MICHEL CORRETTE: Le Phénix; Les Délices de la Solitude; Sonatas 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6; Concerto No. 1 in G major for organ - Musica Franca (four bassoons, guitar/theorbo, harpsichord/organ) - MSR Classics MS 1171, 69:29 **:**

This delightfully sprightly disc comes from a rather specialized musical aggregation of musicians inspired by two composers who synthesized French and Italian styles of the period and were both also extremely partial to the bassoon. They are Corrette and Boismortier, and Musica Franca plans a second album similar to this one but devoted to Boismortier. Both composers turned out buoyant and cheerful Baroque works that please audiences just as much today as they did back then. Another interesting fact about Musica Franca is that they are not an original instrument group - preferring to perform on modern instruments (except for the theorbo and harpsichord).

Corrette liked to make use of the higher range of the bassoon, and in the first two works on this disc one may forget one is listening to the long brown instrument usually limited to the lower registers in the orchestra. It's the same register Stravinsky used in the opening of The Rite of Spring. One might think oboes or clarinets are being heard. One of the bassoons in the band, by the way, is a contrabassoon. The closing organ concerto reminded me that one of my favorite discs of Baroque works is a collection of Corrette organ concertos. The composer was famed as virtuoso on the king of instruments. The CD is cleanly recorded and the players are superb. The music has a welcome simplicity but plenty of élan. Highest recommendation!

- John Sunier //www.audaud.com/article.php?ArticleID=1538