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SONATA K208 DOMENICO SCARLATTI (1685 – 1757)

Domenico was born into an Italian family of composers and musicians in Naples, where his father Alessandro was in charge of his career as an organist and composer; in fact he appointed his son as *organist* to the royal chapel in Naples (1701), where he was “maestro di capella”. One year later father and son went to Florence to try their luck; here he met Bartolomeo Cristofori a famous keyboard instrument maker. Domenico did not go with his father to Rome and returned instead to Naples trying his hand at opera. He later went to Venice where he stayed for four years. Against his father’s wishes he took a post with the exiled Polish Queen Maria Casimira in Rome, writing for her seven successful operas. He also entered the service of the Marquis de Fontes and at St. Peter’s became an assistant maestro of the Cappella Giulia, being promoted to maestro in December 1714. He provided music for secular cantatas as well as church music, both with remarkable efficiency. He managed to escape his domineering father after a legal battle in 1717 and was free to take his own decisions concerning his career.

Two years later he resigned his positions in Rome and went to Palermo becoming *mestre* of the Portuguese court in Lisbon. He gave keyboard lessons to Maria Bárbara, daughter of Jorge V, and when she married the Spanish crown prince they went to live in Seville, Scarlatti followed them. In 1733 Domenico travelled to Madrid where he spent the rest of his life. It was in this phase of his life that he wrote his remarkable series of around one hundred sonatas for keyboard, all of them in the same binary form, some in pairs, where he let his imagination run free, stimulated by the new sounds and Spanish surroundings, and encouraged by his royal pupil and patron.

Sonata K208 explored the new worlds of a virtuoso technique, putting in the new musical trends, such devices as hand crossing, rapidly repeated notes, wide leaps in both hands, with brilliant effects. In 1738 he was honoured with a knighthood from King John V of Portugal and he returned the honour by dedicating to the King a volume of “Essercizi per gravicembalo”, the only work published under his supervision.

THAMAR Y AMNÓN UK Première LUCA LOMBARDI (b.1945)

Lombardi is one of the most talented composers of the new generation in Italy. He is 61 years old and has made incursion into every field related to Italian *New Music* ranging from the classical to the electronic. He studied piano and composition at the Universities of Vienna and Rome and

graduated with a research on the life of Hans Eisler, German composer and committed socialist, considered a national figure, who wrote political choruses, protest songs and film scores in a combative style. With regard to composition, Lombardi was under the supervision of A. Renzi, R. Lupi and B. Porena. He settled in Cologne from 1968 until 1972 where he attended classes given by B.A. Zimmermann and V. Globokar and also attended the *Kölner Kurse für Neue Musik* (1968-1970) with Stockhausen, Pousseur, Kagel, Schnebel and Rzewski. He was taught electronic music by H. Eimert (Cologne) and by G. M. Koenig (Utrecht) and later read a *Meisterschüler* under the supervision of P. Dessau in Berlin.

He is a proficient lecturer giving talks in composition all over Europe, USA, Canada, Latin America and Japan. He is also a prolific composer with more than eighty works being published by Schirmer, Moeck, Suvini Zerboni and Ricordi. Notable are his operas, *Faust, Un Travestimento* (1991) with text by E. Sanguinetti and *Dmitri oder Der Künstler und die Macht*, the wording by H.K. Jungheinrich (2000). He has been commissioned to write music by IRCAM (Paris), WDR (Cologne), RIKSKONSERTER (Stockholm), RSO (Berlin), Radio DDR (Berlin), and private requests. His academic career included a Fellowship at the Institute for Advanced Studies (Berlin) followed by another one at the Hans Institute for Advanced studies in Delmenhorst (Germany). He has written numerous essays and a number of books among them *Conversazioni con Petrassi* (Milan, 1980), and is the co-author of a treatise on orchestration entitled *Instrumentation in der Musik des 20. Jahrhunderts, Celle* (Germany, 1985). With regard to *Thamar y Amnón*, the UK première for tonight’s concert, in Lombardi’s own words he explained... “I met Reinbert Evans, German guitarist at a Festival in 1981, who asked me to write a piece for him. I accepted but was unable to fulfill my promise. However, at the end of February 1982 I was visiting Berlin and heard an opera about Federico García Lorca called *Die wundersame Schusterfrau* by Udo Zimmermann at the Staatsoper. The melody consisted only of three pitches with a vaguely Hispanic flavour which impressed me very much. The following evening I went through the pages of a poetry book by García Lorca at one of my friend’s house, and found out a poem I liked very much; it was about the relations between Thamar and Amnón, Jewish gypsies and their siblings camped out in Andalucía. I returned home a few days later and put on hold a piece for two pianos and orchestra I was working on, and begun writing on *Thamar y Amnón*. The Hispanic melody represents my humble homage to the guitar as an instrument as well as the music and poetry it represents...” *Construction of Freedom and other Writings*, by L. Lombardi, edited by Jürgen Thyn, Verlag Valentin Koerner, Baden-Baden, 2006.

SONATA PER CHITARRA World Première (Dedicated to Sante Tursi) I. *Vivace, molto regolare* II. *Adagio* III. *Presto* VITO PALUMBO (b.1972)

Palumbo graduated in pianoforte and composition under the supervision of Paolo Rotili and studied electronic music with Agostino Di Scipio. He gained his Diploma *summa cum laude* at the Conservatoire N. Puccini in Bari (Italy). He furthered his knowledge of composition by attending master classes with Signor Azio Corghi at the Chigiana Academy in Siena (Italy), obtaining Diplomas of merit. By 2003 he perfected his knowledge of composition by attending the Academy of Santa Cecilia in Rome, guided by Azio Corghi, where he won the Luciano Beri’s grant for being the best student of the year. Moreover, he was winner of the 22nd Competition of Composition. *Castello di Belveglio* in the electro-acoustic category, with his piece *Pulsar*, written for percussion and electronic instruments (2000). He also won the *Valentino Bucchi’s* prize in composition for his *La Machine des Sons*, for soprano and ensemble (2001) and the *Franco Evangelisti* prize with *Quintetto* written for flute, clarinet, violin, cello and piano plus the *Manuel Valcárcel* for his *Ab-sense* for piano, ademas the FMMC Washington International Composers prize for *Deviazioni classica nel “merigiare pallido...”* for string quartet and was semi-finalist at the Prokofiev International Competition with *Concerto per pianoforte e orchestra*.

As a composer he is highly regarded as a natural and brilliant writer and institutions such as, *Nuova Consonanza, Goethe Institut, Beijing Central Conservatoire, Academia Musicale Chigiana* (Siena), *Santander Foundation* (Spain), and the *Berliner Philharmoniker* have commissioned works. His music is broadcasted by RAI and Arté and is published by Suvini Zerboni, Curci and RAI Trade Editions. He teaches composition at the Cosenza Conservatoire in Italy. Recently he was presented with the prestigious Goffredo Petrassi prize by President Berlusconi for his distinguished career.

“...The *Sonata per Chitarra* was inspired by and dedicated to Sante Tursi. It is a work divided into three movements with the traditional fast ones at the beginning and at the end of the piece as well as one slow movement in the middle. The first one *Vivace molto regolare* was written with melodic rhythmic patterns generating a continuity in the piece; it is a kind of work where this pattern moved into different tonalities with a jazz flavour. Also the first bar has a very strong rhythmic peculiarity where through a constant sixteenth flow, one could hear the typical accents that define its *pop* characteristic. However, *Adagio* is a melancholic *cantabile* which is suitable for