

Domenico
SCARLATTI

Complete Keyboard Sonatas Vol. 23

Sergio Monteiro, Piano



Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757) Complete Sonatas Vol. 23

Domenico Scarlatti was born in Naples in 1685, sixth of the ten children of the composer Alessandro Scarlatti, Sicilian by birth and chiefly responsible for the early development of Neapolitan opera. The Scarlatti family had extensive involvement in music both in Rome and in Naples, where Alessandro Scarlatti became *maestro di cappella* to the Spanish viceroy in 1684. Domenico Scarlatti started his public career in 1701 under his father's aegis as organist and composer in the vice-regal chapel. The following year father and son took leave of absence to explore the possibilities of employment in Florence, and Alessandro was later to exercise paternal authority by sending his son to Venice, where he remained for some four years. In 1709 Domenico entered the service of the exiled Queen of Poland, Maria Casimira, in Rome, there meeting and playing against Handel in a keyboard contest, in which the latter was declared the better organist and Scarlatti the better harpsichordist. It has been suggested that he spent a period from 1719 in Palermo, but his earlier connection with the Portuguese embassy in Rome led him before long to Lisbon, where he became music-master to the children of the royal family. This employment took him in 1728 to Madrid, when his pupil the Infanta Maria Bárbara married the heir to the Spanish throne. Scarlatti apparently remained there for the rest of his life, his most considerable achievement the composition of some hundreds of single-movement sonatas or exercises, designed largely for the use of the Infanta, who became Queen of Spain in 1746.

The keyboard sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti survive in part in a number of 18th-century manuscripts, some clearly from the collection of Queen Maria Bárbara, possibly bequeathed to the great Italian castrato Farinelli, who was employed at the Spanish court, and now in Venice. Various sets of sonatas were published during the composer's lifetime, including a set of 30 *Essercizi per gravicembalo*, issued, seemingly, in London in 1738, and 42 *Sonatas* published in London by Thomas Roseingrave

in 1739, including the 30 already available from the earlier publication. In more recent times the sonatas were edited by Alessandro Longo, who provided the numerical listing under 'L', and in 1953 the American harpsichordist Ralph Kirkpatrick offered a new listing, distinguished by the letter 'K'. Stylistic grounds have suggested a further changed listing by Giorgio Pestelli, under the letter 'P', and proposing a new chronology, while Emilia Fadini, in a complete edition for Ricordi, offers a further re-ordering, based in part on the Venice volumes.

Kirkpatrick's listing of the sonatas, based on the chronological order of the available sources, starts with the 30 *Essercizi per gravicembalo* offered for sale in early 1739 by Adamo Scola, 'Musick Master in Vine Street, near Swallow Street, Piccadilly'. The publication included a dedication in Italian to the King of Portugal and a prefatory note for the purchaser, denying serious intention and modestly suggesting rather '*lo scherzo ingegnoso dell'Arte*'. The listing continues primarily with the Venice volumes, in chronological order of compilation, if not necessarily of composition.

❶ The *Sonata in F major, K.256/L.228/P.480* is included in the fourth volume of the Venice manuscripts, but is found in the fourth volume of the sonatas, dated 1753. Marked *Andante* and in triple time, it makes considerable use of the opening motif, with its dotted rhythm.

❷ The *Sonata in C major, K.270/L.459/P.481* is without a tempo indication and is found in the fifth volume of 1753. It makes considerable use of a similar dotted motif and contains passages modulating to E flat and thence to C minor.

❸ The *Sonata in G major, K.289/L.78/P.249* is preserved in the sixth of the Venice volumes, dated 1753. Marked *Allegro*, it is in duple time and includes unusual modulations. Some have chosen to see the sonata as the first of a related group that follows in the same key.

❹ The *Sonata in B flat major, K.310/L.248/P.284* is included in the sixth Venice collection and is marked

Andante. Melodic interest is in the upper part, accompanied by a continuing pattern of minims.

❺ The primary source for the *Sonata in B flat major, K.331/L.18/P.471* is the seventh Venice volume, dated 1754. It is marked *Andante* and is in triple time. Right and then left hand have much play with wide leaps.

❻ The *Sonata in F major, K.349/L.170/P.452* is from the seventh Venice volume, marked *Allegro* and with continuing semiquaver figuration.

❼ The *Sonata in F major, K.354/L.68/P.486* is taken from the seventh Venice volume, marked *Andante* and in 3/8. It offers various rhythms in a framework of perpetual motion.

❽ The *Sonata in G major, K.375/L.389/P.414* has its primary source in the eighth Venice volume, dated 1754, marked *Allegro* and in 6/8. It opens with a motif based on the tonic triad and finds a place for characteristic ornamentation.

❾ The *Sonata in E major, K.395/L.65/P.273* is found in the ninth Venice volume of 1754. *Allegro* and in 3/8, it makes use of recognisably Spanish turns of phrase, with a characteristic use of chords.

❿ The *Sonata in C major, K.407/L.54/P.436* is in the ninth Venice volume of 1754, marked *Allegro* and in 3/8. As so often, the sonata suggests a dance, its rhythm that of a gigue, its musical language instantly recognisable as the work of Scarlatti.

⓫ The *Sonata in A major, K.428/L.131/P.131* is included in the tenth Venice volume, dated 1755. It makes use of

repetitions and of a repeated pedal note, as it draws to an end.

⓬ From the eleventh Venice volume, dated 1756, comes the *Sonata in E flat major, K.475/L.220/P.319*. Marked *Allegro* and *Alla breve*, it ends each half with a flourish of rapid triplets.

⓭ The *Sonata in C major, K.515/L.255/P.417*, an *Allegro* in 3/4, has its primary source in the thirteenth Venice volume, dated 1757. It covers a wide range of the keyboard and makes characteristic use of repetitions.

⓮ The primary source of the *Sonata in C minor, K.526/L.456/P.530* is also the thirteenth Venice volume. *Alla breve* and with the tempo indication *Allegro comodo*, the sonata makes considerable use of mordents and other ornamentation. It has been coupled, by some editors, with the following *Sonata in C major, K.527*.

⓯ The *Sonata in C major, K.549/L.51/P.553*, *Allegro* and *Alla breve*, is included in the same Venice volume. It opens with a right-hand motif, imitated immediately by the left hand and finds a place for demanding chains of trills in the right hand, then the left.

⓰ The *Sonata in F major, K.554/L.521/P.558* is from the same Venice volume. It is marked *Allegretto* and is *Alla breve*. With its central modulation into the tonic minor, and its use of imitated figures it provides an apt conclusion to a set of sonatas that draws largely on the later volumes of the collected sonatas, although these in no way reflect the order of their composition.

Keith Anderson

Sergio Monteiro

Critically acclaimed Steinway Artist Sergio Monteiro was born in Niterói, Brazil. In 2003 he was awarded First Prize at the 2nd Martha Argerich International Piano Competition in Buenos Aires, and has since appeared in prestigious venues across Asia, Europe and the Americas, including the Toronto Centre for the Arts (now the Meridian Arts Centre), The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., the Konzerthaus and the Philharmonie in Berlin, the Steinway Halls of New York and Beijing, and the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires. He has appeared in concert with major orchestras including the Chamber Orchestra Kremlin, and the Buenos Aires, Lübeck and Dresdner Philharmonics under conductors such as Charles Dutoit and Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos. Director of piano activities at the Wanda L. Bass School of Music, Oklahoma City University, Monteiro studied with Myrian Dausberg at the School of Music of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, with Nelita True at the Eastman School of Music and at the Lake Como International Piano Academy in Italy. In 2020, in honour of Beethoven's 250th anniversary, Monteiro will perform the complete cycle of piano sonatas over eight recitals.

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Domenico Scarlatti's distinguished career included a royal post in Rome where he competed against Handel, the latter being declared the better organist and Scarlatti the better harpsichordist. Written for his pupil the Infanta Maria Bárbara, Scarlatti's legacy of hundreds of single-movement keyboard sonatas forms a valuable resource for performers today. This collection includes a wealth of Spanish dances with virtuoso leaps, unusual modulations, flourishes and ornamentation, as well as Scarlatti's irrepressible verve and energy.

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1	Sonata in F major, K.256/L.228/P.480	7:27
2	Sonata in C major, K.270/L.459/P.481	6:31
3	Sonata in G major, K.289/L.78/P.249	2:38
4	Sonata in B flat major, K.310/L.248/P.284	7:08
5	Sonata in B flat major, K.331/L.18/P.471	4:03
6	Sonata in F major, K.349/L.170/P.452	3:45
7	Sonata in F major, K.354/L.68/P.486	3:47
8	Sonata in G major, K.375/L.389/P.414	2:26
9	Sonata in E major, K.395/L.65/P.273	3:29
10	Sonata in C major, K.407/L.S4/P.436	2:37
11	Sonata in A major, K.428/L.131/P.131	2:00
12	Sonata in E flat major, K.475/L.220/P.319	4:15
13	Sonata in C major, K.515/L.255/P.417	3:15
14	Sonata in C minor, K.526/L.456/P.530	7:17
15	Sonata in C major, K.549/L.S1/P.553	5:21
16	Sonata in F major, K.554/L.S21/P.558	4:23

Sergio Monteiro, Piano

Recorded: 28, 29 and 31 May 2019 at the Small Rehearsal Hall, Wanda Bass School of Music, Oklahoma City University, USA • Producer: Sergio Monteiro
Engineer and editor: Matt Horton, AVPRO Studios, Norman, Oklahoma • Piano technician: Matt Stanley
Booklet notes: Keith Anderson • Publishers: Heugel & Cie (ed. Kenneth Gilbert, b. 1931) 1–9, Dover Publications (ed. Ralph Kirkpatrick, 1911–1984) 10–16 • Cover photo: Pond of the Chinescos, Gardens of the Prince, Aranjuez, Madrid, Spain (© Miguel Braulio Pena Rodriguez / Dreamstime.com)



8.574075

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Playing Time
70:52



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