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ORCHESTRATING THE EARLY MUSIC REVIVAL
The Dutch baroque orchestras and the mediation of
commodification and counterculture

In the 1970s, the phenomenon of the period instrument orchestra experienced exponential growth. These ensembles, equipped with valveless horns, gut strings and pre-Tourte bows, marketed themselves as specialists in Historically-Informed Performance (HIP) and aimed to perform orchestral works of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as their composers might have heard them. Orchestras such as the Academy of Ancient Music, the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century, the London Classical Players, and the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra began to command a significant market share by the mid-1980s: they were appearing in international concert halls, record stores and radio playlists, and were encroaching ever further into the canonic repertoire of conventional orchestras. If initial critical response was sometimes lukewarm, by the twentieth century's end, music critics, musicologists and audiences often took it for granted that performances of works by Bach, Beethoven, Haydn and Mozart – and perhaps Berlioz, Brahms, and beyond – were preferable on the instruments for which composers had originally conceived their music. Such a view was, for example, espoused by *New York Times* critic John Rockwell, who declared in a 1987 review of the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century, 'Forget about involved philosophies of the Zeitgeist and changing perceptions and what a composer might have wanted: all else being equal, original-instrument performances in the proper repertory simply sound better than their "traditional" modern equivalents'.¹ By 2003, Colin Lawson could claim that, 'Period instruments are routinely encountered in the concert hall from San Francisco to Budapest and from Toronto to Rio de Janeiro; indeed, they have become virtually obligatory in substantial areas of the orchestral repertory'.²

How did the HIP orchestra rise to such prominence? To the pioneers of the early music revival, this would have seemed a most unlikely development. It is worth recalling that the historical performance movement had its origins not in orchestral playing but rather in the performance of vocal and chamber music composed prior to 1750. Amateur choral societies in France, Germany and the U.K. led the revival of vocal works by J.S. Bach, Handel, Palestrina and other pre-1800 composers in

¹ J. Rockwell, 'Concert: Orchestra of 18th Century at Tully', in *New York Times*, 23 November 1987.

² C. Lawson, 'The revival of historical instruments', in *The Cambridge companion to the orchestra*, ed. C. Lawson (Cambridge 2003), 155-168, at 155.

the nineteenth century, often in large-scale performances.³ By the early twentieth century, university-based *collegium musicum* and *hausmusik* ensembles were promoting amateur music-making, early repertoires and instruments such as recorder, lute and harpsichord in Germany.⁴ The first exponents of historical instruments, such as Arnold Dolmetsch, Wanda Landowska and Safford Cape, focused primarily on solo or consort works. Even after World War II, when an increasingly professionalized generation of historical performers such as Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Gustav Leonhardt, Frans Brüggen, and August Wenzinger emerged, these musicians focused primarily on solo and chamber music repertoire.

Historical performers prior to World War II were thus at the fringes of classical music culture, and estranged from the repertoire and performance traditions of the conventional symphony orchestra. If the orchestra was at once the most prestigious organization in Western classical music, it was perhaps the most maligned in early music circles. Orchestral playing seemed inherently antithetical to the project of historical performance: the orchestra was symbolic of musicians' unthinking interpretive approach to music, an ossified repertoire of nineteenth-century masterworks, the ignorance of historical and geographical differences in performance practices, and – most importantly – a rigidly hierarchical social structure marked by a blind submission to the authority of the conductor.⁵ Emblematic of such antipathy towards the orchestra is the Brechtian table outlined by Laurence Dreyfus in his 1983 article 'Early Music defended against its devotees', which sums up the differences between the Early Music and Mainstream 'dominant social codes.'⁶ Where in the Musical Mainstream 'the conductor is the symbol of authority, stature, and social difference', in the Early Music world, 'the conductor is banished'; while the Mainstream orchestra 'is organized in a hierarchy' with labour strictly divided among musicians, Early Music performers have a more egalitarian relationship; while Mainstream players flaunt their virtuosity, Early Music playing standards are 'commonly mediocre.' In short, Dreyfus uses the orchestra as a metaphor to underscore the contrasting aesthetics and values of these musical communities.

³ See, for example, C. Applegate, *Bach in Berlin. Nation and culture in Mendelssohn's revival of the St. Matthew Passion* (Ithaca NY 2005); K. Ellis, *Interpreting the musical past. Early music in nineteenth-century France* (Oxford 2005); J. Garratt, *Palestrina and the German Romantic imagination. Interpreting historicism in nineteenth-century music* (Cambridge 2002).

⁴ H. Haskell, *The early music revival. A history*, new ed. (Mineola, NY 1996); P.M. Potter, *Most German of the arts. Musicology and society from the Weimar Republic to the end of Hitler's Reich* (New Haven 1998).

⁵ On the latter point, see, for example, C. Small, 'Performance as ritual. Sketch for an enquiry into the true nature of a symphony concert', in *Lost in music. Culture, style and the music event*, ed. A.L. White (London 1987), 6–32.

⁶ L. Dreyfus, 'Early Music defended against its devotees. A theory of historical performance in the twentieth century', in *MQ* 69 (1983), 297–322, at 317–318. Dreyfus uses the capitalized 'Early Music' here to refer to the 'cultural phenomenon' of HIP, distinguishing it from the 'Mainstream,' i.e., conventional performance on modern instruments.

Dreyfus is careful to qualify his analysis (it is meant as a kind of caricature), noting that it was perhaps dated, given that an influx of conservatory-trained musicians into the Early Music ranks was raising playing standards. Nevertheless, it provides a useful snapshot of historical performers' attitudes in the early 1980s. Moreover, ambivalence towards the mainstream symphony orchestra forms a significant component of the biographical narratives of several prominent post-war early music stars. Nikolaus Harnoncourt, cellist with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra from 1952 to 1969, left this ensemble after becoming frustrated with its exhausting routine and its (in his opinion) inexpert performances of Bach and Mozart; tired of the 'intellectual subordination' of orchestral playing, Harnoncourt opted instead for the greater creative freedom of directing his period instrument ensemble *Concentus Musicus Wien*.⁷ Ton Koopman likewise expressed discomfort with the authoritarian role of the conductor; when asked in a 1987 interview why his repertoire with the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra did not extend beyond the eighteenth century, he remarked that, 'In later music there's no room for a harpsichordist, and I don't want to just stand up and conduct. I like to be a musician among musicians.'⁸ The conductor Frans Brüggen, whose earlier career as a recorder virtuoso placed him largely outside of the orchestral world, has also been an outspoken critic of mainstream symphonies (see below).

By the early 1980s, however, the historical performance movement was undergoing dramatic change. If historical performers were initially alienated from the orchestra as an institution, they were now forming period instrument orchestras themselves in great numbers: as shown in the Appendix, at least seventy-one such ensembles were formed in Europe and North America between 1970 and 1990. The establishment of period bands was instrumental in the transformation of historical performance from a fringe pursuit into mainstream acceptance and commercial marketability.

Still, critics did not always greet HIP interpretations of orchestral masterworks by Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and beyond with universal acclaim. Moreover, mainstream players resented that period bands were trespassing into their musical territory. Typical were the remarks of violinist Pinchas Zuckerman, who stated in regard to HIP, 'I hate it. It's disgusting. The first time I heard that shit, I couldn't believe it. It's complete rubbish, and the people who play it. . . . Maybe one or two or a half-dozen have wonderful musical minds. But I certainly don't want to hear them perform.'⁹ Musicologists also issued cautionary reviews of 'authentic' Bach, Mozart and Beethoven recordings, complaining of period orchestras' sometimes lax playing

⁷ M. Mertel, *Vom Denken des Herzens. Alice und Nikolaus Harnoncourt Eine Biographie* (Salzburg-Wien 1999), 116-117.

⁸ A. Kozinn, 'Exploring the biways of harpsichord repertory' [interview with Ton Koopman], in *New York Times*, 22 March 1987.

⁹ R. Everett-Green, 'Does he have the right stuff?' [interview with Pinchas Zuckerman], in *The Globe and Mail*, 8 March 2000.

standards and literalness of interpretation,¹⁰ the sacrificing of historical understanding for expediency in the recording studio,¹¹ and the use of ‘authentic instruments’ as a marketing tactic.¹² As Clive Brown cautioned, ‘There is serious concern that where a search to rediscover the sounds and styles of 19th-century music conflicts with the exigencies of the recording studio and the need to obtain a neat and tidy, easily assimilable product, it is the latter that are regarded as paramount ... there is infinitely more to historically sensitive performance than merely employing the right equipment, and the public is in danger of being offered attractively packaged but unripe fruit.’¹³ Most trenchantly, Richard Taruskin criticized conductors Christopher Hogwood, Frans Brüggen, Roger Norrington, and John Eliot Gardiner for using period instruments as an end in and of themselves (and not as a means to a larger musical goal), and of fetishizing some forms of historical information (e.g., metronome markings, or a vibratoless sound) while ignoring others (e.g., improvisation practices or tempo flexibility).¹⁴

As period instrument orchestras acquired increasing market share, debates about historical performance intensified,¹⁵ prompting Taruskin to ask in exasperation, ‘Do we really want to talk about “authenticity” any more?’¹⁶ *Pace* Taruskin, we might set aside for the moment philosophical questions about authenticity, ‘turf wars’ over repertoire, and the minutiae of performance practice, in order to consider the more radical rethinking of the role of orchestral musician that a period player might represent. What impact, for example, have period orchestras had on the socioeconomic status of professional musicians? Moreover, what effect have these ensembles had on the broader classical music landscape?

To begin to address such questions, I focus on two prominent period instrument orchestras in the Netherlands, the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra (ABO, established

¹⁰ P.H. Lang, ‘Editorial’, in *MQ* 58 (1972), 117–127.

¹¹ C. Brown, ‘Historical performance, metronome marks and tempo in Beethoven’s symphonies’, in *EMu* 19 (1991), 247–258. For an overview of critical views of period instrument orchestras over the course of their development, see Lawson, ‘The revival of historical instruments’.

¹² R. Taruskin, ‘On letting the music speak for itself’, in *Text and act. Essays on music and performance* (Oxford 1995), 51–66, at 60.

¹³ Brown, ‘Historical performance’, 248.

¹⁴ R. Taruskin, ‘The modern sound of early music’, in *Text and act*, 164–170 (first published as ‘The spin doctors of early music’, in *New York Times*, 29 July 1990). Robert Philip has likewise criticized Norrington for only attending to historical performance details that correspond to his taste, despite the evidence for other practices provided by early recordings. See R. Philip, *Performing music in the age of recording* (New Haven 2004), 221–122.

¹⁵ See, for example, *Authenticity and early music. A Symposium*, ed. N. Kenyon (Oxford 1988); J. Kerman, L. Dreyfus, J. Kosman, J. Rockwell, E. Rosand, R. Taruskin, and N. McGegan, ‘The early music debate. Ancients, moderns, postmoderns’, in *The Journal of Musicology* 10 (1992), 113–130; P. Kivy, *Authenticities. Philosophical reflections on musical performance* (Ithaca 1995).

¹⁶ R. Taruskin, ‘The pastness of the present and the presence of the past’, in *Text and act*, 90–154, at 90. First published in *Authenticity and early music*, 137–210.

in 1979) and the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century (OEC, established in 1981), as a case study. In my consideration of these ensembles from their early years through to the present, I will refer to personal interviews I conducted with musicians and administrators in the Dutch early music community, as well as to published reviews, advertisements, government documents, and other materials. The Dutch situation merits examination for three key reasons. First, the Netherlands has, since the 1960s, been widely acknowledged as one of the most important centres of the global early music movement, with both a remarkable concentration of expert performers on period instruments and strong audience support for HIP.¹⁷ Second, the Netherlands established a system of generous government support for the performing arts (especially classical music), which greatly expanded during the post-war era. And third, the role of the symphony orchestra in Dutch society has undergone considerable scrutiny since the late 1960s, as critics challenged the orchestras' heavy subsidization, stagnant programming and domination of public concert life.

Thus, in the 1970s and 80s, the Netherlands emerged as an environment sympathetic not only to historical performance, but also to a questioning of the symphony orchestra's traditional repertoire and organizational structure. This milieu, with a critical mass of musicians open to experimentation into new forms of music-making,¹⁸ proved particularly fertile for the development of period instrument orchestras. In this regard, two examples especially warrant closer examination: while the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra and the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century achieved initial success because they were able to position themselves as alternative, socially progressive institutions, they were also able to present themselves as economically viable to recording companies, corporate sponsors and government funding agencies. Dutch period orchestras effectively mediated between these competing interests, though as I will demonstrate below, not without compromise as regards financial security and artistic freedom.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

One of the key means by which the Dutch Baroque orchestras distinguished themselves from conventional symphony orchestras is through their development of an alternative administrative and institutional structure. In this regard, Frans Brüggen, conductor and founder of the OEC, emerged as a seminal figure. Earlier in his career, Brüggen was the world's leading recorder virtuoso, having concertized widely and made dozens of solo recordings for Telefunken during the 1960s, and eventually for RCA and SEON (a division of Sony) in the 1970s. In addition to his interests in early music, Brüggen was also an advocate of new music for the recorder, and was closely associated with leading avant-garde Dutch composers Louis Andriessen,

¹⁷ See, for example, B. Sherman, *Inside early music. Conversations with performers* (Oxford 1997), 193.

¹⁸ See R. Adlington, 'Organizing labor. Composers, performers, and "the renewal of musical practice" in the Netherlands, 1969-72', in *MQ* 90 (2007), 539-577.

Misha Mengelberg, Reinbert de Leeuw and Peter Schat. These politically-engaged composers led a protest against the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra's lack of new music programming, culminating in the infamous 1969 *Notenkrakersactie* (Note Cracker's Action), during which they occupied the concert hall and disrupted a performance. Although he did not participate in the protest itself, Brügger spoke out publicly in support of his composer colleagues. Brügger was present during a later meeting between the 'Notenkrakers' and the Concertgebouw administration in April 1970, and there, Brügger too attacked the Orchestra, though not in regard to its programming of new music. Brügger was quoted in the populist newspaper *De Telegraaf* as stating, 'Every note that the Concertgebouw Orchestra plays from Mozart or Beethoven is lies. They don't know where Abraham got the mustard [i.e., they are not well-informed]. They have no [historically-appropriate] instrumentarium, no knowledge and no good conductors. The music from 1850 to Stravinsky, yes, that they can do.'¹⁹

Brügger's remarks, the *Notenkrakersactie*, and the ensuing public policy debates did not ultimately result in much change to the Concertgebouw Orchestra itself.²⁰ However, when Brügger established the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century in 1981, it purposely took on a very different form from a conventional symphony orchestra. As Sieuwert Verster, the OEC's co-founder and general manager noted, the Orchestra is 'part of this whole changing landscape of our musical life in the Netherlands which is formulated as the *ensemble cultuur*: the culture of the small ensembles' that emerged in the aftermath of the *Notenkrakersactie* in the 1970s.²¹ Thus, just as *Notenkrakers* Andriessen, Mengelberg and De Leeuw founded their own groups to perform new music (De Volharding and Hoketus; the Instant Composers Pool; and the Asko-Schoenberg Ensemble respectively), so too did Brügger found his own flexible, specialized ensemble to perform early music.

It was not only that the OEC differed visibly and audibly from the Concertgebouw Orchestra in terms of its use of reduced performing forces, period instruments and focus on Baroque and Classical repertoire: it also employed a new operational model and organizational structure similar to contemporary music ensembles. First, the Orchestra operates on a per-project basis instead of a conventional subscription series. Typically, five projects are held each year, amounting to forty concerts; during

¹⁹ [Unsigned], 'Verhit debat in Krasnapolsky. Concertgebouworkest onder "krakers"-kritiek', in *Telegraaf*, 23 April 1970. Brügger's remarks were widely reprinted, though he was quoted slightly differently in other newspapers. See also R. Schoute, 'Discussie Notenkraker [sic] -Concertgebouworkest. "Elke noot van Mozart en Beethoven wordt een leugen"', in *Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant*, 23 April 1970, 7. Video archival footage of the meeting appears in *De Schepping van Frans*, dir. S. Verster (Attacca DVD 2009-8), at 6:48-8:07.

²⁰ See Adlington, 'Organizing labor'.

²¹ S. Verster, interview by the author, 5 September 2012, Amsterdam, the Netherlands. On the Dutch 'ensemble culture', see also *Ssst! Nieuwe ensembles voor nieuwe muziek*, ed. E. Schönberger (Amsterdam 1996).

the project period, musicians convene in the Netherlands for several days of intensive rehearsals, then travel to perform a particular program and record it. As Verster further noted, the OEC is effectively three orchestras, performing at the pitches A=392, 415 or 430Hz depending on the repertoire (French, German Baroque or Classical respectively), and even at A=440 Hz for the rare occasions when they have programmed later works by Schumann or Brahms. Thus, OEC members are able flexibly to adapt their instruments and performing techniques to correspond to the repertoire they perform.

Second, the orchestra's pay structure is explicitly egalitarian. In a 2008 interview in the *New York Times*, Brüggén noted that all musicians share equally in the proceeds of their concertizing regardless of their rank or role within the ensemble, stating that, 'I earn the same as the second clarinet'.²² This was confirmed by Verster, who remarked that, 'We all earn the same. That means that if I pay the airplanes, the hotels, etc. then the remaining is divided in fifty equal parts'.²³ Brüggén elaborated further in an interview in *Goldberg Magazine*, remarking that, 'Perhaps this is one of the reasons behind the orchestra's spirit. If you play the second violin knowing that the conductor earns 10 times as much as you, relations between the various components of the orchestra are logically subject to more of a hierarchical structure'.²⁴ When asked by the interviewer if this made the orchestra a democracy, he quipped, 'No, this isn't democracy, but Communism'.

This emphasis on egalitarianism, regardless of how one might term it, has extended to artistic, administrative and gender equity matters as well. Lucy van Dael, one of the OEC's founding members and its leader for eighteen years, indicated that she had considerable creative input into the ensemble; not only was she in charge of marking parts and coordinating the string playing, but she also worked closely with Brüggén on the group's administration and tour organization during its first few years.²⁵ In the 1980s, it was still unusual for women to hold positions of responsibility and prestige in major symphony orchestras, though period instrument orchestras, including the OEC, have been trailblazers in this regard. The ABO has likewise employed female leaders for extended periods, including Monica Huggett and Margaret Faultless.

In addition to its egalitarian pay structure, the OEC also developed flexible, alternative compensation strategies for its members. As van Dael noted, the musicians were asked to do the first tour without payment, with the understanding that their participation would later pay for itself.²⁶ In a similar vein, Ton Koopman explained

²² D.J. Wakin, 'In Italy, "Eroica" energizes a frail fixture of period music', in *New York Times*, 30 June 2008.

²³ S. Verster, interview by the author.

²⁴ E. Schmied, interview with Frans Brüggén and Sieuwert Verster, trans. Y. Acker, *Goldberg Magazine* 11 (2000), 40-49, at 49.

²⁵ L. van Dael, interview by the author, 16 July 2004, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

²⁶ L. van Dael, interview by the author.

that he convinced the musicians of Musica Antiqua Amsterdam (the predecessor of the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra) to play for only f 75 (about € 34) a concert at first, with no paid rehearsals; those travelling from out of town stayed with family and friends, rather than hotels, to save money.²⁷

Such a strategy of deferred compensation for musically interesting work corresponds to the analysis of 'musical capital' acquisition described by Stephen Cottrell in his ethnography of London freelance musicians. Using an extension of Pierre Bourdieu's theory of symbolic capital exchange, Cottrell observes the tendency of musicians to accept the seemingly irrational situation (at least from a purely Marxist perspective) of playing for no pay.²⁸ While a similar observation could be made of period-orchestra players, the quest for historical authenticity in performance is an especially idealistic pursuit.²⁹ The novelty of engaging with early symphonic works in a new manner, grappling with the technical problems of unfamiliar instruments, and, most importantly - establishing a more egalitarian form of music-making - meant that historical performers were perhaps even more likely than mainstream musicians to accept financial concessions for increased 'musical capital', at least at first. As the OEC and the ABO grew successful, this strategy paid big dividends, as the initial investment of musical capital began to translate into actual capital.

BAROQUE ORCHESTRAS AND THE RECORDING INDUSTRY

One key means by which the Dutch Baroque orchestras achieved this capital transformation was by making recordings. Indeed, some scholars of the historical performance movement have attributed the success of period instrument orchestras primarily to the promotion by, and decision making of, recording companies.³⁰ The launch of the compact disc in 1982 (a technology developed in part by the Dutch company Philips) does correspond with the general timeframe that many Baroque orchestras were established. Through recordings, the ABO and the OEC benefitted by earning both royalties and critical recognition. Still, while it would be an oversimplification to suggest that recording companies were unilaterally exploitative of period orchestras, record company patronage sometimes had unintended consequences, problematizing the orchestras' status as a socially progressive alternative to the classical mainstream.

²⁷ T. Koopman, interview by the author, 7 July 2004, Bussum, The Netherlands.

²⁸ S. Cottrell, *Professional music-making in London. Ethnography and experience* (Aldershot 2004), 65-67. Bourdieu's theory of capital accumulation is outlined in 'The forms of capital', in *Education, culture, economy, and society*, edd. A.H. Halsey et al. (Oxford 1997), 46-58 and in *The logic of practice*, trans. R. Nice (Cambridge 1990), 112-121.

²⁹ For further discussion of Bourdieu's framework as it applies to historical performers, see K.R. Rubinoff, *The early music movement in the Netherlands. History, pedagogy and ethnography* (Ph.D. diss., University of Alberta 2006), 45-50.

³⁰ See, for example, Lawson, 'The revival of historical instruments', 158; Haskell, *The early music revival*, 129.

During the early years of the ABO and the OEC, its music directors were able to build on the recording industry contacts that they had first established as solo performers. Ton Koopman, for example, began recording with the Baroque orchestra that became the ABO on Harlekijn, a small Dutch label.³¹ At Harlekijn, he stated, ‘everything was possible’: he could use his own recording team, he received a budget, and had considerable artistic freedom. As Harlekijn and other small labels merged with larger corporations, Koopman continued to have a positive relationship with them on the whole, working at times with Teldec, Philips, and eventually with Erato, beginning in the early 1980s, with whom the ABO began recording its Bach cantata cycle. Among his most commercially successful recordings with the ABO include a *St. Matthew Passion* disc, which achieved gold, and then platinum, status in the Netherlands,³² and *Simply Baroque*, a crossover album recorded with Yo-Yo Ma, which spent forty-eight weeks on the Billboard charts, topping at number three in January 2000.³³

While a recording company was involved from the very beginning of the ABO’s history, the situation was somewhat different with the OEC. Frans Brügger’s extensive résumé as a recorder soloist and recording artist meant that he had many industry contacts, yet the Orchestra did not make commercial recordings at the outset. It was only after the OEC had been touring and performing for four years that Philips Classics began to produce and distribute their CDs.³⁴ As Verster remarked, this was a conscious decision by Brügger and the other members of the orchestra: ‘Frans was very much irritated and fed up, [as were] many of our musicians, by years of recording in studios, hanging around, [the] “take 82, let’s have a coffee break” [routine]. They were really bored by it. So we decided not to record first until we were really good.’³⁵ Donna Agrell, the Orchestra’s bassoonist, noted that it was typical for the Orchestra to produce live concert rather than studio recordings, usually made at the

³¹ T. Koopman, interview with the author.

³² Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, *St. Matthew Passion*, conducted by T. Koopman (Erato 2292 45814 2 1992). Prior to 2008, gold and platinum records in the Netherlands represented sales of 15,000 and 25,000 units respectively for classical or jazz recordings.

³³ Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra and Y.-Y. Ma, *Simply Baroque*, conducted by T. Koopman (Sony SK 60680 1999).

³⁴ The first recordings (Mozart’s Symphony no. 40, K.550, and Beethoven’s Symphony no. 1, op. 21) were not produced until 1985. This disc appeared as Orchestra of the 18th Century, *Mozart: Symphony no. 40/ Beethoven: Symphony no. 1*, conducted by F. Brügger (CD Philips 416 329-2 1985). Wolf Erichson, Brügger’s long-time producer at Telefunken/Teldec’s Das Alte Werk and Sony’s SEON labels, states that he and Brügger had discussed the idea of forming an orchestra, but that Philips had eventually offered Brügger a more lucrative contract. See T. Otto and S. Piendl, *Erst mal schön ins Horn tuten. Erinnerungen eines Schallplattenproduzenten. Gespräche mit Wolf Erichson und Nikolaus Homoncourt, Gustav Leonhardt, Stephan Schellmann, Yaara Tal & Andreas Groethuysen und Bruno Weil* (Regensburg 2007), 132.

³⁵ S. Verster, interview by the author.

end of a tour in the Vredenburg concert hall in Utrecht, with a few corrections made later.³⁶ These recordings, edited by Verster, were then sold to Philips, which manufactured, marketed and distributed them; Philips, Verster recalled, 'gave us f 100,000 non-refundable advance on royalties; expenses for the recording and the editing were f 10,000; [so] profit [was] f 90,000'. Since recordings were made two or three times annually, this resulted in a significant source of income for the OEC, and in this way the ensemble could produce recordings economically within a very limited time-frame. This was doubtless also a cost-effective production method for Philips (they were not obliged to pay musicians for studio time, for example), but Agrell observed that the Orchestra's members got used to working in this highly-efficient manner, and eventually found that it was a 'very good method' for making recordings.

Having manufactured these recordings at relatively low cost, Philips seems not to have invested heavily in their publicity, at least at first. This can be seen in a survey of Philips Classics advertisements in periodicals such *Gramophone* and *Fanfare*, as well as in the specialist journal *Early Music*. In contrast with the received view of record companies exploiting the fad for 'authenticity',³⁷ these Philips ads suggest that publicity for the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century's recordings was not initially a high priority, likely because the company did not anticipate returns that would justify such an investment: Philips was more interested in promoting its mainstream orchestras and conductors. In a February 1986 issue of *Gramophone*, the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century's recording is buried in a list of new releases of conventional symphonic repertoire.³⁸ No ads appear in *Fanfare* prior to May 1987, and relatively modest advertisements in *Early Music* – seemingly the most logical placement, given the target audience – do not appear until May and November of 1987.³⁹ A 1987 ad in *Fanfare* (see Plate 1) again shows the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century's CD buried in a list of similar repertoire (Haydn, Beethoven) performed by conventional orchestras.⁴⁰ Note the lone distinguishing mark on Brüggén's CD: a tiny banner proclaiming 'Period Instruments!' The overall impression is that Philips was not so much jumping on the early music bandwagon, but rather trying to tap all possible classical music markets simultaneously.

³⁶ D. Agrell, interview by the author, 21 September 2004, The Hague, The Netherlands. See also S. Johnson, 'Bach to the future' [interview with Frans Brüggén], in *Gramophone* 67 (1990), 1452–1453, at 1452.

³⁷ See, for example: Dreyfus, 'The early music debate', 115; C. Lawson, 'The revival of historical instruments', 158; Haskell, *The early music revival*, 129.

³⁸ *Gramophone* 63 (1986), 1040.

³⁹ *EMu* 15 (1987), 242. Meanwhile, glossy colour ads for other period instrument ensembles by Philips's competitors were appearing regularly in this periodical.

⁴⁰ *Fanfare* 10.4 (March/April 1987), 17.



Plate 1. A 1987 ad in *Fanfare* showing the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century's CD (first column, middle row), amidst CDs of similar repertoire performed by conventional orchestras.

Heavier promotion did not come until the late 1980s and early 1990s, despite the positive reviews of the OEC's recordings, and the fact that competing period instrument orchestras such as the Academy of Ancient Music and London Classical Players had already made considerable headway into the market. Small text announcements and CD cover photos expanded to large colour ads featuring the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century and its conductor. In 1990 Brüggén's profile graced the cover of the February issue of *Gramophone* coupled with a glossy Philips advertisement on the inside and an interview.⁴¹ Not only had Brüggén 'arrived' in one of classical music's most important mainstream, commercial publications, but Philips was also beginning to market him in the same manner as its traditional stars like Jessye Norman and Bernard Haitink. Two other ads from *Early Music* (see Plate 2) highlight the importance of Brüggén as interpreter, making him more prominent than either the ensemble itself or the composer. Here, the emphasis in these photos is on his emotive facial expressions and the dramatic gestures of his hands directing the orchestra.⁴² All the eyes of the orchestra members are focused on Brüggén. He is clearly represented here as the principal star, not merely the coordinator of the ensemble's musical ideas. Thus, Philips's marketing of Brüggén in the familiar 'great maestro' role undermines the actual organization of the ensemble as a democratic collective.

⁴¹ Johnson, 'Bach to the future.' This ad also appeared in *EMu* 18 (1990), 247.

⁴² *EMu* 18 (1990), 560.

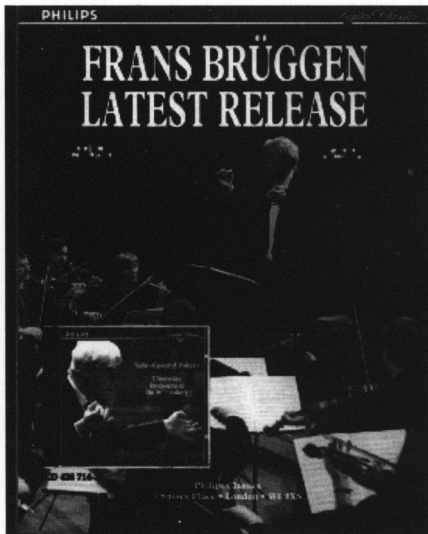


Plate 2. Ad from *Early Music* highlighting the importance of Brüggen as conductor.

The CD industry crash of the late 1990s illustrated the ephemeral and ultimately destabilizing nature of recording company patronage for the Dutch Baroque orchestras. Warner Music Group, which had purchased Erato in 1992, dropped the ABO in 2001 in the midst of its Bach cantata cycle recordings, and The Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century also lost its contract after Philips Classics was merged, along with Deutsche Grammophon and Decca, into Universal in 1999. Such mergers meant that formerly competing period instrument ensembles now found themselves on the same labels. For example, Universal now controlled the rights to recordings by such ensembles as Musica Antiqua Köln (Deutsche Grammophon), the Academy of Ancient Music (L'Oiseau Lyre/Decca) the English Baroque Soloists (Philips) and the Orchestra of the 18th Century (Philips), resulting in considerable overlapping repertoire in its catalogue.

Despite these setbacks, the Dutch Baroque orchestras did not simply become passive victims of the culture industry. Ton Koopman founded his own label, Antoine Marchand, in conjunction with the Hilversum-based Challenge Records, in order to complete the ABO's Bach cantata recording series, while the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century now produces its recordings through its own company, The Grand Tour, and distributes them through Glossa, a label co-founded by Orchestra violist Emilio Moreno and his brother.⁴³ Baroque orchestras have essentially returned to their roots on independent niche labels. As the compact disc as a format moves towards obsolescence, both the ABO and the OEC have embraced online music delivery systems such as iTunes and Naxos Music Library to reach audiences in new ways. Still, although the sophistication and accessibility of modern recording tech-

⁴³ D. Agrell, interview by the author. See also B. Bamarger, 'Classical music. Keeping score', in *Billboard* 10.29 (18 July 1998), 46–47.

nology mean that Baroque orchestras can now more readily control their means of production, widespread exposure and distribution remain a challenge in an age of shrinking classical music market share and cutbacks to classical music programs on state-funded radio – just as they are for conventional orchestras.

BAROQUE ORCHESTRAS AND GOVERNMENT SUBSIDY

The federal government has also been another important source of financial support for the Dutch Baroque orchestras, both through direct grants and indirect sources of funding (e.g., of festivals and concert venues that host historical performers). Indeed, since World War II, the Netherlands has had a tradition of state patronage for arts and culture, including the provision of operating subsidies for symphony orchestras. Still, while generous government funding for the arts was, as Bernard Sherman has suggested, ‘probably ... a non-trivial factor’ in supporting a thriving Dutch historical performance scene,⁴⁴ the federal government was relatively late to invest in early music ensembles. Moreover, period instrument orchestras, like conventional symphony orchestras, have also been affected by the restructuring of the federal arts subsidy system in recent years.⁴⁵

Initially, historical performers (as non-orchestral musicians) were largely on the periphery of the subsidy system. Symphony orchestras received the bulk of federal funding for the music sector; modest support for early music ensembles initially came indirectly in the form of grants to concert series and concert venues, via small grants for individual projects, or from provincial or municipal coffers. It was not until 1987 that the federal government began to provide operating subsidies to the ABO and OEC (of *f* 100,000 and *f* 150,000 respectively), many years after these ensembles had been established. These subsidies were initiated during the administration of Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers (1982–1994), whose Minister of Welfare, Health and Cultural Affairs, L.C. (Elco) Brinkman (1982–1989), undertook major arts funding reforms. The cutbacks and mergers to the twenty-one state-financed symphony orchestras initiated by Brinkman resulted in the freeing up of funding for specialized ensembles, including both contemporary music and early music groups. Remarkably, it was also during the Lubbers administration that the Nederlandse Bachvereniging’s orchestra was restructured into a period-instrument ensemble. The Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social Work, which had been supporting the Bachvereniging, was concerned that its large performing forces and orchestra of modern instruments

⁴⁴ Sherman, *Inside early music*, 398. Sherman is considering the Dutch situation in comparison to the United States, where there is minimal government funding for music and the arts.

⁴⁵ For a more comprehensive consideration of arts funding for historical performers in the Netherlands, see K.R. Rubinoff, ‘Cracking the Dutch early music movement. The repercussions of the 1969 *Notenkrakersactie*’, in *Twentieth-century music* 6 (2009), 3–22. Government policy statements and funding data from Dutch government documents are further analyzed in Rubinoff, ‘The early music movement in the Netherlands’, 230–312 and 434–435.

no longer corresponded with current understanding of Bach performance practice, and threatened to revoke its subsidy. As a result, in 1984 the Bachvereniging's board hired its own specialist conductor, Jos van Veldhoven, who organized a period-instrument orchestra to accompany the choir.⁴⁶ Thus, by the mid-1980s, the federal government had recognized that the presence of Baroque orchestras had significantly altered the Dutch musical landscape; furthermore, it was also exerting through its funding decisions a strong preference for HIP.

Brinkman's successor, Hedy D'Ancona (1989–1994), continued systemic subsidy and policy reform, breaking up the symphony orchestras' near monopoly of federal spending in the music sector. As a result, the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra's modest four-year operating subsidy was continued (at f 130,000), while the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century's grant doubled in size (to f 300,000). Under the administration of Wim Kok (1994–2002), further reductions to conventional symphony orchestras were implemented, while subsidies for the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century and the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra were maintained or increased slightly. During this period, Baroque orchestras were frequently praised in policy statements produced by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and its advising organ, the Council for Culture, though the rationale for their subsidies has varied according to the Ministry's policy themes. For example, in 1996 the Council for Culture praised the role of the Baroque orchestras in promoting Dutch culture abroad, with the OEC specially commended for occupying 'a pre-eminent ambassador's function for our country'.⁴⁷ (This was somewhat ironic, considering that the ensemble's members come from twenty-three countries, and only a third are Dutch nationals.⁴⁸) Under Minister of Culture Rick van der Ploeg (1998–2002), the language praising period instrument orchestras became increasingly economic in tone, with the Ministry citing the ABO and OEC specifically for their 'cultural entrepreneurialism' and their low subsidy-to-ticket sales ratio.⁴⁹ Thus, debates about the role of the symphony orchestra in Dutch society had taken a striking turn. If in the late 1970s and early 1980s Baroque orchestras seemed to present attractive models of music-making for reasons of aesthetics, 'authenticity' and social progressivism, by the late 1990s their appeal – to government leaders, at least – lay in their fiscal restraint and lower operating costs than conventional orchestras. Other ensembles in the Dutch music sector were called upon to adopt similar organizational and budgetary structures.

⁴⁶ J. van Veldhoven, interview by the author, 1 June 2013, Utrecht, the Netherlands; E. Wennekes, "'Het past ons niet de voorschriften van het genie te verwaarlozen". De Nederlandse Bachvereniging 75 jaar jong', in *Tijdschrift voor oude muziek* 12 (1997), 8–11, at 10.

⁴⁷ See Rubinoff, 'The early music movement in the Netherlands', 279.

⁴⁸ D.J. Wakin; E. Schmied, interview with Frans Brügger and Sieuwert Verster, 49.

⁴⁹ For further examination of these Ministry documents, see Rubinoff, 'The early music movement in the Netherlands', 290. In the 1994–1997 period, Ministry figures indicate that the Baroque orchestras had a ticket sale-to-subsidy ratio of 82 : 18, nearly the reverse of the conventional symphony orchestras (24 : 76). These figures are provided in MinOCW, *Culture as confrontation. Principles on cultural policy in 2001–2004* (The Hague 1999), Appendix 2b.

Since 2003, however, further federal retrenchment in the arts and culture sector has meant cutbacks not only to conventional symphony orchestras but to all arts organizations across the board, including the Baroque orchestras. In 2008, for example, the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra had its operating subsidy of € 336,000 eliminated, resulting in a scaling back of its activities and tour cancellations. The ensemble was forced to go dormant for a period, restructure its personnel and board membership, and seek alternative corporate support.⁵⁰ This suggests that government financing – while relatively late in supporting historical performance – has come with strings attached, and its reduction and revocation has had destabilizing effects on the Dutch early music scene.

The economizing trend has continued under the current administration of Mark Rutte (2010–). During Rutte's first cabinet, the State Secretary of Education, Culture and Sciences Halbe Zijlstra (2010–2012) proposed a further € 200 million in cuts to the arts for the 2013–2016 funding period. The Performing Arts Fund (Fonds Podiumkunsten, FPK), which in 2010 took over the subsidy administration for the music, musical theatre, dance, theatre and festival sectors, faced a reduction in its financing from the Ministry of Culture from € 60 million to € 43 million. The granting of four-year operating subsidies (which specifically affected the ABO and OEC) was significantly curtailed, with reductions in these subsidies from € 40 to € 24.5 million.⁵¹

These recent arts funding cutbacks have been detrimental to the performing arts sector as a whole,⁵² but the repercussions for historical performers have been mixed. Although the ABO lost its operating subsidy, the FPK awarded it incidental grants for special projects (e.g., € 51,146 for its Maria Vespers project and € 52,400 for a Bach cantata project in 2010), and a two-year subsidy for 2011–2012. The OEC actually saw its operating subsidy increase for 2013–2016 over the previous funding period (rising from € 254,151 to € 300,000).⁵³ Verster noted that this was a curious consequence of the new subsidy system regulations, which specify the funding amounts for which an ensemble may apply according to the number of concerts played per year in particular venues. As he put it:⁵⁴

⁵⁰ K. Jansen, 'Na dieptepunt gaat Koopman weer op tournee. Personeel ontslagen, schuld gesaneerd', in *NRC Handelsblad*, 8 May 2010, section Kunst 7.

⁵¹ http://www.fondspodiumkunsten.nl/publicaties/beleidsplan_2013_2016_naar_een_nieuw_evenwicht/ (accessed 24 January 2014).

⁵² See, for example, H. Bockma, "'Er zit pijn in, dat klopt". Interview Halbe Zijlstra, Staatssecretaris voor Cultuur', in *De Volkskrant*, 11 June 2011, section Ten Eerste, 4; M. Spel, "'Ensembles gaan sneuvelen". Directeuren van sterk beknotte kunstfondsen niet alleen maar pessimistisch over cultuurbezuinigingen', in *NRC Handelsblad*, 13 July 2011, section Cultuur.

⁵³ http://www.fondspodiumkunsten.nl/nl/toekenningen/meerjarige_activiteitensubsidies_2013-2016/orkest_v_d_achttiende_eeuw/ (accessed 29 January 2014).

⁵⁴ S. Verster, interview by author.

So in these days where orchestras are again losing their subvention, we have for the first time not on purpose but just because of the new system gotten a little bit more than we asked. We asked – we wanted to ask for € 240[,000], they decided to give us € 300,000. Which is still half of what [contemporary music ensemble] ASKO-Schoenberg is getting, it's a fifth of what ASKO-Schoenberg was having in the past, but our idea is that you should realize that there is a restricted amount of money for the arts, of which a restricted part goes to the music, of which another restriction goes to the ensembles, so the more *you* get, the less *they* get, so let's try to remain modest, and that's what we have done over the years. But without that subvention it would be difficult nowadays.

Two new Dutch Baroque orchestras, the New Dutch Academy (NDA, established in 2002) and the Holland Baroque Society (HBS, established in 2007), have begun to challenge the dominance of the ABO and the OEC, but they have had disparate success in securing funding from the federal government. The NDA was not able to break into the subsidy system, having applied for and been denied a grant for 2005–2008. The HBS received a modest stipend for 2008–2012 from the Fonds Podiumkunsten of € 91,622; this amount was increased substantially to € 268,500 for 2013–2016.⁵⁵ At the same time, however, venues and organizations which hire Baroque orchestras, such as the Utrecht Early Music Festival, have seen their subsidy reduced in recent years.⁵⁶ Such reductions further complicate efforts by newer ensembles to find performance opportunities and develop new audiences.

Given the current climate of economizing in the government sector and the collapse of the recording industry, the future of Baroque orchestras in the Netherlands seems uncertain. Frans Brügger has suggested that the OEC will die with him,⁵⁷ while the ABO has curtailed its activities substantially. As tensions between Baroque and mainstream orchestras waned by the late 1990s, both Brügger and Koopman appeared regularly as guest conductors with modern ensembles, and could command 'star conductor' fees. Yet the period-instrument orchestral player is at a comparative disadvantage, having accepted employment concessions for freelance work. This has had disturbing implications for young musicians entering the field. Recent conservatory graduates whom I interviewed in 2003 and 2004 complained of decreasing amounts of orchestral work; they suggested that the lack of formal auditions in the Baroque orchestra sector meant that ensembles like the ABO and Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century were 'closed', resulting in few opportunities for young

⁵⁵ http://www.fondspodiumkunsten.nl/nl/toekenningen/meerjarige_activiteitensubsidies_2013-2016/holland_baroque_society

⁵⁶ The festival was awarded € 250,000 a year for 2013–14, though this is less than half of what it had been awarded for 2005–08. http://www.fondspodiumkunsten.nl/nl/toekenningen/meerjarige_activiteitensubsidies_2013-2016/festival_oude_muziek

⁵⁷ Wakin & Schmied, interview with Frans Brügger and Sieuwert Verster. It is possible that the ensemble may continue in some form with the use of guest conductors, however.

musicians to progress from low-paying, low prestige church and accompaniment orchestra gigs to the more professional groups.⁵⁸

The appearance of new orchestras like the Holland Baroque Society, with a preponderance of younger players, suggests renewal is occurring within the Dutch Baroque orchestra scene, a development that the FPK seems intent on fostering through its funding decisions. As Paul Janssen has noted, the NDA and HBS are keen to communicate not just with early music insiders, but rather with newer, younger audiences by emphasizing the ‘total performance’ experience and by adopting a ‘rock ‘n roll mentality’.⁵⁹ It remains, of course, to be seen if these (in Janssen’s words) ‘hard rockers of the early music circuit’ can project the image of rebellion associated with rock music when the Baroque orchestra as a concept has itself become mainstream and the marketplace has become saturated with similar ensembles (see Appendix). While younger Baroque orchestras can no longer be said to revolt in *Notenkraker* fashion against conventional orchestras, they may react against the older generation of historical performers, who have themselves now become the ‘Concertgebouw of early music’.⁶⁰ In any event, if the Dutch Baroque orchestras are to survive as the vibrant and innovative ensembles they were in the past, they will be forced to adapt to changing markets, funding priorities and demographics. They will also need to maintain their commitment to historical performance practice, as well as to improved working conditions for their musicians.

⁵⁸ See Rubinoff, ‘The early music movement in the Netherlands’, 163–64.

⁵⁹ P. Janssen, ‘De hardrockers van het oude muziekcircuit (New Dutch Academy, Holland Baroque Society, Les Mufatti and B’Rock)’, in *Mens en Melodie* 62 (2007), 23–26.

⁶⁰ The expression ‘Concertgebouworkest van de oude muziek’ was used in reference to the ABO by Jan van den Bossche, former director of the Utrecht Early Music Festival. See A. Fiumara, “‘Een dramatische amputatie’”, in *Trouw*, 23 August 2008.

APPENDIX

Major Period Instrument Orchestras and Dates of Formation

Flexible ensembles have been listed here provided that they have a significant performing or recording history in an orchestral format (e.g., Musica ad Rhenum and The Nederlandse Bachvereniging are not, strictly speaking, orchestras, though their ensembles expand to orchestral size depending on the repertoire). Preexisting orchestras are listed according to the date of changeover to period instruments (actual date of establishment is given in parentheses). Ensembles based in the Netherlands are listed in bold type.

1953	Concentus Musicus Wien
1962	Collegium Aureum Cologne
1968	Monteverdi Orchestra <i>(See English Baroque Soloists)</i>
1972	La Petite Bande Les Musiciens du Louvre, Grenoble
1973	Academy of Ancient Music The English Concert Musica Antiqua Köln Boston Baroque Taverner Consort
1975	Brandenburg Consort and Orchestra
1976	Smithsonian Chamber Players and Orchestra
1977	English Baroque Soloists La Chapelle Royale
1978	London Classical Players Raglan Baroque Players
1979	Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra Tafelmusik Les Arts Florissants Il Complesso Barocco The Parley of Instruments
1980	Das Kleine Konzert The Hanover Band The King's Consort
1981	Orchestra of the 18th Century Gabrieli Consort Arion Baroque Orchestra, Montréal Philharmonia Baroque Ensemble 415

1982	Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin Ensemble Baroque de Nice Gabrieli Consort & Players
1983	Concerto Armonico, Budapest Accademia Bizantina, Ravenna Ex Cathedra Baroque Orchestra
1984 (est. 1921)	Musica Alta Ripa, Hanover Nederlandse Bachvereniging Portland Baroque Orchestra Modo Antiquo Concerto Italiano
1985	Concerto Köln Ensemble Baroque de Limoges European Community Baroque Orchestra (now European Union Baroque Orchestra) Haydn Sinfonietta, Vienna Il Giardino Armonico, Milan Avison Ensemble Lyra Baroque Orchestra (Minnesota, U.S.A.)
1986 (est. 1815)	Frankfurt Baroque Orchestra Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment Freiburg Baroque Orchestra Handel and Haydn Society Boston Orchestre Les Passions, Montauban Capriccio Stravagante Sarband
1987	Concert Spirituel La Simphonie du Marais
1988	La Stravaganza, Cologne Bach Collegium, Japan Orchestre Revolutionnaire et Romantique L'Orchestre des Champs-Elysees Das Neue Orchester, Cologne Norsk Barokkorkester Al Ayre Español La Stagione Frankfurt
1989 (est. 1973)	American Bach Soloists Il Fondamento, Bruges Jubilate Orchestra Musica Aeterna Bratislava Concert des Nations
1990	Australian Brandenburg Orchestra Collegium Musicum 90 L'Europa Galante, Rome Le Parlement de Musique, Strasbourg Collegium Musicum Riga

1991	Les Talens Lyriques, Paris Concerto d'Amsterdam Concerto Copenhagen Ensemble Matheus Florilegium
1992	New Queen's Hall Orchestra Apollo's Fire, Cleveland Musica ad Rhenum, Amsterdam
1994	La Serenissima
1995	Bach Sinfonia (Maryland, U.S.A.)
1996	Irish Baroque Orchestra Bach Sinfonia Maryland L'Orfeo Barockorchester Musica Angelica Tempesta di Mare
1997	Auser Musici, Pisa Venice Baroque Orchestra
1998	New Trinity Baroque, Atlanta La Tempesta, Warsaw
1999	Croatian Baroque Ensemble
2000	Le Concert d'Astrée Ensemble Inégal, Prague
2001	La Chapelle Rhénane
2002	New Dutch Academy
2003	Arion Choir and Consort, Pavia
2004	Barocco sempre giovane, Prague Les Muffatti
2005	Polish Baroque Orchestra Le Cercle de l'Harmonie Holland Baroque Society B'Rock (Ghent)
2006	Collegium Musicum Den Haag
2007	Bourbon Baroque (Kentucky, U.S.A.)
2008	Kuninkaantien muusikot (Musicians of the King's Road) Les Passions de l'Ame Bern
2009	Retrospect Ensemble
2010	Solistes de Musique Ancienne