23: Couperin, *Nevuième Concert, La Noble Fierté*, mm. 1-4, Rhythmic inequality vs. over-dotting



Vibrato

The use of vibrato is a controversial subject in Baroque performance style in the flute community. In modern flute playing, vibrato is part of the tone production to animate the sound and help with expression. Some of the most famous flute pedagogues nowadays, such as Michel Debost, believe that vibrato should be used almost all of the time.⁹⁰ However, vibrato is considered by scholars to be an ornamentation to enliven the tone in the Baroque period.⁹¹ The production of flute vibrato in the Baroque period was done by quick finger movement above the tone hole, and was known as *flattement*. The finger movement can easily control the speed and amplitude of the finger vibrato, except when one plays the low D natural; no finger or tone hole can be used to produce finger vibrato. In this case, one can shake the flute in order to create the

⁹⁰ Michel Debost. *The Simple Flute*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1933), 262.

⁹¹ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 167.

vibrato artificially while finger vibrato does not work.⁹² *Flattement* was the standard documented form of vibrato during for the Baroque period. The modern breath-based vibrato was documented later in the eighteenth century. Charles de Lusse (1720-1774) wrote in 1707 in *L'Art de la flute traversière* that vibrato could be produced by the active movement of the lungs as “hou, hou, hou, hou.”⁹³

Today, breath based vibrato gives much more flexibility for flutists to decide when to apply vibrato, as finger vibrato is only possible for longer notes. How often performers should use vibrato in Baroque music becomes a topic with which current flutists concern themselves frequently. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), Genevan composer, wrote in his *Traité de la Viole* that vibrato should be used on all notes that are long enough to permit it, and it should last to until the end of the note.⁹⁴ Quantz did not mention the use of vibrato specifically in *On Playing the Flute*, but he did suggest using *flattemens* over long notes, especially in *adagio* movements.⁹⁵ C.P.E. Bach said in his treatise that vibrato should be used on long expressive notes on the clavichord.⁹⁶ Donington sums up in *Interpretation of Early Music* that the use of vibrato should be done in moderation, as excessive vibrato damages the integrity of early music.⁹⁷ However, it is an illusion to believe that early performers preferred to perform with straight tone. He also said that vibrato should always be the ingredient for the music making.⁹⁸ In

⁹² Hotterterre, *Principles of the Flute*, 45.

⁹³ Mather. *Interpretation of French*, 65.

⁹⁴ Translation is from: Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 168 “The *Batement* ...is used in all contexts where the length of the note permits, and should last as long as the note.”

⁹⁵ Quantz. *On Playing the Flute*, 165-6, 162, 165.

⁹⁶ Quantz. *On Playing the Flute*, 157.

⁹⁷ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 170.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

general, it seems that most scholars tend to believe that vibrato is more commonly used on longer notes, but the decision must always be made based the sensitivity and good taste.

Tempo

Baroque music generally leaves great flexibility for performers to choose their tempo. Nowadays, one can often find recordings by various performers playing with extremely different tempos. Quantz mentioned that people can choose to play a piece slightly slower or quicker depending on their disposition and spirit, but what matters is that they deliver the spirit of the music in the performance.⁹⁹ He warned that choosing tempi too slow for slow movement or too fast for fast movements was a common mistake.¹⁰⁰ Couperin said that he would prefer a performance that touches him with expression and good taste than one that surprises him with an excessively fast tempo.¹⁰¹ Some Baroque composers indicated tempos with terms such as *adagio*, *allegro*, *presto*...which give a clear idea for the speed of the movements. Donington also provided the metronome equivalents for these tempo terms based on Quantz's description (Table 2).

Table 2: Donington, *Interpretation of Early Music*, Metronome equivalents based on Quantz

⁹⁹ Donington, Robert. "On Interpreting Early Music." *Music & Letters* 28, No. 3, (2019): 239.

¹⁰⁰ Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 378.

¹⁰¹ Couperin. *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 23.

M.M. numbers based on Quantz

I: Allegro assai (including Allegro molto, Presto, <i>etc.</i>)	♩ = 160
II: Allegro (including Poco Allegro, Vivace, <i>etc.</i>)	♩ = 120
III: Allegretto (including Allegro ma non tanto, non troppo, non presto, moderato, <i>etc.</i>)	♩ = 80
IV: Adagio cantabile (including Cantabile, Arioso, Larghetto, Soave, Dolce, Poco Andante, Affettuoso, Pomposo, Maestoso, Alla Siciliana, Adagio spiritoso, <i>etc.</i>)	♩ = 40
V: Adagio assai (including Adagio pesante, Lento, Largo assai, Mesto, Grave, <i>etc.</i>)	♩ = 20

However, French Baroque music often gives poetic titles for movements, so that performers must decide the appropriate tempo that suits the character of the movement properly. The dance type of movement also suggested its appropriate tempo. In addition to the metronome equivalents that Donington provided in *The Interpretation of Early Music*, he also elaborated upon the characters that were commonly used in the Baroque era in the thirty-seventh chapter of his treatise. In conclusion, tempo choices can be based on their meter, dance type, tempo terminology, or descriptive titles, etc., and one can accordingly adjust based on the taste of the performer and the character and expression of the movement.

Dynamics and Balance

Even though dynamic markings can be found in many modern editions of repertoire from the Baroque period, including Rampal's edition of *Concerts Royaux No. 4* and Crussard's edition of *Neuvième Concert*, they cannot be found in facsimiles of the manuscripts, as they do not exist in their original form. Therefore, the dynamic markings simply represent the interpretation of the editor, and by no mean are mandatory for performer. Since performing with crescendos and diminuendos are impossible on the harpsichord, the use of texture and ornamentation are vital to expressive performance. In addition, adding voices and overlapping harmony aid to thicken the

texture dynamically, as mentioned in the first chapter. Couperin also used dissonances and the repercussion of trills and mordents to increase the volume.¹⁰² C.P.E. Bach said that, generally, dissonance should be louder to accentuate and stimulate the expression, and consonance needs to be softer to calm the emotion down.¹⁰³ Halford mentioned that Couperin spread the voices apart when he intended to decrease the volume.¹⁰⁴ Therefore, some score study is necessary for performers to observe when the loud and soft dynamics should occur. Regarding balance, Donington mentioned that it is a common mistake for modern performers to play the basso continuo part too softly and have too little going on.¹⁰⁵ He suggested that it is important to develop an individual keyboard part that is more active when the solo part is not dominating, but to thin out when the solo part is more active.¹⁰⁶ It is recommended that bass instruments double the bass line to add support and fullness when the circumstance allows.¹⁰⁷

Phrasing

As mentioned before, Couperin used breath marks to separate his phrases. He suggested that performers need to separate the phrase with a moment of slight silence when the breath marking is used.¹⁰⁸ He also advises that these brief pauses needs to be quite subtle and cannot

¹⁰² Couperin, *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 24.

¹⁰³ Donington, "On Interpreting Early Music", 234.

¹⁰⁴ Quantz. *On Playing the Flute*, 67.

¹⁰⁵ Donington, "On Interpreting Early Music", 239.

¹⁰⁶ Donington, "On Interpreting Early Music", 230.

¹⁰⁷ Donington. *The Interpretation of Early Music*, 379.

¹⁰⁸ Couperin. *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 22.

cause a delay in the next beat.¹⁰⁹ Halford mentioned that being able to communicate nuances of phrasing is part of acquiring good taste.¹¹⁰

This chapter is by no means intended to address all the principles of French Baroque performance practice, but to provide knowledge essential for performing Couperin's *Neuvième Concert* and the other thirteenth suites in an appropriate manner. Many modern performers have little interest in historically informed performance. While there are many valid possibilities for interpretation in most works, there are practices that are clearly out of style. It is increasingly important for today's musicians to have knowledge to perform in a historically credible manner. This ability must be developed by hearing as many performances on original instruments as possible, by learning the principles of performance practice, and by studying the complete scores in order to learn the "music" and not just the "part."

¹⁰⁹ Couperin. *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 23.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

CHAPTER 4

PERFORMANCE NOTES

This chapter provides the author's performance suggestions including tempos, expressive characters, ratio for rhythmic inequality, solutions for ornamentation issues, etc. for each movement of Couperin's *Neuvième Concert* based on the principles that this study provides in the previous chapter. It also discusses the general styles and the dance basis, where applicable, of each movement.

Le Charme

The first movement, *Le Charme*, was written in polyphonic texture with considerable use of imitative technique, which is not usual for early French music. The use of sequences and recurring patterns reveals its Italian influence. However, the melodic lines are mostly in stepwise motion, especially the sixteenth notes. Therefore, the sixteenth notes in this movement are suitable to be performed with rhythmic inequality. This is a typical characteristic of French tradition.

The tempo of common meter in Baroque music is often slow and heavy, and should be counted by four.¹¹¹ Georg Muffat (1653-1704), French Baroque composer, said that movements in common meter should not be faster than the tempo of *andante*.¹¹² According to the descriptive words of *Gracieusement*, *Gravement* from Couperin, this movement should be in a tempo that is just fast enough to be in four. However, Meller said that this movement is more gracious than grave.¹¹³ It would be reasonable for performers to take a tempo that is close to *andante* to

¹¹¹ Mather, *Interpretation of French Music*, 9.

¹¹² Couperin. *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 23.

¹¹³ Wilfrid Meller. *François Couperin and the French Classical Tradition* (London: Faber and Faber, 1987), 232.

perform this movement at a more fluent pace. The rhythmic inequality ratio should be gentle and almost close to be even in this movement, as the character is supposed to be tender. Based on the character on the movement, sharp over-dotting is not appropriate due to the graciousness and the slow tempo of this movement.

L'engoïement

Even though this movement is not titled *Allemande*, it shares some of the same characteristics from the movements that are titled *Allemande* in Couperin's other suites. These characteristics include the use of imitative technique, the movement always starting on the upbeat, binary form structure, and the common time meter. Couperin also included descriptive words such as *legerement*, *gayement*, *vivement*, etc. to characterize *allemande* movements which suggest a slightly faster tempo. According to the title, *L'engoïement*, this movement is supposed to be playful with positive energy. Meanwhile, *allemande* is supposed to be in a moderate rather than faster tempo or equal or close to *allegro*. Meller mentioned that this movement is an *allemande légères*, which is a type of *allemande* that is light and flowing in a relaxed moderate tempo.¹¹⁴

Based on the characters that Couperin described, the sixteenth-note rhythmic inequality should be greater in this movement than the previous. However, one may consider choosing a ratio that makes the shorter sixteenth notes under rhythmic inequality different than the sixteenth notes following the dotted notes. The other solution is to perform the sixteenth notes following the dotted notes with the same length as the shorter sixteenth notes in the unequal pattern.

¹¹⁴ Meller. *François Couperin and the French Classical Tradition*, 215.

Les Graces

This movement is a French *courante*, which is rhythmically more sophisticated than many of the other dance types. The characteristics of the French *courante* and its comparison to the Italian *corrente* are described in chapter 2. This movement is densely ornamented as well. The harmony in this movement is more chromatic than some of the other movements. According to the title of this movement, it should have a noble and graceful character. In the Baroque period, music in 3/2 meter was performed in a relatively slow tempo with tenderness and sentiment.¹¹⁵ One may choose to perform this particular movement in a more fluid tempo, but it should be stable enough that the ornamentation can still be clearly performed and the difference between the measures in 2/3 and 6/4 meter easily distinguished.

Example 24: Couperin, *Nevuième Concert, Les Graces*, mm. 9-10, Rhythmic inequality vs. over-dotting



Inequality should be applied on the eighth notes with a gentle ratio such as 3:2. Sharp over-dotting is appropriate for the nobility of this movement. All notes after dotted eighth notes or dotted quarter notes should be equally short in their over-dotting. However, if the dotted rhythm and inequality occur at the same time in different voices, the eighth note after the dotted quarter note needs to be aligned with the shorter unequal note in another voice (see Example 24) to avoid cross rhythm. There are also many passing *appoggiaturas* as well as the regular

¹¹⁵ Mather, *Interpretation of French Music*, 18.

appoggiaturas. Performer needs to clearly identify both *appoggiaturas* to play them with contrasting manners.

Le je-ne-sçay-quoy

Movements in 2/4 meter are expected to be in a fast tempo. Couperin gave a humorous title to this movement, meaning “I do not know what.” It refers to an appealing quality of person that simply cannot be defined. Meller described the main theme of this movement as a “cheeky triadic figure”¹¹⁶ It should be performed with lightness, casualness, and humor. One can choose to perform the sixteenth notes with rhythmic inequality. However, as there are not many sixteenth notes in this movement, rhythmic inequality does not seem to significantly enhance the character in this movement, especially with a fast tempo.

La Vivacité

La Vivacité is the most virtuosic movement of the *Neuvième Concert*. The basso continuo part only has a quarter note on every other beat in the beginning of the movement, which is an indication for fast tempo. Since this movement is supposed to be in a fast tempo, rhythmic inequality may make the sixteenth notes sound slow and sluggish. The performer may choose to play the sixteenth notes evenly, or with inequality that is less extreme. Over-dotting is not necessary as well because of the rapid tempo

This movement has many passages that consist of scales of sixteenth notes in both the solo part and the basso continuo part. The parts are musically more equal to each other than in other movements, as the basso continuo part consistently responds to the melodic line in the solo

¹¹⁶ Meller, *François Couperin and the French Classical Tradition*, 233.

part. There are also many canonic passages. These are all qualities that are characteristic to Italian style.

La Noble Fierté

This movement is a *sarabande* in 3 meter, which is common in French airs. 3 meter is not supposed to be excessively slow. However, Meller said that a *sarabande* should be slower and more noble than a *courante*.¹¹⁷ It is a serious, tender, and melancholic movement. The second beat of *sarabande* in certain measures is normally stressed in a manner that suggest a second downbeat, with the third beat hardly being present.¹¹⁸ In *La Noble Fierté*, the second beat often has the longest time value and sometimes has ornamentations, both indicating stress for the second beat. Couperin used many big leaps in this extremely lyrical movement, which is an Italian trait. The biggest leaps are dramatic descending tenths, which matches the grave character suggested by the title.

Inequality should be applied on the eighth notes in this movement with a gentle ratio. This movement has the same issue between over-dotting and inequality as the third movement, *Les Graces*. Therefore, the same solution can be applied in this movement as well. Inequality is necessary in this movement, as there is an *appoggiatura* on a quarter note in the flute part that is supposed to be performed evenly with the main note but also needs to resolve the dissonance with the eighth note in the basso continuo part (see Example 25). In the second measure of this movement, the *appoggiatura* and its main note would be parallel ninths with the basso continuo if both parts are performed evenly. Therefore, the first F of this measure in the basso continuo

¹¹⁷ Meller, *François Couperin and the French Classical Tradition*, 217.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

needs to be prolonged, so that the first F in the flute part can resolve the dissonance while the *appoggiatura* still has the value that it should.

Example 25: Couperin, *Nevuïème Concert, Les Graces*, mm. 2-3, *Appoggiaturas* and inequality



La Douceur

Tunley mentioned that this movement is a *forlane*, which is supposed to be a graceful dance of flirtation.¹¹⁹ It was a dance type that originated in northern Italy, and became popular in France at the end of the seventeenth century. It is usually in a four-bar phrase structure. The fourth suite of Couperin's *Concerts Royaux* and *Nouveaux Concerts* is the only suite that has a movement titled with the name of the dance, *Forlane*. It shows similar characteristics with *La Douceur*, including a four-bar phrase structure and compound meter (see Example 26).

Example 26: Couperin, *Quatrième Concert, Forlane Rondeau*, mm. 1-10



¹¹⁹ Tunley, *François Couperin and 'The Perfection of Music'*, 85.

3/8 meter is supposed to be faster than 3/4 meter and should be beaten in one.¹²⁰ Although it is an expressive movement, the tempo should not be too slow. It should be in a tempo that is stable but also flowing. Rhythmic inequality may add elegance to the character, but the ratio should not be extreme.

L'et Coetera

This movement consists of two minuetts. A minuet is a fairly fast dance that is elegant and graceful. Setting two minuetts in succession is a common practice in the Baroque period. When the first minuet is in a major key, the second minuet is usually in the parallel minor, and vice versa. As such, the first minuet of *L'et Coetera* is in e minor, while the second minuet is in E major. The second movement should be performed in a slightly lighter tempo. Inequality should be applied on the sixteenth notes in this movement, but the ratio should not be extreme due to the fast tempo.

Accents following dotted quarter notes in the second minuet should be performed as the value of shortened sixteenth notes instead of eighth notes (see Example 27). One should not confuse their length with *appoggiaturas*, as accents need to be performed quickly and lightly in most cases.

Example 27: Couperin, *Nevuïème Concert*, *L'st Coetera*, mm. 16-20, Accents

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. It consists of two staves, a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/8. The score is numbered 16 at the beginning. The music features a series of dotted quarter notes in the treble staff, each with an accent mark (^) above it. The bass staff provides a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

¹²⁰ Mather, *Interpretation of French Music*, 24.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

As one of the earliest composers to bring the Italian influence into French tradition to create a unique style, Couperin became one of the most influential French composers in the Baroque period. While *Concerts Royaux* and *Nouveaux Concerts* show significant Italian influence in Couperin's compositional style in comparison to the earlier French works by Lully, Couperin still maintained many characteristic French traditions in these suites. In this dissertation, the discussion of the various aspects of Italian style in comparison to French tradition may guide the reader toward an understanding of the styles individually and their co-existence in the works of Couperin and other late Baroque French Composers. A brief guide for Baroque performance practice is provided reviewing principles on different subjects from treatises by various writers in order to guide flutists, or even other instrumentalists, to perform Couperin's *Neuvième Concert* in an appropriate performance style. This dissertation also provides a performance edition of Couperin's *Neuvième Concert* to help flutists perform this piece appropriately on the modern flute and keyboard instrument.

One of the main characteristics of French Baroque music is that the notation did not adequately notate rhythmic expectation as traditionally understood. Therefore, to perform French Baroque music in an appropriate manner requires the performer to acquire certain knowledge and to develop an understanding of proper taste as it was understood during Couperin's time. Performers at the time learned their knowledge of French manners and developed their taste from their teachers and listening to performances. However, Couperin mentioned that he had heard performers often interpret his works inappropriately.¹²¹ It is much more difficult for modern

¹²¹ Couperin, *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord*, 14, 33.

performers to acquire the appropriate performance style since we cannot rely on learning by imitation anymore. Therefore, it is important to study the examples that remain from written treatises and that other modern scholars provide. The author hopes that this dissertation provides an accessible reference for readers to study Couperin's *Neuvième Concert* with adequate knowledge, use it as an example to study other French Baroque repertory, and, most importantly, develop an interest in acquiring a deeper understanding of French Baroque music and Baroque performance practice.

APPENDIX A

PRACTICAL EDITION OF FRANÇOIS COUPERIN'S

NEUVIÈME CONCERT, "RITRATTO DELL' AMORE"

Preface

Couperin's *Neuvième Concert, Ritratto dell' amore* is one of fourteen suites that he composed between 1714 and 1715 for the pleasure of Louis XIV. It was published in 1724 as part of his collection *Les Goûts-Réunis*. Couperin did not specify the instrumentation for these suites. This edition has been created as a practical performing score arranged for modern flute and keyboard (harpsichord or piano). The *Neuvième Concert* was originally written in E major, but the editor transposes the entire work to G major because the original key is too low for the modern flute to be completely effective. Even though the pitch is transposed a minor third up in this edition, the resulting key, based on A=440, is still within the range of variability of what we consider concert pitch as used in the Baroque period. The editor's goal in creating a keyboard realization was a transparent accompaniment that would both allow a skilled continuo player to elaborate, and a modern pianist to perform as written. However, keyboardists must treat the left hand part as the true duet partner to the flute, since that is the only other line Couperin wrote. Stressing the right hand part or creating countermelodies above the left hand part is not appropriate for the style.

Performance suggestions such as suggested tempo, editorial articulations, ratio for *note inégales* (rhythmic inequality), rhythmic alternation, dynamics, etc. are provided in this practical edition for performers who are not familiar with Baroque performance style. Editorial slurs are notated with dotted lines. All dynamic markings are merely suggestions by the editor, and they may be altered at the performer's discretion. The editor also provides interpretive suggestions based on his study of Baroque performance style for his dissertation on the *Neuvième Concert*.




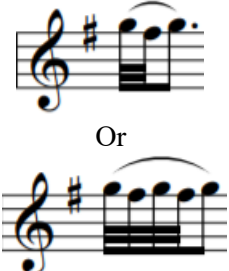
Flutists must understand the practice of rhythmic inequality as they approach this suite. In Baroque music, performers are allowed and even expected to play unequal certain groups of

notes that are notated with equally values, most specifically when they are of a short time value. There is only one rhythmic value that can be applied inequality for each movement. They are either sixteenth notes or eighth notes in most cases. Principles for applying inequality and suggestions for specific use in each movement are provided in the edition. It is recommended to study Couperin's *The Art of Playing the Harpsichord* to understand further the notion of inequality (*notes inégales*).

Notations and the Realizations of Ornamentations

Table A.1 addresses the various ornamentations used in Couperin's *Neuvième Concert*. The realization is based on the instructions from Couperin's *The Arts of Playing the Harpsichord*. Couperin also provided a table for the explanation of his notation for ornamentations in his *Pièces de Clavecin* that includes additional types of ornamentations that are used in his other works (see Table A.2). Halford also included Couperin's ornamentations table in her foreword to Couperin's *The Arts of Playing the Harpsichord* with her detailed explanations.

Table A.1: Notations and the realization of ornamentations from Couperin's *Neuvième Concert*

Notation	Realization	Note
		Trill
	<p style="text-align: center;">Or</p> 	Mordent





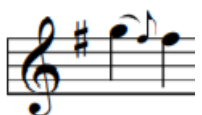





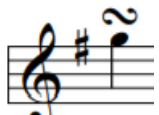



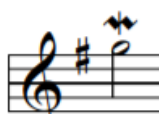



Notation	Realization	Note
		Appoggiatura
		Passing appoggiatura
		Accent
		Trill with notated upper appoggiatura for longer note value
		Trill with notated upper appoggiatura for shorter note value
		Accented upper turn
		Mordent with appoggiatura
		Long mordent (It depends on the tempo to decide how many notes for each beat)
		Long trill (It depends on the tempo to decide how many notes for each beat.)

Table A.2: Couperin, *Pièces de Clavecin*, Explanation of notations of ornamentations

Explication des Agrémens, et des Signes.

1 *Signe +*
Pincé - Simple.
Effet.

2 C'est la valeur des Notes qui doit déterminer la durée des pincés, des portés-de Voie; et des Tremblemens. On doit entendre par le mot de durée le plus ou le moins de Battemens, ou Vibrations.

3 *Signe +*
Pincé - Double.
Effet.

4 *Signes, pour les Renvois des Reprises.*

5 *Signe +*
Port de voie Simple.
Effet.

6 *Signe +*
Port de voie Coulé.

7 *Signe +*
Port de voie Double au Pinçé.
Effet.

8 *Signes pour les renvoi des Notes finales.*

9 Tremblement appuyé, et lié.

10 Tremblement ouvert.

11 Tremblement fermé.

12 Tremblement lié sans être appuyé.
Effet.

13 *Liaisons.*
Signes, pour marquer les Notes qui doivent être liées, et coulées.

14 Tremblement détaché.
Effet.

15 *Signe +*
Accent.

16

Arpeggiement, en montant.

Effet.

17

Pizzicatiés, et Bémolisés.

Effet. Effet. Effet.

18

Arpeggiement, en descendant.

Effet.

19

Pizzicatiés Continú.

Effet.

20

Coulés, dont les points marquent que la seconde note de chaque tems doit être plus appuyées.

21

Les Notes quarrées ne servent que lorsque les Clavecins sont au ravalement par en bas.

23

Tremblement continu.

Effet.

24

Tierce coulée, en montant.

Effet.

22

Signes pour la fin des Rondans, et de leurs couplets.

26

Tierce coulée en descendant.

Effet.

25

Double. Double.

Effet. Effet.

27

Aspiration.

Effet. Effet.

28

Unisson.

29

Suspension.

Effet.

Cette barre | marque que lorsqu'il se rencontre que la même note est écrite dans la main droite, et dans la main gauche (ce qui suppose un Unisson) il faut que l'une, et l'autre main touchent la note comme cy-dessus

APPENDIX B

NEUVIÈME CONCERT SCORE

Neuvième Concert

Intitulé Ritratto dell' amore

for flute and harpsichord/ piano

François Couperin
ed. Ieng Wai Wong

Le Charme
Gracieusement, et gravement (♩ = 48)

Flute

Harpischord

6 6 6 6 7 — — — 6 — 6 — — 6 — 6 — 8 — 6 #6

6 — — 6 7 — — 6 — — 6 — — 6 — 8 7 — — 7

8 — — 8 — #8 — 6 — — 6 6

*Rhythmic inequality should be applied on the sixteen notes in this movement. Ratio suggestion : (3:2).

1) Editorial articulations are notated with dotted lines.

2) Over-dotting is not necessary due to the gracious character of this movement and the slow tempo.

3) The syncopated D in the keyboard right hand part still needs to be aligned with the the B in the flute part when the movement is performed with inequality.

4) Some scholars believe that rhythmic inequality is prohibited if there is a legato marking over more than two notes.

Neuvième Concert, p. 2

Handwritten fingering numbers for measures 10-19:

Measure 10: $\#3-7 \#3-$ $6 \frac{6}{4} \frac{6}{3}$ $6 7 \#3 \#5 \#3$ $8 \#3$ $\#3-6-\#6$ $5-6$ $3-6-5$ 7

Measure 13: $6-8 7$ $5 6$ $6-8 \#3$ 7 $6 8 7$

Measure 16: $7 8 6 6-8 4 7 5-6-$ 6 $3-7$

Measure 19: $5 6 8 7$ $3-5 6$ $3-7$

II

L'enjouement
Gayement (♩=76)

* Rhythmic inequality should be applied on the sixteenth notes in this movement. Ratio Suggestion (2:1)

1) the sixteenth notes following the dotted notes in this movement should be performed with the same length as the shorter sixteenth notes in the unequal pattern.

10 *f*

14 *mf*

17 *f* 2) *mp*

20 *mf*

6 7 7 - 7 7 - #3 3 - 7 6 # 6 - 7

#3 - 7 6 # 6 - 7

6 3

6 3 - 1

#3 6 - 4 6 6 7 6 7 6 7 # 6 4 3 - 7

7 5 # 3 6 3 3 # 3 4 5 # 3 -

6

2) If this movement is not performed with rhythmic inequality, this sixteenth should be played without over-dotting because of the sixteenth note in the basso continuo part. If it is performed with rhythmic inequality, the sixteenth also needs to be aligned with the sixteenth note in the basso continuo part.

24

6 3 7 6 #6 #3 6 7- 6 6 #3 6 6-7 4 5 #3-

28

6 6 #6 5-3- 6- 5-3- 6 5 7 4 3

31

7 7 6 5 6 3-7

33

f

f

6 7 7- 7 7- 7 6 # 6- 7 5 3-

III

Les Graces (♩ = 112)
Courante Française

*Rhythmic inequality should be applied on the eighth notes in this movement. Ratio suggestion : (3:2).

*The Performer must understand the interplay of duple (6/4) measures and triple (3/2) measures, normally based on the harmonic changes implied by the bass line. Couperin does not change the meter signature, but relies on the performer's recognition of the needed groupings. The measures that are in (6/4) include mm.3-5, m.7, mm.17-20, and m.22.

- 1) If the movement is performed with the recommended inequality, the upbeat from the beginning would be short rather than a full length eighth note. Therefore, the flutist would need to adjust the upbeat to start with the keyboard part at the same time
- 2) This is a movement that one can perform with both inequality and over-dotting. However, the eighth notes after dotted notes need to be aligned with the eighth notes in another voice if dotted rhythm occurs at the same time as unequal eighth notes in another voice. Cross rhythm is not recommended.
- 3) One can perform with more sharply overdotted rhythm when there are no eighth notes in other voices.
- 4) The appoggiatura should be performed before the down beat as a passing appoggiatura.
- 5) the trill needs to be delayed slightly as the upper auxiliary and the previous note are the same pitches.
- 6) All notes following dotted eighths or dotted quarters should be equally short in their over-dotting, except when rhythmic inequality occurs in the another part at the same time.

mf

mf

6 6/5 7/3 6 6/4 3 #5 3

13

13

6 4/3-6 7 #3 4/2 6/5 #6 7 6 7 4/3 4/3 #6 7 6/5 4 #3

17

17

5 4/6 7/5 6 7 6/3 8 6 6

21

21

6 6/5 7/3

7) Although the three notes under the slur needs to be performed with equal length, the preceding upbeat D should be late and short to align with the A in the bass, which occurs on the short part of the unequal pair. The elements of the sequence that follows should be performed in the same manner, even though there are no eighth-note bass notes requiring alignment.

IV

Le je-ne-scay-quoy (♩=104)
Gayèment

mf

mf

6 — — 6 — — #6 — 6 6

8

Fl.

mf

mf

— 5 #3 — 6-#6- — 5- #3 5- #3 — 6 —

16

Fl.

— 5- 6- 5- #3 — 6 #6 #6 #6 5 6 #3

* Rhythm inequality is not necessary in this movement, or it could be applied to groups of two sixteenths in a proportion that would align well with the sixteens that follow dotted eighths.

Fl. *mf*

5 4 — 6 — #6 #3 5 #3 5 5 $\frac{6}{4}$ #3 — 6 $\frac{6}{4}$ #6

Fl. *mp*

$\frac{\#6}{3}$ 5 $\frac{6}{4}$ #3 #3 4 — 6 — #3 — 5 — 6 #6 #3 —

Fl. *mf*

6 — 4 #3 5 #3 6 — 6 — 7 6 — 7 6 — $\frac{6}{4}$ 3

Fl. *f* *p* *f*

— 6 — 6 — 6 — $\frac{6}{4}$ $\frac{5}{4}$ 3

La Vivacit  (♩=104)

V

6 7 6 6-6 6 4 3 6

6-8-6 5 3 2 5 6 5

#6 7 6 #3 6 #6 5 3-5

* This movement is the most virtuosic of the suite with its relatively fast groups of many sixteenth notes. The quick tempo suggests that inequality would not be appropriate here. Its use would likely slow the piece down and make the sixteenth notes seem too heavy.

1) Over-dotting is not necessary as well because of the rapid tempo.

2) Some scholars have suggested that slurred pairs indicated by the composer call for inequality. The performer could play unevenly for the marked notes in these two measures, along with shortening the sixteenth that precedes the slurred groups in both the flute part and the keyboard part.

Musical score for guitar, consisting of five systems of notation. Each system includes a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings.

System 1 (Measures 11-12): Treble clef staff shows a melodic line with slurs. Bass clef staff shows a bass line with slurs and fingerings: #3 — 6 — #3 — 6 —.

System 2 (Measures 13-14): Treble clef staff shows a melodic line with slurs. Bass clef staff shows a bass line with slurs and fingerings: 7 6 — 6 — #3 —. Dynamic markings *mp* are present in both staves.

System 3 (Measures 16-17): Treble clef staff shows a melodic line with slurs. Bass clef staff shows a bass line with slurs and fingerings: 5 — 7 — $\frac{6}{3}$ $\frac{6}{5}$ #3 6 — 3 — #3 5 — 6 — $\frac{2}{7}$ 3 — $\frac{6}{5}$ $\frac{6}{3}$ #3 —.

System 4 (Measures 19-20): Treble clef staff shows a melodic line with slurs. Bass clef staff shows a bass line with slurs and fingerings: #3 — 4 — 6 — $\frac{7}{8}$ — 5 — $\frac{6}{3}$ #3 — 4 —. Dynamic marking *mf* is present in the treble staff.

22

6 — 43 — 43 — 46 — 43 — 6 — 43 — 43 — 43 — 7 6 — 5 3

25

7 7 6 6 6 5 — 43 — 5

28

6 — 6 7 7 — 6 — 6 4 3 — 5 — 6#6

31

6 — 5 5 5 5 5 5

33

5 6 6 -7
2 5 3-

6 — 7 6 — 6 — -7
3-

La Noble Fierté
Sarabande
Gravement (♩ = 60)

VI

The musical score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 1-5) includes a flute part with dynamics *mp* and markings 1) 2) and 3). The keyboard part has dynamics *mp* and fingerings #6, 6, 5, #3, 6, 5, #3, 7. The second system (measures 6-11) includes a flute part with dynamics *mp* and fingerings 3, #3, 6, #3, #3, 5, 5, 4, 3. The third system (measures 12-15) includes a flute part with dynamics *mf* and fingerings 5, 6, 5-6, 6, 3, 7, 5.

* Rhythmic inequality should be applied on eighth notes in the movement. Suggested ratio: (2:1)

** One of characteristics of Sarabande is an emphasis on the second beat in certain measures. Here, the second beat should be equal in strength to the first when it has a longer time value or is ornamented.

1) the eighth notes after the dotted quarter notes should be adjusted and aligned with eighth notes in the bass line, if the keyboardist is performing with rhythmic inequality.

2) It is important for the keyboardist to perform with inequality, so that the appoggiatura in the flute part in m. 2 has time to resolve to the main note before the dissonance ends.

3) Over-dotting should always be applied to dotted eighth notes followed by sixteenth notes in this movement.

19

#3 5 #3 $\frac{6}{4}$ $\frac{6}{4}$ 6 3-#5 #3 $\frac{6}{4}$ $\frac{6}{5}$

Petite reprise sy lón vent.**

25

#3 7 6 3-#5 #3 $\frac{6}{4}$ $\frac{6}{5}$ #3 7

** This is an optional repeat of the last four measures.

La Douceur
Amourosement (♩=100) VII

mp

mp

mp

mf

mp

1.)

6 6 #6 8 #3 #6 — 6 — #6 — 8 — #3 — 8 — #3 —

— 6/3 #3 6 8 6 8 #6 6 — 3 — 3 — 6 —

6/3 — 7 6/3 #3 — 6 — 6/3 2/5 5/4 #3 6 — 4/4 — 7 — 6/3

* Rhythmic Inequality should be applied on the sixteenth notes in this movement. Suggested ratio: (3:2)

1) The appoggiatura here should be taken as part of the group of passing appoggiaturas in this measure and the preceding one, all of them coming before the beats. The short trill would then begin on its principle note.

24

mf

2)

43 5 7 #5 7 7 6 6 6 #3 5 8 #3

6/5 4 #3 #5 #3 #5 7 6 4 4 5 #3 5 8 #3

33

mp

mp

6 #6 6 6 5 7 3/2 6 5 #3 #6 3 6 7 6 5 5

6 #6 6 5 4 #3 7 3/2 6 5 #3 #6 3 6 7 6 5 5

42

1.

1.

4 7 #3

2) All of these appoggiaturas should be performed as passing appoggiaturas.

VIII

L'et Coetera ou Menuets
I. Partie (♩=48)

*Rhythmic inequality should be applied on sixteenth notes in this movement. Suggested ratio: 2:1

1) If the performer follows the principle of not applying rhythmic inequality when the legato marking is over more than three notes, the keyboardist will need to play these larger groups of sixteenth notes equally as well. The same applies on the second beat of m.11.

mp

mp

6 ————— 5 4 3

mf

mf

2)

6 #6 B #3 8-7 8-#3 5 6 #6

D.C. al Fine

7 7 ————— 6-5 3

* The second menuet should be performed in a slightly slower tempo.

2) Even though the main note of the accent has longer value here, accent is normally to be performed quickly and lightly, calling for a value of a shortened sixteenth note in this instance.

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