



**Johann Joachim  
QUANTZ**

**Flute Sonatas**

Mary Oleskiewicz  
Baroque Transverse Flute

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## Johann Joachim Quantz (1697-1773) Flute Sonatas

Johann Joachim Quantz was the most important flute virtuoso of the eighteenth century. Best known today for his *Essay on Playing the Flute* (Berlin, 1752), he wrote some two hundred sonatas for flute and continuo, about forty trio sonatas for two instruments and continuo, six quartets for flute, violin, viola and continuo, and some three hundred concertos for flute and strings. Many of these works were composed for King Frederick II of Prussia, Frederick the Great, himself an accomplished flautist and composer whom Quantz taught and later served as royal court musician from 1741 until his death. In addition, the eight surviving flutes by Quantz were probably all made for King Frederick.

Before coming to Berlin Quantz had served the Saxon court in Dresden, where he played from 1718 first as a member of the Polish Chapel - the Elector of Saxony was also King of Poland - and from 1728 in the elite Hofkapelle. There he formed his distinctive style of playing and made the fundamental alteration in flute design for which he is most famous, the addition of a second key, which made it easier than on existing one-key flutes to play in a broad variety of tonalities. To this he later added a tuning slide in the head, further improving the tuning and the sound of the instrument. The striking qualities of Quantz's flutes, the ideal tone of which he described as "full, thick, round, and masculine", reflected the vocal timbres of the virtuoso Italian opera singers favoured in early eighteenth-century Dresden. This, together with the low French chamber pitch preferred by Quantz, enlivens his music with unusual warmth and vibrancy. The present release is the first recording of six of Quantz's Dresden solo and trio sonatas, performed on precise copies of the flutes he built and in the manner which he set forth in his *Essay*. The improvised keyboard continuo accompaniment employs fortepiano as well as harpsichord, since both instruments were known and used at Dresden and Berlin.

The English writer Charles Burney left a famous account of one of King Frederick's private flute concerts, during which only music by Quantz and the King was performed, and only Quantz enjoyed the privilege of congratulating (or criticizing) the King's playing. Burney's account, written at the very end of Quantz's career, encouraged a view of Quantz as a minor composer, restricted to a conservative pre-Classical or *galant* idiom, but, as these Dresden sonatas show, Quantz's music encompasses great variety, incorporating baroque fugues and dances, expressive chromaticism, and even imitations of operatic recitative, together with the graceful melodic writing and virtuoso passage-work that caught Burney's attention. The latter traits, inspired by the concertos of Vivaldi and the opera arias of Johann Adolph Hasse, the leading composer of opera at Dresden, and Quantz's friend, were sufficiently exciting during the 1720s and 1730s to inspire not only Quantz but J.S. Bach, whose later flute works show signs of having been composed with Quantz's music and instruments in mind.

Although it is impossible to attach precise dates to these works, none of which was published during Quantz's lifetime, the earliest may be the *Sonata in G minor, QV 1:116*. It is one of twenty sonatas preserved in a manuscript now in Berlin. Dating perhaps from around 1720, these pieces show the youthful composer testing his abilities by writing in all styles, genres, and keys. The sonata opens with an aria-like movement followed by a strict double fugue. The next movement, an obvious imitation of Italian recitative although not so marked, introduces a French-style minuet in the form of a rondeau. The *Sonata in C, QV 1:9*, must be a somewhat later work; its Handel-like opening movement leads to an *Allegro* seemingly inspired by an aria in Hasse's opera *Cleofide*, first staged in Dresden in 1731.

The two trio sonatas must also be relatively early (Quantz wrote no such works after leaving Dresden). The work in E flat reflects the interest at Dresden in use of the flute in tonalities not traditionally associated with the instrument. For technical reasons, the flute produces a lovely veiled or muted sound in this key, contrasting strongly with the brightness of the other trio, in D major. The latter work is notable for its opening theme, an exact inversion of a melody used several times by Handel, who visited Dresden in 1719 (Quantz later visited Handel in London in 1727). The quick movements of the *Trio in D major* incorporate solo passages for each of the two flutes, recalling the favourite Dresden orchestral form of the period, the concerto. This work is of special interest because excerpts from it appear in a manuscript set of exercises, known as the *Solfeggi*, which Quantz later seems to have prepared for his Berlin students. Annotations in the *Solfeggi* give suggestions for ornamentation and articulation which are included in this recording.

The *Sonata in D major, QV 1:42* also resembles a concerto, not only in its generally virtuoso character but in its sequence of three movements, fast-slow-fast. Together with five other such solo sonatas by Quantz, it might have been part of a set composed for Frederick shortly before Quantz's departure for Berlin. Lacking the initial slow movement favoured in Quantz's earlier sonatas, these works superficially take a form that would become the norm for most later eighteenth-century sonatas. They differ, however, in the through-

composed design of the first movement, rendering them more typical of the contemporary concerto or symphony. The sonata is particularly striking for its highly expressive second movement, which opens on a dissonance, outside its home key, a device today associated with the Berlin court harpsichordist Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, who perhaps picked up this and other expressive devices from his older colleague Quantz.

In Quantz's Berlin sonatas it is the second slow movement that is usually missing, resulting in a slow-fast-fast (or slow-fast-moderate) design. Thus the *Sonata in G minor, QV:128*, probably a relatively early Dresden work, may originally have had a second slow movement that Quantz deleted for performance at Berlin. He nevertheless must have kept this work in his own repertory and in that of his students, for he quoted a particularly difficult passage from the second movement in his *Essay*.

Although little-known today, with such works Quantz established himself as the greatest eighteenth-century composer for the flute. Especially when played on instruments of his own design and according to his own performance instructions, they reveal the brilliance and expressivity that captivated audiences at royal courts throughout Europe and inspired contemporaries such as Bach and Telemann to treat the newly redesigned flute as an instrument well suited to the most varied and profound music.

Mary Oleskiewicz

## Mary Oleskiewicz

Mary Oleskiewicz is an international performer on the baroque flute, a highly regarded teacher of historical and modern woodwind instruments, and one of the leading scholars of her generation on the music of J.S. Bach and his contemporaries. She was first prize winner in 2001 in the triennial Baroque Flute Artist competition of the National Flute Association and a finalist in the 1998 Early Music America/Dorian recording competition, and her performance at the 1997 Boston Early Music Festival was critically acclaimed. Recent performance credits include the Great Performers Series at Lincoln Center, the 1999 Boston Early Music Festival, and the Library of Congress. Her edition of chamber works by J. J. Quantz was published by A-R Editions in 2001. A 1999 recipient of the Ph.D. in Musicology from Duke University, she has published major articles in *Early Music*, *Bach Perspectives*, the *Galpin Society Journal*, and the *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society* and has won two grants from the Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst to support research in European archives and instrument collections. A much-sought speaker, she has given public lecture-demonstrations in Japan, Germany, England, Scotland, and the United States. Born in Ohio, she was formerly a flautist in the Youngstown Symphony Orchestra. In autumn 2001 she joined the faculty of the University of Massachusetts-Boston as Assistant Professor of Music. She previously served as Assistant Professor of Music at the University of South Dakota and Curator of Musical Instruments at America's Shrine to Music Museum, an internationally recognised collection of historical musical instruments in Vermillion, South Dakota.

## The Instruments

The flutes heard on this recording are closely modeled after an instrument built by Quantz for Frederick II and now in the Dayton C. Miller collection of flutes in the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Specially commissioned for this recording, these instruments are the products of collaborative research by Mary Oleskiewicz and the builder, Jean-François Beaudin. Made of African blackwood (what Quantz called "ebony") and ivory, they feature Quantz's inventions: two keys that permit enharmonic distinctions throughout the scale, resulting in more purely tuned intervals, as well as a tuning slide. Like the original, they are built to play at the low French chamber pitch (approximately  $a' = 385$  Hz) favoured at King Frederick's court concerts.

The harpsichord is a copy by William Dowd of a German double-manual instrument by Michael Mietke. The fortepiano is a copy by Robert E. Smith of an instrument by Johann Könnicke. Both keyboard instruments are tuned in a circular temperament based loosely on Neidhart. The continuo realizations follow Quantz's recommendations for accommodating the purer tuning of the flutes.

The violoncello is by William Forster from about 1770, restored to its original proportions by William Monical.

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Mary Oleskiewicz  
Photo: Simon Spicer

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## **David Schulenberg**

David Schulenberg is one of America's foremost authorities on the music of the Bach family and an internationally respected performer on the harpsichord and other early keyboard instruments. A native of New York City, he is Professor of Music and Chair of the Music Department at Wagner College on Staten Island in New York City. His books include the textbook and anthology *Music of the Baroque*, published in 2001 by Oxford University Press, as well as *The Keyboard Music of J.S. Bach* and *The Instrumental Music of C.P.E. Bach*. He has also published numerous articles and reviews and has served on the faculties of the University of Notre Dame, Columbia University, and elsewhere. In January 2002 he presented lectures and concerts in and around Tokyo as a Fellow of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. He has also held research fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Andrew Mellon Foundation, and has served on the Council of the American Musicological Society and the editorial board of the Society's *Journal*. Performances include solo recitals for the American Bach Project, the Berkeley Music Sources series, and the International Bach Harpsichord Festival in Montreal, as well as concerts and lecture-demonstrations at the Library of Congress, Boston Early Music Festival, and the Great Performers at Lincoln Center series.

## **Stephanie Vial**

The cellist Stephanie Vial performs a broad repertoire on both modern and period instruments. She holds a D.M.A in Historical Performance Practice from Cornell University and is involved in research into eighteenth-century musical punctuation, for publication by the University of Rochester Press Eastman Studies in Music. She has appeared with such groups as the Apollo Ensemble, Arcovoce, the Washington Bach Consort, the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, Publick Musick, and Les Violons du Roy, and has recorded for CBC Radio, Dorian and Centaur Records. She teaches at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as a member of the adjunct faculty, and at Duke University, where she directs the Instrumental Collegium Musicum.

## **Jean François Beaudin**

Quebecois flutist and recorder player Jean-François Beaudin studied at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague. He served an apprenticeship in woodwind making with Fred Morgan in Australia and studied the bamboo flute in India. He has recorded previously with L'Ensemble Nouvelle-France. He lives and works in Freilighsburg, Québec, as a maker of flutes and recorders.