

Antonio
SOLER

Keyboard Sonatas Nos. 67–74

Regina Chernychko, Piano



Antonio Soler (1729–1783) Keyboard Sonatas Nos. 67–74

Born in 1729 at Olot, Girona, Antonio Soler, like many other Catalan musicians of his and later generations, had his early musical training as a chorister at the great Benedictine monastery of Montserrat, where his teachers included the *maestro di capilla* Benito Esteve and the organist Benito Valls. Soler studied the work of earlier Spanish and Catalan composers, of Joan Cabanilles and his pupil Josep Elías, combining his abilities as an organist with those of a composer. He took an appointment as organist at the Santa Iglesia de Lérida and was also employed at the Cathedral of La Seu d'Urgell. It was there that in 1752 he met the Bishop of Urgell, former Prior of the monastery of the Escorial, Sebastián de Victoria, who was seeking someone to serve as an organist at the Escorial. Soler took this opportunity, and was ordained subdeacon by the Bishop, entering the Hieronymite Order of San Lorenzo de El Escorial and taking his vows the following year. In 1757, on the death of the previous incumbent, Soler became *maestro di capilla* and organist at the Escorial, positions he held for the rest of his life.

Soler also benefited from contact with musicians from the court. The Escorial had been built by Philip II as a royal palace and a monastery, and the court generally spent the autumn there. This brought the initial possibility for Soler of further study of the organ with the court organist and for contact with Domenico Scarlatti, a strong influence on Soler's style of writing in his addition to keyboard repertoire in some 150 surviving sonatas. Soler, in the course of his duties, wrote music for the church, but also contributed to secular repertoire for the entertainment of the court. Music received particular encouragement under Ferdinand VI, and rather less under his successor Carlos III. Soler, however, was charged with the teaching of the young princes Antonio and Gabriel, the sons of Carlos III, and received particular support from the younger of the two, Don Gabriel, whose *Casita del Infante*, built in the early 1770s, was in part designed for musical performances in which Don Gabriel participated. As a theorist Soler published in 1762 a study of

modulation. *Llave de la Modulaci3n*, a treatise explaining the art of rapid modulation (*modulaci3n agitada*), which brought correspondence with Padre Martini in Bologna, the leading Italian composer and theorist, who vainly sought a portrait of Soler to add to his gallery of leading composers. Soler was also an acknowledged expert on the construction of organs, advising on instruments for the cathedrals of Málaga and Seville, while his wider interests are exemplified in his *Combinaci3n de monedas y c3lculo manifiesto contra el libro anonimo intitulado "Correspondencia de la Moneda de Catalu1a a la de Castilla"*, a polemical study of the comparative currencies of Castille and Catalonia, dedicated to Carlos III.

The many keyboard sonatas of Soler remain his best known achievement as a composer. Many of these were written for Don Gabriel and suggest, at least, the influence of Domenico Scarlatti, while continuing to reflect something of the changing styles of music exemplified in Vienna. The modern publication of the sonatas owes much to Father Samuel Rubio, who collected many of the sonatas in seven volumes, published between 1957 and 1962, and whose R numbering is in wide use, including sonatas subsequently added to his first listing.

Sonata No. 67 in D major is the fifth of a set of six three-movement sonatas dating from 1777. The inventive first movement, introduces a variety of melodies, ending in A major, before the repetition of the first section. The second section, also repeated, brings back the principal thematic material. The second movement, with its two sections repeated, is a lively dance in 6/8. The sonata ends with a four-voice fugue, its subject treated with increasingly greater freedom, leading to a final element of brilliance.

The 1777 collection ends with the three-movement *Sonata No. 68 in E major*. In the first movement, with its trills and syncopations, melodic interest is principally in the right hand. This is followed by a rapid *Allegro*, which makes considerable use of octaves and of Alberti bass figuration. The last movement is a four-voice fugue, each

entry of the subject stressed in its descending opening notes, which appear in a final canon.

Sonata No. 69 in F major is a single binary movement, with affinities with Scarlatti and virtuosic elements. It is marked *Presto* and is in 3/8. The sonata is sometimes coupled with another single sonata movement in the same key.

Sonata No. 70 in A minor is given without tempo indication. A movement of great rapidity, it is marked by the extensive use of scale passages, with elements of hand-crossing.

Sonata No. 71 in A minor, marked *Andantino*, makes use of octaves, particularly in the left hand, and chains of thirds.

Maria Canals International Music Competition

The Maria Canals International Music Competition of Barcelona (www.mariacanal.cat) is the principal music competition in Spain and one of the leading events in the world following its recognition by the World Federation of International Music Competitions in 1958. It was founded in 1954 by the leading pianist and pedagogue Maria Canals, and her husband Rossend Llates. With Her Majesty Queen Sofía as President of Honour, since 1954 the competition association has organised over 120 competitions in the branches of piano, singing, violin, cello, guitar, flute, percussion and chamber music. During

Concurso Internacional de Música María Canals

El Concurso Internacional de Música María Canals de Barcelona (www.mariacanal.cat) es el decano de los concursos de música en España y uno de los primeros del mundo en ser aceptados por la Federación Mundial de Concursos Internacionales de Música en 1958. Fue fundado en 1954 por la prestigiosa pianista y pedagoga María Canals y su marido Rossend Llates. Con S.M. la Reina Sofía como Presidenta de Honor, desde 1954 la asociación del concurso ha organizado más de 120 concursos de las ramas de piano, canto, violín, violonchelo, guitarra, flauta, percusión y música de

There is further brilliance of writing in the *Sonata No. 72 in F minor*, described as in the Dorian mode. A single-movement *Allegro*, it makes considerable use of octaves in the left hand, opening with a figure in the right hand, imitated by the entry of the left. The two sections of *Sonatas Nos. 73 and 74 in D major* form a pair. The first of the two, a fast movement, makes use of chains of thirds and explores other keys in its rapid progress, briefly interrupted by diminished seventh chords. The second sonata, marked *Andante*, has a more overtly Spanish flavour, particularly with the left-hand accompanying chords and its turns of melody, occasionally unexpectedly interrupted. It ends with a flourish of arpeggios.

Keith Anderson

these years more than 8,000 entrants have taken part from a hundred countries from the five continents, and there have been more than 200 jurors from around the world. The competition holds its auditions in the Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona, and offers the prize-winners important financial rewards, a tour of recitals and concerts with orchestra around the world and a recording for the Naxos label. Its winners have developed important professional careers in both performance and teaching in leading centres throughout the world.

cámara. Durante estos años han participado en el mismo más de 8.000 concursantes de un centenar de países de los 5 continentes, y más de 200 jurados procedentes de todo el mundo. El Concurso celebra sus pruebas en el Palau de la Música Catalana de Barcelona, y ofrece a los premiados importantes premios económicos, una gira de recitales y conciertos con orquesta por todo el mundo y una grabación para el sello discográfico Naxos. Sus ganadores han desarrollado importantes carreras profesionales tanto en el ámbito de la interpretación como de la docencia en los centros más importantes de todo el mundo.

Regina Chernychko

Regina Chernychko was awarded first prize at the 60th Maria Canals International Piano Competition in Barcelona. She has also won several other international piano competitions including the Animato Stiftung in Zurich, the Spazio Teatro 89 in Milan, the Ricardo Viñes Competition in Lleida, in addition to receiving the Dorothy MacKenzie Artist Recognition Scholarship Award at the International Keyboard Institute and Festival in New York. In Europe she has performed at the Sala Verdi in Milan, Salle Cortot in Paris, Salzburg Mozarteum, Smetana Hall in Prague, Palacio Euskalduna in Bilbao, Linz Brucknerhaus, Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona and the Teatro La Maestranza in Seville. Ms Chernychko made her orchestral début at the age of seven and has since appeared with the Orchestra Sinfonica di Roma e del Lazio, Orkest van het Oosten, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra of Belarus, Orquestra Simfònica del Vallès, Real Orquesta Sinfónica de Sevilla, Bilbao Orkestra Sinfonikoa, Orquesta Sinfónica de Tenerife, City of Granada Orchestra, Baden-Baden Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra, Bruckner Orchester Linz and the Staatsorchester Stuttgart, among others.

Photo: Oliver Röckle



Antonio Soler's training as a chorister, organist and composer equipped the young Catalan for the prestigious position of *maestro di capilla* at the Escorial palace. Here he was strongly influenced by Domenico Scarlatti in his writing of keyboard sonatas for the young prince Don Gabriel, son of Carlos III. The inventive and ingenious works heard in this volume of the complete set of sonatas reveal his command of the medium, from the fugal brilliance of *No. 67 in D major* and the virtuoso elements of *No. 69 in F major* to the delightfully Spanish flavour encountered in *No. 74 in D major*.

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**Antonio
SOLER**
(1729–1783)

CORRALES PIANOS
1900



Keyboard Sonatas Nos. 67–74

Sonata No. 67 in D major	17:50	Sonata No. 70 in A minor	4:26
1 Andante con moto	9:21	8	
2 Rondo: Allegro	3:55	Sonata No. 71 in A minor	4:35
3 Non presto	4:30	9 Andantino	
Sonata No. 68 in E major	19:19	Sonata No. 72 in F minor	4:56
4 Cantabile con moto	9:35	(Dorian)	
5 Allegro	5:42	10 Allegro	
6 Intento a 4: Non presto	3:57	Sonata No. 73 in D major	5:58
Sonata No. 69 in F major	3:22	11 Allegro	
7 Presto		Sonata No. 74 in D major	8:14
		12 Andante	



Regina Chernychko, Piano
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Music Competition of Barcelona, 2014

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Playing Time
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