

Domenico
SCARLATTI

Complete Keyboard Sonatas Vol. 25

Pascal Pascaleff, Piano



Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757) Complete Sonatas Vol. 25

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.

[1] The *Sonata in F major, K.167/L.329/P.200* is included in the first Venice volume, dated 1752. In triple time, the continuing triplets are interrupted by mordents and by a surprising pause, after which the movement resumes.

[2] The *Sonata in E major, K.206/L.257/P.307* opens the third Venice volume, dated 1753. Marked *Andante*, it is an *alla breve* and explores other keys in its development section, with an interesting use of scales in contrary motion between the two hands.

[3] The *Sonata in C major, K.243/L.353/P.394* is found in the fourth Venice volume, dated 1753, is marked *Allegro* and is in 3/8. It makes characteristic use of 'crush' notes and, in the first section, a repeated drone bass.

[4] The *Sonata in E flat major, K.307/L.115/P.449*, from the sixth Venice volume of 1753, is marked *Allegro* and is in 3/8. It is another example of Scarlatti's *moto perpetuo* sonatas.

[5] The *Sonata in F major, K.350/L.230/P.413* is found in the seventh Venice volume, dated 1754, marked *Allegro* and in 6/8. It includes arpeggio figuration based on triads and chains of thirds in the right hand.

[6] The *Sonata in E flat major, K.371/L.17/P.264* is preserved in the eighth Venice volume of 1754. It is marked *Allegro* and is in 3/8, finding a place in its rapid progress for syncopations, sequences and brief excursions into other keys.

[7] The *Sonata in B minor, K.409/L.150/P.436* is from the ninth Venice volume, dated 1754. Marked *Allegro*, it opens with a descending scale, while the extended section that starts the second part of the work accompanies the right-hand pattern of descending triads with left-hand chords.

[8] The *Sonata in F major, K.437/L.278/P.499*, from the tenth Venice volume dated 1755, is marked *Andante commodo* and is in triple time. Kirkpatrick suggests the sound of bells can be heard in the recurrent pedal notes of the sonata.

[9] The *Sonata in A minor, K.451/L.243/P.366*, marked *Allegro* and in triple time, closes the tenth Venice volume, dated 1755. Kirkpatrick suggests that this sonata was written in the last years of Scarlatti's life, a year or so before his death in 1757.

[10] The *Sonata in D major, K.480/L.58/P.381* is included in the tenth Venice volume, dated 1756. It is an *Alla breve* and marked *Presto*. It opens with a triadic fanfare, the initial figure imitated promptly an octave below. Much use is made of repeated octave semibreves, ringing out above the busy contrapuntal texture.

[11] Found in the twelfth Venice volume, dated 1756, *Sonata in C major, K.501/L.137/P.385* is an *Alla breve*

marked *Allegretto*. It makes great use of rapid triplet figuration and closes each section with a briefly ascending scale replete with mordents.

[12] The *Sonata in G major, K.538/L.254/P.542* is in the thirteenth Venice volume, dated 1757, marked *Allegretto* and in 3/8. It brings a delicate charm of its own, a revelation, once more, of Scarlatti's powers of invention within the limits of his chosen form.

[13] Preserved in the first Venice volume of 1752, the *Sonata in G major, K.153/L.445/P.235* is in 12/8 and marked *Vivo*, and is dominated by continuing triplet quavers throughout.

[14] The *Sonata in A major, K.221/L.259/P.215* from the third Venice volume of 1753, an *Allegro* in 3/8, explores characteristic modulations in its rapid progress.

[15] The *Sonata in E flat major, K.252/L.159/P.203*, in triple time and marked *Allegro*, is given in the fourth Venice volume of 1753. It makes use of scales and arpeggios, with characteristic short repetitions and syncopations.

[16] From the fifth Venice collection of 1753, the *Sonata in D major, K.281/L.56/P.289* is an *Andante* in triple time, a movement of some delicacy.

[17] The *Sonata in F major, K.297/L.519/P.448* is an *Allegro* in 3/8, and is from the first Venice volume. With its syncopations, *acciaccature* and short repetitions it offers a vehicle for technical virtuosity.

[18] The seventh Venice volume, dated 1754, includes the *Sonata in A major, K.343/L.291/P.495*, marked *Allegro Andante* and in quadruple time. The sonata is one of restrained delicacy throughout, as it slowly unwinds.

Keith Anderson

Pascal Pascaleff

Pascal Pascaleff has achieved top prizes in several international piano competitions, including First Prize at the Pavel Serebryakov International Competition in Volgograd, the Victor Merzhanov International Piano Competition in Kyustendil, and the Liszt-Bartók Piano Competition in Sofia, which he was subsequently invited back to as a member of the jury. He has given solo recitals and concerto performances in France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Bulgaria and across the UK, earning recognition for his interpretations of the works of Romantic composers such as Liszt, Schumann and Scriabin. Born in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, Pascaleff began his musical education at the age of eleven. He went on to study at the music school in his hometown and in 2014 graduated from the National Academy of Music in Sofia where he was taught by Atanas Kurtev. He was the inaugural Denis Matthews Scholar between 2016 and 2018 at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, where he studied with Anthony Hewitt and Pascal Nemirovski.



Scarlatti's single-movement sonatas or exercises are his greatest musical legacy. Largely designed for the Infanta, who became Queen of Spain in 1746, the music exists in a number of 18th-century manuscripts, some possibly bequeathed to the great Italian castrato Farinelli. Each of the sonatas in this volume exemplifies the limitless variety of Scarlatti's imagination, from 'crush' notes and surprising pauses, through virtuosic *moto perpetuos*, bell evocations and busy counterpoint, to delicately restrained phrases and delightful syncopation.

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(1685–1757)

Complete Keyboard Sonatas Vol. 25

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| 1 | Sonata in F major, K.167/L.329/P.200 (1752) | 3:43 |
| 2 | Sonata in E major, K.206/L.257/P.307 (1753) | 6:36 |
| 3 | Sonata in C major, K.243/L.353/P.394 (1753) | 2:51 |
| 4 | Sonata in E flat major, K.307/L.115/P.449 (1753) | 2:52 |
| 5 | Sonata in F major, K.350/L.230/P.413 (1754) | 2:20 |
| 6 | Sonata in E flat major, K.371/L.17/P.264 (1754) | 2:57 |
| 7 | Sonata in B minor, K.409/L.150/P.436 (1754) | 4:05 |
| 8 | Sonata in F major, K.437/L.278/P.499 (1755) | 4:03 |
| 9 | Sonata in A minor, K.451/L.243/P.366 (1755) | 1:13 |
| 10 | Sonata in D major, K.480/L.S8/P.381 (1756) | 4:13 |
| 11 | Sonata in C major, K.501/L.137/P.385 (1756) | 5:36 |
| 12 | Sonata in G major, K.538/L.254/P.542 (1757) | 3:27 |
| 13 | Sonata in G major, K.153/L.445/P.235 (1752) | 1:42 |
| 14 | Sonata in A major, K.221/L.259/P.215 (1753) | 4:13 |
| 15 | Sonata in E flat major, K.252/L.159/P.203 (1753) | 3:54 |
| 16 | Sonata in D major, K.281/L.56/P.289 (1753) | 4:20 |
| 17 | Sonata in F major, K.297/L.S19/P.448 (1752) | 3:47 |
| 18 | Sonata in A major, K.343/L.291/P.495 (1754) | 4:47 |

Pascal Pascaleff, Piano

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Playing Time
67:42



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