

Rachel Gauk

Several important debuts in recent seasons have confirmed Ms. Gauk's arrival on the international music scene. She performed the Rodrigo "Concierto de Aranjuez" with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and has recently appeared as a soloist with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, the Kingston Symphony Orchestra, and the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra. She has presented a solo recital at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, and makes frequent concert appearances across Canada. In 1996, she performed, with members of the Penderecki string quartet, the world premiere (with a live-to-air international broadcast) of Omar Daniel's newly commissioned work for guitar, at the Glenn Gould Studio in Toronto.

Internationally, Ms. Gauk has performed with the New World Chamber Orchestra in Mexico City and toured the United States and England.

Ms. Gauk is featured on two other Marquis Classics recordings. Her solo recording, *Danzas y Canciones* (ERAD 137), received widespread critical acclaim, and was followed by an equally successful duo recording, *Toward the Sea* (ERAD 147), with flutist Susan Hoeppepner.

Ms. Gauk's work has been called: "a guitar lover's delight,"
"startlingly good...virtual perfection."



Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757)

Sonatas

Rachel Gauk, guitar

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|-----|--|------|
| 1. | K377 in B minor (Elliot Fisk) | 4:18 |
| 2. | K34 in D minor, performed in E minor (John W. Duarte) | 2:31 |
| 3. | K322 in G major, performed in A major
(Carlos Barbosa-Lima) | 3:10 |
| 4. | K32 in D minor, performed in E minor
(Carlos Barbosa-Lima) | 1:56 |
| 5. | K335 in D major (David Tanenbaum) | 2:22 |
| 6. | K336 in D major (David Tanenbaum) | 4:00 |
| 7. | K176 in D minor (John W. Duarte) | 4:42 |
| 8. | K87 in B minor, performed in D minor (Rachel Gauk) | 7:28 |
| 9. | K391 in G major (Carlos Barbosa-Lima) | 3:02 |
| 10. | K291 in E minor (Heinz Teuchert) | 5:11 |
| | K90 in D minor, performed in E minor (Rachel Gauk) | |
| 11. | Grave | 5:10 |
| 12. | Allegro | 6:44 |
| 13. | Giga | 1:06 |
| 14. | Minuetto | 1:53 |
| 15. | K208 in A Major (Leo Brouwer) | 4:01 |
| 16. | K443 in D Major (Leo Brouwer) | 2:35 |

(Transcribers' names are in brackets)

Domenico Scarlatti

Domenico Scarlatti was born in Naples on October 26 in the distinctive year of 1685, which also produced two other distinguished Baroque composers, Johann Sebastian Bach and George Frideric Handel. Their early careers exemplify many stylistic similarities, especially in their vocal compositions, but gradually their unique styles developed. And for Scarlatti, this individual sense of style would best be represented in his collection of over 500 keyboard sonatas.

The development of this unique sense of style can be understood, in part, by observing Scarlatti's influences and surroundings. Born to the eminent opera composer, Alessandro, and Antonia Anzalone, he was the sixth of ten children, in a family with Sicilian origins and musical roots that ran back generations on both sides. Scarlatti grew up in a household alive with musicians, librettists and painters, and had already begun composing in his early teens, under his father's musical guidance. By his 16th birthday, Scarlatti was appointed organist and composer in the Naples royal palace, where his father was maestro. From 1703 to 1719, Domenico Scarlatti held several positions in Venice and Rome, all the while developing his compositional craft through his operas, cantatas, and oratorios. By August of 1719, he had resigned his positions in Rome to begin a new position in Portugal as mestre of the patriarchal chapel in Lisbon, where his primary duties included the musical education of King John V's daughter, the Infanta Maria Barbara. It was the lifelong relationship with the latter that resulted in the creation of the collection of keyboard sonatas that have become

the keystone of his compositional career. In 1728, when Maria Barbara married the Spanish Crown Prince Fernando, Scarlatti moved to Madrid to work in her service in the Spanish court, and he lived there until his death in 1757.

Not one autograph of Scarlatti's keyboard works has been discovered, but two valuable sets of manuscript copies were done in Spain between 1742 and 1757. These have become the primary sources for musicologists. The two sets of copies were likely done under Scarlatti's supervision, one for Queen Maria Barbara, and the other also for her, or for the famous castrato, Farinelli, who took both sets back to Italy in 1759. The sets became separated, but not the individual volumes, and they are now referred to by the names of the cities in which they reside: Venice and Parma. There are many questions about the chronology of these sonatas, which have been catalogued at least three times in this century. Alessandro Longo drew on the Venice source for his edition of 545 sonatas, which was published in 1906-08, but these are grouped in an arbitrary fashion. Giorgio Pestelli also devised a list of works in 1967, based on questionable criteria of style. Later in 1971, Ralph Kirkpatrick, the American harpsichordist, published a well-respected edition of 555 sonatas. Kirkpatrick formulated a system of ordering these works based on best-dated sources, and the apparent pairing of many of the sonatas. K335 and K336, written in consecutive chronological order, according to Kirkpatrick, may have been conceived as a pair, defined by the unifying tonic of D.

Kirkpatrick, through his years of dedicated research, came to the discovery that there was "an inexhaustible variety of expression inherent in the music, running the gamut of a complete artistic personality..." Certainly the contrasts between

sonatas exhibit this diversity, from the beautiful simple K32 in triple meter to the moody and dramatic K443, which wants to justify the stretching of dynamics to a new limit. Many of the sonatas, such as K208 or K322, are composed throughout in two simultaneous colours, with evident solo and accompaniment lines. It is Kirkpatrick who also notes the need for a "thinking with two minds," in relation to Scarlatti. On the one hand, excessive changes in colour or dynamics could be disturbing to the proportions of sound. And yet, an awareness of the "imaginary orchestration of harpsichord sound" is always a component of his compositions, reflecting "all the resources of the eighteenth-century classical orchestra, strings, woodwinds, brass and percussion, as well as the castanets, mandolins and guitars of Mediterranean popular music."

Clearly the influence of Spanish culture plays an important role in the development of Scarlatti's musical language. The rhythmic strums of K336 evoke a flamenco guitarist, striking the strings percussively, while a singing melodic line opens the second half of this sonata. Perhaps it is because of his numerous musical references to Spanish folk music, and guitars, that many of these sonatas have successfully been transcribed for the guitar. As the instruments of Scarlatti's time were limited dynamically and colouristically, a sensitive approach to dynamics and colour would seem appropriate. This is clearly compatible with the dynamic range of the guitar, but poses an interesting dilemma in light of colouristic usage. The guitar, being an instrument known for its colouristic capabilities, might instead emphasize rhythmic, melodic and harmonic elements. As with any transcription, interpretation will incorporate both an attempt to understand and to appreciate an authentic sound, with a sense of imagination. As well, a recording provides a special setting with which to

convey more delicate subtleties than is possible during a live performance in a large hall.

Although Scarlatti's sonatas are commonly thought of as virtuosic showpieces to display technique and dexterity, there are more slow sonatas than fast. While the slow, haunting K87 reflects a darker, more melancholy character, it is not unusual to find such variety within this collection of works. K176 also opens with a slow stately segment in duple time, which is punctuated by two lively contrasting segments in triple time. K90 is representative of a small collection of multi-movement works, many of which are comprised of four movements. The significant string-like qualities of these multi-movement works imply that they may have originated as works for solo strings or winds with continuo. Still, they are stylistically very similar to sonatas such as K208, K291, and K322, all of which present a format of a solo line with accompaniment.

I selected this collection of sonatas with the intention of exploring the great variety of expression that Kirkpatrick so aptly describes. It seems only appropriate to close with Scarlatti's own words to his readers, echoed by the cluster of birds outside my window as I play his works:


"VIVI FELICE" - Live Happily
(from the introduction to *Essercizi*, published in 1738)

Rachel Gauk

Credits

Producer: **Omar Daniel**
Recording Engineer: **Robert Folkes Hanson**
Executive Producer: **Earl Rosen**
Photo by: **Paul J. Hoeffler**

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Guitar: **Jose Ramirez**.

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