

A Scarlatti Journey Carlo Grante

From 1752 to 1757 copies of hundreds of Domenico Scarlatti sonatas were made and assembled in the two manuscripts we now call Parma and Venice – from the names of the cities where the libraries who own these precious collections are located. Thanks to Farinelli, who inherited these collections from Maria Barbara, Queen of Spain, and brought them to Italy, we have fifteen ‘Parma’ books containing a total of 463 sonatas and thirteen ‘Venezia’ books with a total of 374 sonatas. Both collections were written and produced from 1752 – 57.

Domenico Scarlatti's complete keyboard sonatas have been recorded at the piano by Carlo Grante for the Music&Arts label. The whole series - 35 CDs in 6 boxes - features nearly 600 works, recorded on Bösendorfer Imperial and Bösendorfer 280 Vienna Concert pianos in Vienna.

For this complete recording Carlo Grante used the ‘catalog’ number consisting of city or edition, letters and numbers (in the case of sonatas that also appear in other editions or manuscripts, Parma has priority, both in the order and in the arrangement of the catalogue). The sonatas contained in collections other than Parma and Essercizi are identified by their source, followed by a number showing the order in which they appear in that source. Since, for example, the letter E identifies the ‘Essercizi’ source, E1 is also K1. P1: 18 however indicates the first sonata in the first volume of the Parma collection, which is in fact K. 159.

Grante is also in the process of classifying Scarlatti's often unique and innovative stylistic elements, as well as a more general classification of compositional fingerprints, including characteristics of the individually quoted sonatas, hence the descriptive expressions that appear in the present concert programme.

Programme

- **A Two-part Essercizo**

E1 (K1) in D minor

- Typical Scarlatti fingerprints: 2-part texture, Canon-like beginning, 1-2-3-4-5 motive, Descending tetrachord - Phrygian cadence, Descending broken thirds in (ascending) progression, short keyboard figurations, rapid change of direction, Post-cadential (articulate)

- **A 'Galant' Sonata**
P8:21 (K322) in A major *Allegro*
 - Strict 2-part melo-bass structure, Post-cadential (long, new thematic material)

- **A Pre-Classical Sonata**
Parma 1:28 (K159) in C major *Allegro*
 - Early Sonata-form structure, contains typical Scarlattian fingerprints: theme in thirds, horn fifths, generous use of trills and short trills, leaps

- **An Iberian Sonata**
P6:1 (K248) in B flat major *Allegro*
 - Canon-like beginning, arpeggiated chord theme, sudden scale-passagework, vamp (obsessive ostinato) sections, triple time, dancing, *Mutatio toni* (changes of mode), repeated notes, Iberian features: Phrygian cadences, guitar *rasgueado* chords

- **An Iberian Sonata** P6:2 (K249) in B flat major *Allegro*
 - Arpeggiated chord introduction, canon-like beginning, left-right hand alternation, reiterated section one step above, vamp (obsessive ostinato) section dancing, Iberian features: Phrygian cadence, guitar *rasgueado*

- **A Courtly Sonata** P15:38 (K551) in B flat major *Allegro*
 - Typical Scarlattian fingerprints: canon-like beginning, left-right hand alternation, post cadential coda, short 'vamp' section, sudden rapid arpeggio passagework

- **A Stormy Sonata** Venezia 1742:49 (K84) in C minor
 - Typical Scarlattian fingerprints: canon-like beginning, left-right hand alternation in imitation and passagework, sudden rapid scale-passagework, ostinato sequence over pedal-point

- **A Stormy Sonata** P15:32 (K545) in B flat major *Prestissimo*
 - Typical Scarlattian fingerprints: 'staggered voices', canon-like beginning, *mutatio toni* (changes of mode), short reiterated sections

- **A Pastorale Three-fold Sonata** Parma 14:30 (K513) in C major *PASTORALE. Moderato, Molto Allegro, Presto*
 - First use of a popular Italian Christmas carol in Classical repertoire, typical Scarlattian fingerprints: canon-like beginning, use of *siciliano* rhythm for *pastorale* pieces, reiterated empty octaves and fifths reminiscent of babypipes, broken intervals in passagework

- **A Paired Sonata** P12:14 (K424) in G major
 - Paired (duple time) with P12:15 (K435) in G major, typical scarlattian fingerprints: canon-like beginning, *mutatio toni* (changes of mode), staggered voices, coda with new thematic material, reiterates section a step above
- **A Paired Sonata** P12:15 (K425) in G major
 - Paired (triple time) with P12:14 (K424) in G major, typical Scarlattian fingerprints: *mutatio toni* (changes of mode), sudden scale passagework at end of section, typical 'cathartic' coda
- **An Andalusian Sonata** P1:28 (K175) in A Minor *Allegro*
 - So-called 'acciaccatura' sonata due to dissonances, typical Scarlattian fingerprints: dissonant cadential chords, *rasgueado* chords, Phrygian cadence, passagework of descending scales, *tremulo*
- **An Andalusian Sonata** London/Worgan 41 (K141) in D minor *Allegro*
 - Typical Scarlattian fingerprints: repeated guitar-like notes, dissonant, guitar *rasgueado* chords, Phrygian cadence, syntactic rupture (whole bar rests) followed by sudden modulation
- **'Brilliant in G Major'** P12:3 (K432) in G major *Allegro*
 - Typical Scarlattian fingerprints: broken intervals as diffused keyboard device, *mutatio toni* (change of mode), triple-time 1-2-3-4-5 motive in bassline
- **'Brilliant in G Major'** P12:17 (K427) in G major *Prestissimo quanto sia possibile*
 - Etude-like piece, typical Scarlattian fingerprints: canon-like beginning, varied vocabulary of rapid passagework, broken-interval sequences, rapid scalar passages