

Press Release, February 2013. For immediate release.

## Zappa – New Research Unveiled

Following his 2009 world première CD recording of Zappa's symphonic music, Dutch-based Australian conductor Simon Murphy (Sydney, 1973) presents new research this month containing previously unknown facts about the master musician and composer.

Until now, little was known about the life of The Hague-based Italian 18<sup>th</sup> century cellist and composer Francesco Zappa (1717 – 1803). An esteemed colleague of other 18<sup>th</sup> century cellists Boccherini and Filz, Zappa worked at the Court of Orange in The Hague, travelled Europe as a virtuoso performer, and had his music published by the leading publishing houses of the day, including the Dutch firm of the Hummel brothers founded in The Hague in the 1750's.

Resulting from years of extensive musical and archival research, Murphy and colleague researcher, Dutch historian Cornelia Klugkist have uncovered a considerable amount of new information about the composer. Including birth and death dates, residential addresses, and concert activities, this information will be unveiled in a new article to be published on the website of The Hague's Baroque orchestra, The New Dutch Academy (NDA), later this month.

### Background – Murphy's recordings of Zappa's symphonic music

Murphy surprised the world in 2009 with the [first recording of Zappa's symphonic music](#). Labelled an eye-opener by the Dutch press, the Netherlands' classical music magazine *Klassieke Zaken* said of the disc “brilliant performances – a fascinating view of the rich musical traditions of The Hague with the wonderful orchestral sound of the NDA”. German national radio said “When it comes to the subject of Crown Jewels, the Dutch can definitely hold their own with the British. The New Dutch Academy presents a musical exhibition of seven high-carat examples from the Classical epoch, including totally stunning new masterworks. Under no circumstances should one miss this!”

The American Record Guide confirmed “This is one of the finest SACD recordings I have heard. ... The recording is gorgeous, giving finely balanced and well-placed performances of these works ... Anyone with an interest in off the beaten track late 18th c. music owes it to himself to obtain this SACD.” US Pop Matters reported “Different Zappa, Different Time, Different Place, Same Excitement”.

The recordings of Zappa followed Murphy's previous unveiling of another unknown Dutch-based 18<sup>th</sup> century composer, [Joseph Schmitt “The Dutch Haydn”](#) (1734 – 1791).



Zappa's workplace: the court city of The Hague in the 18<sup>th</sup> century  
(painting La Fargue, Haags Historisch Museum)

## Background – About Simon Murphy

Simon Murphy (Sydney, 1973) is chief-conductor of The Hague's Baroque Orchestra, The New Dutch Academy. He studied with the leading lights of the Dutch early music movement, performing extensively with legendary figures such as Gustav Leonhardt. Murphy has won much recognition for his work as a “repertoire refresher”, working with modern symphony orchestras as well as specialist, period instrument orchestras, presenting fresh perspectives on established masterpieces and introducing newly rediscovered musical gems:

“The repertoire-refresher, conductor Simon Murphy radiates joie de vivre. His interpretation distinguishes itself by its enthusiasm and his approach possesses a classic élan, displaying delicate sensitivity.”  
Diapason, France

“Murphy exhibits liveliness, groove, great dynamic profile and beautiful use of timbre”  
Frankfurter Neue Presse, Germany

“Breathtaking, compelling, technically brilliant and unusually effervescent!  
Murphy has it all - verve and pulsating temperament - presented with the finest finesse.”  
Concerto, Germany

“Murphy's music making is full of imagination, great love and unstoppable drive”  
NRC Handelsblad, The Netherlands

At home in the Netherlands, Murphy's appearances have included cycles Stamitz, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven and Mendelssohn symphonies for Dutch radio at Amsterdam's The Concertgebouw, The Hague's Philipszaal and Rotterdam's De Doelen. Performances at major European festivals include the Holland Festival of Early Music Utrecht, Händel Festspiele Halle and Bachfest Leipzig.

## Recent concert highlights

In October 2012, Murphy opened the NDA's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary season with the symphonic programme *Black Magic*. Exploring the late 18<sup>th</sup>/early 19<sup>th</sup> century's obsession with destiny and the supernatural, the programme featured music from Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Reichardt's *Macbeth*, Rust's *Colma's Klage*, von Weber's *Der Freischütz* and Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* featuring German soprano Gudrun Sidonie Otto.

In November 2012, he made his conducting début in China with appearances in Hong Kong, Shenzhen, Hangzhou and Beijing, also giving master-classes and workshops at the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts and Beijing Central Conservatory. In December 2012, Murphy made his Baltic début conducting Bach's *Mass in B Minor* with the Latvian State Choir in Riga, earning several return conducting engagements, including for Riga's musical celebrations as European cultural capital in 2014.

## Upcoming performances

In May 2013, Murphy will conduct the Queensland Symphony Orchestra in a double bill featuring music by Corelli, Handel, Stamitz, Abel and JC Bach. Entitled *Roman Holiday* and *New Generation*, the concerts will be broadcast live by the Australian national broadcaster, ABC. At home in the Netherlands, Murphy's NDA 10 year jubilee season includes symphonic programmes *Heaven on Earth* and *Ein Heldenleben* with music by Mozart, Beethoven, Rossini, Schmitt, Romberg and Spohr.

## Background – Zappa research

Murphy and Klugkist's research on Zappa and other 18<sup>th</sup> century Dutch (-based) composers is part of the activities of the NDA's “Research Lab”, committed to shedding new light on the music and culture of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, including the Netherlands' own, highly cosmopolitan, 18<sup>th</sup> century musical heritage. Initial new information on Zappa by Murphy and Klugkist was first published in the UK's quarterly early music magazine, *Musica Antiqua*, in late 2012. Full results of the research will be published on the NDA site in mid-February 2013.

Murphy's performing editions of the symphonies of Zappa, Graaf, Schmitt “The Dutch Haydn” and other composers active in 18<sup>th</sup> century Holland are available for hire via Dutch publisher Albersen.

Listen to Murphy's recording of Zappa Symphonies [here](#).

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### **Relevant Links**

[www.newdutchacademy.nl](http://www.newdutchacademy.nl)  
[www.simonmurphyconductor.com](http://www.simonmurphyconductor.com)

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### **CDs**

including:

Murphy's world première recording of symphonies from The Hague's Court of Orange  
Symphonies by Graaf, C. Stamitz, Schwindl and Zappa  
[http://www.simonmurphyconductor.com/web/music\\_details.aspx?ItemId=885947](http://www.simonmurphyconductor.com/web/music_details.aspx?ItemId=885947)

Murphy's "legendary" recording of Corelli's *Concerti Grossi*  
made with the NDA at the Holland Festival of Early Music Utrecht  
recently chosen in the top five highlights of the festival's 30 year history  
[http://www.simonmurphyconductor.com/web/music\\_details.aspx?ItemId=885936](http://www.simonmurphyconductor.com/web/music_details.aspx?ItemId=885936)

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### **Not for publication**

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