

# news

*For Immediate Release*

**WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING OF JOSEPH BOLOGNE'S 1780 OPERA  
*L'AMANT ANONYME* PERFORMED BY HAYMARKET OPERA COMPANY  
TO BE RELEASED BY CEDILLE RECORDS FEBRUARY 10, 2023**

*L'amant Anonyme* features soprano Nicole Cabell as Léontine and tenor Geoffrey Agpallo as Valcour, conducted By Craig Trompeter



**CHICAGO, ILLINOIS (JANUARY 3, 2023)** — Haymarket Opera, Chicago's premier early opera company that presents historically informed performances played on 18th-century classical era instruments, performs *L'Amant Anonyme* (The Anonymous Lover) by Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges (1745–1799) on a world-premiere recording of the opera to be released by Cedille Records (CDR 90000 217) on February 10, 2023. *L'Amant Anonyme* is available for pre-order from [Cedille](#) and [Amazon](#).

A biracial man of French and African descent, Bologne rose to fame among the 18th-century European aristocracy as an accomplished swordsman, virtuosic violinist, and celebrated composer. Premiered in 1780, *L'Amant Anonyme*—which tells the story of a love “triangle” between the two main characters: the young widow Léontine and her friend and anonymous suitor Valcour—was the most successful of Bologne's six operas and is the only one to survive to the present day. Based on a play by the composer's patroness, Félicité de Genlis, who was a respected writer of the era, the work is an *opéra comique* in two acts composed in the then-popular style that mixed sung parts with spoken dialogue, dance, and more. All these theatrical elements are presented on this recording of *L'Amant Anonyme* (“as

delightful production of this neglected bonbon as one could imagine,” *Chicago Tribune*), which features the original dialogue in French, as well as the dance music played on period instruments, performed with full attention to period style.

The cast is headlined by soprano **Nicole Cabell** in the lead role of Léontine, opposite tenor **Geoffrey Agpalo** as her secret admirer Valcour. Cabell, the 2005 winner of the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition, has appeared in opera houses around the world, including the Metropolitan Opera, Royal Opera House, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Lyric Opera of Chicago. Agpalo, a Chicago native, is also known to the city’s audiences through appearances with Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Additional highlights include roles at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and Michigan Opera Theatre. Both singers made their Haymarket Opera Company debuts in the live production of *L’Amant Anonyme*, with the *Chicago Tribune* praising Ms. Cabell’s “expertly, convincingly shaded ... radiant soprano” and Mr. Agpalo’s “hall-filling, bel canto sensibility ... his tenor plush, fluid, and lip-smackingly sweet.” The cast also includes **David Govertsen** (Ophémon), **Erica Schuller** (Jeannette), **Michael St. Peter** (Colin), and **Nathalie Colas** (Dorothée). Company founder and artistic director **Craig Trompeter** leads the performance, conducting a 19-member contingent of the period-instrument Haymarket Opera Orchestra.

The recording’s booklet features an essay titled “Silenced No More: Composer Joseph Bologne and the French Operatic Tradition” by Marc Clague, Professor of Musicology and Associate Dean at The University of Michigan Ann Arbor, that provides historical context and insight into Bologne’s life and the opera. *L’Amant Anonyme* is presented on three CDs: two CDs containing Acts 1 and 2 complete, with the French dialogue, and a third bonus CD that contains only the 21 musical numbers. Production photos and full libretto in original French and English translation are also included in the booklet.

*L’Amant Anonyme* was recorded June 20-22, 2022 at the Sasha and Eugene Jarvis Opera Hall at DePaul University in Chicago by the Grammy Award-winning team of producer James Ginsburg and engineer Bill Maylone.

The album is the first to be funded, in part, by the newly established [Ruth Bader Ginsburg Fund for Vocal Recordings](#) at Cedille Records, honoring the late Justice’s love of vocal music. Cedille Records’ President, and the producer of this album, is the late Justice’s son, James Ginsburg.

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### About Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges (1745–1799)



Joseph Bologne, also known as the Chevalier de Saint-Georges, was among the 18<sup>th</sup> century’s most extraordinary musical figures. Not only was he a virtuoso violinist, composer, and conductor, he was noted as one of the greatest swordsmen of his day and led numerous military campaigns as a high-ranking officer. Bologne was born in Guadeloupe to George Bologne, his Caucasian French father, and Nanon, his enslaved African mother. When his father was unjustly accused of murder, the family fled to France to avoid the younger Bologne being sold into slavery.

Within a few years, his prodigious athletic and musical talents took Paris by storm and he became a society celebrity. Despite the opposition of some overtly racist factions, he rose to great acclaim as a

composer of instrumental music and opera. He knew many of the leading composers of the day, including Salieri, Gluck, and his neighbor (when in Paris) Mozart. He commissioned and conducted the premiere of Haydn's six Paris Symphonies. Bologne was also an active abolitionist and a champion of the French revolutionary cause. Although he was imprisoned for 18 months and sentenced to the guillotine during the Reign of Terror, he was eventually exonerated and released. He died of gangrene at the age of 53.

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Haymarket Opera Company inspires a culturally vibrant community and diversifies the artistic landscape of Chicago and the Midwest through the presentation of historically informed opera and oratorio from the Age of Enlightenment.

Haymarket Opera Company takes its name from both Chicago's Haymarket Affair of 1886 which gave focus to the world-wide labor movement, and from the King's Theatre in the Haymarket District of London where Handel produced his Italian operas.

For over ten years Haymarket Opera Company has enriched the musical community of Chicago and the Midwest with critically acclaimed performances of 17th- and 18th-century operas and oratorios using period instruments and historically informed staging conventions. It has produced more than twenty operatic productions and numerous concert performances. The company has received glowing reviews in the *Chicago Tribune*, Italy's *L'Opera*, *Opera News*, *Early Music America*, and more. *The New York Times* praised Haymarket's "finely played, carefully sung, lovingly detailed period performance."

During the recent shutdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Haymarket attracted national attention by offering audiences a complete season of filmed performances that reached more than 800,000 households. Alongside established cultural institutions including the Chicago Symphony and the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Haymarket was listed as "Chicago's finest operatic event of 2021" by the *Chicago Classical Review*, and in the "Top 10 of 2021 for Classical Music, Jazz, and Opera" by the *Chicago Tribune*. In 2020, the company debuted on WFMT's historic Saturday Opera Radio Broadcast series alongside top opera companies around the world including the Metropolitan Opera, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Paris Opera House, Glyndebourne, Santa Fe Opera, and others. Pre-pandemic, Haymarket Opera Company was listed as one of the *Chicago Sun Times's* "Ten Best of the Decade" and in the *Chicago Tribune's* "Ten Best of 2019." Learn more at [haymarketopera.org](http://haymarketopera.org).

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Launched in November 1989 by James Ginsburg, Grammy Award-winning Cedille Records (pronounced say-DEE) is dedicated to showcasing and promoting the most noteworthy classical artists in and from the Chicago area. The label's catalog of more than 200 front-line albums brims with attractive, off-the-beaten-path repertoire from the Baroque era to the present day. Works from the classical canon, when they do appear, are usually heard in particularly imaginative pairings.

Cedille has recorded more than 180 Chicago artists and ensembles, with over 80 making their professional recording debuts on the label. Its catalog includes the world premieres of more than 400 classical compositions.

Cedille recordings are available on CD, as MP3 and hi-resolution FLAC downloads, and on all major streaming platforms.

An independent nonprofit enterprise, Cedille Records is the label of Cedille Chicago, NFP. Sales of physical CDs and digital downloads and streams cover only a small percentage of the label's costs.

Tax-deductible donations from individual music-lovers and grants from charitable organizations account for most of its revenue.

Cedille's headquarters are at 4311 N. Ravenswood Ave., Suite 202, Chicago, IL 60613; call 773-989-2515; email: [info@cedillerecords.org](mailto:info@cedillerecords.org). Website: [www.cedillerecords.org](http://www.cedillerecords.org)

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***L'Amant Anonyme* by Joseph Bologne, Chevalier De Saint-Georges (1745-1799)**

Catalog No.: CDR 90000 217

Release date: February 10, 2023

Haymarket Opera Company

Craig Trompeter, conductor

**Léontine** Nicole Cabell, soprano

**Valcour** Geoffrey Agpalo, tenor

**Ophémon** David Govertsen, bass-baritone

**Jeannette** Erica Schuller, soprano

**Colin** Michael St. Peter, tenor

**Dorothée** Nathalie Colas, soprano

DISC 1

Act 1

- |    |                                                 |                                              |
|----|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 1  | Overture (7:33)                                 |                                              |
| 2  | Air: Depuis longtemps mon coeur soupire (2:07)  | Valcour                                      |
| 3  | Scene 2 dialogue (2:07)                         | Ophémon, Valcour                             |
| 4  | Duo: Tant de constance (3:24)                   | Valcour, Ophémon                             |
| 5  | Scene 3 dialogue part 1 (4:55)                  | Valcour, Léontine, Dorothée                  |
| 6  | Ariette: Son amour, sa constance extrême (2:43) | Léontine                                     |
| 7  | Scene 3 dialogue part 2 (4:30)                  | Léontine, Valcour, Dorothée                  |
| 8  | Choeur: Chantons, célébrons notre dame (3:05)   | Jeannette, Colin, Valcour, Ophémon, Dorothée |
| 9  | Ballet (7:54)                                   |                                              |
| 10 | Chanson: Jouissez de l'allégresse (2:49)        | Jeannette, Colin, Valcour, Ophémon, Dorothée |
| 11 | Scene 4 dialogue (0:14)                         | Léontine                                     |
| 12 | Danse (1:02)                                    |                                              |
| 13 | Scenes 5&6 dialogue (3:44)                      | Léontine, Dorothée, Valcour                  |
| 14 | Quinqué (3:18)                                  | Léontine, Valcour, Ophémon, Jeannette, Colin |

DISC 2

Act 2

- |    |                                                                         |                            |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1  | Récitatif: Enfin une foule importune / Amour deviens-moi propice (3:51) | Léontine                   |
| 2  | Scene 1 dialogue (1:31)                                                 | Léontine, Ophémon          |
| 3  | Duo: Ah! Finissez de grâce (4:16)                                       | Léontine, Ophémon          |
| 4  | Scene 2 dialogue part 1 (1:33)                                          | Léontine, Ophémon          |
| 5  | Air: Aimer sans pouvoir le dire (2:36)                                  | Ophémon                    |
| 6  | Scene 2 dialogue part 2 (3:53)                                          | Léontine, Ophémon          |
| 7  | Airette: Du tendre amour (5:40)                                         | Léontine                   |
| 8  | Scene 3 dialogue (0:36)                                                 | Léontine, Ophémon, Valcour |
| 9  | Duo Dialogué: Non, non, je ne puis rien entendre (3:03)                 | Léontine, Valcour          |
| 10 | Scene 4 dialogue (4:30)                                                 | Léontine, Valcour          |
| 11 | Trio: Ah! Quel trouble m'agite (3:20)                                   | Léontine, Valcour, Ophémon |
| 12 | Scene 5 dialogue (0:18)                                                 | Léontine, Ophémon          |

- 13 Ballet (1:04)
- 14 Choeur (0:40)
- 15 Ballet (2:18)
- 16 Marche (3:30)
- 17 Scene 6 dialogue (0:45)
- 18 Quatuor: Aïmons-nous sans cesse (2:06)
- 19 Contredance Générale (2:39)

Jeannette, Dorothée, Colin, Valcour  
Léontine, Valcour, Jeannette, Colin

Total Opera Duration (98:54)

DISC 3

Bonus, all-music CD: all 21 non-dialogue tracks (71:37)

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