

Gottlieb
MUFFAT
(1690–1770)

Suites for Harpsichord • 2

Naoko Akutagawa



WORLD PREMIERE RECORDINGS

Gottlieb Muffat (1690–1770)

Suites for Harpsichord • 2

Suite in A major, MC B16 • Suite in D minor, MC B43 • Suite in F major, MC B9 • Suite in C major, MC B15

Gottlieb Muffat, the youngest son of the composer and Kapellmeister Georg Muffat (1653–1704) and his wife Anna Elisabetha (c. 1646–1721), was baptised in St Stephen's Cathedral, Passau on 25 April 1690. Although several of Georg Muffat's children followed in their father's footsteps as musicians (three were court musicians), Gottlieb may be considered the true 'fortunate heir of paternal genius'. The first concrete reference to him is in a document dating from spring 1705. Here it is reported that the Emperor had heard Gottlieb play the harpsichord five years earlier, when he would have been around ten years old, and consoled him and his father that if he pursued his studies, he would be taken into imperial service. We also learn that this prodigious child had been instructed so well by his father in both playing and the rudiments of composition that he could soon develop into a 'perfect' organist. Following his father's death and his relocation to Vienna, Gottlieb continued his musical education under Johann Joseph Fux (c. 1660–1741). He was accepted as an organ scholar at the Viennese Imperial Court in 1706. In 1714 he received his first official post at the court of the dowager Empress Amalia Wilhelmina. Three years later he was appointed organist proper at the court of Karl VI and received a pay rise in 1723, making him one of the better paid instrumentalists with an annual salary of 900 Fl (with an additional 600 Fl for his services at the court of the dowager Empress). According to several reports Muffat was incapable of performing all his duties from the mid-1750s and he was eventually pensioned in 1764, to be succeeded at St Stephen's Cathedral by the renowned composer and Kapellmeister Leopold Hofmann (1738–1793). Aside from his duties as organist Muffat was also responsible for teaching various members of the imperial family, including the young Archduchesses Maria Anna and Maria Theresia (the future Empress) and her husband Franz Stephan. Other identifiable pupils include the children of some of the most influential aristocratic families in Vienna such as the daughter of Johann Adam von

Questenberg (1678–1752) and a Renatha von Harrach – possibly Maria Renata von Harrach (1721–1788). Muffat seemingly spent most of his career in Vienna. In Fux's testimonial regarding Muffat's appointment as court organist in 1717, we find a mention of an elusive 'forthcoming journey', for which it is recommended that he should receive a considerable salary. Although no further evidence of this anticipated journey has yet been uncovered, it is entirely possible that Muffat studied elsewhere before his marriage in 1719. It is known, however, that he travelled to Prague in 1723 in connection with the coronation of Karl VI as King of Bohemia; the high point of these festivities, and arguably one of the most important musical events to have taken place in the 18th century was the ceremonial performance of Fux's opera, with a libretto by Pietro Pariati (1665–1733), *Costanza e Fortezza*. He went to Pressburg (Bratislava) for the coronation festivities of Maria Theresia as King [sic] of Hungary in 1741.

As with many musicians serving at the Viennese Imperial Court in the 18th century, little can be ascertained about the private life of Gottlieb Muffat. He married Maria Rosalia Eineder (or Einöder) (1700–1781) in 1719, and together they had five children (two of whom died in infancy). Only one son, Franz Joseph (1720–1763), embarked on a musical career. Franz Joseph was granted a scholarship at court at the age of twelve but for unknown reasons later abandoned the profession for a job as Lower Austrian Regime secretary. Gottlieb Muffat died at his family home (on the corner of Weihburggasse and Kärntner Straße) from 'Lungenbrand' in December 1770 and was buried at St Stephen's Cathedral.

Although Gottlieb Muffat has received much-deserved attention as a composer in his own right in recent years, he remains best known because of Handel's extensive borrowings of his work. The extant sources of Muffat's work consist almost entirely of works for keyboard instruments, perhaps a reflection of his duties at court. The existence of

four chamber works which can be confidently attributed to him (three keyboard concertos, MC D1–3, and a *Sonate pastorale*, MC D4), however, indicate that his output may have been more varied than the surviving sources suggest. Only two works were published during Muffat's lifetime, the *72 Versettl sammt 12 Toccaten besonders zum Kirchen Dienst bey Choral-Aemtern und Vesperen dienlich* (Vienna, 1726), one of the very few keyboard works to be printed in Vienna at this time, and the *Componimenti Musicali per il Cembalo* (Augsburg, c. 1736–39). Muffat also mentions a third projected publication in his preface to the latter work, which never materialised. To date no compositions post-dating the 1740s have been identified. There are no entirely convincing explanations for this; it has been suggested that after Muffat had reached his highest position at court, his duties were increased and this prevented him from dedicating time to composition. It is highly likely, however, that Muffat did continue to compose but the sources have either been lost or not yet identified. This is by no means an isolated case. For example most of the music by his father, Georg Muffat, has been lost, and even though we know Gottlieb had begun composing as a child, the earliest known surviving work dates from 1717 (when he would have been 27 years old).

The cosmopolitanism of Muffat's works alone indicates that he had been exposed to a wide range of musical influences – unsurprising given his father's artful synthesis of French, German and Italian styles, and the Palestrina tradition in which Fux's teaching was apparently grounded. Another interesting feature of Muffat's music is his system of *Applicatur* and ornamentation. It is often speculated that Gottlieb Muffat's ornamentation system was devised by Fux, as it also appears in several manuscript copies of his keyboard music, and simply notated by his pupil. A much more likely model, however, is his father's French style of embellishment. Unlike his father, Gottlieb includes a table of ornamentation in each of his printed works, a rarity in German keyboard music and exacting even by French standards. His aesthetic considerations are best illustrated in his transcriptions of other composers' works. These include Handel's *Suites de Pièces* (London, 1720) and *6 Fugues or Voluntaries* (London, 1735) '*mises dans une*

autre applicature pour la facilité de la main', keyboard works by Johann Jakob Froberger (1616–1667), and a now lost manuscript of a lute suite by Sylvius Leopold Weiss (1686–1750), whom he possibly met in Prague in 1723, '*transposée sur le Clavecin*'. Gottlieb also seems to have adapted his father's works; a recently discovered manuscript in the Berlin Sing-Akademie collection (SA 4581) includes a total of 35 pieces, 19 of which were hitherto unknown and the remaining 16 are found only scattered across an incomplete, badly damaged manuscript dating from the first decade of the 18th century (A-Wm XIV 743). The most obvious aspect of his transcriptions is the application of ornamentation; however, he also took issues such as hand distribution and clef changes into consideration and made minor changes such as reordering of pieces, the addition or removal of ties, and the alteration of rhythms (for purposes of consistency), accidentals, and cadences. It is evident from a closer examination of the extant sources that his motivations for transcribing other composers' work were manifold. Although they may be viewed as representative of Muffat's aesthetic ideals, their primary function would appear to be pedagogical. From the prefaces to his printed works we learn that the carefully conceived *Applicatur* and ornamentation are intended primarily to help younger players – who were increasingly distanced from the style of French playing Gottlieb inherited from his father – achieve an appropriate gracefulness. Another important motivation behind Muffat's transcriptions would appear to be the preservation of earlier music by making it accessible through modern notation.

The works in this recording are found in manuscripts dating from c. 1720s to 1740s in the archive of the Berlin Sing-Akademie. The oldest choral society in the world, the Berlin Sing-Akademie was founded in 1791 by Carl Friedrich Christian Fasch (1736–1800), *Hofcembalist* to Frederick the Great. The archive comprises approximately 264,100 pages of music dating from the 16th to the 19th century. In summer 1943 the music archive was evacuated from Berlin to Ullersdorf Castle in Silesia owing to the heightened threat of destruction from Allied air bombardment. The history of the archive from the invasion

of the Red Army until its rediscovery in Kiev by a research team from Harvard University in 1999 has not yet been fully explained. What happened to the collection directly after troops of the second Ukrainian Front, which had its own 'trophy brigade', occupied the region where the collection was stored, remains a matter of speculation. Some German collections in the area were shipped to Moscow, others directly to Kiev. In autumn 1945 the director of the Kiev Conservatory, Abram Mikhaylovich Lufer, was sent to the region to evaluate music that had been found and by the beginning of November the Sing-Akademie collection arrived in Kiev. The collection was housed in the Conservatory until 1973; after this time it was housed in the State Archive Museum for Literature and Art. Following negotiations for its restitution in 2000, the library was finally returned to Berlin on 1 December 2001.

There are a total of 27 manuscripts containing works by Georg and Gottlieb Muffat in the archive. This collection is therefore of extraordinary significance to Muffat scholarship; not only is it the largest single collection of Muffat manuscripts, but most of the compositions were previously unknown. Additionally, it contains the earliest and latest known works by Gottlieb Muffat, genres previously not associated with him and a remarkable 19 manuscripts which are possibly autograph. At present, there is insufficient documentary evidence to allow us to establish conclusively the transmission history of the Muffat items in the Berlin Sing-Akademie archive. The first mention of these manuscripts is in the so-called *Zelter*

Katalog, made c. 1835 by the great collector Georg Poelchau (1773–1836) to settle a legal dispute over the rightful ownership of the estate of Sing-Akademie director Carl Friedrich Zelter (1758–1832). One of the only indications of their earlier history is the catalogue marks found on the covers of three manuscripts. A printed copy of the *Componimenti Musicali* (SA 4596) bears a similar catalogue mark and the inscription '*Lehmann auct.*', which has been identified as coming from the estate of Johann Georg Gottlieb Lehmann (1745 or 1746–1816). J.G.G. Lehmann was organist and choir director at the Nicolaikirche in Berlin and a singer in the service of Prince Heinrich of Prussia. Lehmann was one of the first members of the Berlin Sing-Akademie in 1791 and considered one of the best solo tenors, for whom Fasch wrote many of his compositions. There is no documentary evidence that Muffat ever visited Berlin but from Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg (*Legende einiger Musikeiligen*, 1786) we learn that after Lehmann was born, Muffat entered into a correspondence with his father Johann Peter Lehmann (d. 1772), organist at the Jerusalem and St Nicholas' Churches in Berlin. Johann Peter Lehmann asked Muffat to become godfather, a 'testimony of his respect for him', which Muffat accepted with pleasure. It is therefore highly likely that Johann Peter Lehmann received music from Muffat, which was passed on to his son before entering Zelter's possession.

Alison J. Dunlop

We would like to express our deep and abiding sorrow over the tragic death of the author of these notes. Dr Alison Dunlop was an exceedingly brilliant scholar from Northern Ireland, whose biography and catalogue of the works of Gottlieb Muffat (Hollitzer Verlag, Vienna) stands as a monument to a life full of promise, cut off far too early. In the short time we were allowed to know her, information, music, and most importantly, friendship passed among us. She will be a part of our lives for as long as we live.

Naoko Akutagawa and Glen Wilson

Naoko Akutagawa

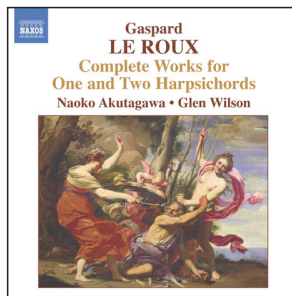
Naoko Akutagawa was born in Hiroshima in 1974, and began playing piano at the age of three. At 16 she switched to the harpsichord, studying first at the Toho Gakuen School of Music, and then at the Hochschule für Musik Würzburg, Germany, as a student of Glen Wilson. Her recordings have been broadcast by the BBC and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). Akutagawa made her debut recording for Naxos in 2005 with Le Roux's complete works for harpsichord (8.557884), and followed this with a highly acclaimed selection of works by Graupner (8.570459), selected works by Storace (8.572209), and violin sonatas by Benda (8.572307). She has been awarded prizes at the 2006 Premio Bonporti International Early Music Competition in Rovereto, Italy, and the 2008 Göttingen Händel Competition, Germany, and has been a guest member of staff at Dutch National Opera, Amsterdam and guest lecturer and recitalist at the Toho Gakuen School of Music. This is her second recording of suites by Gottlieb Muffat, made in conjunction with a new edition by Glen Wilson for Breitkopf & Härtel.

Photo by Glen Wilson

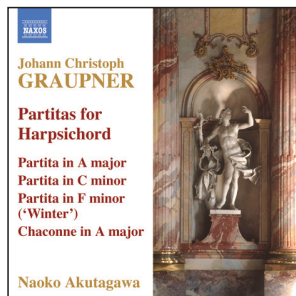


Naoko Akutagawa and Alison Dunlop in front of Gottlieb Muffat's birthplace in Passau

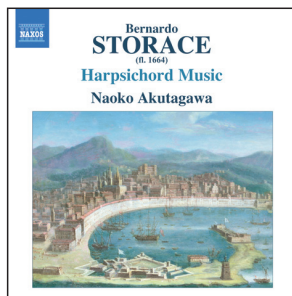
Also available



8.557884



8.570459



8.572209



8.572610

Gottlieb Muffat, youngest son of composer and Kapellmeister Georg Muffat, was a keyboard virtuoso whose career was based around the Viennese Imperial Court. Muffat, with his own elegantly ornamented style, absorbing influences from Germany, France and Italy, is remembered as a composer from whom Handel borrowed extensively – a common practice of the period. These premiere recordings represent the remarkable rediscovery of manuscripts sequestered and dispersed after the Second World War. Naoko Akutagawa's previous recordings from Muffat's *Componimenti musicali* (8.572610) were described by *MusicWeb International* as 'galvanically virtuosic'.



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Suites for Harpsichord • 2

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|-------------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Suite in A major, MC B16 | | 15:23 | 11 Gavotte en Rondeau | 2:22 | 23 Menuet – Trio | 2:34 |
| 1 Prélude | 3:33 | 12 Sarabande | 2:43 | 24 Finale | 1:09 | |
| 2 Allemande | 3:40 | 13 Menuet | 1:01 | Suite in C major, MC B15 | | 17:36 |
| 3 Courante | 2:07 | 14 Air | 1:33 | 25 Prélude | 2:11 | |
| 4 Sarabande | 2:16 | 15 Menuet – Trio | 2:30 | 26 Menuet | 0:58 | |
| 5 Menuet | 0:58 | 16 Gigue | 2:47 | 27 L'Allégresse | 2:18 | |
| 6 Coquette | 1:29 | Suite in F major, MC B9 | | 28 Contrefaiseur | 2:09 | |
| 7 Gigue | 1:19 | 12:32 | 17 Prélude | 1:18 | 29 Rondeau | 1:11 |
| Suite in D minor, MC B43 | | 20:03 | 18 Menuet | 1:05 | 30 Sarabande | 2:03 |
| 8 Fantaisie | 1:50 | 19 Fantaisie | 1:54 | 31 Passepieds I–II | 1:49 | |
| 9 Allemande | 3:16 | 20 Sarabande | 1:54 | 32 Gigue | 1:40 | |
| 10 Hornpipe | 2:01 | 21 Bourrée | 1:07 | 33 Marche | 0:55 | |
| | | 22 Postillon | 1:31 | 34 Finale | 2:21 | |

Naoko Akutagawa, Harpsichord WORLD PREMIERE RECORDINGS

Recorded: 5–8 March 2018 at the Schüttbau, Rügheim (Unterfranken), Germany
 Producer: Glen Wilson • Engineer and editor: Jürgen Rummel • Edition by Glen Wilson, published by
 Breitkopf & Härtel (EB 8904) • Booklet notes: Alison J. Dunlop • Harpsichord by Jan van Schevikhoven
 (Helsinki) after Ruckers • Cover painting: *Platz an der Freyung, Vienna* (1760) by Canaletto (1721–1780)



8.573275

DDD

Playing Time
65:38



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