



Wolfgang Amadeus
Mozart

Piano Duets
Volume I

Julian Perkins &
Emma Abbate

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Piano Duets, Volume 1

Emma Abbate & Julian Perkins *piano duet*

Sonatas by W.A. Mozart:

Grand piano by Johann Peter Fritz, Vienna, c. 1815.

Compass: FF to f¹.

Sonata by J.C. Bach:

Single-strung square piano by Anton Walter & Son, Vienna, c. 1805.

Compass: C to f¹.

About Emma Abbate:

'[...] complete assurance and clear dedication'

International Record Review

About Julian Perkins:

'Exuberantly stylish'

Sunday Times

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Sonata in D major, K381

- | | |
|------------------|--------|
| 1. Allegro | [9:21] |
| 2. Andante | [6:37] |
| 3. Allegro molto | [7:57] |

Sonata in C major, K521

- | | |
|-----------------|--------|
| 4. Allegro | [5:42] |
| 5. Andante | [8:00] |
| 6. Allegretto * | [4:35] |

Johann Christian Bach (1735-1782)

Sonata in A major

- | | |
|----------------------|--------|
| 7. Allegretto | [7:34] |
| 8. Tempo di menuetto | [3:15] |

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Sonata in B-flat major, K358

- | | |
|------------------|--------|
| 9. Allegro | [4:09] |
| 10. Adagio | [6:31] |
| 11. Molto presto | [4:15] |

Total playing time [68:04]

* Cadenza by Julian Perkins after Muzio Clementi's 'Cadenza alla Mozart' in *Musical Characteristics*, Op. 19 (1787, revised 1807).



W.A. Mozart: Piano Duets, Volume 1

When Vincent Novello travelled to Salzburg in 1829 and met Mozart's elderly sister, he saw the large family portrait that had been commissioned by Leopold Mozart from Johann Nepomuk della Croce in 1780–81 (left – it now hangs in the Mozart Residence in Salzburg). Novello wrote in his travel diary: 'Near the bed was the original painting [which] represents Mozart and his sister playing a duet on the piano, the likeness of Mozart's mother in a frame and the father leaning on the piano forte with a violin in his hand.' The most interesting aspect of this charming picture is the depiction of Nannerl and Wolfgang as the *primo* and *secondo* players in a piano duet. They had been performing together on the piano since childhood, and Mozart may well have composed piano duets as early as 1765 when the family was staying in London. Though the authenticity of the Sonata K19d is now questioned, the Mozart children, described in the London press as 'prodigies of nature', certainly played together: on 9 July 1765, the *Public Advertiser* reported that they could be heard daily at the Swan and Harp Tavern in Cornhill, performing 'together with four hands upon the same harpsichord.'

Mozart and Nannerl played piano duets

together long after they had finished touring Europe as child sensations. Mozart probably composed the Sonata in D major K381 (K123a) at Salzburg in 1772, and the manuscript was known to have been in Nannerl's possession (in 1801 she gave a leaf of it to Baron de Trémont). Louis de Visme (or Lewis Devisme), was a British diplomat in Munich at the time, and on 30 November 1772 he wrote to his friend Charles Burney: 'I passed lately some days at Salsburg and had a great deal of Musick at the Archbishop's [...] Young Mozhart is [...] of the band, you remember this prodigy in England. [...] He is a great master of his instrument; for I went to his Father's house to hear him. He and his Sister can play together on the same Harpsichord'.

It is probable that the piece De Visme heard played by Mozart and his sister was the Sonata K382. This was five years before Charles Burney published his *Four Sonatas or Duets for two Performers on One Piano Forte or Harpsichord*, the first pieces for four hands on one keyboard to be published in England. Such was the novelty of these pieces that Burney thought it necessary to write an explanatory preface:

As the following pieces are the first that have appeared in print, of this kind, it may be necessary to say something concerning their utility and the manner of performing them. That great and varied effects may be produced

by Duets upon two keyed instruments, has been proved by several ingenious compositions [...] The playing [of] Duets by two persons upon one instrument is attended with nearly as many advantages, without the inconvenience of crowding a room, or of frequent or double tuning. And so extensive is the compass of keyed instruments, that the most full and elaborate compositions must, if played by one person, leave many parts of the scale unemployed. [...] And though, at first, the near approach of the hands of the different performers may seem awkward and embarrassing, a little use and contrivance with respect to the manner of placing them, and the choice of fingers, will soon remove that difficulty. Indeed, it frequently happens that when there are two students upon the same keyed instrument, in one house, they are in each other's way; however, by compositions of the following kind, they become reciprocally useful, and necessary companions in their musical exercises.

Burney described the attraction of being able to explore the whole range of the keyboard in four-hand music to produce a fuller effect than is possible with two hands. Mozart does just this in the opening sonata form 'Allegro' of K381, achieving a sound that is only possible with two players. Alfred Einstein thought of it in orchestral terms, writing that the sonata could be 'best described as a reduction of an Italian symphony – a symphony in which individual groups of winds and strings, of tutti and soli,

are quite sharply distinguished. And the "Andante" contains a genuinely orchestral effect, the melody of the *primo* being doubled two octaves lower by the "bassoon" or "cello" of the *secondo*.' The finale, marked 'Allegro molto', is short and energetic, a festive ending to this delightful work, in which strong, bright chords alternate with triplets, and contrasting ideas are thrown playfully from one player to the other.

The Sonata in B-flat K358 (K186c) was probably composed in April or May 1774 in Salzburg. The manuscript of this work also belonged to Nannerl at one time, before passing through several owners until it was acquired by Vincent Novello, who presented it to the British Library (Add MS 14396). This sonata begins with a breezy 'Allegro' with only a very short development section. The music is based mainly on the descending idea heard at the start, rapid scales, and a dotted rhythm – all familiar ingredients in Mozart's later keyboard writing. The core of the work is a lyrical 'Adagio' in E flat major, notable for its subtle and beguiling melody, supported by gently pulsating chords, in the manner of a string quartet slow movement. The finale, marked 'Molto presto', is short and straightforward.

Mozart didn't forget these two sonatas. During his stay in Mannheim in 1777–8, he





asked his father to send copies so that he could play them with some of the more promising students he was teaching. Five years later, they were also among the first of Mozart's works to be published by the Viennese firm of Artaria: in 1783 they were issued as *Deux sonates à quatre mains sur un clavecin ou pianoforte par W.A. Mozart. Oeuvre 3me.*

The Sonata in C major K521 was finished on 29 May 1787, written in the year that saw the completion of the C major and G minor string quintets (K515 and K516), *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* K525 and *Don Giovanni* K527. Coincidentally, the autograph manuscript of this work also found its way, eventually, into a British collection: it is now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. Mozart intended this sonata for one of his pupils, Franziska von Jacquin. She was clearly a talented pianist: a year earlier she had played the piano in the first performance of the 'Kegelstatt' Trio (K498) with Anton Stadler playing the clarinet and Mozart himself on the viola. Mozart meant this piece to be quite demanding, and sent it to Gottfried von Jacquin on the day it was completed with a covering letter: 'give this sonata to your sister with my compliments and tell her to start working on it at once as it is rather difficult.' The first edition, published in 1788 by Hoffmeister,

is dedicated not to Franziska von Jacquin but instead 'aux demoiselles Nanette et Babette de Natorp'. They were the musical daughters of a merchant, Franz Wilhelm Natorp, and Babette was another of Mozart's pupils. The opening 'Allegro', a substantial sonata form movement, begins with a theme in octaves that quickly gives way to brilliant scale passages in both parts. As Einstein put it, 'Nanette and Babette are treated quite impartially [...] the two parts are friendly rivals.' The central Andante is a song-like movement in F major, and the intricate dialogue between *primo* and *secondo* continues here. The finale is a delightful rondo, marked 'Allegretto' and full of wit and charm.

When Mozart went to London in 1765, he met Johann Christian Bach (1735-1782) and subsequently became a warm admirer of his music, freely admitting the influence it had on him. J.C. Bach's Sonata in A major for piano four hands, was first published in 1778 by the London firm of Welcker with the title 'Duetto', as one of *Four Sonatas and Two Duets for the Harpsichord or Piano Forte ... Opera 18*. It is in two movements, the first of which is an 'Allegretto' dominated by the theme which is introduced by the *primo* player before being repeated by the *secondo*. The second movement is a short, undemanding



Anton Prutz
in Wien

'Minuet'. Throughout this brief work, there's a very attractive dialogue between the two players.

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Finchcocks

From 1971 to 2015, the Finchcocks Musical Museum near Goudhurst in Kent was home to a collection of over 100 keyboard instruments plus related artefacts. The instruments ranged from harpsichords, virginals and clavichords to cottage pianos, early grand pianos and barrel organs. Set in an Arcadian oasis, Finchcocks put on thousands of varied events and was a global mecca for both the curious uninitiated and the touring virtuoso. The Finchcocks Charity for Musical Education, founded in 1984, retains a core collection of fourteen instruments from the Richard Burnett Heritage Collection of Early Keyboard Instruments (of which both pianos on this recording are part). The charity will continue to sponsor research projects and to work with students, with a particular – and much-needed – focus on training a new generation of early keyboard instrument restorers, tuners and technicians. Emma Abbate and Julian Perkins are honoured to be playing a part in the charity's future.

A Personal Tribute

I first came to Finchcocks aged twelve and, like innumerable visitors, was enthralled by the veritable menagerie of instruments on which one could actually play at this living museum. Never a fusty institution, Finchcocks always encouraged active participation, and I clearly remember once indulging in far too much hearty food in their Cellar Restaurant before playing the recorder in the annual 'Young Performers Recital'! A regular guest at Open Days, I will always be grateful to Finchcocks for nurturing my passion for original keyboard instruments. I wrote an article about Finchcocks and the indefatigable Burnetts for the magazine *Early Music Today* in 2006, and introduced Emma Abbate to the wayward delights of early keyboards when we performed at Finchcocks on a Clementi square piano in 2007 – our first concert together.

This recording was the last to be made at Finchcocks, but I speak for a host of musicians and music lovers in expressing relief that the sale of this Georgian 'mini-mansion' is not by any means the end of the story, but rather the end of a remarkable chapter.

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Finchcocks House & Musical Museum (photography: Paul Carter)

Emma & Julian extend their heartfelt thanks to Katrina and Richard Burnett and the Finchcocks Charity for Musical Education for generously allowing them to record in the Great Hall at Finchcocks.



Emma Abbate (piano – secondo)

Described as ‘an amazingly talented pianist’ by the leading Italian magazine *Musica*, Emma Abbate enjoys a demanding career as a piano accompanist and chamber musician, working with some of the finest singers and instrumentalists of her generation. She has performed in duo recitals for international festivals and concert societies in Salzburg, Lisbon, Naples, Ischia, Kosciierzyna and Sorrento, and at many prestigious UK venues such as the Wigmore Hall, Southbank Centre, Royal Opera House, St John’s Smith Square, St George’s, Bristol and Aldeburgh Festival, in addition to broadcasts on BBC Radio 3. She is also an advocate for historical pianos, and has given recitals at prestigious collections including Finchcocks and Hatchlands.

Emma is releasing a series of recordings devoted to twentieth-century Italian vocal chamber music, the latest of which is the world premiere disc of Shakespeare Sonnets by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco with the baritone Ashley Riches for Resonus Classics. The disc has been highly praised both by *International Record Review* and on BBC Radio 3’s CD Review. Other recordings include *L’Infinito*, a musical journey through twentieth-century Italian songs with the mezzo-soprano Kamelia Kader, world

premiere recordings of works by Krzysztof Meyer, Algernon Ashton and Stephen Dodgson with the cellist Evva Mizerska, and the world premiere recording of Stephen Dodgson’s piano quintets with the Tippett Quartet.

Based in London, Emma is a professor at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. Following her graduation from the S. Pietro a Majella Conservatoire in Naples and an Advanced Diploma from the S. Cecilia Conservatoire in Rome, Emma studied in London with Yonty Solomon. She completed her studies with Geoffrey Pratley as a scholar at the Royal Academy of Music, from where she graduated with distinction. She was also awarded an Italian Literature and Culture degree *cum laude* from the Federico II University in Naples.

www.emmaabbate.com



Julian Perkins (piano – primo)

Described as ‘exuberantly stylish’ by *The Sunday Times*, Julian Perkins enjoys a varied career as a keyboard player and conductor, is artistic director of Cambridge Handel Opera and founder-director of Sounds Baroque.

Julian’s discography has seen acclaimed solo and chamber recordings for Avie, Coro, Chandos, Opus Arte and Resonus Classics on a wide range of instruments, including the Royal harpsichord by Burkat Shudi at Kew Palace. These have included world premiere recordings playing harpsichord suites by James Nares and John Christopher Smith, Stephen Dodgson’s clavichord suites, and directing Daniel Purcell’s opera-oratorio *The Judgment of Paris*. Solo recitals have included appearances for international festivals at St Albans, Buxton, Canterbury, Colchester, Oundle, Ryedale and Two Moors in repertoire including J.S. Bach’s 48 Preludes and Fugues. Julian has also appeared with many leading soloists and ensembles at venues such as the Wigmore Hall, London, Lincoln Center, New York, and Sydney Opera House, as well as at the BBC Proms and Edinburgh International Festival. In addition to participating in productions at The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and

Welsh National Opera, Julian has performed concertos with groups including the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Orchestra of the Sixteen and New London Soloists. As a conductor, Julian has performed staged opera productions for organisations such as the Buxton Festival, Dutch National Opera Academy, Grimeborn Festival, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, Kings Place, New Chamber Opera and New Kent Opera, and concert performances with, among others, the Bampton Classical Players, Barts Chamber Choir, Bury Court Opera, New London Singers, Rodolfus Choir, Southbank Sinfonia and Spiritato.

Julian read music at King’s College, Cambridge, and completed his formal studies at the Schola Cantorum, Basle and the Royal Academy of Music, London. Singing is central to Julian’s approach to music; the prestigious Baylis programme at English National Opera and tours with the Monteverdi Choir were formative experiences. His diverse mentors have included Noelle Barker OBE, David Parry and Trevor Pinnock CBE. He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists, and has been elected an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music in recognition of his contribution thus far to the music profession.

www.julianperkins.com



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International Record Review

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Recorded in Finchcocks House, Kent on 29-30 November 2015

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Pianos prepared, maintained & tuned by Edmund Pickering

Recorded at 24-bit / 96kHz resolution (DDD)

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