

CLASSICAL MUSIC

GUITAR FINGALS HÖHLE & LA SOURCE DU LISON

FINGALS HÖHLE

MUSIC BACKGROUND



This piece, a definite homage to Mendelssohn's Overture, is the first part of Book 5 of Volume 3 of the Johann Kaspar Mertz collection of classical guitar works entitled, *Bardenkänge*.

"The title *Bardenkänge* [meaning "Bardic Sounds," title of this opus] suggests still another Romantic tradition, the marriage of music with literature...On a tour of Scotland in 1829, which included a visit to the home of Scott, Mendelssohn first saw the Isle of Staffa, the legendary location of Fingal's Cave, a reference to Ossian/ Macpherson's *Fingal* (1762). This experience inspired Mendelssohn's overture for orchestra *Die Hebriden*, otherwise known as *Fingal's Cave*. Mertz's choice of this same title for the piece in the fifth volume of the *Bardenkänge* is confirmation of the literary reference." (Long 2002)

For information on Fingal's Cave on the Isle of Staffa in Scotland you are referred to the document on Music Background for Mendelssohn's *Fingal's Cave Overture*.

Ref: Anon. 2014, Johann Kaspar Mertz, Biography, [Wikipedia](#)
Cummings, Robert 2014, Johann Kaspar Mertz, Artist Biography, [Allmusic](#)
Fingal's Cave, Description, [Wikipedia](#)
Long, Richard 2002, Johann Mertz, *Bardenkänge* CD, Liner notes, p. 3

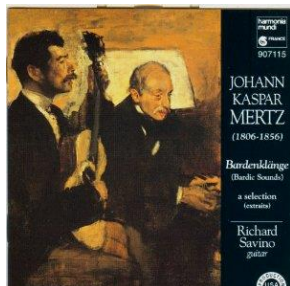
VARIOUS VERSIONS OF FINGALS HÖHLE In chronological order

CL-GT1 United States 1994

FINGALS HÖHLE (FINGAL'S CAVE) *

CL – Romantic – Instrumental

Comp: Johann Kaspar MERTZ (1802-1856)
Perf: Richard **SAVINO** (guitar)
Prod: Paul F. Witt
Prod. Co: Harmonia Mundi USA; Los Angeles, CA
Rec. Co: Pony Track Ranch; Portola Valley, CA
Rec. Date: Feb. 1993



Liner Notes: (16-page booklet) Richard Savino
(in English, French, & German)

Time: 2:44

CD: JOHANN KASPAR MERTZ – BARDENKLÄNGE
Harmonia Mundi HMU 907115 (Tk 11)

Notes: The first known recording of this piece.
This album received “great critical acclaim.” (Anon. n.d.)

Ref: Anon. n.d., Richard Savino, Bio, Sacramento State Department of Music, csus.edu
Richard Savino, Bio, Naxos
Mertz Bardic Sounds, gramophone.co.uk

CL-GT2 Italy 1995

FINGALS-HÖHLE *

CL – Romantic – Instrumental

Comp: Johann Kaspar MERTZ

Perf: Roberto **PORRONI** (guitar)

Prod. Co: Sipario Dischi

Rec. Date: 1992

Liner Notes: Roberto Porroni

Time: 2:29

CD: LA CHITARRA NELL '800
Sipario 23 (Tk 3)

Notes: Performance by a well-known Italian classical guitarist.

Ref: Roberto Porroni, Bio, robertoporroni

Roberto Porroni, La chitarra nell'800 CD, Allmusic (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)



CL-GT3 Germany 2002

FINGALS HÖHLE (FINGAL'S CAVE) *

CL – Romantic – Instrumental

Comp: Johann Kaspar MERTZ

Perf: Adam **HOLZMAN** (guitar)

Prod. Co: Naxos

Liner Notes: (12-page booklet) Richard Long
(in English, German, & French)

Time: 2:45

CD: JOHANN MERTZ – BARDENKLÄNGE
Naxos 8.554556 (Tk 3)

Notes: Another superior performance.

Ref: Adam Holzman, Bio, adamholzman

Adam Holzman, Johann Mertz: Bardenklänge CD, Allmusic (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

Adam Holzman, Johann Mertz: Bardenklänge CD, Amazon (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)



CL-GT4 United States 2003

FINGALS HÖHLE *

CL – Romantic – Instrumental

Comp: Johann Kaspar MERTZ

Perf: David LEISNER (guitar)

Prod. Co: Azica

Time: 2:48

CD: LE ROMANTIQUE

Azica 71223 (Tk 3)

Notes: David Leisner “has been responsible for reviving the music of Johann Kaspar Mertz.” (Anon. 2014)

The [Allmusic](#) sample gives the best idea of this piece.

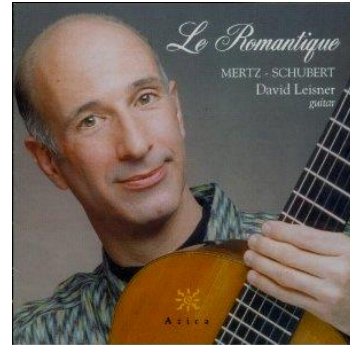
Ref: Anon. 2014, David Leisner, Bio, [Wikipedia](#)

David Leisner, Le Romantique CD, [Allmusic](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

David Leisner, Le Romantique CD, [CDUniverse](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

David Leisner, Le Romantique CD, Review, [guitar magazine](#)

Amazon Web site



LA SOURCE DU LYSON

MUSIC BACKGROUND

Napoléon Coste was born in Amondans (in the French department of Doubs) located 8 miles north of the cave resurgence, Source du Lison.

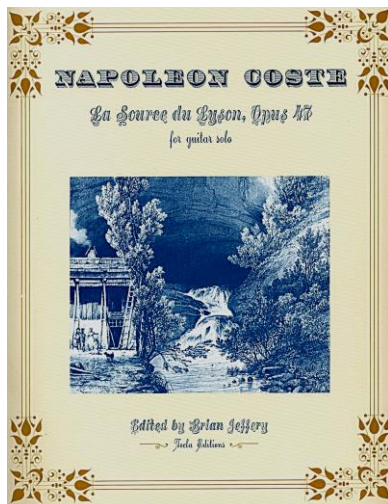
“From 1840, Napoleon Coste starts publishing his first work...in the tradition of his predecessors. But very soon the composer (sic.) finds a new writing style for his instrument...His native Jura with its great landscapes, the splendor of trees with their lazily undulating tops, water streaming down a slope or foaming gushing forth start shaping his music. The majestic, unchanging, noble and reposing Nature haunts the music of Napoleon Coste.

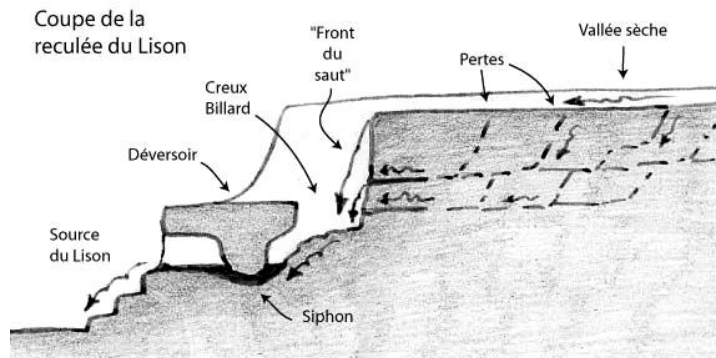
It imposes this slow rhythm and its complex and tortuous harmony and permanently imprints a kind of native optimism, wrapped in certain sadness.

His romanticism, even if Walter Scott influences him and even if he is a member of the Scottish Masonic Lodge, is fundamentally rooted in the century. His music gives the impression to merge into the earth.

“*La Source du Lyson, Op.47* is quite significant for this state of mind. Genuine program piece in three parts, it first describes a flowing river in the initial Allegro. The repeated notes do not present any instrumental interest, but express the flow of water. The Andante is a dreamy and sometimes a bit dramatic pastorage (sic). The final Rondo is a village dance full of naïve candor in the tradition of the Symphony Pastorale by Beethoven.” (Anon. 1996)

“In his article on Coste, Theodor Rischel wrote that the first section imitates the murmuring of the water, the second is a country idyll, and the third is a peasant dance and festival (‘Bauerntanz und Fest’), and went on to suggest that the work was composed under the influence of Berlioz’ programme music or Beethoven’s Pastoral Symphony.” (Jeffrey 1982)





The Source du Lison is a major cave resurgence where a considerable flow of water reappears after a short siphon passage coming from the nearby Creux Billard, a collection pit (see profile by Jean-Claude Frachon).

"Située au fond d'une reculée, la source du Lison est une résurgence des zones calcaires... avec un débit moyen de 7,3 m³ par seconde. Le Lison prend sa source à 2 km de Nans sous Saint Anne dans un cadre spectaculaire au pied d'une falaise." (Anon. n.d.)

[Situating at the end of a blind valley, the Lison Spring is a karst resurgence... with an average flow of 7.3 m³ per second. The Lison has its source 2km from Nans-sous-Saint-Anne within a spectacular setting at the foot of a cliff.]

This is a remarkably picturesque site that was painted twice by Gustave Courbet in 1866, followed by three variant copies that he did in 1866. (Brison 2013) One of these paintings was reproduced on the cover of the Chandos Records LP album, *Napoléon Coste, Music for Guitar and Oboe*, listed below.

Ref: Anon. 1996, Napoléon Coste: Guitar Romantique CD, Liner notes

Anon. 2012, La Source du Lison (in French), lieux-insolites.fr

Anon. n.d., Balade à Nans sous Ste Anne, Source du Lison, (in French), recoin.fr

Brison, David 2013, Caves Painted by Gustave Courbet, (Unpublished Inventory), p. 2-3

Frachon, Jean-Claude & Cailhol, Didier 2006, Nans-sous-Sainte-Anne, Karstologie (in French) neuf.fr

Jeffery, Brian 1982, Napoléon Coste, La Source du Lyson (sic), Tecla Editions, London, p. [2]

Napoléon Coste, Bio (in English), Wikipedia & (in French), Wikipedia

Rischel, Theodor 1927, Bibliographische Notizen zu den Gitarre-Werken von Napoleon Coste, *Die Gitarre* Source du Lison, Description (in French), Wikipedia

CL-GT5 United Kingdom 1981

LA SOURCE DU LYSON *

CL – Romantic – Instrumental – Cave Pic Cover

Comp: Napoléon COSTE (1805-1883)

Perf: Simon **WYNBERG** (guitar)

Prod: Brian Couzens

Prod. Co: Chandos Records; London

Rec. Loc: Rosslyn Hill Chapel; Hampstead

Rec. Date: Feb. 7-8, 1981

Liner Notes: Simon Wynberg

Time: 9:45

LP: NAPOLÉON COSTE: MUSIC FOR GUITAR & OBOE

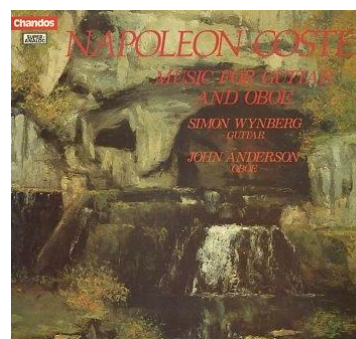
Chandos ABR 1031

([PC-RE#](#))

12" 33rpm (Sd 1 – Bd 1)

Notes: A really nice piece of classical guitar and a superb LP picture cover with a Courbet painting of the cave fit to be framed and hung on the wall.

Ref: Oron, Aryeh 2008, Simon Wynberg, Bio, Bach Cantatas Website, bach-cantatas



CL-GT6 France 1996

LA SOURCE DU LYSON *

CL – Romantic – Instrumental – Cave Pic Cover

Comp: Napoléon COSTE (1806-1883)

Perf: Frédéric **BEN ATTAR** (guitar)

Prod: Jean Gibaud

Prod. Co: De Plein Vent; Val-les-Bains

Rec. Loc: Radio France Nancy-Lorraine

Liner Notes: (6-page booklet)

Time: 9:16

1. **CD:** NAPOLÉON COSTE: GUITAR ROMANTIQUE ([PC-RE#](#))
De Plein Vent DPV 9687 (Tk 26)



2. Reissue **CD:** NAPOLÉON COSTE: GUITAR ROMANTIQUE (2002)
([PC-RE#](#))

Fréaux et Associés FA 9014 (Tk 26)

Notes: “Certes, on est loin de partitions majeures ou essentielles à la littérature de ce noble instrument qu’est la guitare. Mais Frédéric Ben Attar réussit ce pari toujours difficile de bien interpréter des études au contenu souvent peu considérable. Le style de Napoléon Coste est typique de la musique romantique pour guitare avec une écriture conventionnelle qui ne surprendra pas beaucoup. Mais c’est toutefois une belle performance du guitariste qui pourra nous faire découvrir cet auteur tombé dans l’oubli.” (Bargeheon n.d.)



[Here certainly we are far from the major scores or the essential music written for the noble instrument that is the guitar. But Frederic Ben Attar succeeds in that always difficult task of properly interpreting works where the content is often not very substantial. The style of Napoleon Coste is typical of romantic music for guitar with a conventional score, which does not surprise many. But it is, however, a beautiful performance by the guitarist, who allows us discover this composer fallen into oblivion.]

Ref: Bargeheon, Ludovic n.d., Napoleon Coste: Guitar romantique, Review, *Écouter Voir*, [fremeaux](#)
Frédéric Ben Attar, Napoleon Coste: Guitar romantique CD, [fremeaux](#)