

'Le célèbre Berteau'



1 Michel-Nicholas-Bernard (1735–1784), portrait of Martin Berteau (private collection)

Anyone who has looked into the early history of the cello will have encountered Martin Berteau. In his own time he was clearly a figure of major importance as a performer, teacher and composer of music for the instrument. The authors of the earliest cello methods who were actually cellists (in contrast to Michel Corrette, who wrote methods for a variety of instruments, as well as the voice) advertised themselves as pupils of 'le célèbre Berteau'. La Borde, in his *Essai sur la musique* (1780) wrote that Berteau had contributed the most to the perfection of the cello. Jean-Louis Duport, in his important *Essai sur le doigté du violoncelle et la conduite de l'archet* (1804), wrote that 'the celebrated Berteau, who formed an epoch in the art, and whose reputation still subsists, may be considered as the creator of the violoncello'.¹ And yet, until recently, little of substance was known of Berteau. He left no written record of his obviously successful teaching methods. His compositions for cello seemed to have disappeared. Accounts of his life and career as a performer were sketchy, unreliable and padded out

with fanciful invention. However, as this article will show, it is now possible to make an assessment of him as a composer and to begin to set straight the record of his life.

F.-J. Fétis, in compiling his *Biographie universelle des musiciens* (1835–44), must have acutely felt the need to flesh out his portrayal of Berteau. Fétis is not the most reliable of sources. As Alex Hyatt King pointed out, 'Fétis was too apt to guess at dates, and his inferences from uncertain facts were dubious in the extreme'.² Nevertheless, the information provided by Fétis has been repeated almost intact in most references to Berteau. If one were to construct a typical biographical entry on Berteau, it would look something like this:

Berteau [Bertaud, Bertault, Bertau, Bertheau] (d. Paris, 1756). French gambist who, after hearing the legendary Franciscello, abandoned the viol in favor of the cello. In 1739 he made a spectacular debut at the *concert spirituel* playing a cello concerto of his own composition. He wrote other concertos and three books of sonatas for the violoncello, none of which survives. His career was ruined by an excessive fondness for wine. Nevertheless, he may be considered the founder of the French school of cello playing. Among his pupils were the elder Duport, the two Jansons and Cupis.

Only the last sentence is verifiably true. By examining, where available, the sources for these 'facts', and tracing how the information was modified in transmission, we can see how such an inaccurate portrait of Berteau came about. A lucky discovery in the British Library and an examination of the *Mercure de France* of Berteau's time revealed that it is also possible to construct a more reliable resumé of Berteau's career as performer, composer and teacher. Beyond what we can learn about Berteau, an exploration of the processes by which his reputation has come down to us may serve to caution scholars about too confidently relying on standard sources.

As the variants listed after the preferred spelling in the hypothetical entry indicate, there was an unusual degree of latitude regarding the spelling of Berteau's surname, even for the 18th century. The title page of op.1 has 'Bertau', op.2 has 'Berteau' and the death

notice reads 'Bertault'. His pupil, Cupis, wrote 'Bertaud' in one publication and 'Bertau' in another. The name appears three times in the *Mercure de France*, each time with a different spelling. Fétis opted for 'Berteau' and most writers have followed his example.

In the second edition of the *Biographie universelle* (1860–65), Fétis added a footnote to his entry on Berteau describing his efforts to ascertain Berteau's first name and date of birth. He dispatched Pierre Hédouin, a lawyer and writer on the arts, to Valenciennes, Berteau's birthplace, to search among the civil records housed there. The only reference to a Berteau that Hédouin was able to discover was a 'Corneille Berteau, musicien, né à Valenciennes en 1736, fils de Martin Berteau, musicien aussi'. It thus appears that Berteau had at least one son.³ Fétis realized that Corneille could not have performed at the *concert spirituel* at the age of three, but for some reason assumed that Martin was a brother of the cello virtuoso rather than the man for whom he was looking. Eitner, in his *Biographisch-bibliographisches Quellen-Lexikon* (1900), was the first to mention the op.2 violin sonatas and, since the title page he cited carried the composer's full name, he was also the first to include Berteau's first name.

Regarding Berteau's dates, writers before Fétis refer only to his being active in Paris around 1748. Fétis does not tell us how he obtained the information that Berteau died in 1756 in Paris, but this is the date transmitted by Riemann (1882), Schmidl (1887) and others. In a handwritten note added to a manuscript collection of violin pieces by Berteau, however, he was said to have died at Angers 'vers 1772'. Sylvia Milliot was able to settle the question by discovering Berteau's *acte de décès*, which she cites in full:

Bertault, Martin, célèbre musicien, natif des environs de Valenciennes, cy-devant de la musique du feu Roy de Pologne Stanislas, mourut à Angers le 22 Janvier 1771, âgé de 62 ans, y est inhumé le lendemain dans le grand cimetière de St-Pierre d'Angers, en présence de Jean Dujardin, Guillaume Rosé et autres musiciens de la cathédrale.⁴

Berteau was therefore born in 1708 or in the first weeks of 1709. The acceptance of the premature death date led to some curious situations; for instance Berteau's pupil, Louis-August-Joseph Janson, was only seven years old in 1756. Some writers concluded that he therefore could not, after all, have been Berteau's pupil.

According to a mid-19th-century source,⁵ as a youth Berteau went to Germany to study the viol with a

Bohemian named Kozais (or Kozecz), but then gave it up in favour of the cello. Once again, it was Fétis who diagnosed this conversion as the result of an encounter with the legendary Franciscello (Francesco Alborea). In the *MGG* article on Berteau, Roger Cotte repeats this, and furthermore gives 1713 as the year that the meeting transpired.⁶ It is unlikely that Berteau was as precocious as that date would require. Franciscello is even more legendary than Berteau. If everybody who claimed to have heard him actually did, his career would have spanned more than half a century. So while Berteau may actually have heard Franciscello, it seems equally plausible that this is only an assumption on the part of Fétis.

Berteau was not the only French cellist who was alleged to have sought out Franciscello. According to Fétis, Jean Barrière (1707–1747), at the height of his career and after having published two sets of cello sonatas, went to Italy to study with Franciscello from 1736 to 1739. Barrière did indeed take a leave of absence from the Opéra from April 1737 to Easter 1741.⁷ He spent some of that time in Italy, but not all of it, for in August and September of 1738 he performed at the *concert spirituel*.⁸ Moreover, Franciscello was employed in Vienna during those years. Another story has it that Jean-Pierre Duport sailed from Marseilles to Genoa with only the intention of hearing Franciscello perform. Having achieved this he returned to France after a stay of only three hours.⁹ It is a charming anecdote, but Franciscello seems to have died two years before Duport was born.

Berteau's spectacular debut at the *concert spirituel* in 1739 is mentioned by virtually everyone who has written about him. It has assumed the status of fact by virtue of being so often repeated in print. Yet there is no mention in the *Mercure de France* (which regularly reported on the programmes and performers at the *concert spirituel*) of Berteau ever having performed there.¹⁰ If the alleged debut were so sensational, it is unlikely that the event would be overlooked by the contemporary press. Moreover, only two of Berteau's compositions were performed at the *concert spirituel*. On 5 May 1750 'Mssrs Gaviniés, Edouard and Capel played a trio sonata by M. Bertault' and on 8 September 1753 'M. Baptiste played a violoncello sonata composed by Mr Berteau, which was applauded'.¹¹

It took only a few intermediary steps to transform this matter-of-fact account into a rave review. In his *Historisch-biographisches Lexicon der Tonkünstler* (1790), Gerber reported that in 1754 Bertaud's cello pieces

were received with acclaim at the *concert spirituel*. Twenty years later, Charon and Fayelle noted in their *Dictionnaire historique des musiciens* (1810) that Berthaud wrote violoncello sonatas and concertos which he played at the *concert spirituel* 'avec le plus grand succès'. The imaginative Fétis, who, to be fair, cited Caffiaux as his source,¹² came out with the following:

It was in 1739 that [Berteau] appeared for the first time at the *concert spirituel*, and that he excited admiration in a concerto of his composition. Not a year passed when he was not pressed to play in this institution.

Fétis, having decided that Berteau died in 1756, must have found it convenient to set the date of the debut back. Otherwise the career of 'le célèbre Berteau' would have been pathetically brief.

One can only speculate as to why Berteau apparently never played at the *concert spirituel* (perhaps his excessive fondness for wine was a factor). Certainly he enjoyed a considerable reputation among his contemporaries as a performer. Jean-Jacques Rousseau mentioned having heard him,¹³ and La Borde credited him with having contributed the most to the perfection of the cello 'by the astonishing manner in which he played it'.¹⁴ In a 1753 publication it was reported that 'nobody today can flatter himself on having more fire than M. Berteau'.¹⁵ Where then did Berteau perform? Vidal provides a possible answer: 'There was not a salon in Paris which did not vie for the pleasure of hearing him'.¹⁶ Also, as the death notice indicated, he would have performed in the service of Stanislas, King of Poland.

It is curious that neither Hubert LeBlanc in his *Defense de la basse de viole contre les entrées du violon et les prétensions du violoncel* (1740) nor Michel Corrette in his *Méthode théorique et pratique pour apprendre en peu de tems le violoncelle* (1741) mentioned Berteau. In LeBlanc's case it may be because his ire was directed more towards the violin as the challenger to the viol's soloistic eminence. He viewed the cello as little more than Sultan Violin's acolyte. Indeed, the only cellist he named is Lanzetti who, in 1736, was the first cellist to perform at the *concert spirituel*. The cellists to whom Corrette referred in his introduction, 'M^{rs} Batistin Struck et l'Abbé', belong to an earlier generation.

An amusing misunderstanding arose from Rousseau's reference to Berteau which, fortunately, has not been often repeated. Rousseau, in his discussion of string harmonics, which he called 'les sons flutés', wrote that to judge the beautiful effect of these sounds, one

needs to have heard M. Mondonville on his violin or M. Berteau on his violoncello. Gerber cited Rousseau as praising Berteau's 'Vortrage des Flageolet'. Wasielesky then made the astonishing revelation that Berteau 'also performed unusually well on the flageolet, the playing of which had been little developed'.¹⁷

One of the more curious aspects of the historical assessment of Berteau is that it not only is in part founded on performances that did not take place, but it is maintained in spite of an almost total unfamiliarity with his compositions. The only pieces for cello by Berteau that are mentioned specifically by his biographers are student pieces—a G major étude in Duport's *Essai*, an A minor étude in Brevet's *Traité du violoncelle*, op.42 (1804), and various airs and menuets in Cupis's *Recueil d'airs choisis des meilleurs auteurs* (1761). Eitner, in 1900, was the first to list the op.2 violin sonatas. And La Laurencie in 1913 was the first to mention the violin sonatas and *air varié*, which are in manuscript at the Bibliothèque Nationale, although he mistakenly assumed that they were for the cello. But no published cello sonatas by Berteau were thought to have survived. William S. Newman even asked, 'In short, did Martin Berteau actually leave any cello sonatas at all?'¹⁸

Therefore, I was amazed to find that in 1975 the British Library had acquired a set of six cello sonatas, op.1, by Martino Bertau (illus.2). Eitner noted that in 1882 the antiquarian Reeves possessed a solo for violoncello by M. Bertau in a manuscript of 26 pages. The spelling and the number of pages suggest that this is the same set of sonatas. The publication date is probably 1772, the year after Berteau's death, since a publisher's catalogue of Le Menu that is bound with the sonatas includes a *Journal... des plus jolies airs des opéras comiques* that appeared annually from 1762 to 1773, and the last year given for it in the attached advertisement is 1772.

This set of sonatas is identical to a set published in 1748 by 'Sgr. Martino' (illus.3). Other than the new title page, the 1772 publication differs from the earlier one only in that the bass line no longer has figures and the following notice has been added:

Pour donner plus de facilité aux Elèves, on a marqué les positions et le doigté des passages les plus difficiles, par des Chiffres dont voicy l'Explication Le Zero (0) indique le pouce, le Chiffre (1) indique le 1^r doigt, le Chiffre (2) le 2^d. et ainsi des autres.

SONATE g. 512 2
DA CAMERA

 Violoncello Solo Col Basso Continuo
 DEDICATE
Alli Amatori di Musica
 COMPOSTE
Dal Signor
MARTINO BERTAU.
 OPERA I.^a
 Prix en blanc 7.^s. 4.^s.
 Gravé par Richonneau)
 A PARIS
 Chez { M. Le Menu, M^{re} de Musique au No. 10. au Café d'Or.
 Et aux autres vendeurs de Musique.
 à Lyon, chez M. Cuchaud.
 à Rouen et à Dunkerque.
 A. P. D. R.

2 Title page of 1772 edition of Berteau's op.1

This set of sonatas is in many ways remarkable. Elizabeth Cowling in *The Cello* prefaces a lengthy discussion of the Martino sonatas with the observation: 'For sleuth work the most interesting problem to present itself concerning these baroque cello sonatas was to try to answer the question "Who was Sigr. Martino?"'¹⁹ There are four known surviving copies of the 1748 edition, two at the Bibliothèque Nationale where they are attributed to (Giovanni Battista) Sammartini, one at the British Library attributed to Filippo Martino, and one at the Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale in Bologna where François Martin is suggested as the possible composer. In the *New Grove* entry on François Martin, the set is included in his list of works. In *RISM* all four copies are listed under the entry of Filippo Martino. Amid all this bibliographic confusion, however, nobody has suggested that Martin Berteau is the real Signor Martino.

Mary Cyr, in the *New Grove* article on Berteau, includes among the 'Lost Works' 'Pièces, vc/bn, op.3 (?1767); Musique de violoncelle [op.4] (?1777) (and) Sonates (1783)'. Comparing this list with the facsimiles

SONATE
DA CAMERA.
 A
 Violoncello Solo,
 Col Basso Continuo.
 DEDICATE
Alli Amatori di Musica
 COMPOSTE
DAL SIG.^R MARTINO.
 Opera I.^a
 Prix en blanc 9.^s.
 Gravé par M^{re} Estien.
 A PARIS
 Chez { Le S^r La Croix, M^{re} rue du Roule, à la Croix d'Or.
 M^{re} Boivin, M^{re} rue St. Honoré, à la Règle d'Or.
 Le S^r Blanc, près la Comédie Italienne.
 Avec Privilège du Roy.

3 Title page of 1748 edition of Berteau's op.1

provided by Johansson,²⁰ we find Bailleux advertising the 'Violin Sonates opus 2' from 1767 to 1786; the Bureau d'Abonnement Musical listing the op.3 'Pièces pour Viocelle ou Basson' from 1767 to 1782; Le Menu et Boyer advertising 'musique de Violoncelle' by Berteau in 1777, which becomes 'violoncelle sonates' from 1779 to 1782; from 1783 to 1788 Boyer alone advertised 'Sonates pr Violoncelle' by Berteau. Concerning the Le Menu and Boyer sonatas, Johansson notes that in the *Annonces* of 27 February 1775; 'In the advertisement the composer's name is given as Martino Bertau.' As no opus number is given for the sonatas advertised by Le Menu and Boyer, and after 1782 by Boyer, it seems probable that they all refer to the c1772 publication, or republication, of the 'Martino' sonatas and so are, after all, not lost. We are thus left with only the op.3 'Pièces pour Viocelle ou Basson' and possibly some concertos unaccounted for. One fact is evident—Berteau has no op.1 listed under that name.

Why did Berteau publish the 1748 sonatas under a pseudonym and why were they reissued under his name a year after his death? Perhaps in 1748 Berteau

could not afford or had difficulty in or could not be bothered with obtaining the *privilege* that was required for all publication in France in this period. I have found no *privilege* for any Sigr. Martino, and the only one listed for Berteau is: '22 avril 1751. p.g. pour 10 ans à Martineau Bertheau pour des Sonates de violon dédiées à l'ambassadeur de Holland (Lestevenon)'.²¹ Perhaps Berteau was well known in musical circles of mid-century Paris as Signor Martino. There is a slight hint that the Martino cello sonatas may have been identified with him. The earliest biographers identify Berteau as a famous cellist active in Paris around 1748.²²

The addition of fingering to the 1772 edition suggests a pedagogical bent. The timing of its publication might indicate the sincere efforts of a former student to pay homage to the memory of a revered teacher, but a student who at the same time had an eye on the market. Two of Berteau's pupils published methods—Tillièrre in 1764 and Cupis in 1772. Each of them identified himself as an 'élève du célèbre Berteau'. Strangely enough Tillièrre's was advertised ten years after its publication in the September 1774 volume of the *Mercure de France*, perhaps to promote its sales as a result of competition from Cupis's newer method: The notice begins: 'This method reunites the principles by which the late Bertau and M. Tillièrre his student have succeeded in mastering the violoncello and rendering it an instrument able to execute not only all sorts of basses, but even sonatas . . .'²³ We cannot ascertain for certain who was responsible for the reissuing of the op.1 cello

sonatas nor what prompted it, but either of these two pedagogues would be likely candidates.

The discovery of the op.1 sonatas allows us for the first time to examine concert music for the cello by this important cellist. Along with the violin sonatas, they provide some basis for an assessment of Berteau as a composer. The first five sonatas in the set give the impression of a virtuoso exploring the technical limits of his instrument. The sixth is a trio sonata in E minor for two cellos and continuo; this is more conservative in its technical demands than the five solo sonatas.²⁴ In these Berteau exploits the entire range of the cello. He makes use of four clefs: bass, alto, tenor and soprano. Thumb position is required in all these sonatas, and the passage in ex.1 is right at the end of the baroque fingerboard.

Multiple stops abound in all the solo sonatas. Berteau treats them in two different ways. In some passages he writes two independent lines, yielding an accompanied duet for one (ex.2); in others he writes in chordal fashion, as in the *Vivace* passage in ex.3. In the last variation from the second sonata, the performer would have to decide whether to roll the chords or to break them up into some sort of pattern (ex.4). Berteau makes his intentions clear in an analogous passage from the third sonata (ex.5).

If some readers find this last example familiar, it is because Berteau's third sonata is the source for the so-called Sammartini sonata in G major, familiar to generations of cellists as a standard piece in the repertory. So it turns out that we have, after all, long been acquainted with a work of Berteau's. The sonata

Ex.1 Martin Berteau, op.1, no.5, iii



Ex.2 Op.1, no.2, ii



Ex.3 Op.1, no.1, ii



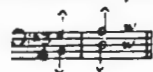
Ex.4 Op.1, no.2, iii, variation 7



was resurrected in 1911 by Alfred Moffat, who devoted much of his energy to rediscovering forgotten music. This was followed by three other editions and even a recording.²⁵ It was perhaps Moffat who, confronted with only 'Sigr. Martino', decided that this must refer to Sammartini. Less forgivable are the editorial 'Improvements' he and subsequent editors committed. They not only tampered with the bass line by introducing chromatic anachronisms, and added suspicious slurs across bar lines to the solo voice, but

4 Advertisement of 1748 edition of Berteau's op.1

*Lorsque l'on rencontrera des Chevrone bristés
dessus et dessous les Notes, par Exemple ?*



*il faut placer les doigts naturellement comme
les notes sont marquées, en les pressant
très légèrement sur les Cordes, et en tirant de
grande coups d'Archet, ce qui forme les sons
harmoniques.*

5 Finale of a sonata in A major for violin by Berteau in the composer's own hand (Paris, Bibliothèque National Ms 3221¹)

they also omitted the double stops from the second movement. This movement may be familiar to theatre-goers, as it was used in Bernard Pomerance's play *The Elephant Man* (ex.6). Worse yet, modern editors omitted the fourth movement, an Amoroso Rondeau with the principal theme written almost entirely in double-stopped harmonics (ex.7).

As indicated by Rousseau, Berteau was known for his exploitation of harmonics. The second page of both editions of the op.1 sonatas bears the notice shown as illus.4. In addition to the Amoroso Rondeau, harmonics are used in two of the variations from the second sonata (ex.8).

Berteau was not the only innovative French cellist in this period. There is an extraordinary passage in the first movement of a sonata by François Martin (op.2,

Paris 1746), who was one of the men credited with the Martino sonatas. It involves an arpeggiated passage that at first glance appears impossible to play (ex.9). One might be tempted to give the bottom note to the continuo cellist since he is tacit for the passage. But Martin has written 'Menton' (chin) above the staff, and, sure enough, by leaning the side of one's chin on the neck of the cello (a baroque cello—it might not work on a modern end-pinned steel-stringed cello), the passage becomes negotiable. This is a rare example of the chin-stop on the 18th-century cello.

Berteau's op.1 cello sonatas are technically demanding, but grateful and appealing as well. Along with sonatas by such contemporary composers as Lanzetti, Barrière and Martin, they may help to correct the impression that the cello was a late bloomer and

14 *Amorgoso*
Rond. f.
Fine
Dacapo f.

(a) variation 3

3^e
 6^e

(b) variation 6

6^e

Arp.
Allegro

that 18th-century cellists spent most of their time languishing in the bass line.

In addition to Berteau's op.2 set of six violin sonatas, the Bibliothèque Nationale has four sonatas and an Air Varié for violin in a manuscript that was copied, according to Milliot, by Abbé Roze.²⁶ Two of the sonatas are different versions of the same piece and another is the same as the fourth sonata in op.2, both labelled 'Gaviniés'. The date 1759 is added to the first

page, and at the end of the A major sonata (illus.5) is written:

The last two pages of this sonata are in the hand of the author, one of the foremost violoncellists who ever appeared in France. He had for pupils the Jansons and Duport. These violin sonatas were among the best of their time. He died at Angers towards the year 1772.²⁷

Compared to his cello sonatas, the violin sonatas reflect both the fact that Berteau was a cellist rather

than a violinist and their later date of composition. The range from *g* to *g'''* is standard for violin sonatas of the period. There are no harmonics and less passage work. Double stops are called for in only three of the movements. The solo line is much more elaborately ornamented, perhaps an indication of changing taste as well as the violin's greater agility.

There are other tendencies towards an early classical style of writing as well. The number of sonatas in three movements outnumbers those in four, and in general the movements are more substantial. So while there is a smaller number of movements in the op.2 violin sonatas (20) than the cello sonatas (22), they occupy nearly twice as many pages of print. The phrases tend to be shorter, more numerous, and more clearly punctuated. As a way of internally expanding his material, Berteau uses varied phrase repetition—sometimes changing the register, or the dynamic through echo effects, or the timbre through the use of a mute. At the ends of sections, there are often one or more clearly defined closing themes. Berteau's violin sonatas are graceful and evocative. No single movement can adequately represent the whole, but ex.10 may give some idea of their style.²⁸

While it is possible to ascertain Berteau's dates and to locate some of his published works, it is more difficult to separate fact from fiction regarding his personal life. From Fétis on, many writers have referred to Berteau's 'immoderate penchant for wine', which tarnished his career. Vidal wrote that Berteau's love of wine was legendary even among artists and that whenever he entered a salon to play, he began by asking for some rosin. Knowing what was intended by that, a valet would immediately bring him a bottle of wine which he kept within reach during the performance. There are two sources for this aspect of Berteau's character—Caffiaux's manuscript from c.1756, cited by Fétis, and the article from a century later by E. Grar, which, as Milliot points out, offers no documents or references for its portrayal of Berteau. It is possible that Grar may have depended heavily on Caffiaux or even Fétis.

Fétis (based on Caffiaux) and Milliot (based on Grar) offer the same anecdote about an ambassador engaging Berteau to play at a large party. Berteau did so and enchanted everyone. The ambassador gave Berteau eight louis and had him sent home in the ambassador's own coach. Upon reaching his lodgings, Berteau, thinking his talents had not been adequately

rewarded, gave the entire eight louis to the coachman. The ambassador had Berteau come a second time. This time he gave Berteau sixteen louis and again sent Berteau home in his coach. The coachman with great expectations held out his hand, but Berteau told him, 'Mon ami, je t'ai payé pour deux fois.'

Milliot, citing Grar, presents two other pieces of information that have not appeared elsewhere. The first is that Berteau taught the Dauphin, who was not a promising student. The two allegedly had the following exchange:

Monseigneur, je vous vole votre argent.
Pourquoi, Bertault?
Monseigneur, je n'ose vous le dire!
Dis, je te l'ordonne.
Monseigneur, c'est que vous ne saurez jamais rien.

The second is that Berteau went to London where he had some success, but returned impoverished to Paris.²⁹ The first sounds apocryphal. New information may yet turn up that might verify the second.

We are on surer ground in considering Berteau's contribution as a teacher. He taught virtually every important cellist of the next generation, or, as in the case of Jean-Louis Duport, taught their teachers. The only question is where Berteau taught. In the *New Grove* article on Cupis, Julie Anne Vertrees mentions that 'he was a cello student under Berteau at the Collège des Quatre Nations'. Whether Berteau taught elsewhere as well or privately is uncertain. His students included Jean-Pierre Duport, the two Jansons, François Cupis, J. B. Tillière and possibly Brevet. Jean-Pierre Duport taught the Englishman John Crossdill, who taught Robert Lindley. He also taught his younger brother, Jean-Louis Duport, who in turn taught J. J. Kriegck and Nicolas Platel (as well as countless others with his *Essai sur le doigté du violoncelle...*). Cupis taught Jean Levasseur, who taught the teacher of Franchomme. In fact many prominent cellists today would be able to trace their lineage back through Salmond, Klengel, Popper, Grutzmacher and others to Berteau. In the light of this, it would be understating the case to say that Berteau was the founder of only the French school of cello playing.

We are now able to frame an updated biographical entry for 'Le célèbre Berteau':

Berteau (Bertault, Bertau), **Martin** (b. Valenciennes, 1708; d. Angers 22 January 1771). French cellist who founded the first important school of cello playing. Among his students were J.-P. Duport, the two Jansons, Cupis and Tillière. He was in the service of the King of Poland and taught at the

Ex.10 Op.2, no.2, i

SONATA II *Andantino*

Collège des Quatres Nations.

Contemporaries described his manner of performing as astonishing and full of fire. In writing for the cello, he made extensive use of thumb position and multiple stops, and was especially known for his exploitation of natural harmonics.

WORKS

op.1 (6) cello sonatas, 1748, 2nd edn 1772 (The third sonata in this set is known in 20th-century editions as the 'Sammartini' sonata in G major.)

op.2 (6) violin sonatas, 1767

op.3 pieces for cello or bassoon (lost)

I am deeply indebted to Douglas Johnson for his careful readings of several versions of this essay, and to the late Fortunato Arico for inspiring it.

Jane Adas teaches in the music department at Rutgers University. She is working on music in Dr Johnson's London.

¹Jean-Benjamin de La Borde, *Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne* (Paris, 1780), i, p.309; Jean-Louis Duport, *Essay on Fingering the Violoncello* trans. John Bishop (London, 1853), p.145

²'Dictionaries', in *Grove* 5th edn

³Corneille may be the Berthaud mentioned by Gerber in the *Neues historisch-biographisches Lexicon der Tonkünstler* (1812). This Berthaud was a student of Duport who performed in 1796 in Hamburg. There was also a Gabriel Berteau who took second prize playing the cello at the Paris conservatory in 1799 and who wrote an E major cello concerto, op.1. Perhaps Gabriel was Corneille's son and Martin's grandson.

⁴S. Millot, *Le violoncelle en France au XVIIIème siècle* (Lille, 1981), i, pp.590-91

⁵E. Grar, 'Bertaut violoncelliste, Bibliographie valenciennoise', *Revue agricole, industrielle et littéraire du Nord*, vii (1855-56), pp.230-32 as cited in Millot, but E. Grard according to Lionel de La Laurencie, 'La Musique Française de Lulli à Gluck' (1913) in *Encyclopédie de la musique et dictionnaire du Conservatoire*, iii (Paris), p.1527

⁶R. Cotte and C. Noisette de Crayat, 'Berteau', *MGG* (Supplement)

⁷Millot, *Le violoncelle*, p.119

⁸*Mercure de France*, August 1738, p.1868; September 1738, pp.2079-80

⁹E. J. S. van der Straeten (whose source is Marpurg) in *History of the Violoncello* (London, 1915), pp.274-5, but challenged even by Fétis

¹⁰This is confirmed in C. Pierre, *Histoire du Concert Spirituel 1725-1790* (Paris, 1975).

¹¹*Mercure de France*, May 1750, p.187; October 1753, p.182

¹²Cited in Fétis: J. Caffiaux, 'Histoire de la Musique', MS, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale. In the *MGG* article on Berteau, this is listed as being around 1756. If this is true, it may be a factor in Fétis's mistaking Berteau's date of death.

¹³J.-J. Rousseau, *Dictionnaire de Musique* (Paris, 1768), p.449

¹⁴La Borde, *Essai* p.309

¹⁵Daquin, *Siècle littéraire de Louis XV* (Paris, 1753), p.151 cited in Antoine Vidal, *Les instruments à archet* (London, 1877), ii, p.345

¹⁶Vidal, *Les instruments à archet*, ii, p.329

¹⁷W. J. V. Wasielewski, *The Violoncello and its History*, trans. I. S. E. Stigand (London, 1894), pp.87, 88

¹⁸W. S. Newman, *The Sonata in the Baroque Era* (New York, 4/1983), p.390

¹⁹E. Cowling, *The Cello* (New York, 1975), p.87

²⁰C. Johansson, *French Music Publishers' Catalogues of the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century* (Stockholm, 1955)

²¹G. Cucuel, 'Quelques documents sur la librairie musicale au XVIIIe siècle SIMG xiii (1911-12)', p.388. 'Martineau' appears to be a transliteration into French of 'Martino'. The violin sonatas were first advertised in 1767, six years after the expiration of the *privilege*.

²²E. L. Gerber, *Historisch-Biographisches Lexicon der Tonkünstler* (Leipzig, 1790); A.-E. Choron and F. J. M. Fayolle, *Dictionnaire historique des musiciens* (Paris, 1810)

²³*Mercure de France*, September 1774, pp.212-14

²⁴It is unlikely that this is the trio sonata that was performed at the *concert spirituel* as one of the performers was Gaviniés, a well-known violinist, and the upper line of this sonata is in the tenor clef and descends below the range of the violin.

²⁵Modern editions of the Sammartini sonata include those of Alfred Moffat for Schott (Mainz, 1911); J. Salmon for Ricordi (Milan, 1914); J. Stutchewsky for International (New York, 1948); and Leonard Rose for International (New York, 1962). Rose recorded the sonata with Leonid Hambro for Columbia, ML 4984.

²⁶Abbé Roze (1745-1819) was master of music to the cathedral of S Maurice in Angers 1770-75. Since Berteau died in Angers in 1771, it is possible that Abbé Roze received the movement in Berteau's hand directly from Berteau. In 1807 Roze became librarian to the Paris Conservatory. It may have been in this capacity that he added the comments to the manuscript, hence the fuzzy recollection as to when Berteau died.

²⁷I am grateful to Mary Cyr of McGill University for generously making films of this manuscript available to me.

²⁸Berteau's op.1 cello sonatas and op.2 violin sonatas will be included in a facsimile reprint series on *The Eighteenth-century Continuo Sonata*, ed. J. Adas, to be published by Garland Press.

²⁹Milliot, *Le violoncelle*, pp.591-92



PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

AT

DUKE UNIVERSITY

The Duke program in Performance Practice offers an unorthodox blend of traditional training in music history, theory, and analysis with practical study in performance practice and interpretation. It is not limited to any one period of any one kind of music: the interest of the faculty in this area ranges from Gregorian chant to Bartók and ethnomusicology. However, for the study of keyboard music and its performance in particular, Duke is able to offer a uniquely authoritative coverage. The performance practice degree provides more "hands-on" experience than the musicology program, including courses in historical interpretation and a recital.

Fellowships are available offering income stipends as well as tuition and fees. Assistantships are available for subsequent years. For information write to Director of Graduate Studies, Music Department, Duke University, Box 6695 College Station, Durham, NC 27708.



rp

research
publications

MUSIC COLLECTIONS IN MICROFORM

rp

research
publications

P.O. Box 45
Reading
RG1 8HF
England

Italian Music Manuscripts in the British Library, London

"The programme of Italian Music Manuscripts from the British Library is of truly exceptional interest for students of Italian opera from the seventeenth to early nineteenth century. The British Library collection in this area is both extensive and diverse. Its filming makes available a unique collection which has long been a major point of reference for music scholars."

Professor Thomas Walker, Dean of Humanities, University of Ferrara.

The Music Collections of the Cambridge Libraries

The three great libraries in this series offer a wealth of key early music source texts. From the Ely service books to the Matthew Holmes lute and consort books, the Paston and Tolquohon part books and of course, the Fitzwilliam virginal book, the Cambridge manuscripts offer unparalleled research opportunities.

The History of Musical Instruments: Manuals, Tutors and Méthodes

The music tutor is a central source of evidence for makers, students and performers of early music. Most include charts and diagrams, advice and instruction, pieces and exercises. These three collections cover a vast range, from a 1523 German lute book to viol, harpsichord and early brass, woodwind, percussion and organ méthodes.

British Printed Music Before 1800 from the British Library

"The British Library collection is probably unsurpassed in quality and variety, and reflects all aspects of music in Britain from the late 1520s up to the end of the eighteenth century: song of all kinds, dance music, chamber and orchestral works, and opera. This collection is essential to all students of English music."

Alec Hyatt King, formerly Music Librarian of the British Library.

For further details of these and our other music collections, please write or telephone us on 0734-583247.