



Photo: Mary Mikaelberg Spányi

Miklós Spányi, Artistic Director of Concerto Armonico, was born in Budapest. He studied harpsichord and organ at the Ferenc Liszt Music Academy with Ferenc Gergely and János Sebestyén, at the Royal Flemish Conservatoire in Antwerp with Jos van Immerseel, and at the Hochschule für Musik in Munich with Hedwig Bilgram. Spányi has won first prize at international harpsichord competitions in Nantes (1984) and Paris (1987). He has given concerts and masterclasses in most European countries and performs as both soloist and continuo player. For the Swedish label BIS he is recording C.P.E. Bach's complete keyboard solos and the complete keyboard concertos with Concerto Armonico. Between 1990-2012 Miklós Spányi taught at the Oulu Conservatory as well as the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. Today he teaches at the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Mannheim, the Ferenc Liszt Music Academy in Budapest and the Amsterdam Conservatory. See also www.miklosspanyi.de.



Photo: Andrea Schille

After winning first prize in both the National Flute Association's Baroque Flute Artist and its Doctoral Dissertation Competitions, Mary Oleskiewicz quickly established herself as an international performer on historical flutes and the leading expert on the music of Johann Joachim Quantz. She has appeared throughout Europe, North America, Japan, Mexico and Australia as a performer, speaker, and masterclass teacher. The recipient of numerous fellowships and grants, in 2001 she rediscovered, recorded, and published the first edition of Quantz's six lost quartets for flute, violin, viola, and basso continuo. Her numerous, highly acclaimed editions, articles, and recordings have focussed on the music, flutes, and writings of Quantz, Frederick the Great, Johann Sebastian and Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. Mary Oleskiewicz, a resident of Boston, has performed as soloist and principal flute with Arcadia Players, Chorus Pro Musica, Chicago's Baroque Band, and Newton Baroque, and as flautist and piccolist with the Handel & Haydn Society Orchestra. She has served as Guest Professor at the University of the Arts in Berlin, and is currently Associate Professor at the University of Massachusetts. She plays two-keyed Baroque flutes after J. J. Quantz, modelled on an instrument made for King Frederick the Great, now in the Library of Congress, Washington D.C. Pitch: a = 385 Hz. Built by Jean-François Beaudin.

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Johann Joachim
QUANTZ
Flute Concertos
Mary Oleskiewicz
Baroque Transverse Flute
Concerto Armonico • Miklós Spányi



Johann Joachim Quantz (1697-1773): Flute Concertos

When the instrumental concerto emerged as a distinct genre in the first years of the eighteenth century, it was almost invariably a work for stringed instruments. Vivaldi alone wrote hundreds of such works, most of them with violin soloist, and when German composers, including Bach and Telemann, adopted the concerto in the following decades, initially they employed it primarily for string instruments as well. The first generation of concerto composers, however, was already experimenting with works for other solo instruments, and among their followers were players of wind, keyboard, and even brass instruments eager to take up the new genre. These included Johann Joachim Quantz, who proved to be the most innovative player, composer, and maker of the eighteenth-century flute. Author as well of an influential treatise on flute playing, Quantz composed hundreds of works for his instrument, including over two hundred sonatas and nearly three hundred concertos.

Until recently, the only widely known work from this vast output was a single concerto in G major, made famous through an accident of music history: the nineteenth-century flautist Moritz Fursienau had selected it for performance (in his own considerably altered edition), and ever since this one concerto has been repeatedly performed and reprinted. Although an attractive work, listed as No. 5:174 in the modern thematic catalogue by Horst Augsbach, a single concerto could hardly represent adequately the composer's considerable technical and expressive range. Indeed, that Quantz's music even possesses much variety, or displays any great compositional skill, has often been doubted, chiefly on the basis of a somewhat misleading report by the eighteenth-century English writer Charles Burney.

Burney, who travelled to Germany and met Quantz near the very end of the composer's long career, left a famous account of his visit in 1772. Quantz by then had been serving for over thirty years as teacher, composer, and flute-maker to Frederick the Great, King of Prussia. The king, himself an amateur flautist and composer of considerable ability, had cultivated music throughout his long reign. He was particularly famous for the private concerts that he held regularly in his various palaces, and Burney described one

such concert, in which the the king was, as usual, accompanied by a few select players from his court orchestra. By the 1770s, however, the king and his musicians were long past their prime, and his repertory was limited to works of his own and Quantz's composition. Burney also failed to note that he was permitted to hear the king's music-making only through the closed door to the private music-room in the royal palace of Sanssouci.

These royal concerts nevertheless were the principal venue at court for the four works included in the present recording, which is based on detailed research into original performing practices at Sanssouci, including the use of bassoon and fortepiano as members of the basso continuo group. This same research has revealed that Quantz's concertos, composed over a period of five decades, display considerable musical as well as technical variety. The early works, composed while Quantz was a member of the Saxon court orchestra at Dresden, betray the influence of Vivaldi and other Italian composers, such as Alessandro Scarlatti, whom Quantz visited during a tour of Italy, France, and Britain during 1724-7 that also led him to Handel in London and the French flautist Blavet in Paris. From these travels and contacts, Quantz doubtless picked up numerous musical ideas, but perhaps the greatest source of inspiration was the Italian opera of the day, in which virtuoso singers re-enacted the history of ancient Greece and Rome on the stages of Dresden and other cities. Frederick was particularly enamoured of Italian opera, and among his first acts after becoming king in 1740 was to found an opera house and company in his capital city of Berlin; another was to engage Quantz in 1741 as the chief instrumentalist of his court music.

The four works here recorded, all for the very first time, illustrate some of Quantz's range, contradicting old misimpressions that he was a composer limited to the clichés of the mid-eighteenth-century *galant* style. Each work comprises three movements, in the order fast-slow-fast, and each movement is written in some version of ritornello form, the same basic design, alternating between ritornellos for the full ensemble and episodes for the soloist, that was

used in the opera arias of the period. Within this homogeneous formal plan, however, Quantz unifies a limitless variety of ideas, including constantly inventive types of brilliant figuration or passagework in the solo episodes of the quick movements. These display the capabilities of the specially designed flutes that Quantz made for himself and the king, but so too do the slow movements, which exploit the rich, expressive tone of these same flutes (which Quantz likened to the vocal quality of a high tenor).

The earliest of these concertos is the *Concerto in D minor, QV 5:81*, (Augsbach's numbers are not chronological). It is No. 113 in a manuscript listing concertos by Quantz and others that constituted the repertory of the king's private concerts. This is the one concerto from the present selection whose score has hitherto been published; the others remain in manuscript copies in Berlin. Quantz and Frederick were eager to see the flute employed in the full range of keys and expressive characters cultivated by other eighteenth-century composers, not least in opera. D minor is a key associated with the most serious types of operatic arias, and the work opens with an extraordinary gesture, an impulsive upward scale, whose passionate affect is, however, almost immediately contradicted by a much quieter series of passages. This is the type of sharp expressive contrast better known today from the works of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, second son of the famous Johann Sebastian Bach and court keyboard player to King Frederick. C. P. E. Bach was writing keyboard concertos of similar character within a few years of his arrival at Berlin in 1738. Yet this work was probably composed while Quantz was still at Dresden, and it would have made a strong impression on the younger composer, who must have participated in performances of the concerto after Quantz had supplied copies of the music to his new patron, the king.

Composed at Dresden somewhat later is the *Concerto in A minor, QV 5:238* (No. 123). This work has long been considered lost, for its manuscript copies disappeared from Berlin during the chaos of World War II. They have since turned up in the Russian National Library in St Petersburg, where the present flute soloist retrieved them, and the work becomes generally available

for the first time with the present recording.

A similar discovery distinguishes the *Concerto in G major, QV 5:165* (No. 151). Although the king's own manuscript copies of the work have never left Berlin, the concerto is one of a relatively small number that also survive in additional copies perhaps made from the composer's personal papers (Quantz's own manuscripts of these and other works are long gone). One of these copies, preserved in the archive of the Sing-Akademie zu Berlin, similarly disappeared during the War and was returned to Berlin only in 2001. The present flute soloist was among the first to study the music collection and made an extraordinary find while examining this manuscript. Following eighteenth-century Berlin tradition, all four of the present works require the improvisation of a cadenza near the end of the second movement. Remarkably, the Sing-Akademie copy contains written-out cadenzas not only at this point but at a corresponding moment in the first movement. These cadenzas provide a direct link to the practices of Quantz and his star pupil, two of them, one for the first and one for the second movement, are heard in this performance.

The latest of these works is the *Concerto in C minor, QV 5:38*, (No. 300) and the last in the king's catalogue. Indeed, it is not only Quantz's but King Frederick's last composition, for Quantz left it unfinished at his death in 1773. The king had long since abandoned composition, but he took up the pen again to compose the last movement of the work, resulting in a posthumous collaboration between Quantz and his most famous pupil. Particularly touching is the second-movement *Lento*, in the rare key of F minor, which sounds particularly dark on the eighteenth-century flute. (It is as if Quantz wrote it while contemplating his own impending death). The aging composer nevertheless included some brighter-sounding solo passages accompanied by pizzicato viola. The final movement, if not as adept as Quantz might have written, is nevertheless well crafted, like all of the king's mature compositions, and it contains a compelling chromatic modulation. This work and the *Concerto in G major* are performed here using an intimate ensemble of one player per part, which Frederick favoured in his later years.

Mary Oleskiewicz

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Concerto Armonico Budapest



Concerto Armonico Budapest was founded around 1983 by young musicians, at that time still studying at the Budapest Ferenc Liszt Music Academy. As only the second orchestra playing on period instruments in Hungary, the ensemble soon became very popular under the artistic direction of harpsichordist Miklós Spányi and violinist Péter Szűts. After initial successes in its home country the ensemble was soon invited to play concerts around Europe, featuring in the most important festivals and appearing with outstanding singers and instrumentalists of the European baroque. The ensemble began its ground-breaking complete recording of C.P.E. Bach's *Keyboard Concertos* for the innovative Swedish label BIS in 1994, a series of twenty CDs planned for completion during 2013. As well as recording C.P.E. Bach's works, Concerto Armonico also performs extensively the music of this composer and other members of the Berlin school around Frederick the Great. See also www.concertoarmonico.com

Violin I: Erika Peitöfi, Gergely Kuklis
Violin II: Balázs Bozzai, Ildikó Hadházy
Viola: Tamás Cs. Nagy
Cello: Csilla Vályi

Bassoon: László Feriencsik
Double bass: György Schweigert
Harpsichord/fortepiano: Miklós Spányi

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