

*“RAVISHING RAMEAU - For nobility of expression, elegance of execution, and originality of programming, few recordings of this repertoire can compete with Skip Sempé’s latest.”*

- **BBC Music Magazine** (January 2009, BBC MUSIC CHOICE)

# Paradizo

## A FRENCH COLLECTION

### *Harpsichord Pieces*

### *Parisian salon repertoire of the Age of Enlightenment*

**Skip Sempé**, *harpsichord*



Skip Sempé has already recorded a wide selection of French harpsichord music: Chambonnières, Louis Couperin, d’Anglebert, Forqueray, Francois Couperin and Rameau. The repertoire of both the seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century French harpsichordists is large and rich. The harpsichord took over where the lute left off, but all is inspired by the touch of the seventeenth-century lutenists. The so-called *art de toucher* is therefore a bit of a *double-entendre*: *toucher* meaning to touch the listener and to touch the instrument. In the age of great harpsichord playing, these two ideas were inseparable.

*A French Collection* is a kind of companion volume to the Rameau recording *La Pantomime* and the DVD which accompanies it for Paradizo, and includes repertoire Skip Sempé has often performed in concerts, but had not yet recorded: Duphy, Balbastre, Royer, Armand-Louis Couperin. “Ravishing Rameau,” says **BBC music Magazine**, “For nobility of expression, elegance of execution, and originality of programming, few recordings of this repertoire can compete with Skip Sempé’s latest. The playing leaves us ‘touched’ and ‘impressed’, just as Rameau would have it.”

This disc is also a reminder that Rameau’s contemporaries were also outstanding harpsichordists. The salon repertoire of the Enlightenment was characterized by the intimate and the decorative, served its artistic and musical purpose, and vanished almost unnoticed. The next great flowering of keyboard music in France was the music and the playing of Chopin, who can rightly be considered the last keyboard composer-performer of the great French salon tradition of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In company of the superb harpsichord by Bruce Kennedy based on 18<sup>th</sup> century French originals, Skip Sempé is the ideal guide for this voyage into the extraordinary diversity of French harpsichord music from the Age of the Enlightenment

**For more information and a complete track listing, please visit: [www.paradizo.org](http://www.paradizo.org)**

***Paradizo: Essential Listening***

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