

Scarlatti Sonatas Tamara Stefanovich



PENTATONE



SCARLATTI SONATAS

Tamara Stefanovich



PENTATONE · PTC 5187 401

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| 1. Sonata in B Minor, K. 87 | 6. 58 |
| 2. Sonata in C Minor, K. 158 | 5. 48 |
| 3. Sonata in G Minor, K. 8 | 6. 00 |
| 4. Sonata in G Major, K. 13 | 4. 22 |
| Total playing time: | 23. 11 |

Tamara Stefanovich, piano



My first encounter with Scarlatti was in 1985, in Belgrade, at a festival dedicated to his 300th birthday. I was 12 and eager to learn a couple of his sonatas. But once I learned them, I couldn't stop working on them. It felt as if something was hiding in plain sight—beneath all those perfectly measured runs, pearly notes, and immaculate resolutions.



His music possesses both microscopic and telescopic qualities. It resembles engraved, illuminated, miniature drawings—music of immense presence and distant melancholy. It is almost a paradox that something so immaculate can contain so much ambiguity, that such small forms can resemble symphonic dances.

It's a perplexing state for an interpreter: to reveal all the ornate, accessorized ornaments without obscuring what is being embellished. A little like walking

lightly through a vast landscape, admiring the grandeur of mountains, yet pausing to observe each leaf with a magnifying glass. This immersive quality is so dense, yet so transparent, that I often feel drawn to repeat the two sections even more than once—as if the repetition, like a mantra, reveals something more on each return. The repeats are of a emotional necessity as if to confide even more precisely what was mentioned the first time round.

There is a storyline running between the exquisite arabesques, the acrobatic passages, the solemn marches, and the carefully measured utterances. The musical calligraphy reveals gestures of powerful energy and conviction. And yet, even while expertly adhering to the laws of his time—rhythmically, harmonically, formally—Scarlatti finds a way to



express a daring, courageous, explosive pace hidden between the notes.

The notes seem magnetically pulled toward their final destination, their current always surging forward. It reminds me of Zurbaran's white—a color so profoundly virginal, yet seemingly containing all other colors within it. Its transparency becomes a lens through which deeper, more complex vistas emerge.

The constraints of Scarlatti's time—its formal structures, harmonic expectations, and limited keyboard range—paradoxically allowed him to discover immense freedom between the notes. He lulls us into believing that this is merely lightweight entertainment, only for us to realize—after the final note—that he has not revealed all his secrets.

In the preface to his *Essercizi per*



Gravicembalo (1738), Scarlatti himself described his music as “ingenious jesting with art.” That phrase captures the duality I’ve always felt in his work: a playful surface concealing a profound interior world. Beneath the virtuosic sparkle lies a language of subtle tension, elegance, and mystery that continues to draw me in, decades after my first encounter.





Aramat Art

by Tamara Stefanovich

“My music unfolds as a pilgrimage through unseen architectures of sound, where echoes become corridors and silence opens into infinite halls. Upon the page, I conjure motion from stillness, persuading ink and paper to tremble, to sway, to dance as if animated by an unseen spirit.”

Acknowledgements

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*This album was recorded at Teldex
Studio Berlin in March 2024.*

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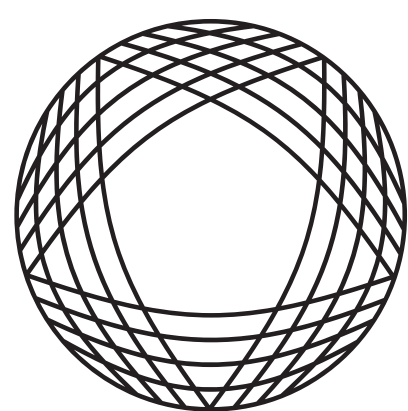
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