

PORTERFLUTE POD

S. 5 Ep 11

ETUDES: DROUET'S DRAMA

Welcome to PorterFlute Pod! Come on in and listen to the story from 200 years ago - and the flute drama that unfolded around Louis François Philippe Drouet. We're on the platform where we discuss etudes in depth and I offer some background and examples along the way, including Drouet's story of a stolen composition and even many stolen flutes. You can also find my videos and I read the preface of the 24 Drouet Etudes on my PorterFlute YouTube channel.

Welcome to PorterFlute Pod! I'm so happy you're here.

INTRO:

I wanted to let you know that I'm playing from the Merry/ Fleury edition. These were two very prominent flutists and pedagogues with significant experience. These are melodious etudes with emphasis on the study of legato technique. Don't forget that Fleury was the flutist for whom Claude Debussy wrote *Syrinx* in 1913, and Fleury also premiered the work. So here it is. I inherited it from the John Wummer Library in this edition, published in 1926, the year Fleury died.

There is a preface written by Fleury, if you will kindly indulge me.

The number of studies for the flute is considerable for few instruments. Does there exist such a choice of technical exercise methods, collection of scales, sets of studies, etc., etc.? The reason

for this is to be found in the fact that for a whole century in particular the 19th century, every outstanding player and considered himself bound to give the public the benefit of his experience.

As regards teaching. Nevertheless, this store is far richer in studies of great difficulty than in exercises destined to players of average ability. The professor, who has set his pupil to work through verbal studies and who, when all the studies have been assimilated, does not find that marked progress has been made, will find it difficult to select studies of the same degree of difficulty in the library of musical publications.

The studies we published today are essentially destined to supply that want of all drew production an immense amount of output. This is certainly the part which deserves to be brought again to light. This famous virtuoso who spent his long and laborious life in traveling through Europe and who in the meanwhile had numerous pupils, wrote a mass of varied airs pope trees and other pieces which have long been forgotten and justly so.

But his studies are excellent, more varied than those of Berbiguier. They bring out all the difficulties to be currently met with and which can be mastered by pupils and amateurs of average ability. The text has been reproduced from the original edition, which contained less mistakes than the later editions, although even in that one there were quite an appreciable number at the beginning of each study will be found a short notice, the purpose of which is to direct the pupils attention to the main difficulties to be encountered.

Finally, the study comprising a summing up of all these difficulties. The crowning part of the method, the last part of which was made up of these studies, has been reproduced. Not only is this a skillful summing up of all the difficulties previously met with, but it is also an excellent study in endurance. The general tone of these studies, which are not without a certain pleasant, melodious ness, are also somewhat grandiloquent.

They prepare the pupil for the concerto style, which has been in some sort neglected and which should not be too greatly regretted as regards the flute. But the utility of which from a pedagogic point of view, cannot be contested.

I'll take a **commercial break** here to remind you that The Anatomy of Sound workshop you know, and love has found a new home online! It's called AOS-wellness and we are here for you as a faculty to provide resources and products for arts educators and performing artists. Join for 6-months or 1 year and get our 5 changing channels every month plus the back content from previous months. Those channels are Wisdom, Movement, Meditation, Breathing and Practice. So after the show you can go to PorterFlute.com/AOS and learn more. You can opt in for our 7-day trial and get access to my popular Focus Sheet along with all of the wisdom we're bringing to you from our amazing faculty – only here at AOS-Wellness.com

First, let's think about the timeline – who was around during Drouet's time? Well it was Berbiguier (1782–1835), Briccialdi (1818–1881), Furstenau (1792–1852), and Altes (1826–1895) came just a little later. They're ALL flute playing etude-writing fiends!

Drouet 's dates are born in 1792 and died in 1873. He was a flute player, teacher, composer, in France, England, Holland and and facing the fate of the press and of theivery.

I'l came across a blog from Trübcher publishers in the south of England about Drouet spelled - T R Ü B C H E R. on their website dated 9th June 2020. I greatly appreciate the easy way this was written and I know I couldn't have written out the drama of Drouet's story better. So I decided to read what they wrote about Drouet. Let me tell you about Trübcher.

Trübcher is owned and managed by Roz Trubger, and also has an office in Slovenia, where Roz and her partner, Colin Hind, are renovating an old farm into a music and education centre with self catering apartments. Every aspect of the editions published by Trubcher is undertaken in house by Roz & Colin, from editing to printing and book binding. So Roz and Colin are knowledgeable and personally able to answer all enquiries about the editions. Roz answers questions about music, flute teaching and arranging, whilst Colin responds to technical questions. So let' start off with the story!

“Drouet was just 16 years old when he was appointed ‘Solo Flute’ for the King of Holland. Subsequently he was made First Flute to Napoleon 1st and Chapel master to the Duke of Saxe-Coburg. Drouet also spent significant time in London where he performed often and also set up a flute manufacturing business. A review in the Morning Chronicle dated March 29th, 1816, described the skill of Drouet’s playing as ‘astonishing’ but complained that the small core of his flute produced a sound more like that of a ‘spirit stirring fife’ than a ‘self complaining flute....the whole however is irresistibly prepossessing and was cheered by repeated acclamations’. The critic in the The Examiner newspaper the next month [Sunday 14th of April 1816] was rather less impressed, describing Drouet’s playing as ‘decidedly vile.....the effect of his rapidity extremely unpleasant to the ear’.

However, Drouet’s reputation continued to soar so that in 1817, when he returned to England on a packet boat with Sir George Smart and Mrs. Salmon, he shared first billing with them for a concert and described as ‘Mr. Drouet, First Flute to the King of France’.

The address for his flute manufacturing business was No.23 Conduit street, London. An advertisement in the Morning Post [March 21st 1817] stated ‘Mr. Drouet has the honour to acquaint the public that he has now on sale some beautiful toned instruments, made under his immediate direction, which he flatters himself will be found unrivalled for

brilliancy and elegance.’ But trust was not part of the working environment in London and within eighteen months, Drouet had been swindled by one of his workers and declared bankruptcy. His father came to the rescue, enabling the young man soon to be back in business with another trading licence:

Morning Chronicle -Tuesday December 8th 1818

‘Mr. LOUIS DROUET senior, respectfully acquaints the Public that he CONTINUES the BUSINESS lately carried on by his Son, who has lately returned from the Continent, at no. 358 Oxford street, where DROUET’S FLUTES and MUSIC CONTINUE to be SOLD as usual. Mr. Drouet takes this opportunity of informing the Public, that no Flutes of the manufacture of his Son, nor any of his compositions, are to be had elsewhere; and that to prevent the possibility of fraud upon a public which has bestowed such distinguished approbation on the works of his Son, all the Flutes of his manufacture will be accompanied by a Certificate, signed by himself, in red ink; the Music also will be accompanied by similar signature. The above precautions have become necessary, because a person lately in the employ of Mr. Drouet junior, has, during his absence, possessed himself of nearly 400 flutes of Drouet’s make in an unfinished state, as well as some certificates written in black ink, together with a quantity of imperfect music. The public will therefore be pleased to observe, that Drouet’s Flutes and Music are to be had only at 358 Oxford street; and that neither Flutes or Music are genuine unless signed or accompanied with a certificate by Mr. Drouet junior himself in red ink’.

Another newspaper stated that London was flooded with so-called Drouet flutes but, in reality, there was scarcely a genuine one to be had.

Nevertheless, Drouet's reputation continued unabashed. He was composing as well as performing. He was known as the Paganini of the flute and always much in demand as a player. A review in *The Herald* [1829] described how he 'performed some variations on an air of Weber's, likewise composed by himself, in which he surpassed even his former performance of the concerto, fugue succeeding fugue and staccatos upon staccatos in endless variety till, as a celebrated poet expressed it, the theme dissolved in an ocean of harmony without however ceasing to imitate the original air.' The over elaborate style of this review was rather amusingly ridiculed a few days later in the *Harmonicon* by the writer of the "Diary of a Dilettante" who summed up his scathingly ironical retort with the words "But this is an age of wonders, and the musical critic in *The Herald*, is the wonderful wonder of wonders."

Hector Berlioz was starting to write musical criticisms around this time and even he revealed his respect for Drouet writing in his memoirs: "I was soon an intrepid performer, a pretty reasonable singer and I played the most difficult flute concertos by Drouet"

When Felix Mendelssohn visited London, he and Drouet both performed in several of the same concerts including one given by Mlle. Sontag at the Argyll Rooms for the 'benefit of sufferers by the inundations in Silesia'. Tickets were half a guinea each, a dozen British and foreign Royals patronised the occasion and the *Morning Post* of 14 July 1829 reported that. "Nearly an hour before the commencement, upper Regent St was thronged with carriages, and in a short time the assembled company became more numerous than the room could accommodate. Upwards of 50 ladies honoured the musicians with their company" I have to confess to being somewhat amused, or maybe just aggrieved(?), by the notion of ladies 'honouring' the musicians by their presence!

Was it honour, trust or respect that encouraged another Royal, namely Queen Hortense de Beauharnais, to pass off a composition by Drouet as her own work? Did she feel she honoured him in this manner? If you read sources including Wikipedia you will see that

Hortense is accredited with composing a rousing march for the army. However various other sources give the lie to this including the Grantham Journal [15 November 1873]

“the Musical Standard gives currency to a statement that the late Louis Drouet was the real composer of ‘Partant pour la Syrie’ which is usually attributed to Queen Hortense.”

Well. Thank you for letting me read that incredible entry from the English publishing company Trübcher Publishing for this take on this interesting part of our flute heritage.

Let me take one more opportunity to introduce you to AOS Wellness where you can do a 34 minute yoga class or several different meditations, all for free. You can see more of our content at AOS-Wellness and if you're on our PorterFLute website, it's /AOS. Check us out for memberships and products that help the performing artist and arts educators.

There is a Drouet 8-keyed flute in the US at the National Museum of American History in Washington D.C. and was made by Louis François Philippe Drouet in London, England around 1818 to 1819. It is an 8-keyed flute made of ivory with silver ferrules and keys.

The flute is stamped:

L. DROUET

358 OXFORD St

827

LONDON

and engraved on a medallion:

No Flute is genuine that

is not bought at Mr. L. Drouet's

Manufactory

358 Oxford Street, London

& accompanied by a Certificate

under his hand.

In 1818, Drouet established a flute shop in London, and one year later, left the business to his employee Cornelius Ward. The inscription on the medallion is a response to fake Drouet flutes appearing on the market during this time.

Flute teachers were writing technical studies for the development of the pedagogy for the brand new modern flute and they still stand the test of time .

His Compositions include 10 concertos

- more than 20 duets, trios, solos and fantasies
- more than 300 studies and a Pedagogic method written in 1828 and
- *Méthode pour la flûte, in French in 1828*, and a translation into English under the title *Drouët's Method of Flute Playing*, in London by R. Cocks, in 1830

I play from the Merry/Fleury edition published by Leduc and the preface says –

Hey, thanks for being in PorterFlute Pod. If you'd like to visit us over at Porterflute.com that's our new website for the show. AmyPorter.com has been revamped so students can go there and click on UMICH FAQs or Porter's curriculum to learn more about me. You can also find me as Porterflute and Anatomy of Sound on YT and on FB and Instagram I'm PorterFlute and AOS-Wellness.

Thanks for being here! I'm so grateful for YOU.

