

Zappa in the Netherlands

New Discoveries on the life of

Francesco Zappa (1717 - 1803)

Cellist and Composer
at the 18th Century Court of Orange in The Hague

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Until now, little was known about the life of Francesco Zappa. Shrouded in mystery, the biographical information that was available on this 'Dutch Boccherini' was sketchy at best. The standard entries on him in Grove and MGG list him without birth or death dates, and with large parts of his life being left unknown.¹

Spanning the last decade, our research into Zappa, in collaboration with The Hague's Baroque Orchestra, The New Dutch Academy (NDA), has resulted in the rediscovery and world première presentation of his symphonic music on disc, in the creation of new modern performance editions of his orchestral works, and in major new biographical discoveries.

This new research into Zappa seemed appropriate, not only because of the quality of his music, but also due to the important role he played in Dutch music history, as both a cellist and composer. This article presents these new discoveries - such as his birth and death dates - and provides a considerably more complete picture of Zappa's life than was previously available.²



View of the summer palace 'Huis ten Bos' near The Hague c. 1750/51 by Jan ten Compe (1713 - 1761), from the collection of Hoogsteder & Hoogsteder, The Hague