

Domenico
SCARLATTI

Complete Keyboard Sonatas Vol. 17

Sean Kennard, Piano



Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757) Complete Sonatas Vol. 17

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 Barbara 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 eighteenth century manuscripts, some clearly from the collection of Queen Maria Barbara, 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 thirty issued, seemingly, in London in 1738, and 42 published in

London by Thomas Roseingrave in 1739, including the thirty 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, derived in part from the Venice volumes.

Kirkpatrick's listing of the sonatas, based on the chronological order of the available sources, starts with the thirty *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.

[1] The *Sonata in D major*, K.400/L.213/P.228, is included in the ninth volume of the sonatas preserved in Venice, dated 1754. Marked *Allegro*, it is propelled forward by the opening lively rhythmic figures, while the central section finds room for wider harmonic exploration. Both halves of the sonata are duly repeated.

[2] The *Sonata in G major*, K.374/L.76/P.472, marked *Andante*, draws impetus from the opening rhythmic figure. It is included in the seventh Venice volume of 1754.

[3] The *Sonata in G major*, K.372/L.302/P.402, included in the same Venice volume, is marked *Allegro* and includes antiphonal writing, as the lower register answers the upper.

[4] A further *Sonata in G major*, K.325/L.37/P.451, ends the sixth Venice volume of 1753. It is headed by the less usual direction *Con velocità* and offers a brilliant display of scale passages.

[5] The *Sonata in G major*, K.521/L.408/P.492, is preserved in the thirteenth Venice volume of 1757. Marked *Allegro*, each half of the sonata includes a brief digression into a minor key, before taking its way once more.

[6] The *Sonata in G major*, K.477/L.290/P.419 is found in the eleventh Venice volume, dated 1756. It is marked *Allegro* and has a contrasting central section in the minor, the whole propelled forward by lively arpeggio figuration.

[7] The *Sonata in C major*, K.527/L.458/P.531, appears in the thirteenth Venice volume, dated 1757. Marked *Allegro assai*, it reveals yet again the remarkable variety of Scarlatti's musical imagination, within the bounds of his chosen form.

[8] The *Sonata in F major*, K.355/L.22/P.344, marked *Allegro*, is included in the seventh Venice volume of 1754. The melody is in the upper part throughout.

[9] The *Sonata in F major*, K.468/L.226/P.507, an *Allegro*, is preserved in the eleventh Venice volume, dated 1756. It opens with a descending scale figure, the source of the sonata, with passages of syncopation and pauses in each half before the final bars.

[10] The *Sonata in F major*, K.445/L.385/P.468, marked *Allegro, o presto*, is found in the tenth Venice volume, dated 1755. With rapid figuration and interest shared by right and left hands, the sonata is in the style of a toccata.

[11] The *Sonata in F minor*, K.386/L.171/P.137, is included in the tenth Venice volume, dated 1754, and is again in toccata style, marked *Presto*, with passages of chromatic scales.

[12] From the thirteenth Venice volume, dated 1757, comes the *Sonata in F major*, K.543/L.227/P.547, marked *Allegro*, one of the final group of sonatas in the Venice albums. In 6/8 it makes considerable use of trills and scale passages.

[13] The *Sonata in B flat major*, K.311/L.144/P.227, is found in the sixth Venice volume of thirty sonatas, dated 1753. Marked *Allegro*, the sonata has its principal melodic interest in the upper part.

[14] The primary source of the *Sonata in A major*, K.342/L.191/P.341, is the seventh Venice volume, dated 1754. Marked *Allegro*, it is in two voices, with melodic interest in the upper part.

[15] The *Sonata in D major*, K.512/L.339/P.359, marked *Allegro*, a rapid toccata, is included in the twelfth Venice volume, dated 1756.

[16] The *Sonata in D major*, K.490/L.206/P.476, is also found in the twelfth Venice volume and is marked *Cantabile*. The dramatic chords suggest Spanish influence.

[17] The *Sonata in F major*, K.506/L.70/P.409, is another sonata from the twelfth Venice volume. It has the tempo direction of *Allegro* and is in 3/8. It is in the style of a toccata.

[18] The present recording ends with the *Sonata in F major*, K.418/L.26/P.510, which opens the tenth Venice volume, dated 1755, and is again an *Allegro*. It is in the style of a toccata, the rapid flow of quaver figuration occasionally interrupted by passages of alternating notes, the whole a further example of Scarlatti's genius for variety, couched always in his own recognisable musical language.

Keith Anderson

Sean Kennard

Sean Kennard has won top prizes at such prestigious events as the Queen Elisabeth Competition (Belgium), the International Music Competition of Viña del Mar (Chile), the Sendai International Music Competition (Japan), and the Hilton Head International Piano Competition (United States) and the Vendome International Piano Competition (Portugal), among others. Kennard has appeared as a soloist with the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra, the NHK Chamber Orchestra, the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra, the Osaka Symphony Orchestra, the Yamagata Symphony Orchestra, the Sendai Philharmonic Orchestra, the Kyushu Symphony Orchestra, the National Orchestra of Belgium, the Frankfurt Chamber Orchestra, and ensembles in Chile, the Dominican Republic, Italy, Morocco, Uruguay, and the United States. He is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and The Juilliard School and recently completed the residential portion of the Doctor of Musical Arts degree programme at the Yale School of Music, working with Boris Berman. www.seankennard.com



Photo: Grace Song

The keyboard repertoire has been immeasurably enriched by Domenico Scarlatti's prodigious exploration of sonatas written for the Spanish court. They represent some of the greatest such works of the entire eighteenth century. In this volume of the complete edition Sean Kennard, a Laureate of the 2013 Queen Elisabeth Competition of Belgium, explores eighteen of the 555 or so extant sonatas, revealing the remarkable variety of Scarlatti's musical imagination, and his genius for variety through constant melodic interest, lively figurations, and brilliant displays of scale passages.

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SCARLATTI**
(1685–1757)

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1	Sonata in D major, K.400/L.213/P.228	2:22
2	Sonata in G major, K.374/L.76/P.472	1:55
3	Sonata in G major, K.372/L.302/P.402	2:06
4	Sonata in G major, K.325/L.37/P.451	2:00
5	Sonata in G major, K.521/L.408/P.492	4:06
6	Sonata in G major, K.477/L.290/P.419	3:45
7	Sonata in C major, K.527/L.458/P.531	3:53
8	Sonata in F major, K.355/L.Supp.22/P.344	2:25
9	Sonata in F major, K.468/L.226/P.507	2:48
10	Sonata in F major, K.445/L.385/P.468	3:08
11	Sonata in F minor, K.386/L.171/P.137	2:49
12	Sonata in F major, K.543/L.227/P.547	4:11
13	Sonata in B flat major, K.311/L.144/P.227	1:51
14	Sonata in A major, K.342/L.191/P.341	2:24
15	Sonata in D major, K.512/L.339/P.359	2:35
16	Sonata in D major, K.490/L.206/P.476	4:06
17	Sonata in F major, K.506/L.70/P.409	2:37
18	Sonata in F major, K.418/L.26/P.510	3:39



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8.573708

DDD

Playing Time
54:01



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