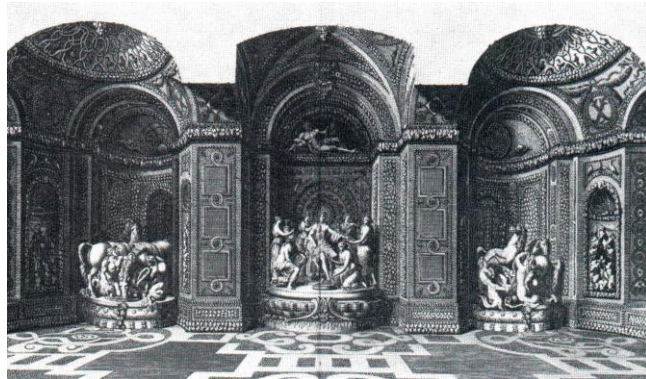


CLASSICAL MUSIC

OUVERTURE DE LA GROTTTE DE VERSAILLES

MUSIC BACKGROUND:

This baroque overture to Lully's "petit opera" (also called a ballet-divertissement), produced for King Louis XIV in 1668, is one of the oldest examples of a piece of music inspired by caves. "Lully's music is known for its power, liveliness in its fast movements and its deep emotional character in its sad movements." (Anon. 2013)



Etching by J. Le Pautre, 1676

In this case, the "Cave of Versailles" was a large stage in the garden at the north end of the chateau, which was destroyed in 1689 to make room for an addition on the north wing of the chateau. These statues were later moved to an artificial garden cave, the Grotte de Thétys or Grotte des Bains d'Apollon (Apollo's Cave), which is located not far west of the chateau itself. This garden cave was designed in 1774 by the painter Hubert Robert (1733-1808), who did several romantic landscapes showing caves and natural bridges. The arranger, Robert de Visée, who greatly admired Lully's music, was Louis XIV's court guitarist and later in 1719 he became "Maitre de guitare du roi" (the King's master guitarist) under Louis XV. This guitar entablature of Lully's overture presumably dates from 1685, when the "Grotto of Versailles" had the honor of a second performance at the royal court.



The painting of Lully
by Nicolas Mignard.



The oldest known cave-inspired music is *La Cueva de Salamanca* written by Miquel De Cervantes in 1615 (see under World Music – Spain – [WD-ES1](#)).

Ref: Anon. 2013, Jean-Baptiste Lully, Bio (in French), [Wikipedia](#) & (in English), [Wikipedia](#)

Miller, Naomi 1982, *Heavenly Caves: Reflections on the Garden Grotto*, George Allen & Unwin, London, p. 73-76

Mills, Martin 1989, Caves in Music, *Shepton Mallet Caving Club Journal*, Series 8, n. 6, p. 280

Robert de Visée, Bio, [hoasm](#)

Robert de Visée, Bio (in French), [Wikipedia](#) & (in English) [Wikipedia](#)

Willemin, Véronique & Langlois, Gilles-Antoine 1986, *Les 7 folies capitales*, Editions Alternatives, p. 62-63

DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF THE OUVERTURE DE LA GROTTÉ DE VERSAILLES

In chronological order by release dates

CL-GV1 Germany 1990

OUVERTURE DE LA GROTTÉ DE VERSAILLES (de Lully)

Classical – Baroque – Instrumental

Comp: Jean-Baptiste LULLY

Arr: Robert DE VISÉE

Perf: Manuel **BARRUECO** (classical guitar)

Prod: Gerd Berg

Prod. Co: EMI Electrola GmbH; Köln

Rec. Loc: Kloster Machern

Rec. Date: Jan. 1989

Liner Notes: Matthias Henke, 1990 (English trans.: Clive Williams)

Time: 3:25

A. German **CD:** MANUEL BARRUECO – BACH & DE VISÉE
EMI Classics 7243 5 66575 2 6 (Tk 1)

B. Austrian **CD:** MANUEL BARRUECO – BACH & DE VISÉE
EMI Classics CDC 7 49980-2 (Tk 1)

C. American **CD:** MANUEL BARRUECO PLAYS BACH & VISÉE (1997)
EMI Music 940238 (Tk 1)

Notes: "The work that de Visée choose to arrange documents the typical form of the French overture as firmly established by Lully: two 'grave' movements with dotted rhythms frame a central fugal section in a fast tempo." (Henke 1990)

Ref: Manuel Barrueco, Bach & de Visée CD, [Allmusic](#) (◀**AUDIO SAMPLE**)

Manuel Barrueco, Bach & de Visée CD, [CDUniverse](#) (◀**AUDIO SAMPLE**)

Manuel Barrueco, Bio (in Spanish), [Wikipedia](#) & (in English), [Wikipedia](#)

Manuel Barrueco, Website, [barrueco](#)



Photo by Simon Fowler

CL-GV2 Germany 1993

OUVERTURE – LA GROTTÉ DE VERSAILLES de Mr. J.B. Lully

Classical – Baroque – Instrumental

Comp: Jean-Baptiste LULLY

Arr: Robert DE VISÉE

Perf: Yasunori **IMAMURA** (theorbo)

Prod. Co: Delta Music GmbH.

Rec. Loc: Kirche Seewen; Solothurn

Rec. Date: 26-28 April 1992

Photo by Frank Gutsche



Liner Notes: Philippe Canguilhem (English trans.: Lionel Salter)

Time: 3:12

CD: ROBERT DE VISÉE – PIECES FOR THEORBO

Capriccio 10 464 (Tk 7)

Notes: The theorbo, much larger than a lute, was equipped with 14 courses (as against 8 for the lute) of which the lowest are stretched over an extension of the neck and serve only to play the bass line of the accompaniment. (Canguilhem 1993) It originated in Florence in the late 16th century and became very popular in France in the second half of the 17th century.

In the complete sample one hears that the piece (at 1:00) picks up the tempo and changes to a happier melody.

Ref: Sayce, Lynda n.d., What is a theorbo?, [theorbo](#)

Theorbo, Description, [Wikipedia](#)

Yasunori Imamura, Bio, [yasunoriimamura](#) & [Wikipedia](#)

Yasunori Imamura, Ouverture la grotte de Versailles (3 :02), [YouTube](#) (◀COMPLETE AUDIO SAMPLE)

Yasunori Imamura, Robert de Visée – Pieces for Theorbo, [Allmusic](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

Yasunori Imamura, Robert de Visée – Pieces for Theorbo, [CDUniverse](#)



Grotte de Thétys – Painting by Hubert Robert

CL-GV3 Netherlands 1995

OUVERTURE 'LA GROTTTE DE VERSAILLES' de Mr. Lully

Classical – Baroque – Instrumental

Comp: Jean-Baptiste LULLY

Arr: Robert DE VISÉE

Perf: Toyohiko **SATOH** (theorbo)

Prod: Bert van der Wolf

Prod. Co: Channel Classics Records B.V.; Amsterdam, Holland

Rec. Loc: Bethaniënklooster; Amsterdam

Rec. Date: 4-6 June 1990

Liner Notes: Toyohiko Satoh(English trans.: Keith Freeman)

Time: 4:41 (4:28) & (No. 2) 3:04

1. **CD:** TOYOHICO SATOH 4 – Robert de Visée

Channel Classics CCS 7795 (Tk 19)

2. Reissue **CD:** TOYOHICO SATOH 4 – Robert de Visée (1997)

Channel Classics 7795 (Tk 2)

Notes: A stirring rendition where the bass line comes across more forcefully than in the Imamura interpretation and the transition to the middle fugue is much smoother.

Ref: Toyohiko Satoh 4 – Robert de Visée CD, [Allmusic](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)



Photo by Hans Hordijk

Toyohiko Satoh 4 – Robert de Visée CD, [Discogs](#)
Toyohiko Satoh, Bio, [Wikipedia](#) & [bach-cantatas](#)

CL-GV4 France 2001

LA GROTTE DE VERSAILLES (Ouverture)

Classical – Baroque – Orchestral – Instrumental

Comp: Jean-Baptiste LULLY

Perf: LA SYMPHONIE DU MARAIS

Cond: Hugo REYNE

Prod: Yann Olivier

Prod. Co: Musidisc-Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles

Rec. Loc: L'Opera Royal de Versailles

Rec. Date: 6-7 Dec. 2000

Liner Notes: Hugo Reyne & Philippe Beussant
(English trans.: John Tyler Tuttle)

Time: 2:10

CD: LULLY OU LE MUSICIEN DU SOLEIL – VOL. 3

Accord 461 811-2 (Tk 9)

Notes: This orchestral version as originally composed by Lully was performed in concert and recorded at the opera theater at the Chateau of Versailles in 2000.

The [deezer](#) 30-second sample has the full orchestra and one of the trumpet passages while the [Amazon](#) sample (from the 2012 reissue CD) has another more representative trumpet section.

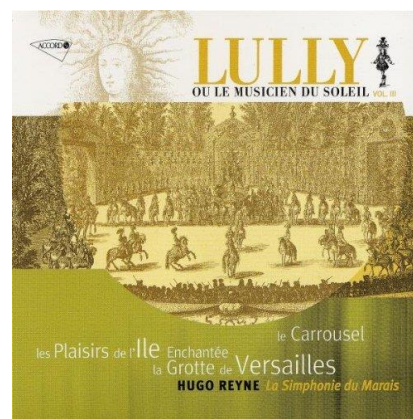
Ref: Hugo Reyne, Bio, (in French), [symphonie-du-marais](#)

Lully ou le musicien du soleil – Vol. 3 CD, [Amazon](#)

La Symphonie du Marais, Lully – La Grotte de Versailles – Ouverture, [Amazon](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

La Symphonie du Marais, Lully – La Grotte de Versailles – Ouverture, [deezer](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

La Symphonie du Marais, Lully : La Grotte de Versailles, [symphonie-du-marais](#)



CL-GV5 France 2002

“LA GROTTE DE VERSAILLES” OVERTURE

Classical – Baroque – Chamber Music – Instrumental

Comp: Jean-Baptiste LULLY

Arr: Robert DE VISÉE

Perf: Luca PIANCA (archlute)

Vittorio Ghielmi (bass viol)

Prod: Jean David Noir



Prod. Co:

Rec. Loc: Tibor Varga Studio; Sion, Switzerland

Rec. Date: Nov. 2001

Time: 3:01

CD: PIÈCES DE CHARACTRE

Opus 111 (Tk 14)

Notes: The archlute and the bass viol are both very unusual string instruments. See below for more information on Wikipedia.

The audio sample on [CDUniverse](#) has both instruments performing.

This version was originally found on the MusicStrands Website, a very helpful site that no longer exists.

Ref: Archlute, Description, [Wikipedia](#)

Luca Pianca, Bio, [Wikipedia](#)

Viol, Description, [Wikipedia](#)

Vittorio Ghielmi, Bio, [Wikipedia](#) & [bach-cantatas](#)

Vittorio Ghielmi & Luca Planca, Pièces de caractère CD, [Allmusic](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

Vittorio Ghielmi & Luca Planca, Pièces de caractère CD, (Misnumbered No. 6), [CDUniverse](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

caveinspiredmusic.com