

Domenico  
**SCARLATTI**  
**Complete Keyboard Sonatas Vol. 22**  
Eylam Keshet, Piano



## Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757) Complete Sonatas Vol. 22

Domenico Scarlatti was born in Naples in 1685, sixth of the ten children of the composer Alessandro Scarlatti, who was 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 to Madrid in 1728, 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 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 minor*, K.204b/L. –/P.255 is not included in any of the Venice manuscripts, but is found in the fourth volume of the sonatas preserved in Parma, dated 1752. It is not included in the Longo collection, but associated by Kirkpatrick with *Sonata K. 204a*.

[2] The *Sonata in F major*, K.367/L.172/P.453 is marked *Presto* and in 3/8, its primary source in the eighth of the Venice volumes, dated 1754. It makes considerable use of scale passages, in contrary motion between left and right hand.

[3] The *Sonata in B flat major*, K.248/L. *Supp.*.35/P.187 is preserved in the fourth of the Venice volumes, dated 1753. It makes use of contrasts between major and minor and, in the second half, characteristic repeated notes.

[4] The *Sonata in B flat minor*, K.131/L.300/P.154 is included in the 15th Venice collection, dated to 1749, and is marked *Allegro*. It makes use of hand crossing.

[5] The primary source for the *Sonata in G major*, K.338/L.87/P.400 is the seventh Venice volume, dated 1754. It is dominated by the rhythmic figure introduced in the opening bar.

[6] The *Sonata in A major*, K.285/L.91/P.321 is from the fifth Venice volume, marked *Andante allegro* in the Parma manuscript and *Allegro* in the Venice version. It has the tempo indication *Alla breve*. Again, the rhythmic motif of the first bar remains important throughout.

[7] The *Sonata in G minor*, K.97/L.–/P.5, of doubtful authenticity, was among the *Pièces de clavecin* published in Paris by Boivin and Le Clerc, before 1746. It is not included in the Longo listing.

[8] The *Sonata in G major*, K.305/L.322/P.397 has its primary source in the sixth Venice volume, dated 1753, marked *Allegro* and in 3/8. It makes much of interesting figuration.

[9] The *Sonata in B flat major*, K.228/L.399/P.224 is found in the third Venice volume of 1753. It makes considerable use of repetitions.

[10] The *Sonata in F minor*, K.204a/L.–/P.170 is not included in any Venice collection or in Longo, but is found only in the Parma manuscript. For this and other reasons some have chosen to reject the piece, with its three sections marked *Allegro*, *Allegro* and *Allegro*. [11] The *Sonata in B flat major*, K.154/L.96/P.183 is included in the first Venice volume, dated 1752. Kirkpatrick has suggested the possibility that the sonata belongs to a group written for the fortepiano, an instrument available to Scarlatti at the Spanish court.

[12] From the seventh Venice volume, dated 1754, comes the *Sonata in D major*, K.352/L. *Supp.*.13/P.343. It starts with an imitated figure and finds room for hand crossing as it proceeds.

[13] The *Sonata in A major*, K.300/L.92/P.312 has its primary source in the sixth Venice volume, dated 1753. It opens with a descending motif, which remains of importance throughout in a sonata of simple charm.

[14] The primary source of the *Sonata in B flat major*, K.267/L.434/P.363 is the fifth Venice volume, dated 1753. Prominence remains with the right-hand melody throughout the sonata.

[15] The *Sonata in A major*, K.83/L. *Supp.*.31/P.31, without tempo marking, is included in the 14th Venice volume, dated 1742. It opens with a left-hand motif, imitated immediately by the right hand. It is followed by a *Minuet*.

[16] The *Sonata in D major*, K.178/L.162/P.392 is from the second Venice volume of 1752. It is marked *Vivo* and in 3/8, and includes accompanying left-hand octaves, which have some prominence.

[17] The *Sonata in A major*, K.321/L.258/P.450, found in the sixth of the Venice volumes, makes much of arpeggio figuration.

[18] The *Sonata in C minor*, K.56/L.356/P.50 is found in the 14th Venice volume, and is marked *Con spirito*. It includes a spectacular series of hand crossings in its rapid progress.

Keith Anderson

## Eylam Keshet

Born in Israel, Eylam Keshet began his musical studies at the age of nine. He has participated in prestigious festivals and musical events around the world, including the Ravinia Festival, Chetham's International Piano Festival, and the Festival de Musique de Wissembourg. Keshet performs regularly in Israel, Europe, Switzerland, the United States, and the United Kingdom. He has been awarded scholarships for excellence from several foundations. Keshet is a laureate of international piano competitions and has won first prizes at leading national piano competitions in Israel. He regularly performs with prominent symphony orchestras such as the Haifa Symphony Orchestra, the Rishon LeZion Symphony Orchestra, and the Ashdod Symphony Orchestra. Keshet earned his Bachelor of Music degree at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music at Tel Aviv University in 2015 as a student of Asaf Zohar. He then moved to the United States and completed his Master of Music degree at the Yale School of Music, studying with Hung-Kuan Chen. In 2020 he will finish his studies at the Basel Music Academy in Switzerland with Claudio Martínez Mehner.



*Photo © Rafael Yochi*

When his pupil, the Infanta Maria Bárbara married the heir to the Spanish throne, Domenico Scarlatti travelled with her from Lisbon to Madrid, a move that led to the completion of hundreds of single-movement sonatas or exercises ('*Essercizi*'). Designed for her to play, and containing some of his greatest music, the sonatas offer a plethora of features that have ensured their lasting popularity and influence. In this volume one can encounter effortless use of repetition, imitation and arpeggio figuration, dynamic left-hand octave writing and hand crossing, some, as in the *Sonata in C minor*, of spectacular velocity.

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**Complete Keyboard Sonatas Vol.22**

1	Sonata in F minor, K.204b/L.–/P.255	4:51
2	Sonata in F major, K.367/L.172/P.453	2:40
3	Sonata in B flat major, K.248/L.Supp.35/P.187	4:53
4	Sonata in B flat minor, K.131/L.300/P.154	4:09
5	Sonata in G major, K.338/L.87/P.400	3:43
6	Sonata in A major, K.285/L.91/P.321	4:19
7	Sonata in G minor, K.97/L.–/P.5	5:46
8	Sonata in G major, K.305/L.322/P.397	3:07
9	Sonata in B flat major, K.228/L.399/P.224	2:52
10	Sonata in F minor, K.204a/L.–/P.170	5:43
11	Sonata in B flat major, K.154/L.96/P.183	3:43
12	Sonata in D major, K.352/L.Supp.13/P.343	4:26
13	Sonata in A major, K.300/L.92/P.312	4:02
14	Sonata in B flat major, K.267/L.434/P.363	3:54
15	Sonata in A major, K.83/L.Supp.31/P.31	5:09
16	Sonata in D major, K.178/L.162/P.392	1:54
17	Sonata in A major, K.321/L.258/P.450	2:46
18	Sonata in C minor, K.56/L.356/P.50	4:12

**Eylam Keshet, Piano**

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Playing Time  
72:13



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Booklet notes in English