

GUIDE TO MUSIC IN BRITTANY

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INTRODUCTION

Music has often been the means by which Americans discover Brittany--a recording on the radio or live performances by Breton musicians on tour such as Alan Stivell, Kornog, Dan ar Bras, Bleizi Ruz, Pennou Skoulm or bagads such as the Kevrenn Alre or Bagad St. Nazaire. Brittany has one of the richest musical heritages in Europe today--expressed both in traditional styles and less traditional electric arrangements and compositions. Despite strong pressures from Paris for cultural standardization, Bretons have never abandoned their rich oral tradition while adapting all the tools of modern technology--tape recorders, compact discs, CD-Roms, and computers--to support this tradition.

If Breton music was ever in danger of disappearing, it was in the years between World War I and World War II after more than a century of brainwashing had convinced many Bretons that their culture was fit only for backward peasants. Enough Bretons recognized the timeless beauty of their native heritage to pioneer a renaissance of Breton culture in the 1950s and 1960s. Much of the music one hears today has grown out of the efforts of these pioneers. Traditional songs and dances were given new life in the 1950s with the creation of festivals and contests and the reinvention of the fest noz. In the 1960s and 1970s the "folk revivals" of the British Isles and U.S. had a parallel in Brittany, and this period is marked by the growth of Breton folk groups who began to innovate with older songs and instruments.

While some of the experiments of the 1960s and 1970s were short-lived, many musicians who rediscovered their roots during this period have continued to develop technical mastery of instruments and song, as well as to research the Breton oral tradition. The seeds planted during this period are bearing fruit today. Young and old traditional style singers and instrumentalists (using bagpipes, bombardes, accordion, fiddle, clarinet and hurdy-gurdy) find an appreciative audience in Brittany at annual contests and festivals, frequent concerts, and weekly dances with feature the dozens of traditional dances of Brittany.

Contests, concerts and dances (the fest noz and fest deiz) have been important contexts for young performers who use a firm knowledge of older traditions to create newer styles. For example, the paired playing of the biniou (the high-pitched bagpipe unique to Brittany) and the bombarde (an oboe with the sound of a trumpet) is now incorporated into groups alongside electric guitars, fiddles, flutes, synthesizers and percussion from around the world. While extremely protective of the beauty of their local heritage, Bretons are also very international in spirit. Young musicians take time to listen and learn from older masters who pass to them the riches of previous generations, but they also open their ears to the world around them, borrowing sounds from their Celtic neighbors in Ireland, Scotland, and Galicia (in Spain), as well as Eastern European dance tunes, or American jazz and blues rhythms.

The following pages are intended to be just a basic introduction--a place to get started. New books and articles are published all the time in Brittany, and there seems no end to the production of great new recordings, so bibliographies and discographies will be always need updates. Feel free to contact the U.S. ICDBL for more specific information on any of the topics included in this guide, or contact some of the resources in Brittany that are listed.

SOME BASICS ABOUT BRITTANY

Where am I??

In exploring Breton music, dance, and culture, it is important to start with a few maps.

Departments

Departments are government-defined administrative units which often cut across cultural borders. In fact, the French government has defined "Bretagne" as a region which excludes the department of Loire-Atlantique. The decision by the Vichy government of France in 1941 to chop off this historically important area of Brittany (which includes the historical capital of independent Brittany, Nantes) continues to be protested by Bretons.

Upper Brittany (Haute-Bretagne in French; Breizh-Uhel in Breton) is the eastern half of Brittany and the French language predominates here, with a unique Franco-Roman dialect called Gallo in the countryside. Lower Brittany (Basse-Bretagne in French; Breizh Izel in Breton) makes up the western half and in this area the Breton language is still concentrated and still spoken by some 300,000 people as their everyday language.



Dioceses

These are areas were established by the 9th century as basic religious areas. today they are still important as major cultural areas. The four western dioceses: Leon, Treger, Kernev and Gwened correspond to the four major dialects of the Breton language.



Pays

Called "pays" in French ("country") or "bro" in Breton, these areas are marked by distinctive cultural differences in music, dance, costume, architecture, and subtleties of language, in addition to distinctive economies. The borders are fuzzy and no definitive map has been produced since research is always underway to better understand these areas. The map which follows should be considered a rough draft only, but it will give you a few names you may see in Breton writings about music and dance or in record jacket notes. For more details, the organization called Dastum could be contacted (see information in this guide).



BRETON MUSIC - A BASIC BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following is a very short selection of books and articles about Breton music and dance. Not included are a variety of song or tune collections which often include interesting notes. Articles in English have been included when possible, even though these might not be as significant as French language publications. Breton recordings are sometimes accompanied by 50-80 page booklets which also offer extremely rich documentation of particular instruments, regions or genres.

« **La Musique bretonne** » Becker, Roland & Laure Le Gurun.

Spezet: Coop Breizh, 1994. 120 pages

Best single source of background information on Breton music--especially excellent for piping and instrumental traditions.

« **Guide de la musique bretonne** »

Dastum. . 3rd augmented edition. Rennes: Dastum, 2000. 446 pp.

Exhaustive listing of addresses and indexes for musicians, musical instrument makers and teachers, groups, organizations, and festivals. Should be updated via Dastum's web site: <http://www.dastum.com/>

« **Musiques traditionnelles de Bretagne. 1 - Sonnoux et sonerien** » Defrance, Yves.

Skol Vreizh no. 35, 1996.

"**Musiques traditionnelles de Bretagne 2 - Etude du répertoire à danser** »

Skol Vreizh no. 39, 1998.

3 - Kanerien et chantoux; forthcoming.

"**Music and identity in Brittany, France**" Kuter, Lois. Discourse in Ethnomusicology, Vol. II.

Bloomington, IN: Ethnomusicology Publications Group, 1981, pages 15-41.

Brief overview of different styles of music and relation of music to social and political issues.

« **Muzik e Breizh—un regard sur 20 ans de musique breton** » Maisonneuve, Arnaude & Loiez Bloñs.

Coop Breizh. 2000.

« **Bretagne—Terre de Musiques** » Morvan, Daniel and Bernard Galéron.

Collection Bretagne ma Terre. 2001. 142 pages.

Portraits of some 60 movers and shakers on the Breton music scene with wonderful photographs. Also includes a CD with additional images and sound bites.

Musique Bretonne - Histoire des sonneurs de tradition.

Douarnenez: Le Chasse Marée/Ar Men. 1996. 512 pages.

History of instrumental music in Brittany – especially bombarde and biniou--beautifully documented with photography.

Magazines

Several magazines published by cultural organizations in Brittany are of particular interest in documenting not only musical events and activities, but also in including well-researched articles, book and record reviews.

Ar Men Abri du Marin, 29171 Douarnenez cedex, France

This is a beautifully produced bi-monthly magazine on all aspects of Breton culture and history. It often includes excellent articles on Breton musicians and musical instruments, and has regular record reviews.

Ar Soner 55 impasse de l'Odet, 29000 Quimper, France

Published by Bodadeg ar Sonerion, an organization for bagpipers and bombarde players with approximately 3,000 members. This magazine primarily of interest to these musicians (with contests results and music transcriptions as a major part of the content), but it also includes occasional articles on Breton music of more general interest.

Bro Nevez 169 Greenwood Ave., B-4, Jenkintown, PA 19046, U.S.A.

One of the only sources available in English. Includes regular record notes and reviews, catalogs, festival notes, and short articles on Breton music. the bulk of this quarterly newsletter produced by the U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language focuses on the Breton language and its situation in Brittany.

Musique bretonne Dastum, 16 rue de la Santé, 35000 Rennes, France

Dastum is an archives of music recordings, transcriptions, song texts, photography, popular media (newspaper clippings) and other documentation of Brittany's oral traditions. It's monthly magazine features research articles as well as short notes on cultural events, book and record reviews. The best single source of information on Breton music.

Video

Of Pipers and Wrens – The Fight for Survival of Brittany's Musical Heritage.

Film by Gei Zantzinger, based on research of Lois Kuter. Constant Spring Productions (P.O. Box 2, Devault, PA 19432). 1999. 58'21 minutes. Includes 19-page booklet. Also available in French "De souffle et de roseau" in NTSC, PAL and SECAM formats.

Introduction to traditional styles of Breton music and their transmission from one generation to the next through a healthy oral tradition.

FINDING BRETON BOOKS & RECORDINGS OF BRETON MUSIC

Breton recordings are extremely difficult to find in U.S. stores, although mail order houses that specialize in Celtic musics, folk or "world" music may be able to order things (and if they get enough requests, they may even start to stock Breton recordings).

Here is one source in the U.S. to recommend as a source for recordings and books—and even musical instruments like the bombarde and biniau:

Dusty Strings/Ron Reed Telephone: (206) 634-1662
 3406 Fremont Ave., N. Fax: (206) 634-0234
 Seattle, WA 98103 Web site: <http://members.aol.com/dustystri/>

However, it is quite possible to order things directly from Brittany. The following record producers publish catalogs and/or may be able to distribute by mail or even via e-mail and web site catalogs:

Diffusion Breizh Telephone: (33) 02 98 93 83 14
 Kerangwenn Fax: (33) 02 98 93 87 97
 29540 Spezed web site: <http://www.rennet.org/tourism/coopbzh/home.htm>

Epecially for the Escalibur/Arfolk labels, but carry a large number of all styles (as well as many books)

Dastum Telephone: (33) 02 99 30 91 00
 16 rue de la Santé Fax: (33) 02 99 30 91 11
 35000 Rennes E-mail: dastum@wanadoo.fr
 Web site: <http://www.dastum.com/>

Epecially focused on traditional styles; anything produced or co-produced by Dastum is best ordered here (see information on following pages about Dastum)

Keltia Musique Telephone : (33) 02 98 95 45 82
 1 place au Beurre Fax: (33) 02 98 95 73 19
 29000 Quimper E-mail: mailto:keltia@eurobretagne
 Web site: <http://www.bagadoo.tm.fr/fr/culture/keltia/index.html>

Distributes all recordings on Keltia Musique label; also Rikou Soner and a number of other labels; has been known for focus on piping

Le Chasse Marée/Ar Men Telephone.: (33) 02 98 92 09 19
 Abri du Marin Fax: (33) 02 98 92 80 01
 29171 Douarnenez E-mail: chasse-maree@wanadoo.fr
 Web site: <http://www.armen.net/>

Books and recordings produced and distributed tend to be expensive, but you definitely get what you pay for in quality. Credit card orders are possible. The catalog includes variety of books and materials with a strength in maritime culture.

If you travel to Brittany, the following are a few stores which specialize in Breton books and recordings. They are also be willing to send recordings by mail order and several are up and running on Internet:

Ar Bed Keltiek Quimper
2 rue du Roi Gradlon
29000 Quimper

Telephone: (33) 02 98 95 42 82
Fax: (33) 02 98 95 24 73

Ar Bed Keltiek Brest
4 avenue Clemenceau
29200 Brest

Telephone: (33) 02 98 44 05 38
Fax: same as Quimper

Web site: <http://www.arbedkeltiek.com/>

Librairie Breizh
17 straed Penhoet
B.P. 2542
35036 Rhoazhon (Rennes)
Cedex

Telephone: (33) 02 99 79 01 87
Fax: (33) 02 99 79 43 52

This store will take credit card orders for books and recordings and carries nearly everything available.

Librairie Breizh Paris
10 rue du Maine
75014 Paris

Telephone: (33) 43 20 84 60
Fax: (33) 43 21 99 22

**Musiques Bretonnes /
Breton Music**
On the Web only



<http://www.breton-music.com/>

Other links on the Web: <http://www.breizh.net/ICDBL/saozg/links.htm> - shopping

DANCES OF BRITTANY

Traditional dances of Brittany vary by geographical region--each having a different dance or a different variety of a more widely spread dance. Although limited to just western Brittany, the best introduction to the complexity of defining and mapping different dances in Brittany is Jean-Michel Guilcher's classic [La Tradition populaire de la danse en Basse-Bretagne](#) (1963; 1994).

In general, three different types of dances can be found in Brittany. First are the oldest dances which are often performed in a three-part suite. These are most commonly danced in lines or circles, and include dances such as the **gavotte**, **an dro**, **hanter dro**, **laride** or **ridee**, or **dans plinn**. In some areas of Brittany subvarieties of these dances have been developed (**gavotte d'Aven**, **gavotte pourlet**, etc.). The second category of dance is made up of more recent figure dances influenced by British dances of the 17th century or French contredances of the 18th century. Included here are the **jabadao**, **pach-pi**, and **bals**. In the third category one finds couple dances introduced to Brittany in the 19th and 20th centuries such as the polka, mazurka, and scottisches. Although of more recent introduction, these dances have been adapted by Bretons to become a unique part of the dance tradition.

Understanding variation in dance and musical styles depends on a knowledge of the division of Brittany into **pays** (French for "country") or **broioù** (singular, **bro**, in Breton). Bretons' sense of cultural identity is most strongly linked with these areas which are marked by differences in music, dance, costume, architecture, and subtleties of language, in addition to distinctive economies. Since the borders of differences in one cultural feature may not coincide exactly with another, the borders of **pays** are extremely difficult to define but they can be generally shown on a map. While songs are generally given a title which matches the first line of the text, dance tunes are named by type, often including a reference to pays without any other title.

Other geographical areas which generally match cultural identities within Brittany are the Dioceses. These larger areas were established by the 9th century as basic religious areas. The four diocese of western Brittany: Leon, Treger, Kernev and Gwened correspond to the four major dialects of the Breton language. The border between the western half of Brittany, or Lower Brittany (Breizh Izel in Breton; Basse-Bretagne in French) and the eastern half, Upper Brittany (Breizh Uhel; Haute-Bretagne), has been defined by the presence of the Breton language. While the presence of Breton has declined from one generation to the next (with approximately 250-300,000 people speaking it today in western Brittany), the line between predominantly French or Breton speaking halves has remained relatively stable for centuries. The departments of Brittany (Finistère, Morbihan, Côtes d'Armor, Ille-et-Vilaine and Loire-Atlantique) are government-defined administrative regions which often cut across cultural borders.

Reading

« **La Tradition populaire de danse en Basse-Bretagne** » Guilcher, Jean-Michel. 1963. Paris: Mouton. Reprinted and distributed by Coop Breizh, 1994. 704 pages.

"**À la découverte de la danse bretonne**" Ar Men and Jean-Michel Guilcher. Ar Men 67 (mai 1995):14-27.

« **Musiques traditionnelles de Bretagne: 2—Etude du répertoire à danser** » Defrance, Yves. Skol Vreizh No. 39. Editions Skol Vreizh, 1998. 84 pages.

« **La Danse bretonne** » Pierre, Alain, and Daniel Cario. Coop Breizh 2001. 144 pp.

"**Aux origines du fest-noz**" Postic, Fañch. Ar Men 93 (avril 1998): 12-23.

« **Apprenez les danses bretonnes** »

Vol. 1: Leon & Treger;

Vol. 2: Terroir Bas-Vannetais;

Vol. 3 Terroir Nantais.

Coop Breizh CD 922, 923 & 924. 2000 & 2001.

First in a series of CDs with accompanying booklet with instructions for learning dances of various regions of Brittany.

See also publications by Dastum and this organization's magazine, Musique bretonne

TRADITIONAL SONG IN BRITTANY

Song remains at the heart of Breton music. In contrast to instrumental traditions, women have an equally important role in song. Traditional song in Brittany is unaccompanied and unison in nature. The vast majority of ballad singing is performed solo. In both the French-language tradition of eastern Brittany and the Breton language songs of western Brittany, response style singing is very common, especially in songs for dance. In contrast to other areas of western Europe (including Brittany's Celtic neighbors) singing for dancing is very common and well appreciated. Like instrumental traditions, song repertoires and the use of song varies from one region of Brittany to another--song for a particular dance will be found in the region where that dance is traditionally found.

There are several words one finds associated with Breton song that merit a brief definition.

Kan ha diskan is a particular type of responsive singing for dance found in the Breton-speaking areas of central western Brittany. Most commonly, it is sung by two people, a **kaner** ("singer" in Breton) and **diskaner** ("counter-singer"). The prefix "dis" is difficult to define, but in this case it has the sense of opposition as in rolling/unrolling, winding/unwinding. The **kaner** begins and the **diskaner** repeats each phrase. The unique aspect of this style of responsive singing is the fact that the singers take up their singing on the last few syllables of each other's phrases.

Gwerz is a Breton language term that has no good English translation, although in French it is roughly translated as **complainte**. It refers to a repertoire of ballads in the Breton language in which historical, legendary, or dramatic events are recounted. **Son** is the Breton term for all Breton language songs other than the **gwerz**. Included in this category are love songs, drinking songs, counting songs, and other "lighter" songs for dancing.

Reading

“**Tradition chantée de Haute Bretagne, 1850-1998: Les Moissonneurs de mémoire**” Bouthillier, Robert
Ar Men 97, septembre 1998, pages. 8-17
Great article on singers of Gallo Brittany and work to collect song.

Oust et Vilaine—Pays de Traditions Groupement Culturel Breton des Pays de Vilaine.. Groupement Culturel Breton des Pays de Vilaine. November 2000. See sections on “**La danse**”, “**La musique instrumentale**”, and “**Le chant**” (pp. 225-266).
Includes an excellent CD of 21 songs and tunes annotated in 12 pages in the books “annexes”.

“**La gwerz de Louis le Ravellec--Enquête sur un crime de 1732**” Laurent, Donatien
Ar Men 7, février 1987, pages 16-35
Detailed study of a song text and its use to clarify events of a murder which took place in the 18th century; fascinating account of research.

« **Histoire de la chanson populaire bretonne** » Malrieu, Patrick
Dastum and Skol, 1983. 95 pages.
Summary of the history of Breton song texts and their collection; well documented with text reproductions and photos.

“**La gwerz ... vue par de jeunes chanteurs**”
Musique bretonne 98,99 decembre 1989-janvier 1990, pages 3-7; fevrier 1990, pages 8-11.
A series of interviews with young traditional singers about their feelings about singing and ideas about the ballad style gwerz.

“**En Bretagne ... le témoignage d'Erik Marchand**” Moelo, Serge.
Modal--la Revue des musiques traditionnelles 4, septembre 1986. pages 43-49
Interview with young traditional singer with good description of music in Brittany and its performance; interesting commentary on the transmission of traditional music.

Musique bretonne (Dastum, 16 rue de la Santé, 35000 Rennes). Dastum is an archives of music recordings, transcriptions, song texts, photography, popular media (newspaper clippings) and other documentation of Brittany's oral traditions. It's monthly magazine features research articles as well as short notes on cultural events, book and record reviews. The best single source of information on Breton music.

Recordings

See also DASTUM for excellent recordings with strong documentation.

Songs in the Breton Language

Annie Ebrel

'Tre ho ti ha ma hini. Gwerz Pladenn GWP 012. 1996.

Annie Ebrel, Marie-Aline Lagadic, Lydie Le Gall, Klervi Rivière

Femmes de Bretagne. Keltia Musique KM 74. 1997

Marie Laurence Fustec & Brigitte Le Corre

Gavottes à Scignac. Gwechall BOZ 001. 1999.

Eugenie Goadec and Louise Ebrel

Gwrizioù--Chants à danser et mélodies de Bretagne. Arfolk CD 429. 1994.

Ar C'hoarezed Goadec (Goadec Sisters)

Ar C'hoarezed Goadec. Keltia III/Keltia Musique KMCD 11. 1990.

Mathieu Hamon, Nolüen Le Buhé, Patrick Marie, Marthe Vassallo

Gwerzioù et Chants d Haute Voix. France 3 Ouest/Keltia Musique. RSCD 211. 1993. 56'

Lors Jouin

Moualc'h ar meneiou. Silex Y225044. 1994.

Kanerien Pleuigner

Chants traditionnels bretons. Arfolk CD 424. 1993.

Ballads and songs for dances from the vannetais area performed by group of 12 men.

Yann-Fañch Kemener, (Jean-Francois Quemener)

Chants profonds de la Bretagne Arion ARN 34386, 1977; ARN 34476, 1979; ARN 34587, 1981

Kemener pairs up with Anne Auffret on the 4th album of Chants profonds de la Bretagne (Arion ARN 34789

Gwerzioù ha sonioù Adipho ADP084, 1989

Roue Gralon ni ho salud/Chants profanes et sacrés de Bretagne Keltia Musique KMCD 42. 1993 Kan ha diskan Arfolk CD 445. 1997

With Annie Ebrel, Erik Marchand, Patrick Marie, Valentine Colleter, Claudine Floc'hig, Marcel Guilloux, Ifig Troadeg.

Manuel Kerjean, Bastien Guern, Alain Le Clere, Jean-Claude Talec

Chants à répondre en Centre Bretagne - Fest noz e Bro Rostren. Arfolk CD 428, 1994. 54'53 CD

Nolüen Le Buhé

Komz a Raer Din – Sonennoù Bro Gwened/Songs from the Vannes Region. Coop Breizh CD 891. 1999. 49'41.

Jean Le Meut

Pe Yuvankiz kuhet/Inner Youth: Tradition chantée de Bretagne--Le Pays Vannetais/Traditional songs from Brittany/The Vannes region. Keltia Musique KMCD 44. 1994. 63'27 minutes.

Les Frères Morvan/Ar Vreudeur Morvan

Fest-noz Botcôl. Coop Breizh CD 893. 1999. 74'

Denez Prigent

Ar gouriz koar/La ceinture de cire. Silex Y225022. 1993.

Loeiz Ropars ha kanerien-danserien Poullaouen

Kan ha diskan. Al Leur Nevez/Keltia Musique KMCD 28. 1992

Reissue of early lp of classic performances of kan ha diskan for dancing.

Ifig Troadeg

E skeud tosen vre/Chants traditionnels bretons en Trégor. Arfolk CD 425. 1993

62-minute compact disc. 24-page booklet with Breton texts and French translation; English texts available upon request.

Trouzerien

Atañ biù: sonneu a Vreizh-Izel. EOG Production. EOG 106. 1999

Vannetais repertoire.

Various performers

Mélodies chantées en Trégor: Bro Dreger II. Kreizenn Sevenadurel Lannuon/Nevez Amzer Tregastel. BD 002. 1997

Kanaouennou an aod: Bro Dreger IV. Kreizenn Sevenadurel Lannuon. BD 004. 1992

Cassette with 65-page booklet of song texts.

Kan--Kan ar Bobl Duault. Radio Kreiz Breizh/Dastum Loudéac. 1987

Kan II--Kan ar Bobl Duod. Radio Kreiz Breizh. 1988

Kan 3: Kan ar Bobl Duod 1992. Radio Kreiz Breizh. 1993

Fest noz en Poher: "kan ha diskan" Dastum Kreiz Breizh, 1998

Various performers--mostly traditional styles--at annual contest/festival for song.

Chants de la Mémoire Morbihannaise – sonennoù hengounel a Vro Gwened. Par Les Chemins de Rencontre CR 98-02. 1998.

Songs in the French language

Gilbert Bourdin, Erik Marchand & Christian Dautel

Chants a danser de Haute Bretagne. Dastum (cassette)

Chants a repondre de Haute-Bretagne. Le Chasse Maree. SCM 011. 1988 (lp)

A capella traditional songs for dancing and form marches from the Gallo portion of Morbihan.

Roland Brou

Trois garçons du Lion d'Or. Keltia Musique RSCD 220. 1996.

Brou-Hamon-Quimbert

Trois p'tits oiseaux—Chants de Haute Bretagne. Coop Breizh D 890. 1999. 58'30.

L'Épille

C'est à Bovel il y a ...; Chansons et contes traditionnels recueillis entre l'Aff et le Canut. EPL 002, 1998 cassette

Chansons et contes traditionnels de Saint-Just et Pipriac. EPL 003. 1998, 2 cassettes

Chansons traditionnelles recueillies a Molac, Larréw, Le Cours et Pluherin. EPL 004. 1999

Chansons traditoonnelles a Plédran et St. Carreu. EPL 005. 2000.

Les Chanteurs du Pays de Vilaine

Danses en Rond, Danses en Chene. TVB Production (Distriubiton Keltia Musique) RSCD 215. 1995. 56'

Various performers

Tradition chantée de Haute Bretagne—les grandes complaintes. Ar Men/La Bouèze/ G.C.B.P.V./Dastum 44. Ar Men SCM 041. 1998

Two CDs averaging 70 minutes each with a 92-page booklet.

Various performers

Chansons d'amour de Haute Bretagne. Pixie/Déclic 845 6922. 1999

17 songs by 13 traditional singers including ballads, dances and marches.

TRADITIONAL SONG OF BRITTANY: Feuilles Volantes

The oral song tradition in Brittany has long been supplemented by written texts in the form of **feuilles volantes**--literally translated from French as "flying sheets". The earliest of these are religious songs dating from the 17th and 18th centuries. **Feuilles volantes** are the works of a known author who printed as many as 1,500 sheets to help make his song better known. The printed text was sold as the author or another singer performed the song, most often at fairs. Subjects included events of the day--crimes, accidents, politics--and moral or instructive messages about family life, love or conscription into the army. Satirical and humorous songs had a strong place in the repertoire, as did religious topics. While some songs became popular and have remained in the oral tradition, many texts were ponderous in style and relatively poor in literary quality. Authors who signed the **feuilles volantes** came from all walks of life and were using this form of publication as late as the 1960s. The importance of this supplemental media to the oral tradition in Brittany is well documented in a catalogue of 1,100 titles compiled in 1942 by Joseph Ollivier, [Catalogue bibliographique de la chanson populaire bretonne sur feuilles volantes](#).

Reading

"**Chansons populaires de Basse-Bretagne sur feuilles volants** » Giraudon, Daniel.. Skol Vreizh no. 2-3, decembre 1985. 131 pages.

Booklet tracing the history of "broadsheets" in Brittany, describing printing industry, singers and song writers, song styles and content; photographs and reproductions of song sheets abundant.

« **Histoire de la chanson populaire bretonne** » Malrieu, Patrick. 1983.. Rennes: Dastum and Skol.

« Catalogue bibliographique de la chanson populaire sur feuilles volantes » Ollivier, Joseph. 1942.. Quimper: Le Goaziou.

TRADITIONAL SONG IN BRITTANY: 19th Century Text Collections

Documentation of the oral song tradition of Brittany was limited until the 19th century when the collection of popular song became a common activity for amateur scholars and Celticists. An interest in ancient Celtic literary roots expressed in the oral song tradition was to spawn a number of collections by amateur historians and gentry scholars of Breton antiquities. Beginning in the 1830s magazines served as a very important medium for the publication of song texts. Some of the earlier magazines were Le Lycée Armoricaïn, La Revue de Bretagne, La Nouvelle Revue de Bretagne, and La Revue de l'Armorique. Later in the 19th century and in the early 20th century a dozen other magazines were to follow.

The best known song text collection of the 19th century is Hersart de la Villemarqué's Barzaz Breiz, first published in 1839. This was the first major publication of Breton songs and it inspired other collectors as well as brought international attention to Breton traditions. The Barzaz Breiz gave evidence that Brittany had a rich cultural heritage dating back to its common Celtic roots in the British Isles. It was also important in giving prestige to a Breton language literature. The Barzaz Breiz was a product of the Romantic period in which it was produced, and was bitterly attacked by other Breton scholars for the liberties taken with the texts--especially the glorification of Brittany's independence from France. La Villemarqué collected his texts in a period (1835-40) when methods of transcription and edition were not so scrupulously defined, and controversy about the authenticity of his texts has continued to the present day. While La Villemarqué never adequately defended his work for himself, a detailed study of his collection notebooks by Donatien Laurent has shown that he did not invent the texts as some of his accusers had claimed. Study of La Villemarqué's field notes show that he was a good Breton language speaker and that texts were carefully collected, even if cleaned up and revised for publication to suit the tastes of 19th century readers.

Following La Villemarqué was another influential collector, François-Marie Luzel (1821-1895). Between 1869 and 1890 Luzel published over 400 song texts from the Tregor region of northern Brittany in four volumes. In contrast to the literary retouching characteristic of La Villemarqué and other earlier collectors, Luzel's texts were more representative of his informant's renditions. Luzel was also an important scholar of popular theater--another major media for the Breton language still found today, although not as popular as in earlier centuries. Some of the other better known song text collectors of this period included Prosper Proux (1811-1873), Narcisse Quellien (1848-1902), Alfred Bourgeois (1824-1904) and composers and musicologists L. A. Bourgault-Ducoudray (1840-1910) and Maurice Duhamel (1884-1940) who included music transcriptions and analysis.

Parallel to the collection of song texts in Brittany was the collection of folk tales, proverbs and folk beliefs, as well as linguistic studies of the Breton language. Some of the best known collectors of the 19th and early 20th century who also included song in their study were: Emile Souvestre (1806-1854), Anatole le Braz (1859-1925), François Vallee (1860-1949), Joseph Loth (1847-1934), Loeiz Herrieu (1879-1953), and Emile Ernault (1852-1938). While scholars focused on the Breton language traditions of western Brittany, there were also some who collected French and Gallo language traditions in eastern Brittany: Adolphe Orain (1834-1918) and Paul Sebillot (1834-1918).

The collection of song and folk traditions was dampened by World War I (1914-1919) with the loss of many young Breton men to the war (approximately 240,000 lost of a population of 3.2 million). This marked the beginning of a period of rural exodus as well as increasing influence of French institutions which actively promoted the French language and a standardized culture from Paris. While collection activity was greatly diminished until a revival of interest in folk traditions in the 1950s and 60s, there were always a few individuals documenting traditions of their region and their collection and activity has been important in providing a record of an ongoing oral tradition in Brittany.

Sound recordings of Breton music date from 1900 with wax cylinders of singers made by Dr. Azoulay who recorded "peoples of the world" at the Exposition universelle de Paris. Early recordings were also made by François Vallee of Marc'harid Fulup who was a renowned singer and the primary informant for Luzel's collections in the 1870s and 80s. Other recordings which have not been released were made in 1908 by Austrian Rudolf von Trebitsch and by the Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires of Paris in 1939.

See Introduction sheet for DASTUM for information on current collection activities in Brittany.

Reading

"L'enquête Ampère-Fortoul sur les poésies populaires de la France (1852-1876)" Berthou-Becam, Laurence.

(The Ampère-Fortoul study of popular poetry of France, 1852-1876)

Musique bretonne 123 (May-June 1993): 3-11.

Preliminary findings of much more extensive research on one of a number of 19th century collectors.

« **Gwerziou ha soniou Breiz-Izel** » Duhamel, Maurice

Musiques bretonnes; Editions Dastum. 1998

Reprint of a collection of 432 tunes collected from 1902 to 1912.

« **Guerzenneu ha sonnenneu Bro-Guéned** » Herrieu, Loeiz and Maurice Duhamel

Lorient: Editions Eromi. 1998 (first published in 1911).

With CD Kerrieu—Villages entre Scorff et Blavet. Eromi 058. 1998

15 selections from the collection performed by various singers and musicians.

« **Aux sources du Barzaz-Breiz--la mémoire d'un peuple** » Laurent, Donatien

Douarnenez: Ar Men, 1989. 335 pages.

Based on careful scrutiny of original notebooks and letters over a 20-year period of research, the author has published a detailed analysis of the Barzaz Breiz, the most controversial and influential song collection to be published in Brittany. 45 introductory pages place this collection in historical context and detail the tedious work of transcribing the hand-written song texts. The bulk of the book is made up of the song transcriptions--Breton with French translations. A third section examines La Villemarqué as a collector. Includes a comprehensive bibliography and useful indexes.

« **Barzaz Breiz--Chants populaires de la Bretagne** » La Villemarqué, Vicomte Hersart de (Kervarker)

Paris: Librairie Academique Perrin, 1963; reprint of 3rd edition of 1867; 1st edition 1839. 540 pages

Classic collection of song texts; songs are in French translation with smaller print version of original Breton texts at bottom of pages; some music and notes included.

"**Barzhaz-Breiz** »

Lesneven: Mouladurioù Hor Yezh, 1988. 454 pages.

First edition to give Breton version of texts prominent place; melodies for songs also included.

« **Chants et chansons populaires de la Basse-Bretagne** » Luzel, François Marie (Fanch an Uhel)

Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1869-1890.

Another very important collection of traditional Breton language songs; considered to be less "refined" than the Barzaz Breiz.

« **Histoire de la chanson populaire bretonne** » Malrieu, Patrick

Dastum and Skol, 1983. 95 pages

Summary of the history of Breton song texts and their collection; well documented with text reproductions and photos.

Recordings

Various performers

Tradition chantée de Bretagne: Aux sources du Barzaz Breiz. Ar Men & Dastum. SCM 013. 1989

Compact disc with songs performed by contemporary traditional singers from the famous 19th century collection, Barzaz Breiz, by Hersart de la Villemarqué. accompanied by a 75-page booklet with history, background on performers, and song texts in Breton and French. Performers include Soeurs Goadec, Ifig Troadeg, Erik Marchand, Mari Harnay, and Yann-Fañch Kemener, and others including a wax cylinder recording of Marc'harid Fulup from 1900.

Barzaz Breizh--c'hoazh hag adarre. FR3 Bretagne/Le Lagon Bleu LBCD 03 (CD) LBK 03 (cassette). 1990

Performers using a variety of styles to interpret songs from the classic 19th century song collection by La Villemarqué, Barzaz Breiz. Performers include: Reves de gosse, Y-F Kemener, Youenn Gwernig, Gilles Servat, Andrea ar Gouilh, Herve Queffelec, Roland Becker, E.V., Dan ar Bras, Chorale du Bout du Monde.

Dastum

Gwerzioù ha sonioù Bro Dreger—le répertoire trégorrois, cent ans après Luzel.
Tradition Vivante de Bretagne 13. Dastum 138. 2000.

DASTUM - BRETON TRADITIONS FOR THE FUTURE

WEB SITE: <http://www.dastum.com/>

Dastum, a Breton word meaning "to collect", has become well known in Brittany throughout Europe for its work collecting and encouraging the performance of traditional styles of Breton music. Dastum was founded in 1972 and has continued to expand not only in its collection of recordings and song texts, but also as an archives for photographs and documents related to all aspects of Breton culture. Today Dastum has over 30,000 recorded documents, 30,000 pages of manuscripts and printed materials, 25,000 old postcards and photographs, and over 55,000 press clippings in its collection. But, such figures mean little compared to the total work of this organization.

Dastum has mobilized both scholars and performers who are well aware of social and economic changes which have changed the traditional culture of this distinctive area within France. Urbanization and its individualistic life style has helped undermine the communal spirit of rural Breton life. Industrialization and increased mobility, along with changes in the family unit, have affected the human contacts which make an oral transmission of culture possible and creative. And the centralization in France of education and the media has stifled the expression of unique local cultures with the diffusion of a standardized program. For centuries Bretons have been taught that their languages--Breton, a Celtic language, and Gallo, a Franco-Roman dialect--are backwards and, at best, impractical in the modern world.

Dastum has created the means for people in Brittany to use their traditional culture as part of modern life in stimulating a sense of cultural self-confidence and in helping local communities find the resources necessary to creatively use their rich oral traditions. There is nothing nostalgic in the work of Dastum. It is a future-oriented organization, using computers and the most technologically advanced equipment and techniques to support and not replace the invaluable human element of oral traditions which continue to prosper in Brittany.

Collection of Music

Unlike other archives, the primary aim of Dastum is not to store recordings, but to use collected materials. The activity of collection itself is critical in encouraging performance of traditional styles of vocal and instrumental music. Collectors are volunteers--usually musicians themselves-- using a wide range of equipment and techniques, resulting in a range in quality of recordings. As Dastum has grown, more collectors have gained experience and better equipment has become available, resulting in excellent quality recordings today. Local collection groups are the basis of most activity within Dastum, and these are effective because of their close ties to the community in which they collect. Collectors are not outsiders descending on Breton villages to scavenge a dying culture, but participants in a living culture.

Dastum now has seven sites in various regions of Brittany where volunteers and staff maintain collections focused on their particular region, but also organize festivals, conferences and a variety of events to encourage the performance and transmission of traditional song and music. Besides the main branch in Rennes, Dastum branches are: Dastum 44 (in Nantes), Dastum Bro Dreger (in Lannion), Dastum Kreiz Breizh (in Carhaix), Dastum Bro Ereg (in Pontivy), Dastum Bro Leon (in Lesneven), and Dastum Bro Gerne (in Quimper).

Cahiers de musique traditionnelle

Dastum's early work was focused on the production of studies of different **pays** ("countries") within Brittany. These lps/cassettes included 60 to 100-page booklets which documented language, costume, architecture, dance, musical instruments, and song, as well as the particular performers on the recording. Each is an excellent sample of the music to be found. Each selection is transcribed, and the text is given as sung by the performer, with unique features of language noted, and other versions of the song sometimes also provided. The basic text of each study is in French, so if a song is in the Breton language, a French translation is given. Notes are also included on the performers, musical instruments or specific traditions related to the music. Each study is liberally documented with photographs. Studies produced have focused on Pays de Lorient-Hennebont, Pays Pagan (Bro Bagan), Pays de Mur-Loudeac, Bro Fanch, Pays d'En-Bas (Questembert), Bro Noal (Pontivy), and Pays d'Oust et de Vilaine.

Chanteurs et musiciens de Bretagne

"Singers and musicians of Brittany" is a newer series (begun in 1990) which like the "cahiers" provides an in-depth presentation--a cassette with a 70-100 page booklet of information. While the "cahiers" presented a particular region this series of recordings focuses on a particular performer, musical instrument, or a musical event. So far the series includes:

- No. 1: Chansons traditionnelle du pays de Fougères: Melanie Houedry.
DAS 111, 1990.
- No. 2: Tradition de veuze en pays nantais.
DAS 112, 1990.
- No. 3: Chants traditionnels de Haute-Bretagne: Bogue d'Or 1989.
DAS 113, 1990.
- No. 4: Tradition familiale de chant en pays bigouden (Lisette Floc'h, Marie-Aline Lagadic, Klervi Rivère).
DAS 114, 1991.
- No. 5: Clarinettes et anciennes danses populaires du Trégor.
DAS 115, 1991.
- No. 6: Airs à danser du pays de Chateaubriant (accordion).
DAS 116, 1992.
- No. 7: Chants traditionnels de Haute-Bretagne: Bogue d'Or 1990.
DAS 117, 1992.
- No. 8: Fête plin de Danouet.
DAS 120, 1994.
- No. 9: Bombardes et binious de la Montagne--Retrospective du Trophee Per Guillou.
DAS 124, 1995.
- No. 10: Eugénie Duval--Chanteuse et conteuse de Haute Bretagne.
DAS 125, 1995.

Tradition Vivante de Bretagne

This series of compact discs tends to focus on particular regions, but CDs can feature a theme or musicians. Each CD comes with a well documented 40 to 100-page booklet of information. CD run from 68 to 77 minutes.

- No. 1: Gouel 20 vloaz Datum—Dastum fait le boeuf à Berrien.
DAS 119. 1993
Dastum's 20th anniversary festival
- No. 2: Quand le Bretons passent à table.
DAS 121. 1994
Song and music on the theme of food and feasting.
- No. 3: Chant et veuze en Presqu'île guérandaise.
DAS 123. 1994.
- No. 4: Les Mangeouses d'oreilles. Plaignons les courreurs de nuit. 1996
Features a group of women singers from the Loudéac/Mur de Bretagne area.
- No. 5: Musique et chants des pays de Pontivy, Baud et Pourlet.
DAS 127. 1997.
- No. 6: Veillées en Bretagne—ur wezh 'oa bopred.
DAS 128. 1997.
- No. 7: Nantes en Chanson.
DAS 129. 1998.
Traditional and less traditional music related to the city of Nantes.
- No. 8: Filaj e Langedig. DAS 130. 1998.
Traditional song from the Langedig area.
- No. 9 : Deo ket jaojapl ur seurt—Histoires en breton vannetais
Bro Ereg, DAS 133. 1999
- No. 10: A pep tu d'er Blañoèh—Chants traditionnels en pays de Melrand, Guern, Pluméliau, Baud, Bubry.
Bro Ereg/Bugale Melrand, Dastum, DAS 134. 1999.
- No. 11: Chants à danser en presqu'île guérandaise.
DAS 135. 1999
- No. 12: Albert Poulain. Y'a rien de plus charmant.
DAS 136. 1999. 73'51. 60 page booklet.
- No. 13: Gwerzioù ha sonioù Bro Dreger—le répertoire trégorrois, cent ans après Luzel.
DAS 138. 2000.

Other publications and recordings

In its 20 years, Dastum has produced over 50 recordings and books, in addition to over 170 issues of its magazine Musique bretonne (as of early 2002). Five recordings coproduced by Dastum have been given awards by the Academie Charles-Cros for their excellence. In May 1990 Dastum was awarded the Grand Prize of the Premier Salon du Patrimoine Sonore in recognition of its important role overall in promoting and researching Breton traditions.

Dastum has a number of active branches throughout Brittany which organize festivals and events and serve as a contact point for musicians in a particular area. The central office and point of contact for Dastum is:

Dastum
16 rue de la Santé
35000 Rennes

Telephone: (33) 02 99 30 91 00
Fax: (33) 02 99 30 91 11
e-mail: <mailto:dastum@wanadoo.fr>
WEB SITE: <http://www.dastum.com/>

If you consult Dastum for information, make your request as specific as possible. No one will be able to take time to answer broad questions which require a 30-page response (or a 300-page response). For instance, you are not likely to get an answer to a question such as "What are the different dances of Brittany" or "Could you give me the history of bagpipes in Brittany". Do as much homework ahead of time as you possibly can before you consult Dastum. Keep in mind that the small staff of Dastum gets hundreds of requests and tends to put in long hours. If you will be in Rennes and would like to visit Dastum, make an appointment in advance. Keep in mind also that funding for Dastum is very tight; if you do make use of their services, consider making a contribution to support their work.

MARITIME MUSIC OF BRITTANY

The coast line of Brittany is equivalent to one fourth of that of all France, and Bretons have played a dominant role in European maritime history. At the end of the 15th century Brittany had a fleet of 1,800 to 2,000 ships and approximately 20,000 sailors (of a population of some one million). Fishing, shipping and service in the navy remain important occupations in Brittany. While the modernization of maritime industries has effectively eliminated the continuation of a work song tradition among sailors and fishermen, the transmission of song about the life related to the seas continue to be a part of Brittany's oral tradition on land. These relate maritime history--storms at sea, ship wrecks, naval battles, piracy--and speak of the hard life of fishermen and sailors and their long separation from family and loved ones.

An organization which has been active in researching and documenting maritime traditions of Brittany is Le Chasse-Maree. From collection with sailors and fishermen now in their 80s and 90s, young performers have been able to recreate maritime work songs for raising sails and anchors, turning capstans, rowing from ship to shore, or hauling boats into harbors. Also documented is the use of musical instruments on board ships--including fiddles, hurdy-gurdies, accordions and more rarely bagpipes--and the presence of Breton dances such as the **laride** and **rond**.

Recordings

Cabestan. (some of the more recent CDs)

Fortunes de mer--chants de marins. Chasse-Maree SCM 028, 1993

Femmes de Marins. Keltia Musique KMCD 81. 1998

Tempête pour sortir. Keltia Musique KM 58. 1995

La mer est trop vieille pour qu'on se moque d'elle. Keltia Musique KMCD 110. 2000. 45'34.

Le Chasse-Marée

Chants de marins I: Chants de marins traditionnels des côtes de France. Chasse-Marée SCM 001. 1982

Chants de Marins II: Danses et plaintes des cotes de France. Chasse-Marée SCM 002. 1983

Chants de marins III: chants de bord des baleiniers et des long-courriers français. Chasse-Marée SCM 003. 1984;

Chants de marins V: gens de rivières et bateliers de France. Chasse-Marée SCM 007. 1985

Series of excellently documented double albums of maritime music performed by various singers and instrumentalists.

Selections found on :

Anthologie des chants de mer--chants de marins traditionnels. Chasse Marée SCM 014. 1989

Douarnenez 88. Chasse-Marée SCM 012 (cassette). 1989.

15 performers from maritime festival held yearly in Douarnenez.

The following are some of the CD recordings in a series called Anthologie des chansons de mer:

Chants de marins nantais. nouvelle series Vol. 1. Chasse-Marée SCM 018. 1991

A Brest la joie--chansons de ports. Chasse-Marée/Ar Men. 1992

Chants de Clippers. Vol. 5, SCM 029. 1994

Terre-neuvas et islandais, Chants de la Grande Pêche. Vol. 7. SCM 033. 1995

Chants de marins en fête (Pampol 1997) Vol. 12. SCM 039. 1998

Chansons de Bord. Vol. 13. SCM 040. 1999.

Djiboudjep

Djiboudjep en concert. Escalibur 833. 1991

Parfums d'épices et goût de sel. Coop Breizh CD 869. 1997

Latest CDs by popular group which specializes in maritime song.

Guillemer

De Brest Douarnenez. L'OZ Production. L'OZ 20. 1998

Escale L'OZ Produktion L/OZ 32. 2000

Three men on vocals with various acoustic accompaniment in arrangements of chanteys and new compositions about the sea.

Yann Fañch Kemener and Didier Squiban

Enez Eusa. L'OZ Produktion, L'OZ 2. 1995

Voice and piano arrangements of traditional songs related to the Island of Ouessant.

Taran

Kost 'ar mor--Chansons maritimes au pays bigouden. Ar Men/Le Chasse-Marée. SCM 027. 1993.

Song in Breton by Marie-Aline Lagadic, fiddler John Wright and guitarist Arnaud Maisonneuve.

Various performers

Enez Eussa/Ouessant – Ile des sept vents. Escalibur CD 861. 1995.

Compilation of various artists of different styles.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF BRITTANY: Biniou & Bombarde

The **biniou koz** ("old bagpipe" in Breton) or **biniou bihan** ("little bagpipe") is traditionally played in pair with the **bombarde** (see below). The two players are referred to as **sonerion** (in Breton) or **sonneurs de couple** (in French). The **biniou koz** is a mouth-blown bagpipe with one drone. It is high-pitched (an octave above the Scottish Highland bagpipes), with a range of ten notes. Its use and its key (G#, A, B, or C) varies from one area of Brittany to the next and research is underway to fully document the history and diverse use of this instrument in Brittany. The **bombarde** has a range of two octaves with its lower range pitched an octave below the **biniou**. The **biniou** provides a continuous sound due to the steady supply of air from the bag to both the drone and chanter. the chanter is only 5-1/2 inches long with 7 finger holes; the single drone is approximately 14 inches long.

While the **biniou koz** and **bombarde** pair is found today throughout Brittany and performed by some 400 pairs, it has been traditionally found in the southwestern quarter of Brittany where its practice remains strong. The style of paired playing found today has been documented as far back as the 18th century, with references and visual depictions indicating that these two instruments were played together at least as far back as the 16th century. In earlier centuries a drum was also commonly found to form a trio, although today this is rarely found. The **biniou** and **bombarde** pairs have traditionally been professional musicians--men paid for their performances at weddings, fairs and other public events.

The **bombarde** is a member of the oboe or shawm family. Describing it as an oboe, however, can be misleading since it has a very powerful sound, more closely resembling a trumpet. The **bombarde** is played as oboes are played with the double reed placed between one's lips; the second octave (unison with the range of the **biniou**) is achieved with lip pressure. In contrast to the continuous sound of the bagpipe, the **bombarde** is capable of staccato which makes it particularly effective in pair with the **biniou**. This is an instrument that has been in constant evolution with many different keys developed as well as milder versions (**lombarde**, **piston**) developed for use in ensembles.

Reading

« **Musique Bretonne—Histoire des sonneurs de tradition** ».

Douarnenez: Le Chasse-Marée/Ar Men. 1996. 512 pges.

"**Hervieux et Glet, facteurs de bombardes**"

Ar Men 11 (October 1987): 61-62

Description of the work by Gilbert Hervieux and Olliver Glet in crafting bombardes (and bagpipes); includes wonderful photographs.

"**Polig Monjarret**"

Ar Men 53 (August 1993): 44-57. photos.

A portrait of a very important collector of traditional music--especially that of the bombarde--and leader of Breton bagpipe band renaissance.

"**Musique bretonne au fil du temps**"

Ar Men 81 (December 1996):10-21.

« **La Musique bretonne** » Becker, Roland & Laure Le Gurun.

Spezet: Coop Breizh, 1994. 120 pages

Best single source of background information on Breton music--especially excellent for piping and instrumental traditions.

"**Le couple biniou-bombarde: aux origines d'une grande tradition**" Bigot, Laurent.

Ar Men 59 (May 1994):26-39;

"**Le couple biniou-bombarde: Apogée, décadence et renouveau** »

Ar Men 61 (August 1994):10-29

Excellent articles with beautiful photographs and illustrations about the history of the biniou and bombarde in Brittany; parallels release of CD of historical recordings - see below.

« **Sonerien daou ha daou--Methode de biniou et de bombarde** ». Castel, Yves.

Editions 'Breizh hor Bro', 1980

A 63-page booklet including history of the paired playing of biniou koz and bombarde as well as instructions on performance for learners.

« **Musiques traditionnelles de Bretagne: I—Sonnoux et Sonerien** » Defrance, Yves.

Skol Vreizh no. 35. 1996.

“**Toniou Breiz-Ize--Folk Music of West Brittany**” Monjarret, Polig.

Rennes: Bodadeg are Sonerion, 1984. 675 pages.

2,200 dances and melodies collected from biniou and bombarde players between 1941 and 1954 in Lower Brittany; introductory section describes structure of music and collection activity.

See also listings for biniou braz and bagad.

Recordings

Roland Becker.

Musiques Traditionnelles en Bretagne Morbihannaise. Arfolk CD 423. 1993.

85-minute compact disc. excellent 24-page booklet in French with bibliography. Features the bombarde, with biniou koz and biniou braz, drum and organ.

Roland Becker, L'Orchestre National Breton.

Er roue Stevan. Carpe Diem 2627. (L'Autre Distribution). 2000.

Jean Baron & Christian Anneix.

Danses de Bretagne. Keltia Musique Keltia Musique KMCD 07;

Dansal e Breiz. Keltia Musique KMCD 41, 1993;

Toniou Bastian ar Soner. Association des Bretons d'Anjou. CD 70431. 1993

Compositions of Sebastien Cam, 1879-1958;

Sonaozadur. Keltia Musique KM 89. 1998

15 new compositions;

Dansoù tro Breiz—Y'a d'la joie. Keltia Musique KMCD 123. 2001.

Pierre Crepillon, Laurent Bigot.

'Dreuz Kreiz Breiz. Keltia Musique. KMCD 56. 1995. 49'26.

Pierre Crepillon, Laurent Bigot, Patrick Molard.

Ar sac'h Ier. Escalibur BUR 826. 1988; reissued by Coop Breizh CD 453. 1998

Some of the best you can hear of bombarde/biniou koz and bombarde biniou braz combined.

Daniel Feon and Jil Lehart.

Evit Dansal. Arfolk CD 432. 1995

Gilbert Hervieux & Jacques Beauchamp.

Arzoustaff. EOG Production. EOG 101. 1996.

Philippe Janvier & Jean-Luc Moign.

Pour le coeur d'un marinier. Pixie JLM 95. 1995.

Youenn Le Bihan & Patrick Molard.

"Er Bolom Koh". Gwerz Pladenn GWP 007. 1995.

Ronan Le Corre, Teddy Molard, Yann Le Corre, Yann Simon, Yann Le Boulanger.

Jeunes sonneurs du Centre Bretagne. Arfolk CD 437. 1995.

Gildas Moal & René Chaplain.

An disput. Arfoilk CD 438. 1996.

Serge Riou and Hervé Irvoas.

Gant ar vombard hag ar biniou. Coop Breizh CD 902. 2000. (52'36)

Various performers.

Dans plinn--biniou-bombarde: Bro Dreger III. Kreizenn Sevenadurel Lannuon. 1990.

Cassette with accompanying booklet documenting traditional bombarde/biniou tunes for the dans plinn.

Sonneurs de couple biniou-bombarde: les enregistrements historiques.

Anthologie des chants et musiques de Bretagne Vol. 6. Le Chasse Marée/Ar Men. 73-minute CD with 28-page booklet.

Beautifully documented collection of older recordings by masters.

Bombardes et biniou de la Montagne--Retrospective du Trophée Per Guillou.

Chanteurs et musiciens de Bretagne No. 9. Dastum, DAS 124, 1995. (60 minute cassette and 24 page booklet).

40e Championnat de Bretagne des sonneurs par couple—Gourin. Arfolk CD 444. 1997.

Bombarde & Organ

The pairing of the bombarde with big church organs dates back only to the 1970s but has become a tradition of its own. Often the repertoire includes a number of Breton cantiques or hymns, but this pairing is also used for dances and new compositions, and more recently the biniou has been added to make a trio. The following are some more recent recordings.

Jean-Michel Alhais & Jean-Pierre Rolland.

Fantaisies. Escalibur 868. 1997.

Josick Allot & Michel Dubois.

Matelin en Amour. Keltia Musique RS 237. 1999

From Festival Interceltique de Lorient composition.

Josick Allot, Job Defernez & Michel Dubois.

Trio biniou-orgue-bombarde: Bonjour Boulom. 2000.

Anne Auffret, Jean Baron, Michel Ghesquière.

Pedenn. Keltia Musique KMCD 109. 2000. 72'57.

Singer Anne Auffret in trio with bombarde and organ.

Jean Baron & Michel Ghesquière.

Bombarde, ocarina et orgue. Arion ARN 33697, 1981; rereleased on CD in 1995, Arion ARN 64302;

Musique sacrée et mélodies bretonnes. Keltia Musique KM 69, 1996.

Jean Baron, Christian Anneix & Jean-Michel Mansano.

Kerjadenn—bombarde, biniou, orgue. Keltia Musique KMCD 108. 2000.

Christophe Caron & Louis Yhuel.

Prestige de la bombarde. Escalibur BUR 814. 1985.

Christophe Caron & Christian Mayer.

Gwenn-rann, bombarde et piano. Coop Breizh 916. 2000.

Jean-Claude Jégat & Louis Yhuel.

Bombarde et orgue. Arfolk 305-306; reedited on CD in 1989.

Pioneers in this genre with many recordings in the 1970s and early 1980s on lp.

André Le Meut & Hervé Rivière.

Bombarde et orgue—musiques profane et sacrée de Bretagne. Keltia Musique KM 52. 1995.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF BRITTANY: Biniou Bras & The Bagad

The **biniou bras** is the name given to Scottish style bagpipes which were introduced to Brittany in the late 1800s. These bagpipes did not attain any degree of popularity until the late 1930s when they were used in place of the **biniou koz** in pair with the **bombarde**. While still used in this pair, they are best known for their role in the **bagad**, a Breton bagpipe band developed in the 1950s which includes **bombardes** as well as a drum section. The French word **cornemuse** is also used to refer to this type of bagpipe, but usually refers to bagpipes more generally, or is used to refer to solo piping using this instrument.

The **bagad** is a bagpipe band modeled after Scottish pipe bands, but this ensemble includes **bombardes** as well as Scottish style bagpipes and drums. Typically a **bagad** includes eight Scottish bagpipes, eight **bombardes**, four snare drums, two tenor drums and one bass drum. While members of a bagad wear "uniforms" these are often very simplified version of older traditional dress, incorporating perhaps an embroidered vest.

Although the **bagad** has always been a popular part of parades at large Breton festivals, these ensembles also perform Breton dance music, arranging tunes from the traditional repertoire of singers or the paired playing of **biniou koz** and **bombarde**. As the quality of technique has improved over the past three decades, **bagadoù** (pl.) have become more and more innovative in arranging Breton music and in composing new music. Annual contests for different levels of **bagadoù** are showcases for the highly sophisticated orchestrations the best of these ensembles have developed.

Most of the 60 or so **bagadou** in Brittany today are part of the federation **Bodadeg ar Sonerion** which was founded in 1942. This federation publishes a magazine ([Ar Soner](#)), and organizes classes and contests for pipers and **bombarde** players.

Web site: <http://www.ar-soner.org/>

Reading

Ar Soner (55 impasse de l'Odet, 29000 Quimper).

Published by Bodadeg ar Sonerion, an organization for bagpipers and bombarde players with approximately 3,000 members. This magazine primarily of interest to these musicians (with contests results and music transcriptions as a major part of the content), but it also includes occasional articles on Breton music of more general interest.

La Musique bretonne Becker, Roland & Laure Le Gurun.

Spezet: Coop Breizh, 1994. 120 pages

Best single source of background information on Breton music--especially excellent for piping and instrumental traditions.

Breton Traditional tunes for the Scottish Highland Bagpipe. Le Moign, Jean-Luc. 1989

60 Breton tunes transcribed for the Scottish Highland pipes; includes dances and melodies from all over Brittany with notes for learners.

"**Quarante années au service de la musique bretonne**" Monjarret, Polig.

[Ar Soner](#) 273 (40th anniversary issue), 1983. pages 7-18.

Overview of the use of bagpipes in Brittany and the evolution of Breton music in relation to social and political changes

"**Polig Monjarret parle de Dorig Le Voyer (1914-1987)**" Monjarret, Polig.

[Ar Soner](#) 299 (December 1987), pages 16-20;

[Ar Soner](#) 300 (January-March 1988), pages 8-11;

[Ar Soner](#) 301 (April-June 1988), pages 19-22.

Both Polig Monjarret and Dorig le Voyer were important figures in the renaissance of piping in the 1950s in Brittany; this article focuses on the role of Dorig Le Voyer who was also a pipes and bombarde maker.

« **La B.A.S.: Mouvement generateur d'une conscience bretonne** » Ollivier, Steven.

Ar Soner 327 (January-February 1994), pages 4-8

Interesting history of the Bodadeg ar Sonerion and its place in the history of Breton music and piping--especially the development of the bagad.

Recordings

Solo bagpipes *Cornemuse--Scottish style instrument.*

Patrick Molard.

Ar baz valan Keltia Musique KMCD 87. 1984/1998;

Piobaireachd Gwerz pladenn GWP 003. 1993;

Biniou braz Cinq Planètes/Calen Distr. 1998;

Deliou L'OZ Production L'OZ 29 (NV3541-1). 2000

Includes uilleann pipes, Scottish pipes; Scottish small pipes, biniou koz, Bulgarian singer Kalinka Vulcheva.

(Patrick Molard) & Dan ar Bras.

Theme for the Green Lands: Suite for Pipes and Guitar. Keltia Musique MCD48, 1993.

Compositions by Dan ar Bras which feature a great deal of piping by Patrick Molard.

Various pipers.

Bretagne cornemuse aventures. EOG Production. EOG 110. 2001.

Includes solo and accompanied piping by Alan Cras, Patrick Molard, Gwenaël Le Corrone, Hervé Le Floc'h, Mikael Cozien, Yann Cariou.

Sample of different piping/bombarde combinations

Bodadeg ar Sonerion.

Assemblée des sonneurs de Bretagne--sonneurs de binious et de bombardes de Bretagne. 30e anniversaire BAS.

Heol (Arfolk) SB 312. 1973; reedited 1991 as CD, Arfolk CD 312.

Bodadeg ar Sonerion.

Assemblée des sonneurs--40e anniversaire. Rikou Soner/Bodadeg ar Sonerion RSBAS 309/disque M 104. 1984.

Double lp with interesting notes and photos on the history of the bagad and piping in Brittany.

Bagads

Only some of the most recent recordings have been listed below.

Various Bagads

Championnat de Bretagne des bagadoù—Epreuves de Lorient. Arfolk CD 447. 1998.

Top six bagadoù in competition performances: Bagad Kemper, Kevren Alre, Bagad Ronsed Mor, Bagad Bro Kemperle, Bagad Cap Caval.

Championnat de Bretagne des bagadoù—Epreuves de Lorient, Vol. 2 Coop Breizh.BAS CD 455. 1999;

Bagad—Championnat de Bretagne des Bagadoù / Kampionad Breizh ar Bagadoù, Vol. 3 – Epreuve de Lorient

Coop Breizh/BAS CD 898. 2000. 2 CDs (75'39 & 53'13).

Bagad Brieg.

Dalc'h da noz. Arfolk CD 433. 1995;

Gogo Droc'h. Coop Breizh. CD 899. 2000.

Bagad Kadoudal de la Kevrenn de Rennes.

Bombardes et binious de Bretagne. Arion ARN 64243. 1993

CD release of earlier recording

Bagad Kemper.

The Best of Bagad Kemper. Keltia Musique KMCD 21. 1991

Including cuts from 4 albums/CDs.

Lip ar Maout/La Force du Belier. Keltia Musique KMCD 50. 1995;

Hep Diskrog. Keltia Musique KMCD 100. 1999;

Azeliz Iza. Keltia Musique KMCD 121. 2001..

Bagad Kemperle.

Kerjadenn. Silex Y225023. 1993;

Ar Gouriz ruz. Coop Breizh CD 895. 1999.

Bagad Kerlenn Pondi.

Fest a gren. Arfolk CD 446. 1997.

Bagad de Lann-Bihoue.

40ème anniversaire. Arfolk CD 421. 1992;

Glann Glaz. Arfolk CD 440. 1996;

Ar mor divent. Columbia COL 498476-2. 2000..

Bagad Men ha Tan & Henri Texier.

Doùe Lann. L'OZ Production L'OZ 21. 1998.

Bagad Men ha Tan & Doudou N'Diaye Rose.

Dakar. L'OZ Production. L'OZ 30/NV 3601-1. 2000. 51'43

Senegal drums

Bagad Ronsed Mor-Locoal Mendon.

Ag an Douar d'ar Mor. Arfolk CD 426. 1993;

Coeff 116. Arfolk 441. 1997.

Bagad de Saint-Nazaire.

Pib-Rock. OMAC. 1992

Self-produced CD

Fonds de Terroir. OMAX 9820. 1998.

Black Label Zone.

Pot' velu. Siam Production. BLZ 310300. 2000

More of a Scottish style ensemble featuring the bagpipes and drummers in wild arrangements.

Kerlenn Pondi.

Champion de Bretagne des Bagadoù. Coop Breizh 2001.

Kevrenn Alre.

Kevrenn Alre. GREM G9002. 1990;

La-ri-don-gé! Arflok CD 442. 1997;

50 ans. Coop Breizh/Kevrenn Alre 2001.

Kevrenn Brest St. Mark.

"Tu pe Du". Kevrenn Brest St. Mark/Diffusion Breizh CD-KBSM 001. 1995

Rerelease of 1987 cassette.

Ocean Liberty. KBSM 002. 1996;

Levezon. KBSM 003. 2000..

François Monnier.

L'Occidentale de Fanfare. Coop Breizh CD878. 1998

Bagad with fifes of Gascony.

Note that many bagadoù (plural for bagad) have websites on the internet.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF BRITTANY: The Veuze

The **veuze** is a one-drone bagpipe found in southeastern Brittany and in the northern part of Vendée. Played alone or with the accordion or fiddle, this instrument is perhaps the oldest of the bagpipes found in Brittany and has changed very little in form since the Middle Ages. The tone of the veuze is similar to that of the **gaita** of Galicia, Spain, or the **cabrette** of the Limousin and Auvergne regions of southern France. The **veuze** disappeared from Brittany for several dozen years before pipers began to research it and locate old instruments. It was only in the mid-1970s that the instrument saw a real revival thanks to the organization *Sonneurs de Veuze* which researched its use and reconstructed instruments. Today some 80 musicians play this instrument.

Reading

"**La musique bretonne** » Becker, Roland, and Laure Le Gurun

Spezet: Coop Breizh, 1994. 120 pages

An excellent introduction to Breton music and its performance and social context. Includes basic information about piping in Brittany; lots of interesting photos.

"**Quelques éléments sur la tradition populaire de la veuze dans le pays nantais**" Moreau, Thierry. *Musique bretonne* 93 (juin 1989):15-17.

« **Quelques éléments sur la tradition populaire de la veuze en pays nantais** » *Sonneurs de Veuze* Nantes: *Sonneurs de Veuze*; Distribution by Dastum, 1979. 210 pages.

"**Redécouverte de la veuze, cornemuse de Haute Bretagne** » *Sonneurs de Veuze*

Ar Men 14 (avril 1988):14-29.

Recordings

various performers

Sonneurs de veuze en Bretagne et marais breton vendéen. Musiciens et chanteurs traditionnels. vol. 3. *Le Chasse-Marée*/Ar Men SCM 010. 1987

*Beautifully documented with history of veuze and its renaissance; reissued as CD *Le Chasse-Marée* SCM 026. 1993 (with some additional selections).*

Tradition de veuze en pays nantais. Chanteurs et musiciens de Bretagne No. 2. Dastum/*Sonneurs de Veuze* DAS 112. 1990

Cassette accompanied by excellent 30-page booklet.

Duo Bertrand

Musique d'hier pour aujourd'hui. AREXCPO AVPL 12. 1993

Fleur de sel. Label Ouest 306 004-2. (Distr. L'Autre Distribution). 2000

Duo featuring Thierry Bertrand on veuze with nephew Sebastien on diatonic accordion with dances and melodies from the Breton-Vendée border area.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF BRITTANY: The Clarinet

The **treujenn gaol**, literally translated from Breton as "cabbage stump" is a clarinet with four or five keys, often made of boxwood. More commonly found are clarinets of thirteen keys made of boxwood or ebony. The fabrication of these instruments in Brittany dates back to the 19th century and their use is concentrated in central western Brittany--Bro Fanch and Plinn and Bro Fisel. Modern clarinets of twenty-four keys are also used and traditional performers tend to stay within one octave. The music parallels that of the **biniou-bombarde** pairs, and even when a single clarinet is playing the performer uses a responsive style. The organization Paotred an Dreujenn Gaol has been particularly active in promoting research, documentation, and performance of this instrument.

Reading

Various performers

Sonneurs de clarinet en Bretagne/Sonerien treujenn-gaol. Musiciens et chanteurs traditionnels. vol. 2. Dastum/Armen/ Paotred an Dreujenn gaol. SCM 008. 1986

Double lp with rich jacket notes; reissued on CD Le Chasse-Marée SCM 027. 1992.

Clarinettes et anciennes danses populaires du Trégor. Chanteurs et musiciens de Bretagne no. 5. Dastum Bro Dreger/Dastum DAS 1115. 1991.

Cassette with 87 page booklet documenting performances and history of dance and use of the clarinet in the Trégor region of northern Brittany.

Michel Aumont

Clarinettes armorigènes. An Naer Produktion

Jazzy arrangements using lots of different types of clarinets.

Christian Duro

Sonneur Fisel. Escalibur CD 872. 1997

Various traditional and less traditional clarinet performances by one of Brittany's best players.

Paotred an Dreujenn Gaol

1ère rencontre internationale de la clarinette populaire. Radio Kreiz Breizh & Paotred an Dreujenn Gaol. K02. 1990

2e rencontre international de la clarinette populaire. Paotred and Dreujenn Gaol/Radio Kreiz Breizh. K03. 1991

Festival recordings including Breton as well as international range of clarinet players.

Quintet de clarinettes

Musique tetue. Sillex Y225001. 1991

Bazh du. Sillex 225031. 1994

Traditional and jazzier arrangements and compositions by group including Michel Aumont, Dominique Le Bozec, Bernard Subert, Dominique Jouve, Eric Marchand.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF BRITTANY: The Accordion

Beginning in the early 20th century, the diatonic and later the chromatic **accordion** gained popularity throughout Brittany, with particular use in eastern Brittany and in coastal areas where maritime traditions have remained strong. As in other countries of Europe, the accordion has often replaced bagpipes, but it has also developed a tradition all its own. While this instrument brought with it a repertoire from outside of Brittany to replace local styles, it has also been adapted by Breton musicians to uniquely Breton styles.

Reading

“Traditions populaires et industrialisation--le cas de l'accordéon » Defrance, Yves.
Ethnologie française. XIV(3). 1984:223-236.

"L'accordéon en pays Fanch" Lableiz, Bernard & Aristide Bernard.
Musique bretonne 105 (septembre 1990):3-8.

"Accordéons chromatiques et jazz bands dans les Monts d'Arrée" Lasbleiz, Bernard.
Musique bretonne 109 (mars 1991):4-8; 110 (avril 1991):3-7.

"Souvenirs d'un bouezou" Lecoq, André.
Ar Men 63 (novembre 1994):26-33.

Recordings

Jean Barbelivien.

Airs a danser du pays de Chateaubriant. Chanteurs et musiciens de Bretagne no. 6. Dastum DAS 116. 1992.
Cassette and 50-page booklet on traditional diatonic accordion player from area of Chateaubriant in eastern Brittany.

Jacques Beauchamp.

Accordéon diatonique en Bretagne. Arfolk SB 417. Ip

Jean Coateval.

Dañs tro Menez Arre. Dastrum Kreiz Breizh 03. 1999.
Older master of accordion and the repertoire of western Brittany.

Cocktail diatonique.

Cocktail diatonique; Accordéons diatoniques en Bretagne. Keltia Musique KMCD 63. 1992.
Arrangements and compositions by Jacques Beauchamp, Patrick Lancien, Yann-Fanch Perroches, Ronan Robert.

Yann Dour.

Musiques pour accordéons diatoniques. Escalibur 812
Booklet and Ip/cassette with 30 selections showing 10 styles.
Musique pour la danse bretonne. Editions Caruhel. 1988 (75-page booklet and cassette).
Bal en pays Gallo, suite. Arfolk/Escalibur 419. 1991.
Several recordings among other by diatonic accordion player who has also produced pedagogical materials for the instrument.

Etienne Grandjean Trio.

Circus valse. Escalibur CD 842. 1992.
Features Etienne Grandjean on accordion with Vincent Burlot on various saxophones and Yann Gouriou on electric and acoustic guitar; new compositions and arrangements.

Etienne Grandjean & Pierrick Lemou.

Musiques Celtiques. Sony Music. 1996.
Accordion and fiddle.

Fred Guichen.

La Lune noire. Ciré Jaune 188. 1998.
Former guitarist with hot fest noz band Ar Re Yaouank.

Bernard Lasbleiz & Jean-Michel Corgeron.

Boest an diaoul--l'accordéon en pays de gavotte. Anche Libre/Dastum. 1987
Cassette with 104 page booklet of music and notes.

Patrick Lefebvre.

Accordéon Gavotte. Arfolk CD 431. 1995.

Pierrick Lemou & Patrick Lefebvre.

Seizh hun. Keltia Musique KMCD 90. 1998
Accordion and fiddle.

Alain Pennec.

Accordéon diatonique. AP01. 1988;
Self-produced cassette
Tablatures AP02 and AP03. 1993.
Two cassettes of 29 tunes each, with accompanying booklets of transcriptions for learning the tunes.
Alcoves Keltia Musique KMCD51. 1995
With guitar and keyboard.
Turbulences. Keltia Musique KMCD 101. 1999
With harp, guitar and percussion.

Yann-Fañch Perroches.

An droug hirnez. Keltia Musique KMCD 79. 1997.

Yann-Fañch Perroches and Fañch Landreau.

Daou ha daou. Keltia Musique. KMCD 111. 2000. 49'
Accordion in pair with fiddle.

Ronan Robert.

Réunion en concert. Pixie/Déclic Communication/Blue Silver. 1996.

Various performers.

Accordéons diatoniques en Bretagne. Keltia Musique KMCD 08 (compact disc); RSK 194 (cassette). 1990.
Excellent sample of best young Breton diatonic accordion players: Jacques Beauchamp, Christian Desnos, Yann Dour, Etienne Grandjean, Bernard Lasbleiz, Patrick Lefebvre, Alain Pennec.
Accordéon diatonique en Haute-Bretagne. Rikou Soner RS 185. 1982I reissued in 2001 by Keltia Musique KMCD 116.
CD featuring diatonic accordion and music from traditional repertoire of Upper Brittany; includes F. Delaunay, V. Coignard, Ch. Le Mouee, E. Grandjean, Ch. Anneix, J. Rousseau.
L'accordéoniste en Bretagne. Edition la Boueze. Col. Ethnographie vivante, vol. 62. LB 1006-1007. 1985
2 lps with good documentation, in French, on the history of the diatonic accordion in Brittany.
Accordéon diatonique en Tregor: Bro Dreger V. Kreizenn Sevenadurel Lannuon. BD 005. 1993.
Reissued in 1998 as a CD.
Fest deiz accordéons. Arfolk CD 427. 1995
Loic le Borgen, Jean Coateval, Jean-Yves Le Corre, Yves Le Guennec, Regis Huiban, Patrick Lefebvre, Eric Richard; various dances.
Accordéons en Haute-Bretagne, Pixie/Déclic 50 500-2. 1999.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF BRITTANY: The Violon & The Vielle à Roue

The **violon** or fiddle was noted first in Brittany in the 17th century and it has been an instrument found primarily in eastern Brittany. Most fiddlers were artisans--wood workers and furniture makers who sometimes made their own instrument. This instrument was at the height of its popularity in Brittany at the turn of the century when it was used to lead wedding processions and dances, but after World War I, it tended to be replaced by the accordion. In the 1970s only about 40 traditional fiddlers could be found. While Irish fiddling has been a source of inspiration for younger Bretons, research and collection of music from traditional Breton fiddlers has kept its practice going.

The **vielle à roue** or hurdy-gurdy has been found throughout Europe since the middle Ages. Its period of greatest development in France seems to have been the 18th century when it was a popular instrument of the court and aristocracy. In more recent centuries eastern Brittany along with the regions of Bourbonnais, Berry and Auvergne, have been particularly active areas for this instrument. Like other traditional instruments of Brittany, its use declined between the World Wars as the accordion gained ground. A current revival began in Brittany in the 1950s with the use of the hurdy-gurdy by the Celtic Circles (dance troupes) of Rennes, St. Malo, Penthièvre, St. Brieuc and Dinan. The hurdy-gurdy remains a part of an oral tradition in northeastern Brittany where it is played for dancing, wedding festivities and informally for local festivals.

Reading

La Musique bretonne Becker, Roland & Laure Le Gurun.. Spezet: Coop Breizh, 1994. 120 pages
Best single source of background information on Breton music--especially excellent for piping and instrumental traditions.

"**Le violon en Basse-Bretagne: le cas du Trégor**" Lasbleiz, Bernard. (The fiddle in Lower Brittany: the case of Tregor)
Musique bretonne 124, juillet-aout 1993, pages 3-13; Musique bretonne 125 septembre-octobre 1993, pages 7-12.
History of the fiddle and fiddle players in north-central Brittany; includes music, photos, maps.

"**Le violon en Bretagne**" Lemou, Pierrick and Ar Men (The fiddle in Brittany).
Ar Men 55, novembre 1993, pages 22-35.
Nicely illustrated overview of the history of fiddle playing in Brittany.

Recordings

Violon (Fiddle)

Didier Allain, Pierrick Lemou and Frederic Samzun
Violons en Bretagne. Pluriel/Collection Disker GRI 19049 2. 1994.

La Boueze
Violoneux traditionnels de Bretagne. La Boueze 1001.

Archetype

Archetype. Escalibur CD 831. 1990
Ensemble of Breton fiddlers performing traditional Breton tunes as well as original compositions and melodies from Scotland and Eastern Europe.

[Yann-Fañch Perroches and] Fañch Landreau
Daou ha daou. Keltia Musique. KMCD 111. 2000. 49'

Christian Lemaitre

Ballade à l'hotesse. Escalibur CD 858. 1995 50'05
Arrangements of traditional Breton tunes and a few compositions and borrowings; some with guitar, piano...

Pierrick Lemou

Kalon Koat. TVB Production. 1999
Combined with lots of other instruments.

Pierrick Lemou & Patrick Lefebvre

Seizh hun. Keltia Musique KMCD 90. 1998
Accordion and fiddle.

Pierrick Lemou & Christian Peloil

Musique Bretonne pour Violons. Ed. Allain Penneec. 2001
CD and book of tunes for learners.

[Etienne Grandjean &] Pierrick Lemou

Musiques Celtiques. Sony Music. 1996
Accordion and fiddle.

Jean Sabat & Laors Dacquay

Harmonica, violon. Coop Breizh CD 915. 2001.

Various performers

Sonneurs de violon traditionnels en Bretagne. Anthologie des chants et musiques de Bretagne. vol. 5. Le Chasse-Marée/Ar Men SCM ?. 1993.
Beautifully documented recordings of traditional fiddling in Brittany.

Vielle à Roue (Hurdy-Gurdy)

Various performers

Sonneurs de vielle traditionnels en Bretagne. Musiciens et chanteurs traditionnels. vol. 1. Le Chasse-Marée SCM 004. 1984 (double lp with rich jacket notes); reissued on CD Le Chasse-Marée SCM 024. 1993.

Jean-Pierre Lecuyer

Vielles à roue. Keltia Musique KMCD 114. 2001. (reedition of a 1983 recording).

Other Strings

Arz Nevez

Pevar en avel. Pluriel/Molène Musiques/Sony GRI 19 123-2. 2000.
Kerjadenn. Pluriel/Molène Musiques/Sony GRI 19 155-2. 2002
A string quartet with a classical edge to its arrangements of Breton and other Celtic melodies and dances.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF BRITTANY: The Celtic Harp

The **telenn** or Celtic harp is a small harp whose golden age in Brittany as well as in the other Celtic countries was the Middle Ages. Professional harpers brought the harp to the halls of noble families as well as more common folk, and a great deal of musical exchange between harpers of Brittany, Wales, Scotland and Ireland is recorded in history. Combined economic, social, political and cultural changes contributed to the decline of this instrument, and by the end of the 18th century harps had disappeared in Brittany. A rebirth of the Celtic harp in Brittany can be dated to the 1950s and Jord Cochevelou (father of one of the best known Breton performers on harp, Alan Stivell) was an important figure in the reconstruction of ancient harps. By the early 1970s the popularity of the Celtic harp started to grow and today hundreds of Bretons learn harp, performing at annual competitions and festivals in Brittany in solo or in a group with other instruments.

Reading

"**Les lyres en Bretagne**" Rolland, Gael 1992, 1993.
Musique bretonne 118 juin-août 1992, pages 3-5;
Musique bretonne 122 mars-avril 1993, pages 9-11
A history of early harps and lyres in Brittany.

Recordings

Dominig Bouchaud

L'ancre d'argent. Keltia Musique KMCD 127. 2001
20 melodies, dances, marches and compositions.

Job Fulup

Harpeur. Escalibur CD 839. 1991.

Anne Marie Jan

Parallèles. Keltia Musique/TVB Prod. 1994.

Gwenaël Kerleo

Chemin de brume. CDK 03. 2000.

Marianig Larc'hantec

Chall ha Dichall (flux and reflux). D.F. Kerig. Kerig 13. 1999.

Mariannig Larc'hantec & Dominig Bouchaud

Diou delenn--deux harpes celtiques. Rikou Soner, BAS collection Eus ar Vagann. RS BAS 308,M104

Mariannig Larc'hantec & Yann Dour

Bleu--harpe et accordeon diatonique. Caruhel CAR 002. 1987.

Mariannig Larc'hantec & Myrdhin

Harpes celtiques--mille ans d'histoire. Conservatoire regionale de musique de Ploemeur. 1988.

Violaine Mayor

Danse avec les fées—Musiques de Bretagne et d'Irlande. Hent Telenn Breizh. VM01. 1996
Metal strung harps featured.

Myrdhin

A cordes et à cris. Iguane Production. 1995.

Buhez Marzin. RIA-Kerig 595. 1999

Just two latest of a number of recordings by this harper.

Myrdhin & Zil [Duo Ars Celtica]

Fréhel féeries. Kerig KCD 160. 2000.

Myrdhin & Pol Huellou

Harp and shakuhachi. Goasco Music. GM027. 1988 (cassette);

Harp et bamboo. Escalibur CD 841. 1992

Pairing of Celtic harp and Japanese shakuhachi flute.

Kristen Nagues

Kernelec. Klang Welten 75-144. 1990 (distr. Keltia Musique)

An envor. Coop Breizh CD 882. 1999..

Gwenola Roparz

Telenn Vreizh--Musique bretonne pour harpe celtique. Arfolk CD 430, 1994. 50'50 CD

Baradoz (Cantiques et musiques populaires de Bretagne pour voix, harpe et orgue). Escalibur CD 877. 1997.

Sedrenn

On our way. Keltia Musique KMCD 62. 1996

De l'autre côté/The Other Side. Keltia Musique KMCD 96. 1999.

Duo of harp including lots of song and less traditional arrangements.

Alan Stivell

Renaissance de la harpe celtique. Fontana 6325-302, 1971 (also released on Rounder Records 3067). *Classic Stivell which stands up very well with time.*

Harpe du nouvel age. WEA Filippachi 240 7371. 1985.

"new age" style in arrangements of Celtic melodies.

See also the group Triskell in "New Arrangements" listing.

“CLASSICAL” & CHORAL MUSIC

Brittany is a land where all styles of music prosper, and numerous classically trained composers and musicians have been inspired by Brittany and/or have incorporated musical themes and texts from the Breton tradition. This is not an area I have researched, thus the recordings below are just a small sample of possibilities.

Reading

"Dictionnaire des compositeurs de musique en Bretagne » Vefa de Bellaing.

Nantes: Ouest Editions, 1992. 280 pages.

This is a thoroughly researched "encyclopedia of some 200 composers from Brittany or inspired by Brittany with biographical information as well as listings of works and recordings.

Recordings

Early Breton Music

Ensemble Vocal Féminin Colortalea.

Messe de Kernascléden et Livre vermeil de Montserrat. Escalibur 886. 1996

Gérard Lomenec'h.

Musique sacrée au temps des ducs / Saint Vincent Ferrier et la Messe de Kernascléden. Ed. Du Layeur. 2000. (Book & CD)

Musique sacrée au temps des ducs—"Chanter me fait ma dame" Escalibur CD 865. 1996.

Gérard Lomenec'h & Agnès Brosset (Colortalea).

Laïcs bretons—Auz origines de la poésie chantée médiévale. Ed. Du Layeur 003. 2000. (Book and CD)

Choral Music (secular and religious) and Performance of Cantiques

Anne Auffret, Jean Baron, Michel Ghesqière.

Soñj—Kantikou e vro-Breiz Keltia Musique KM 17. 1991. .

Pedenn. Keltia Musique KMCD 109. 2000.

Cantiques sung by Anne Auffret with bombarde and organ in duo or trio.

Various performers

Breizh a gan – Chants choral breton. Kendalc'h DS 748-070. 1996.

Various choirs from an annual competition for choirs singing in the Breton language.

Chorales du Breizh a Gan & Orchestre et Choeur de Broceliande.

Kan evid peoh / Cantate pour la paix. Kendalc'h DS 896092. 1993.

Christian Desbordes.

La Passion Celtique—Ar Basion Vras. MCV 23. 1992. 2 CDs

Theater piece with the Strollad ar Vro Bagan; features choral music and many solists in an enactment of the Easter story based on old Breton songs as well as newer composition.

Ensemble Choral du Bout du Monde.

Nedeleg—Noëls Celtiques. Green Linnet GLCD 3124. 1998.

Buhez. Keltia Musique. ECBM 1000. 2000. 61'23.

Kanerien Sant Karanteg.

Kanadenn evit Marzhin CD KSK 003. 1994?;

Droug Kinnik Neumenoïou ‘ Le Tribut de Nominœ. CD KSK 004. 1995;

Huñvre Lancelot / Le songe de Lancelot. KSK 006. 1999.

“Classical” composers / Symphonic music

Arz Nevez.

Pevar en avel. Pluriel/Molène Musiques. GRI 19 123-2. 2000. 46’09.

String quartet interpreting traditional Breton tunes.

Jean Cras (composer)

Catharine Estourelle, Lionel Peintre, Alain Jacquon.

Mélodies, oeuvres de Jean Cras. Timpini IC 1025. 1995.

Alain Jacquon, l’Orchestre philharmonique du Luxemburg, Jean-François Antondoli.

Journal du bord, Ames d’enfants, Légende pur violoncelle et orchestre, Concerto pour piano et orchestre.

Timpani 2037. 2 CDs. 1996.

Marie-Annick Nicolas and Jean-Pierre Ferry.

Suite en duo, Quatre pieces, Poèmes intimes de Jean Cras. Skarbo D SK 4941. 1996.

Jean Pierre Ferey.

Maritime—oeuvres pour piano de Jean Cras. Skarbo DSK 1986. 1999.

Quatour à cordes de Chartres.

Premier quatour “A ma Bretagne” – oeuvre de Jean Cras. Auvidis BNC 112860. 1995.

Paul Ladmirault (composer)

Intégrale des Sonates. (for violin, cello, clarinet and piano). Skarko, DSK 4952. 1980 recording released in 1990s

L’oeuvre pour piano. (played by Louis-Claude Thirion. Skarbo DSK. 1962 recording released in 2001.

Paul Le Flem (composer)

Orchestre de Bretagne.

La Magicienne de la mer, Fantaisie pour piano et orchestre, Symphonie No. 1 – oeuvres de Paul Le Flem.

Timpani AS 1021. 1995.

Jef Le Penven (composer- one of most recent recordings)

Breizh a Gan, Orchestre de Brocéliande.

Symphonie Mor-Bihan, Cantate du Bout du Monde de Jef Le Penven. Escalibur 876. 1997.

Joseph Guy Ropartz (composer)

Orchestre de Bretagne.

Petite symphonie, Pastorales, Sons de cloches, Sérénade champêtre et divertimento, de Joseph Guy Ropartz. Timpani K1034. Auvidis. 1995.

Trio pour violon, violoncelle et piano. Quatrième quatour, Prélude, Marine et chansons. Timpani IC 1047. 1999.

Didier Squiban.

Symphonie Bretagne. L'OZ Production. L'OZ 31. 2000 57'24.

Alan Stivell.

Symphonie Celtique – Tir na nog. Keltia III / CBS 88487. 1980

This double lp may not be available today, but testifies to how Alan Stivell has always been in the forefront in innovation.

NEW ARRANGEMENTS OF BRETON MUSIC

Many performers on the recordings which follow also perform styles considered traditional; the line between what I call "traditional" and what are "arrangements" is a fine one in some cases. The following is a very small sample of some very interesting and excellent recordings, reflecting a wide range of ways that Breton musicians and singers create new music from old traditions and influences from all over the world (pop, rock, jazz, rap ...)

Samplers

A very good way to get introduced to a number of musicians—both traditional in style and those who do more innovative arranging.

Au cœur de la musique bretonne. Escalibur CD 879. 1997

Includes Annie Ebrel, Roland Becker Trio, Gwerz, Ar Re Yaoiunk, Sonerien Du, Glaz, Gwenfol, Carré Manchot, Y.F. Kemener, K. Nogues, J.-M. Veillon ... Bagad Brieg, Bagad Lann Bihoué.

Au cœur de la culture bretonne. 40ème anniversaire Coop Breizh (no number). 1997

Sampler from Coop Breizh labels: Bagad Lokoal Mendon, Gwerz, Djiboudjep, Kemener/Squiban/Nogues, Band ar Jazz, E. Goadec/L. Ebrel, J.-M. Veillon/Y. Riou, J.-M. Alhait/J.-P. Rolland, Annie Ebrel, Soig Siberil, Kanerion Pleuigner, Jacques Pellen/Riccardo Del Fra.

Barzaz Breizh--c'hoazh hag adarre. FR3 Bretagne/Le Lagon Bleu LBCD 03 (CD) LBK 03 (cassette). 1990

Performers using a variety of styles to interpret songs from the classic 19th century song collection by La Villemarque, Barzaz Breiz. Performers include: Reves de gosse, Y-F Kemener, Youenn Gwernig, Gilles Servat, Andrea ar Gouilh, Herve Queffeleant, Roland Becker, E.V., Dan ar Bras, Chorale du Bout du Monde.

Breizh and Roll. Arsen, Move On Productions, WMD. 1996

Sampler of 16 Breton bands, with a rock beat.

Bretagne à Bercy. Saint-Georges SAN 494 5102. Sony Music 1999. 2 CDs

Concert performances by some of Brittany's bigger names, including Alan Stivell, Gilles Servat, Tri Yann and Dan ar Braz.

Compil'oz. L'OZ Production L'OZ 38. 2002

Nice variety of solo performers, bagads, groups from OZ recordings.

Dañs--musique à danser de Bretagne. Iguane Production/Adipho distribution. ADP 084. 1987

Excellent sample of groups of the 1980s: Storvan, Carre Manchot, Strakal, Strobinnell, Skolvan, B.F 15, Pennou Skoulm.

Digor an nor. Coop Breizh. 1998.

Recordings of winners of inter-high school Breton music contests in 1996 and 1997; including Martin-Hamon, Spontus, Karma, Kelerenn, Mouli.

L'empreinte de la Bretagne. Naïve Y 2250181. 2000.

Reviews recommend highly. Includes R. Le Bars, Quintette de Clarients, J. Pellen, Bagad Kemper, Manu Lann Huel ...

Fest noz d'EOG. EOG 108. 2001.

Selection of fest noz bands recorded by EOG.

Fest noz millenium. Ciré Jaune. CIR 172. 2000.

Fest noz live. Keltia Musique KMCD 76. 1997.

Inlcudes Skolvan, Annie Ebrel & Noluen Le Buhé, Bagad Kemper, Frères Quéré & Baron & Anneix.

Fest vraz. Keltia Musique KM 91. 1998.

Hommage – da enoriñ – Glenmor. Radio France Bretagne Ouest/Kan an Douar. KAD 01. (Dif. Coop Breizh). 2000.
Recording of a concert given at Gouel Broadel ar Brezhoneg to honor famous “chanteur engagé” Glenmor. Performers of his songs include Katell, Andrea ar Gouill, Yvon Etienne, Mona Jaouen, Manu Lann Huel, Bernez Tangi, and Kristen Nikolaz.

Kerden—Cordes de Bretagne. Gwerz Pladenn GWP 014. 1998
A sampler of electric and acoustic guitar players: Jacky Molard, Dan ar Braz, Pat O'May, Soig Siberil, Nicholas Quemener, Tangi Le Doré, Alain Genty, Jacques Pellen, Alain Léon, Franck Le Bloas, Jamie Mc Menemy, Gilles Le Bigot, Jean-Charles Guichen, Roland Conq, Yvon Riou.

Kleg Live – 10e anniversaire du fest-noz de Klergereg. Ciré Jaune. 1996
Dances from traditional singers and pipers as well as bands.

Bro Dreger XI—E-barz an dañs. Kreizenn Sevenadurel Lannuon. 1999
Fest noz bands from the Tregor area.

Bro Dreger XII – Daou ha daou. Kreizenn Sevenadurel Lannuon. BD 012. 2001
Paired singers and instrumentalists interpreting traditional music from the Tregor region.

La Musique du Bout du Monde. L'OZ Produktion. L'OZ 14. 1997
Includes recordings by Michel Defougères, Guillemer, Y.F. Kemener, Didier Squiban, Manu Lann Huel, Nicolas Quemener, Ronan Le Bars, and a massed bagadoù with 1,000 pipers and bombarde players.

Musiques de Bretagne/The Sounds of Brittany. Keltia Musique KMCD 19 (CD or cassette). 1991
Sampler of various styles from recordings, including Alan Stivell, Gwalarn, Bagad Kemper, Anne Auffret, Jean Baron & Michel Ghesquiere, Skolvan, Goadec Sisters, Patrick Lefebvre.

Planète Bretagne. Déclic (Sony) DICB 11692. 1999. 2 CDs.

Reuz a breur mem' – fest noz. EOG Production. DDD-EOG 103. 1997
Includes Diwall, Forzh Penaos, Kaskerien, Distro, sonneurs de couple and kan ha diskan.

War an hent. Gwerz Pladenn GWP 010, 1995
Sampler of artists on the Gewrz Pladenn label: Jacky and Patrick Molard, Kristen Nogués, Kristen Nikolaz, Annie Ebrel, Jacques Pellen, Yannick Jory, Thierry Garcia, Youenn Le Bihan, J.-M Veillon, Allain Genty.

Instrumental Groups and Singers

Just a few of the best known and more recent recordings biased by the fact that I know of them, have heard their CD or seen a strong review of their work.

Añjel

I.K. Coop Breizh/Siam Productions. CD 883. 1999

Diank Sony Music. 2001

Traditional singer Kristen Nikolaz with a techno style backup group featuring traditional Breton dances.

Dan Ar Bras

Acoustic. FLVM 3062 M103. 1984. reissued on Green Linnet SIF 3035. 1985.

As title suggests, features acoustic guitar, but also some fine songs by Dan ar Bras.

Héritage des Celtes Columbia COL 4777632. 1995

Collaboration with a number of stars from the Celtic world.

La mémoire des volets blancs. Columbia. 2001.

See also **Patrick Molard** in Bagpipes section: Theme for the Green Lands..

Ar Re Yaouank

Best Of. Le Ciré Jaune. CIR 128. 1998

One of the best loved of the younger fest noz bands.

Barzaz (Barzaz Trio)

Ec'honder Escalibur CD828, 1989

An den kozh dall Keltia Musique KMCD29, 1992

Traditional singer Y-F Kemener with Jean-Michel Veillon, Gilles Le Bigot, Alain Genty and David Hopkins.

Roland Becker

Fallaen. Rikou Soner RS 181. 1982

Gav'rinis. Arfolk/Escalibur CD 840. 1992

Jazzy arrangements of Breton tunes and Breton-inspired compositions; lots of sax and winds and Becker's exceptional use of bombarde.

BF.15

Primeur. Escalibur CD 879. 1997

Jazzy arrangements of trad. tunes--accordion, clarinet, fiddle, binou, bombarde.

Bleizi Ruz

Pell ha kichen. Adipho ADP 084. 1988

Bleizi Ruz en concert. Escalibur CD 836 ADD. 1991

An Teuz. Cire Jaune CIR 194. 2001

Well known band with 20+ years of experience.

Bugel Koar

Ar Solier. An Naer Produktion. AN 403. 2000

Duo of singer Marthe Vassallo with accordion player Philippe Olivier.

Carré Manchot

Noz. Declic Communication. 50519-2 1996

Riboul. Déclic 345 3642. 1997

Group including: Herve Lelu, Gilbert Le Pennec, Ronan Pinc, Ronan Robert.

Liyannaj. Déclic B 11452. 1999

With traditional band from Guadeloupe

Degemer. Ciré Jaune CIR 810 579 2. 2001

Latest.

Dalc'h Soñj

Lusk ar Galon. YBER Production. YBD 501. 1998

Instrumental group with female singer featuring Vannetais tradition.

Diaouled ar Menez

Chauffe la Breizh!—Fest noz depuis 1972

Sampler of recordings by this popular group performing most often live at festou noz.

Diwall

Setu ur vuhez. EOG Productions/Coop Breizh EOG V05. 1999

Fest noz band.

Dremmwel

Heol loar. Escalibur CD 862. 1996

Glazik. DREM 02. 2001

Acoustic group with guitar, harp., accordion, binou, bombarde and veuze...

Annie Ebrel & Riccardo Del Fra

Voulouz loar/velluto di luna. Gwerz Pladenn. GWP 016. 1998
Traditional singer combines with jazz bass fiddle player.

E.V.

En public (Mar Plij). Déclic Communication. B1-5-42. 1999
Pemp. Sony EPC 501746-2. 2001
One of best known Breton rock bands.

Alain Genty

Le grand encrier. Keltia Musique KMCD 92. 1998
Electric guitarist with friends; compositions and innovative arrangements of traditional tunes.

Glaz

Glaz. Escalibur CD 848. 1993
Ar Gest Declic BS 334, 1995
Pop/rock group; song in Breton/French/English: Nathalie Brignonen, Ronan le Bars, Jean Claude Normant, Jean-Christophe Boccou, Yves Ribis, Yann Honore.

Glenmor

Les principes oeuvres. Arfolk/Escalibur CD 413/414
Reissue of classics by this well-known singer/poet known especially in the 60s and 70s for his militant texts.

Gwenfol

Berdadaou. EOG Productions/Dif. Breizh. EOG 102. 1997
Fest noz band.

Youenn Gwernig

Just a Traveller/Foeter-Bro. Keltia Musique KMCD 49. 1994
One of Brittany's best known "singer-songwriters" in the Breton language.

Gwerz

Gwerz live. Gwerz pladenn CD GWP001. 1993
Ground-breaking group in arrangement of traditional music: Youenn le Bihan, Jacky and Patrick Molard, Eric Marchand, Soig Siberil, Alain Genty and Bruno Caillat.)

Hastañ

Hastañ. An Naer Produktion 201. 1998
Fest noz band.

Mona Jaouen

Maouez. Coop Breizh. 1999.
Singer in the Breton language with great bluesy voice.

Yann Fañch Kemener & Didier Squiban

Île-Exil. L'Oz Production, L'OZ 11. 1996
Kimiad. L'OZ Production. L'OZ 24. 1999
Traditional singer with piano.

Karma

Nozata. Coop Breizh CD 900. 2000
Young fest noz band using guitars, accordion, fiddle, percussion, bombarde and biniou.

Kerhun et les Gnawa

Lila-noz. L'OZ Production L'OZ 34. 2001
Example of international collaborations Breton musicians are taking on – this time with Moroccan singers and percussion.

Kornog

Kornog, Green Linnet Records. GLCD 1209. 2000

Very popular band of the mid 80s who toured in the U.S. including Jamie McMenemy, Jean-Michel Veillon, Christian Lemaitre and Nicolas Quemener.

Koun

C'est en souhaitant bonsoir! Keltia Musique KMCD 97. 1999

Features voice of Véronique Bourjot with solid instrumental backup and a slant towards the rich Gallo repertoire.

Loened Fall

An Deizioù zo berr. An Naer Produktion. An Naer 202. 1998. 59'34

Kan ha diskan singing of Marthe Vassallo & Ronan Gueblez at center acoustic mix for traditional songs and dances from western Brittany.

Loenoù Ruz

Amzer ar merc'hed. LR001. 1998

Group of 8 women featuring songs from the Gwened tradition.

Erik Marchand

An Tri breur. Silex Y225 008. 1992

Marchand with Breton language song; Thierry Robin, oud, and Hameed Kahn, tabla.

Sag an tal eil Silex Y225043, 1994

Traditional song with Taraf de Caransebes.

Erik Marchand, Paolo Fresu & Jacques Pellen

Condaghes. Silex Y225067. 1998

Traditional singer in collaboration with Sardinian jazzman and trumpet player.

Meuriad

D'ar gêr. Ciré Jaune. 2001

Centered on new compositions in the Breton language with accompaniment by fiddle, uilleann pipes, flutes, guitars & percussion.

Kristen Nikolaz ha Kern

Lusk an Amzer. Gwerz Pladenn GWP 008. 1995

Traditional voice with guitars, percussion, keyboard, fiddle, etc. featuring new compositions in the Breton language.

Obrée Alie

Alment d'if. Coop Breizh CD 904. 2000

Newer group focused on the Gallo traditions.

Jacques Pellen

Celtic Procession. Silex DDD 6931 Y225028. 1993

Jazzy arrangements of traditional tunes by guitarist.

Pevar Den

La danse du quadrupède. Déclic. 1998

Young fest noz band with fiddle, flute, bombarde, bagpipes and guitar.

Denez Prigent

"Me 'zalc'h ennon ur fulenn aour" Rosebud/Barclay 539254-2. 1997

Irvi. Barclay-Universal. 543647-2. 2000

Traditional song/hip-hop/techno mix.

Quatre Jeans

Que de mensonges. CD AL4AS. 2001

Great group with a focus on the Gallo song and dance tradition.

Gilles Servat

Les albums de la jeunesse. Keltia Musique KMCD 31 M312. 1992

"best of..."

A rack mont kuit. Keltia Musique KMCD 45. 1994

Comme je voudrais. Columbia 497962-2. 2000

Latest of many albums by one of Brittany's best known "singer-songwriters"

Soig Siberil

Digor. Gwerz Pladenn.GWP 005. 1993

Entre Ardoise et granit. Gwerz Pladenn GWP 013. 1996

Gwenojenn. Coop Breiz CD 889. 1999

Gitar. Coop Breizh CD 927. 2001

Brittany's top acoustic guitarist and friends in arrangements and new compositions.

Skaliero

Beg ar riñs. Keltia Musique KMCD 124. 2001

D. Le Féon on bombarde, S. Le Féon on accordion, A. Le Signor on harp, J.-M, Mansano with organ & singer Marthe Vassallo.

Skeduz

Rag ar plinn. Keltia Musique KMCD 72. 1997

Couleurs/Livioù. Keltia Musique KMCD 98. 1999

Acoustic band featuring biniou/bombarde pairing.

Skolvan

Kerzh ba'n dans. Keltia Musique KMCD 16. 1991

Swing and Tears Keltia Musique KMCD 46, 1994

Cheñchet 'n eus amzer. Keltia Musique KMCD 107. 2000

Instrumental group: Youenn Le Bihan, Yann-Fanch Perroches, Gilles Le Bigot and Fanch Landreau.

Sonerion Du

Steir. EOG Production. 006. 1998

Noz Live. EOG 007. 2000

Latest of many recordings by one of the best known bands of Brittany.

Didier Squiban

Molène. L'OZ Productions. L'OZ 17. 1997

Porz Gwenn—18 variations pour piano. L'OZ Production. L'OZ NV-3201-1, 1999

Rosbraz—12 images pour piano. L'OZ 34. 2001

Piano compositions and arrangements of traditional melodies.

Alan Stivell

Zoom—1970/1997. Dreyfus FDM 36189-2/Keltia III. 1997

1 Douar. Dreyfus FDM 36209-2. 1998

Back to Breizh. Dreyfus/Keltia III. FDM 36223-2. 2000

Just the latest in a long line of great recordings since the 1960s.

Strobinell

Breizh Hud. Keltia Musique KMCD 66. 1996

Trede milved. STROB 04 / Ciré Jaune CIR 182. 2000

Group including: Gilles Lehart, Patrick Le Balc'h, Jean-Henri Le Guilcher, Riwall Le Menn.

Ti Jaz

Rhythm 'n Breizh Gemini Prod. 1010. 1998

Live in ar Vag. Ciré Jaune CIR 501. 2001

Bombarde, clarinet and sax featured.

Triskell

Daou. Keltia Musique KMCD 83. 1998

Features Celtic harps of Quefféléant twins; strong inclusion of Irish and Scottish tunes and melodies and Breton arrangements.

Tri Yann (an Naoned)

Anniverscène Phonogram 826-074-2 (5-CD set issued in 1992)

Inventaire 1970/1993. Triskell Music/Polygram. 1993

Prolific and well-known group which has been on the scene for over 20 years.

Tud

Setu!. Keltia Musique KMCD 122. 2001

D. Boedec on bass; F. Lambèrge on accordion; C. Langelier with flutes; F. Le Rest on guitar; E. Ollu with oboes and biniou.

Jean-Michel Veillon

E koad Nizan. Gwerz Pladenn GWP 004. 1993

Er Pasker. Coop Breizh CD 888. 1999

Arrangements of traditional Breton dances and melodies and compositions featuring wooden flute.

Jean Michel Veillon & Yvon Riou

Pont Gwenn ha Pont Stang Gwerz Pladenn GWP 009, 1995

Beo! An Naer Produktion. Naer 402. 2000

WHERE TO FIND LIVE MUSIC IN BRITTANY

Fest Noz or Fest Deiz

The fest noz is a dance where traditional Breton dances are featured (especially those of the local area where the fest noz is held). A Fest deiz is the same thing, only held in the afternoon instead of late at night (deiz = day in the Breton language; noz = night). Typically, a fest noz starts at 10 or 11 p.m. and goes to 2 a.m. or so. You get an older crowd at the fest deiz; you get all generations at a fest noz. Eating and drinking and talking with friends is a key part of these events, so there is always a bar and food on sale.

The fest noz was reinvented in the 1950s and gained wide popularity in the 1970s as a fundraising event where admissions went to support everything from Breton languages schools (Diwan) to a local war veterans association. Originally the fest noz was the name given to a small gathering of family and neighbors who would dance and eat together after a major work event on a farm. Today the fest noz can still have a community flavor, but most attract Bretons from quite a distance away if the singers and musicians are good. Hordes of tourists are not welcome at these dances and too many beginners in a dance line or circle is disruptive. But individual travellers are quite welcome, and anyone with reasonable dancing skills can learn many of the dances by following along.

The fest noz and fest deiz vary greatly in size and quality--the best way to choose one is by the performers listed in publicity for the event (see below--Finding a fest noz...). Most fest noz include traditional singers and the paired playing of the biniou and bombarde, as well as several bands of a less traditional nature.

Concerts

Concerts are a good context for slower songs or more innovative styles, and often combine a number of excellent performers of different styles. Knowing a performer's name or style of music you like is always helpful in choosing a concert to attend.

Cafes/Bars

Although cafes can be a great place to find informal sessions of Breton music, there is no easy way to find such places or scheduled events except by consulting local musicians. Brittany does not have a pub scene equivalent to Ireland.

Contests and Festivals

The contest (usually imbedded in a larger festival) has become a very strong medium for the encouragement of music-making in Brittany. Great week-end and one-day festivals are held year-round in Brittany, but most festivals and the large week-long events (like the Lorient Inter-Celtic Festival and the Fêtes de Cournouaille of Quimper) are concentrated in July and August.

How to find a fest noz, concert, or festival? ...

In Brittany, you can look in the Friday editions of the local newspapers called **Le Telegramme** and **Ouest France**, or--better yet--in a recent issue of the magazine **Musique Bretonne** or **Ar Soner**. Or check out posters plastered on public walls or in the village cafe for something local. Book and record stores specializing in Breton materials are also great places to find information (see the page on "Finding Breton Books and Recordings"). Now the internet can also serve as a great place to get up-to-date information on music events in Brittany as well as tours by specific singers and musicians. But no one listing is ever complete!

BRETON INTERNET SITES

Bretons have created hundreds of web sites about Brittany and the Breton culture, and new ones are being produced every day (while others disappear or change "addresses"). Many of these sites offer information in English as well as in Breton and French. For the latest (although far from complete) listing of web addresses on the ICDBL page, click [here](#).