

Fandango

move



Elizabeth Anderson *harpsichord*
with Douglas Lawrence *organ*



Elizabeth Anderson is a tutor in Late Renaissance and Baroque Music at Ormond College, University of Melbourne, a teacher of harpsichord at the University of Melbourne and Mercy College and a continuo player with the State Orchestra of Victoria.

She studied at the University of Melbourne under Roger Heagney and Geoffrey Cox, graduating in 1984 with a Master of Music degree in music performance. Further studies took her to Europe, where she followed courses with Ton Koopman, Alan Curtis, Luigi Tagliavini and Colin Tilney.

As a concert performer, she has played extensively both at home and abroad. Concert tours in 1983 and 1986 have seen her playing in such venues as the Basilica dei Frari, Venice; Kaiser-Friedrich-Gedächtnis-Kirche, Berlin; the church of Saint Germain, Geneva; Frederiksborg Castle, Denmark and Leeds Town Hall. In Australia she performs regularly with two ensembles, and has appeared as solo artist with several orchestras. Some organizations which have engaged her are the Victorian Arts Council, Musica Viva and the Melbourne International Festival of Organ and Harpsichord. She records regularly for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Douglas Lawrence is Director of Music at the Scots Church. He enjoys an international reputation as organist, conductor and teacher, and has released several highly-acclaimed recordings.

The harpsichord is a copy of an instrument by Pascal Taskin, built in Paris in 1769, and now a part of the historical instrument collection at the University of Edinburgh. Originating from a Hubbard kit, the instrument used for this recording was modified and assembled by Alastair McAllister of Melbourne in 1984. It stands on a Louis XIV apron stand, and has a lid painting by Iris and Warren Anderson. It has two manuals with shove coupler and three choirs of strings: an 8' and a 4' on the lower manual and an 8' on the upper manual.

The Organ used on this recording was built by Knud Smenge in Melbourne in 1983. It has one keyboard and the following registers: Gedackt 8', Flöte 4', Principal 2', Nasat 1 1/3.

Padre Antonio Soler:

Baptized – Olot, Gerona 3 Dec. 1729

Died – El Escorial, 20 Dec 1783

In 1736, at the age of six, Soler entered the choir school at Montserrat, where he received his musical education. In 1752 he joined the Escorial community of Jeronome monks. He succeeded Gabriel de Moratilla as *maestro de capilla* on the latter's death in 1757. The Escorial capitular acts noted Soler's command of Latin, his skill as organist and composer, his flawless conduct, and his indefatigable application to music.

During the reign of Ferdinand VI and Maria Bárbara (1746-1759), the musical

life of the monastery was closely allied to that of the royal household. The royal family spent each Autumn at El Escorial with its musical entourage, which included Soler's teachers, Jose de Nebra and Domenico Scarlatti. During the remainder of the year, Soler was often in Madrid, where the Jeronimites had an annexe, fulfilling his duties as a composer, and later as harpsichord and organ teacher to the Infanta Gabriel (1752-1788), son of Carlos III (1759-1788).

Thus, as Scarlatti had formed a lifelong relationship with the previous generation of monarchs, Soler formed a lifelong musical symbiosis with Prince Gabriel, the results of which were numerous keyboard sonatas, six string quintets with organ, and the six concertos for two organs.

Concerto No. VI in D major for two organs – Allegro-Minue

These concertos were designed to be performed by Soler and his royal pupil in the small palace built on El Escorial grounds in 1768-1772 for Prince Gabriel's private concerts. The works are style galant pieces, in which Soler digresses from the Scarlattian virtuoso style often heard in his sonatas.

The *Allegro* from the Concerto No VI in D is a movement which aims to charm rather than to impress. The wistful D minor interjections are accompanied by colour changes which are enhanced by the alternation of organ and harpsichord.

Certain parts of the *Minue* are reminiscent of Scarlatti's harpsichord sonatas: the trumpet-like motif, heard first on harpsichord, and then on organ in the first variation, the rapid repeated-note motif in the harpsichord part in the second variation, and then the rapid scale and arpeggio passages of the fourth and final variation.

François Couperin:

Born – Paris, 10 Nov. 1668

Died – Paris, 11 Sept. 1733

François Couperin belonged to a dynasty of musicians second only to the Bach family.

In 1686, he officially inherited the position of organist at the church of St Gervais, where his uncle, Louis Couperin (1626-1661) and his father and teacher, Charles Couperin (1638-1679) had preceded him. In 1690, Couperin obtained his first royal privilege to print and sell his music. He used the six year licence to publish a collection of organ pieces. Interestingly enough, this was the only organ music that Couperin is known to have written, despite the fact that at least until 1717 he performed primarily as an organist.

It was as an organist that Couperin first gained a foothold at Louis XIV's court, succeeding his teacher, Lalande, as king's organist in 1693. Having established financial security with a position at court, Couperin concentrated on producing harpsichord music, which would form the

basis of his compositional output.

In 1713 he took out a twenty-year printing licence, which, as it happened, sufficed to cover the publication of his music up to the end of his life. His *Pièces de Clavecin*, book one, appeared in that year. A treatise, *L'art de toucher le clavecin* was published in 1716, followed by a second book of harpsichord pieces in 1717. The third and fourth books were issued in 1722 and 1730 respectively.

It seems strange that it was not until 1717 that Couperin was officially recognized as a harpsichordist at court. He had for some time been standing in for d'Anglebert, whose eyesight was failing, as *Ordinaire de la musique de la chambre du roi pour le clavecin*. Now Couperin was offered the right to inherit the post on d'Anglebert's death.

Little detail of Couperin's personality and musical opinions is available, as none of his correspondence has survived: Letters he is supposed to have exchanged with J.S. Bach were allegedly used as jampot covers some years later. That Bach knew Couperin's music is evident from a copy and an arrangement of two of Couperin's pieces in Bach's hand.

La Favorite

The title of this piece, from the first book of *Pièces de clavecin*, suggests its possible origin as an improvisation that Couperin was frequently asked to recall. The composer labels it *Chaconne a deux tems* because traditional chaconnes

were in triple metre, and this one is an exception. It is in rondo form: the rondo theme itself is whimsical, each phrase beginning with a descending, three-quaver figure. The first couplet treats this three-quaver figure contrapuntally, whilst the second uses the same figure in inversion as a starting point. The third couplet brings with it a more sprightly mood, then the fourth, more serious in character, introduces a march-like leaping figure with intervals of a fourth and a fifth. The fifth and final couplet returns to the elusive sadness of the opening.

Jean-Philippe Rameau:

Born – Dijon; baptized, 25 Sept. 1683

Died – Paris, 12 Sept. 1764

Rameau's musical career divides into two distinct periods.

In 1702, on his return from study in Italy, he was appointed organist at Clermont Cathedral. From this time until 1715, he occupied various church-organist posts in Lyons, Dijon and Paris. During this time, he wrote motets and secular cantatas, and published his first book of harpsichord pieces (1706).

1715 saw him back at Clermont Cathedral, where he stayed for eight years. To secure his release before the end of his contract, Rameau is said to have created chaos at a feast-day service, by first refusing to play, and then by pulling out all the most unpleasing stops on the instrument and playing a discordant improvisation. Thus, Rameau was released

from Clermont, and went to Paris. It was probably due to this dramatic exit that he did not succeed in securing another organist's post in Paris until nine years later – 1732.

Nevertheless, Rameau made use of the ensuing years in Paris, publishing his *Traité de l'harmonie* in 1722, his second and third harpsichord books in 1724 and 1728, and his *Nouveau Système de musique théorique* in 1726. By this time, Rameau had become famous as a theorist, thus fulfilling one of his ambitions. He had a second ambition though, which was to compose for the stage.

Opera and ballet performance, however, required much greater financial resources than Rameau could muster. In 1726, he met the patron he needed: The tax-farmer, Le Riche de la Pouplinière ran a private orchestra, and his wife, Marie-Thérèse Deshayes became one of Rameau's fervent admirers. Rameau married in the same year – a girl of 19, Marie-Louise Mangot – perhaps to enhance his respectability. The fruit of this collaboration with Pouplinière was Rameau's first opera, *Hyppolyte et Aricie*, which was performed twice in 1733. Thus began the second period of Rameau's life: a period of living in Pouplinière's mansion and conducting his orchestra, writing for the stage, and producing theoretical publications. Only five more pieces for harpsichord were written after the first opera, these being published in 1741 and 1747.

In spite of his enthusiasm for opera and ballet, Rameau always regarded composition as a diversion from his theoretical work. In his last years, he told Chabanon that he regretted the time he had devoted to composition, because it had distracted him from research into the principles of his art.

Gavotte and Doubles de la Gavotte

The Gavotte with its Doubles appears in the second book of harpsichord pieces, *Nouvelles suites de pièces de clavecin* (c1728).

The *Gavotte* is majestic and evocative of palatial architecture. It seems strange for the statement of a theme preceding its variations to be so highly ornamented. Yet when the first *double* breaks into a stream of descending semi-quavers, the contrast with the staid crotchet pulse of the theme is arresting.

All the variations are based on semi-quaver movement: The second has semi-quavers in the left hand, the third in the inner part, and then in counter-point with the upper part. When such possibilities would seem to have been exhausted, the fourth *double* charms the listener with an arpeggio figure with repeated notes distributed between two keyboards. Here, the buff stop adds to the appeal of the new texture. After this *double*, the fifth and sixth variations, whilst maintaining semi-quaver movement, return to the majesty of the Gavotte.

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach:

Born – Weimar, 8 March 1714

Died – Hamburg, 14 Dec. 1788

Emanuel was the second surviving son of Johann Sebastian Bach, and the most famous and prolific composer of all the Bach offspring. His father was entirely responsible for his musical education, and he went on to study law at Leipzig and then Frankfurt universities (1731-1738).

On completing his degree, Bach travelled to Berlin, where he secured a position as harpsichordist to the flute-playing Prince Frederick II of Prussia, who was later to become King Frederick the Great (1740). Bach served in this capacity for 30 years before accepting a new post in 1768 as cantor of the Latin School and director of music in the five principal churches of Hamburg – a post not dissimilar to the one J.S. Bach had occupied in Leipzig.

The years in Berlin were at first glamorous and exciting. He writes proudly in his autobiography that in 1740 he had the honour of accompanying the first flute solo played by Frederick as king. But after some years, working with the limitations of a quite good, but not altogether professional flute-playing monarch must have begun to pall. From 1753 onwards, Bach is known to have intermittently sought alternative employment. Life at court, however, brought with it many advantages. Bach's *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments* was published in two volumes in 1753 and 1762

by private arrangement with the court printer. Court life meant that Bach met all the foremost musicians of his day. In 1742, he witnessed Frederick's establishment of the great Berlin Opera, where the works of Hasse and Graun were performed.

Although he never composed an opera, the dramatic style crept into Bach's instrumental works, beginning with the keyboard sonatas of 1743 and 1744. This type of emotionally-charged composition; dramatic, and yet without words, became known as the *empfindsamer Stil* (highly-sensitive style), of which Bach was the chief exponent.

Such a style was probably best interpreted at the large clavichord, which Bach had had built to his requirements. This instrument could most easily cope with the abrupt changes of mood, voice-like melodic contours and painstakingly exact dynamic requirements of *empfindsam* compositions. However, this is not to say that Bach intended such compositions only for the clavichord. In the introduction to Part One of his *Essay*, he discusses the possibility of different tone colours on the harpsichord, which, he suggests can be achieved by the 'varied touch which the competent clavichordist brings to the harpsichord'.

12 Variations auf die Folie d'Espagne

A comparison of C.P.E. Bach's *Folie d'Espagne* variations with Rameau's Gavotte and variations demonstrates what

a difference the *empfindsamer-Stil* made to Bach's approach. The Folie d'Espagne variations are highly dramatic. Where Rameau's variations charm with their subtle differences, Bach's are radically different in tempo, texture and mood, from the calculated under-statement of the theme in simple arpeggiated chords, to the twelfth variation, marked *sehr geschwind*, which brings the work flying to a rather sudden close.

François Couperin:

Muséte de Choisi

Muséte de Taverni

These two pastoral pieces imitating the bagpipe music of the countryside are probably named after small French villages. The two miniatures provide a light-hearted diversion in the fifth suite from the third book of harpsichord pieces. Couperin provides a note explaining that these pieces can be performed by one player, if the bass is omitted after the first bar, the manuals are coupled and the hands crossed. But, he adds, 'these Musétes are really for all sorts of instruments in unison'.

In this performance, the bourdon bass is doubled on organ and harpsichord, whilst the upper part is taken by the organ in *Choisi*, and by the harpsichord in *Taverni*.

Domenico Scarlatti:

Born – Naples, 26 Oct. 1685

Died – Madrid, 23 July 1757

Little is known of Scarlatti's musical

education. His name does not appear on any conservatorium roster, and evidence of his having been taught by any of the Neapolitan musicians is lacking. It is likely that his father, Alessandro Scarlatti took care of the boy's practical and theoretical training, and the intensity with which the father followed his son's musical career would seem to bear this out.

Scarlatti's life can be clearly divided into two periods. The earlier period saw him composing opera and oratorio for the Italian stage, as well as other sacred and secular vocal music, clearly under his father's influence. That Scarlatti felt inhibited in some way by excessive paternal interest is suggested by the fact that in January 1717 he took the trouble to acquire a document which enforced his legal independence. There are indications that the father continued to exert as much influence as possible over his son even after this date.

Nevertheless, the year 1717 represents a turning-point in the younger Scarlatti's life. In 1719 he resigned his positions as *maestro di cappella* of the Basilica Giulia and musician to the Portuguese ambassador in Rome, and went to Portugal. Thus began the later period of Scarlatti's career, which he spent almost exclusively on the Iberian Peninsula.

In Lisbon (1719-1728) Scarlatti took up the position of master of the Royal Chapel. Apart from his more obvious duties, he was put in charge of the general

musical education, and particularly the harpsichord tuition of King John V's talented daughter, the Infanta Maria Barbara. When the young princess married the Spanish crown prince in 1728, and moved to Madrid, Scarlatti followed amongst her retainers.

The most important products of these years were the 550 or so single-movement harpsichord sonatas, composed for performance and didactic purposes. For whichever reason Scarlatti produced these pieces, it is clear that at this stage in his career his primary interest was the development and maintenance of a virtuoso technique. Within each of these bipartite sonatas, he explores a particular aspect of the harpsichordist's technique. Less than a sixth of the sonatas is indicated to be played at a slower tempo, such as *andante* or *moderato*, and there are no slow tempo indications: Scarlatti was clearly preoccupied with velocity.

Sonatas: K 140 in D major

K 141 in D minor

In each of these sonatas, Scarlatti incorporates rapid arpeggio figures and hand-crossing. In addition to these technical considerations, the D major piece is a study in consecutive thirds and sixths, whilst the D minor piece concentrates on extended passages of repeated notes.

In each of these sonatas one gets glimpses of Spain. In the D major piece, Scarlatti brings the perpetual motion of

the opening to an abrupt halt after a few bars, then introduces what sounds like a distant fanfare of trumpets, which grows more intense as it seems to come closer. A similarly brief trumpet interlude breaks into the second half. The repeated note opening of the D minor is evocative of the thrumming effect used by Flamenco guitarists.

Claude-Bénigne Balbastre:

Born – Dijon, 22 Jan. 1727

Died – Paris, 9 May 1799

Balbastre received his first organ lessons from his father Bénigne Balbastre. At the age of 23 he went to Paris, where he studied composition with Jean-Philippe Rameau, and organ with Pierre Février. By 1756, when he obtained the post of organist at St Roche, he had already established a reputation as a fine concert organist. Charles Burney attended a service there in 1770, and entered the following comments on Balbastre's performance in his diary:

He performed in all styles in accompanying the choir. When the Magnificat was sung, he played likewise between each verse several minuets, fugues, imitations, and every species of music, even to hunting pieces and jigs, without surprising or offending the congregation, as far as I was able to discover.

In 1776 Balbastre was appointed organist to the royal chapel, a position he occupied until the French Revolution (1789-1792). It is interesting to note that amongst his harpsichord students at this time were Marie-Antoinette, and one of the

daughters of the American diplomat Thomas Jefferson.

With the fall of royalty, Balbastre ended his life in poverty. He did, however, survive the Revolution, and one of his last performances included his variations on the Marseillaise.

He produced several books of harpsichord pieces, the most comprehensive of these being the first (1759), which contained the Scarlattian gigue, *La Lugeac*.

Balbastre was a close friend of the Parisian harpsichord builder, Pascal Taskin, and was probably responsible for the first buff stop, which Taskin incorporated into an instrument of 1767. Balbastre is often quoted as a critic of the early piano: On first hearing an English piano played by Taskin at the Tuileries, Balbastre evidently remarked 'Never will this newcomer dethrone the majestic harpsichord.' From this remark one can deduce that the pieces of 1759 were more likely conceived for the harpsichord than the fortepiano.

It seems, however, that Balbastre must have changed his mind about the forte-piano, as he later published pieces '*pour le Clavecin ou le Forte-Piano*' (1771) (or perhaps this was nothing more than opportunism?).

La Lugeac

Balbastre labelled *La Lugeac* a '*giga*', thus drawing attention to its boisterous Italianate character. The Marquis of

Lugeac was a handsome young captain of the mounted grenadiers, whose vanity so incensed one admirer that he was shot, not more than a year after Balbastre had published this piece in his honour.

P. Antonio Soler:

Fandango

Although Soler, like Scarlatti, is remembered primarily for his keyboard sonatas, he produced a wealth of instrumental and vocal works, both sacred and secular, as well as a number of highly-respected theoretical works.

One group of pieces is perhaps rather unconventional. These are the three Gypsy *villancicos* of 1753, 1765 and 1772, and one Negro dialect *villancico* of 1758. It was probably from this period of interest in vernacular song that the Fandango for harpsichord originated.

The Fandango was a courtship dance, originating in the early 18th century in the Castilian and Andalusian regions of Spain. It was usually played on guitar, accompanied by castanets, and sometimes violin or other instruments. Folkloric performances with such instruments can still be witnessed in certain parts of South America and the Philippines.

The couple dance together, with movements in similar motion, sometimes very close, but never touching. The music begins at an elegant pace, and gradually increases in tempo. The dance is characterized by sudden and unexpected silences, during which the dancers must freeze.

Soler's Fandango uses a passacaglia bass borrowed from the flamenco guitar tradition. His use of minor scale forms which dwell on the augmented second between the sixth and seventh degrees is also reminiscent of gypsy music. Throughout the work, devices such as repeated notes, and arpeggios superimposed one upon the other produce some rich, guitar-like sonorities.

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This project is assisted by the Australia Council, the Federal Government's arts funding and advisory body.

Recorded in the dining room at Ormond College, University of Melbourne.

An original digital recording, edited using the Dolby Spectral Recording process and digitally mastered.

Cover painting: Warren Anderson
Photograph (page 2) courtesy 'The Age'
Sound engineering: Martin Wright

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Padre Antonio Soler (1729-1783)

Concerto No. VI in D major for two organs

1 *Allegro* 3'58"

2 *Minue* 5'41"

François Couperin (1668-1733)

3 La Favorite: Chaconne a deux
tems from Pièces de clavecin,
Book 1 5'01"

Jean-Philippe Rameau

(1683-1764)

4 Gavotte, et Doubles de la
Gavotte from Nouvelles suites
de pièces de clavecin 6'30"

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach

(1714-1788)

5 12 Variations auf die Folie
d'Espagne 7'51"

François Couperin

(from Pièces de clavecin,
Book 3)

6 Muséte de Choisi 2'25"

7 Muséte de Taverni 2'46"

Domenico Scarlatti

(1685-1757)

8 Sonata K 140 in D major 4'02"

9 Sonata K 141 in D minor 4'16"

Claude Bénigne Balbastre (1727-1799)

10 La Lugeac from Pièces de clavecin 2'33"

Padre Antonio Soler

11 Fandango 11'49"

Fandango

Elizabeth Anderson
harpsichord



with Douglas Lawrence organ