

LES NATIONS  
*Sonades et Suites de Simphonies en Trio*

FRANÇOIS COUPERIN  
(1668-1733)

"Les Nations, Sonades et Suites de Simphonies en Trio" appeared in 1726 as a joint publication of François Couperin and his publisher, Boivin.

Premier Ordre "La Française"

Sonade

--E Minor

--the sonata is slow-fast-slow-fast-slow-fast-air-fast

♩ C ♩ 6/8 ♩ C C 6/8

(gigue)

--slow movements incorporate longer note values

Pièces de Simphonie

Allemande

Première Courante

Seconde Courante

Sarabande

Gigue

Chaconne ou Passacaille

Gavotte

Menuet

--eight movements played without interruption

--the sixth movement is a chaconne; 105 measures in length; in the form of a French Rondeau

Second Ordre "L'Espagnole"

Sonade

--C Minor

--more grave, melancholy, sombre in character

--consists of 7 movements, with two breaks, after the 3rd and before the last

--ends with majestic finale which is a chaconne on an ostinato of 8 notes identical with the bass of the theme of the Goldberg variations except in mode aeolian which is major in the Bach work.

--slow-fast-air-slow-fast-slow-fast

C C C C 6/4 2 6/4

Pièces de Simphonie

Allemande

Courante

Seconde Courante

Sarabande

Gigue Lourée

Gavotte

Rondeau

Bourée

Double de la Bourée précédente

Passacaille

--consists of 10 movements

--last one is a Passacaille, 162 measures long

--majestic theme; dotted rhythms

(Second Ordre, Pièces de Simphonie, continued)

- duet between 2 high instruments without bass
- interlude in fanfare style in E flat major

Troisième Ordre "L'Impériale"

Sonade

- d minor
- noble and serious expression
- true grandeur
- six sections, but of far greater scope than those in the other sonatas (particularly the last four sections)
- more developed
- slow-fast-slow-fast-slow-fast  
C 4/8 3/2 3/8 3/2 4/8  
(long)

Pièces de Simphonie

Allemande

Courante

Seconde Courante

Sarabande

Bourée

Gigue

Rondeau

Chaconne

Menuet

- first 4 are in d minor
- following 5 in D major
- chaconne, 196 measures; subdivided into three almost equal sections. The middle one is in d minor and unfolds almost entirely in echo style.
- closes with a short minuet in the manner of an ironic exclamation mark

Quatrième Ordre "La Piémontoise"

Sonade

- G minor
- added in 1726; less developed; less dimensions than the other three
- slow-fast-slow-fast-air-2nd air-slow-fast  
3/2 C 3/2 C 3 3 6 6/8  
g-6 G G g g

Pièces de Simphonie

Allemande

Courante

Seconde Courante

Sarabande

Rondeau

Gigue

--six movements

--1,2 in g minor

3,4,5 in G major

6 in G minor

--The gigue, which returns to the minor, has a strange and subtle sadness