# **The Flute Music of Frederick II**

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# Master of Arts in Music (Performance)

## Waterford Institute of Technology

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## Declaration

I hereby declare that, except where duly acknowledged, this dissertation represents my own work and has not been submitted, in whole or in part, by me or any other person, for the purpose of obtaining any other qualification.

Sarah J. Macken 6 March 2012

#### Abstract

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Frederick II 'the Great' of Prussia (1712-1786) is regarded as one of the greatest aristocratic dilettante musicians and composers of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This Master of Arts in Music (Performance) minor dissertation explores his flute music with particular reference to the compositional style of his flute sonatas and concertos. It commences with an overview of Frederick's musical background, focusing on relevant biographical details that relate both to the formative influences on his musical training and tastes, and to the development of his compositional style. A historical examination of his abilities as a flautist (citing contemporaneous first-hand accounts) and the actual flutes upon which he played concludes that Frederick, while not faultless, was a skilled flautist judging from the technically difficult music that he and others composed for him to perform. The remaining chapters explore the musical structures and style that he employed in writing for the flute in his sonatas and concertos.

Frederick's flute music adheres to the 'rules' set out by Quantz in his *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversière zu spielen* (Berlin, 1752). By imitating the forms and style of Quantz's own flute works precisely, posterity has perhaps judged Frederick's dilettante compositions for the instrument unfairly in comparison with those of his far more experienced professional teacher. Notwithstanding the formulaic nature of these works, however, the concluding premise of the dissertation asserts that Frederick's extant published flute sonatas and the four flute concertos have significant artistic merits, warranting a deserved place in the instrument's repertoire.

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#### **Literature Review**

The flute music of Frederick II, 'The Great', of Prussia, has only been examined to a limited extent in publications to date. The principal research in English is by the authors of the entry on Frederick in <u>New Grove/2</u>, Eugene Helm and Derek McCulloch.<sup>1</sup>This article consists of a short biography that focuses on Frederick's musical interests and training and his contribution to the musical life in Berlin as a patron and, to a lesser extent, as a composer. Only one sentence refers to his flute music, however,<sup>2</sup> and the worklist simply states the total number of flute concertos and sonatas that he wrote (citing the two published editions noted below) rather than listing these individually. Eugene Helm's seminal book, *Music at the Court of Frederick the Great* (1960), devotes chapters to each of the main composers involved in addition to one on Frederick himself that includes anecdotal evidence of his flute playing abilities together with an overview of his compositions. The ten pages that focus on Frederick's works for flute are mainly descriptive and are mostly comprised of musical examples. This publication naturally also contains some information which is now regarded as inaccurate.<sup>3</sup>

Derek McCulloch's dissertation *Aristocratic Composers in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century* (1990) explores the music of many such *dilettante* composers. Chapter 6 is entitled "The House of Hohenzollern", and the first 26 pages of this are devoted to Frederick. McCulloch importantly clarifies some of the confusion caused by the various existing numbering systems of Frederick's flute sonatas.<sup>4</sup> He does not discuss the anecdotal evidence of Frederick's playing abilities, stating that it has been dealt with by others, nor does he critically discuss the music itself. He compares the 25 sonatas published by Spitta to the 38 praised by Gustav Thouret in his catalogue of 1895 and remarks on the fact that there is no overlap between the two. According to McCulloch, "It would serve little purpose here to confuse the issue even further

by adding a third value judgement."<sup>5</sup> He also appraises the two main works on Frederick's flute music, Spitta's preface to his 1889 anthology and Helm's book of 1960 and comments on their respective musical observations.McCulloch's article,*A Lesson on the King of Prussia: a New Look at the Compositions of Frederick the Great*(1995), discusses the merits and limitations of Spitta's publication and Helm's work. It does not examine Frederick's works for flute from a musical perspective but focuses instead on the authenticity of all of Frederick's compositions, considering the anecdotal evidence of Charles Burney and others.

The fourth chapter of Alan Yorke-Long's *Music at Court* (1954) is entitled "Frederick the Great". This includes a biography of the king and an account of his contribution to the musical life in Berlin with particular focus on opera, although chamber music and the musicians in Frederick's employment are also considered. Just one paragraph is devoted to his compositions for the flute and slightly over a page to his flute playing abilities. Finally, Dr. Charles Burney's account of his European musical tour in*The Present State of Music in Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Provinces* (1773) provides invaluable first-hand historical anecdotal evidence of the musical life at Frederick's court and of the king's playing abilities, the only such account in English to do so.

With regard to Frederick's compositions for flute, Philipp Spitta's anthology of 1889 contains all four flute concertos but only 25 of his 121 flute sonatas, and this remains the only published source of the latter.<sup>6</sup> Gustav Thouret published a catalogue of works in Frederick's former library in Berlin in 1896 and marked with an asterisk those works which he thought were of particular merit, including 38 flute sonatas, none of which, however, overlap with those chosen by Spitta for publication. Spitta's forward in his edition has yet to be translated into English but has been referred to by other authors.

### **Discography**<sup>7</sup>

Title and publication details	Work(s) by Frederick II	Performers
Flute Concertos From Sanssouci -	Flute concerto 3 in C	Emmanuel Pahud (flute),
A Tribute To Frederick The Great		Kammerakademie
DVD (C Major, 711308, 2011)		Potsdam,
		Trevor Pinnock
The Flute King: Music from the		(harpsichord/director)
Court of Frederick the Great		
CD (EMI, 5099908422026, 2011)		
FlötenkonzerteausSanssouci –	Flute concerto 3 in C	Patrick Gallois (flute),
Flute Concertos from Sanssouci		Kammerorchester Carl
CD (Deutsche Grammophon,		Philipp Emanuel Bach,
439 895-2, 1994)		Peter Schreier
		(conductor)
Frederick the Great	Flute sonata 190 in c <sup>8</sup>	ChristophHuntgeburth
Music for the Berlin Court		(flute),
CD (Harmonia Mundi, 902132,		AkademiefürAlteMusik
2012)		Berlin, Stephan Mai
		(violin/conductor)
King Frederick the Great of	Flute sonatas 126 in a, 146	Mary Oleskiewicz
Prussia – Seven Flute Sonatas	in C, 182 in B flat, 184 in g,	(flute), Balazs Mate
CD (Hungaraton, 32698, 2011)	189 in b, 214 in d, 261 in F <sup>9</sup>	(cello), David
		Schulenberg
		(harpsichord)
The Musical Legacy of Frederick	Flute sonatas 117 in A, 144	Gerhard Mallon (flute),
the Great	in G <sup>10</sup>	Julian Byzantine
CD (Meridian Records, 84558,		(guitar) <sup>11</sup>
2008)	10	
Music from the Court of Frederick	Flute sonata 24 in C <sup>12</sup>	Rachel Brown (flute),
the Great		Collegium Musicum 90,
CD (Chandos Chaconne,		Simon Standage (violin/
CHAN0541, 1994)		director)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>There are also two biographies of Frederick II in English, both entitled *Frederick the Great*: one by Giles MacDonagh (1999) and the other by Nancy Mitford (1970). Neither of these is written from a musical perspective, although MacDonagh's book was consulted to check biographical and historical details. <sup>2</sup>"His model in flute sonatas and concertos was Quantz, and through him the sonatas of Tartini and solo

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>"His model in flute sonatas and concertos was Quantz, and through him the sonatas of Tartini and solo concertos of Vivaldi"(<u>New Grove/2</u>, ix, 218-219).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>McCulloch (1990), 216.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> This will be examined in Chapter 4. McCulloch gives a thorough explanation of the numbering system and corrects some mistakes made in other publications.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>McCulloch (1990), 219.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>The flute concertos were also edited by Gustav Lenzewski and were published in 1925, but this edition was not consulted for this dissertation because it was unavailable at the time.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>Available recordings only: a CD of Frederick's Flute concertos 1, 2 and 4 (Orchester Pro Arte München, Kurt Redel (flute/director), Philips, 426 083-2, 1980) was deleted many years ago, for example.

<sup>8</sup>This sonata was numbered 190 in the original manuscripts where Frederick's sonatas were kept alongside those of Quantz. Spitta numbered it 84 in his Thematic Index and it is Sonata 2 of his edition. The various numbering systems of Frederick's sonatas are discussed in Chapter 4.

<sup>9</sup> These seven sonatas, numbered 126, 146, 182, 184, 189, 214 and 261 in the original manuscripts, were renumbered in Spitta's Index as 21, 40, 76, 78, 83, 107, 118 respectively. 184/78 was published in Spitta's edition as Sonata 6, 214/107 as Sonata 11 and 261/118 as Sonata 8. <sup>10</sup>These sonata numbers refer to the order in which they appeared in the original manuscripts. Sonata 117 is 12 in

<sup>10</sup>These sonata numbers refer to the order in which they appeared in the original manuscripts. Sonata 117 is 12 in Spitta's Thematic Index and 20 in Spitta's edition. Sonata 144 is 38 in Spitta's Index and remains unpublished. <sup>11</sup>The *continuo* was edited for guitar by Byzantine for this recording.

<sup>12</sup>This sonata is not numbered on the CD but is Spitta's Sonata 24 of the 25 sonatas that he published.

#### Introduction

This minor dissertation complements the two formal flute recitals that fulfilled the practical requirement for this Master of Arts in Music (Performance).<sup>1</sup> It will focus on the flute music of Frederick II 'the Great', the 18<sup>th</sup>-century King of Prussia who was renowned as one of the greatest aristocratic dilettante performers and composers of the time. Chapter 1 will present a historical overview of Frederick's life, concentrating on biographical and music-related aspects relevant to this topic. Chapter 2 will provide details of the flutes Frederick played and the capabilities of these instruments, and it will also discuss his playing ability with reference both to anecdotal evidence and music written for the king. Chapter 3 will provide an overview of Frederick's compositions, including those for flute, and it will also examine a number of relevant general aspects of his compositional style. Chapter 4 will focus on Frederick's flute sonatas, specifically the 25 published in the Spitta edition,<sup>2</sup> and it will consider both the structure of these sonatas and the writing for flute. Chapter 5 will examine the four flute concertos, focusing once again on their form and writing for flute but also on the role of the accompanying instruments. Frederick also composed *solfeggi* or technical warm-up exercises for the flute: regrettably it was not possible to obtain a reliable copy of these exercises, and they are therefore not examined in the dissertation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The flute recitals took place in the Good Shepherd Chapel at the College Street campus of Waterford Institute of Technology on 1 June 2006 and 31 May 2007.

 $<sup>^2</sup>$  Frederick's remaining 96 flute sonatas remain unpublished and were therefore unfortunately unavailable for examination for the purpose of researching and writing this dissertation.

#### **Chapter 1**

#### Frederick 'the Great' – Composer and Flautist

Frederick II of Prussia (1712-1786), also known as Frederick 'the Great', was the son of Frederick William I and the grandson of Frederick I, the first King of Prussia. While Frederick I kept an extravagant court, Frederick William I was much more austere, and when he succeeded his father in 1713 he disbanded the court orchestra, being really only interested in the use of horns for hunting.<sup>1</sup> Opera at Berlin declined abruptly and performances by foreign ensembles were eventually forbidden. He instructed the young Frederick's tutors to make him

"a good Christian, accomplished horseman, man of honor, stoical, courteous, pious without bigotry, a good judge of works of culture, with all the manners, graces, ease, and self-control which come of frequenting good company."<sup>2</sup>

The study of Latin was forbidden, as was attendance at "operas, comedies [and] other follies of the laity."<sup>3</sup> Instead he was to be taught French, German, agriculture and the mathematics of war. His study of history was to be limited to European politics of the 150 years prior to his father's reign.<sup>4</sup>

Frederick William I did not initially oppose his son's musical development, and Frederick was allowed to learn the piano, violin and flute from the age of five and composition under a cathedral organist, Gottlieb Hayne, two years later.<sup>5</sup> In 1728 Frederick accompanied his father on a visit to the court of Augustus II 'the Strong', King of Poland and Elector of Saxony, at Dresden. Here he first heard the flautist Johann Joachim Quantz (1697-1773), who had been a member of the Dresden court orchestra since March 1728, and who was soon to have a profound influence on Frederick.<sup>6</sup> Later that year Augustus made a return visit to the Berlin court, taking with him a group of musicians including Quantz and another flautist, Pierre Gabriel Buffardin.<sup>7</sup> Quantz made such a strong impression on both Frederick and his sister

Wilhelmina that their mother, Queen Sophia-Charlotte, immediately offered him "a good position".<sup>8</sup> Quantz declined, however, claiming that he was unable to obtain his release from Dresden, but he did begin to make twice-yearly visits to Berlin to give flute lessons to Frederick.

In 1730 Frederick made an unsuccessful attempt to escape to England from his father's tyranny. Two friends, Lieutenants Hans Hermann Katte and Peter Karl Christoph Keith, accompanied him, but they were intercepted, and Frederick was confined to the fortress of Cüstrin and was forced to watch his friend Katte's execution.<sup>9</sup> Up until this time Frederick William had tolerated his son's interest in music, but he now completely forbade it, and his "books, flute and sheet music were all to be taken away."<sup>10</sup> Frederick persuaded his captors to bring him his flute, however, and, unknown to his father, he continued to play and also put together his first musical ensemble,<sup>11</sup> although Quantz remained in Dresden.<sup>12</sup>

The king was now determined that Frederick should marry a bride of his choosing despite his son's reluctance:

"As long as I am left a bachelor, I will thank God that I am one, and if I marry I shall certainly make a very bad husband, for I feel neither constant nor enough attached to the fair sex... the very thought of my wife is a thing so disagreeable to me that I cannot think of it without a feeling of distaste."<sup>13</sup>

In accordance with his father's wishes, Frederick finally married Princess Elizabeth Christina of Brunswick (1715-1797) in 1733 after several attempts to delay the wedding. Following his marriage he obeyed the king by taking an interest in taxes, agriculture and war, and he also took command of a regiment near Ruppin.<sup>14</sup> At the same time, however, and unknown to his father,<sup>15</sup> he maintained his private ensemble of musicians at his residence in Ruppin, which grew to a substantial yet insecure orchestra by 1736, when Frederick moved his small court to nearby Rheinsberg.<sup>16</sup> Among the seventeen musicians who accompanied him there were the composer and director of his chamber music, Carl Heinrich Graun, the violinists Johann

Gottlieb Graun and Franz Benda, the viola player Johann Benda, the harpsichordist Christoph Schaffrath and the double bass player Johann Gottlieb Janitsch.<sup>17</sup> Frederick also continued his occasional lessons on flute.<sup>18</sup> The death of Augustus II in 1733 would have allowed Quantz to transfer to his employment if he had so wished, but he enjoyed an active musical life in his secure position at Dresden and so chose to remain there under Augustus III. In a letter to his sister Wilhelmine on 6 November 1733, Frederick expressed his displeasure at Quantz's decision:

"Quantz is probably pleased that his new lord has ascended to the throne. Since he does not wish to change from horse to donkey, he has considered it advisable to break his word to me; for he had promised to enter my service."<sup>19</sup>

In addition to his flute lessons, Frederick studied composition with Carl Heinrich Graun (1704-1759), his director of chamber music from 1735 and his royal Kapellmeister from 1740.<sup>20</sup>

When Frederick acceded to the throne in 1740 he initially devoted much of his time to political reforms and military conquests.<sup>21</sup> In the same year he also established the Berlin Opera, sent C.H. Graun to Italy to employ singers and employed C.P.E. Bach as his principal harpsichordist.<sup>22</sup> Quantz finally entered his service in December 1741, the year in which the new opera house was opened.<sup>23</sup> During the period 1742 to 1756, initially at Berlin and from 1747 chiefly at his *Sans Souci* palace at Potsdam, Frederick held musical soirées every evening, the repertoire for which consisted of flute sonatas and concertos mainly by Quantz or the king himself, with one or the other of them as soloist.<sup>24</sup> Quantz's duties included organising the king's evening soirées. For this he received

'a stipend of two thousand thalers a year for life, in addition to a special payment for my compositions, a hundred ducats for each flute that I would supply, and the privilege of playing only in the Royal Chamber Ensemble, not in the [opera] orchestra, and of taking orders from none but the king....<sup>25</sup>

When Frederick played the flute, Quantz beat time but rarely performed in the accompanying ensemble, and only he was allowed to criticise Frederick's flute playing (see below).<sup>26</sup>

Conversely, when Quantz played the solo flute part Frederick followed the score and pointed out any of his mistakes.<sup>27</sup>

Frederick maintained his daily flute practice even on the battlefield, and he often sent to Berlin for an accompanist. During the winter of 1760-61 he was joined by Carl Friedrich Christian Fasch,<sup>28</sup> who accompanied him on a portable clavier (*Reiseclavier*),<sup>29</sup> and during the final battle of the Seven Years' War, Frederick sent for a quartet of musicians. The decline of Frederick's performing ability was evident as early as the winter of 1760-61, when he sent for Fasch, who reported that he found

"an old man, considerably changed and given an appearance of deep melancholy by five years of battles, worry, sorrow and hard work. He had completely lost his former lively aspect; he was aged far beyond his years. And his playing was sour."<sup>30</sup>

By the end of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), Frederick had become 'der alte Fritz': he had lost a front tooth, his fingers had become stiff and he also suffered from shortness of breath. In the last few years of his life he was forced to give up the flute entirely.<sup>31</sup> Early in 1779, as he packed his flute before returning to Potsdam, he remarked to Franz Benda, "My dear Benda, I have lost my best friend."<sup>32</sup> Towards the end of his life Frederick became increasingly isolated as his friends gradually died, and he died in an armchair in his study in the palace of *Sans Souci* on 17 August 1786.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> MacDonagh (1999), 20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Helm (1960), 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Hayne (1684-1758) was employed as a court cellist from 1708 onwards by Frederick I, remaining in this position until the orchestra was disbanded in 1713. Before 1719, the year in which he began to teach the young Frederick, he had obtained the position of a Berlin cathedral organist and schoolteacher (Eitner (1900-04), v, 78). From this point onwards any reference in this chapter to Frederick refers implicitly to Frederick II.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Quantz began his training as a town musician at Merseburg at the age of ten, studying the violin, oboe, trumpet, cornett, trombone, horn, recorder, bassoon, cello, viola da gamba, double bass and harpsichord. He also made his first attempts at composition at this time. In 1716 he moved to Dresden and became an oboist in the town band. In 1718 he was accepted as an oboist in the newly formed *Kleine Kammermusik* at the court of Augustus II. This group of 12 musicians accompanied Augustus on trips to Warsaw. The following year, at the age of 22, he took up the transverse flute as he saw little opportunity of advancing his career as an oboist.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Buffardin (*c*1690-1768) entered the service of Augustus II in 1715 and "was soon regarded as one of the outstanding players in the court orchestra.... For four months [he] was the teacher of J.J. Quantz" (<u>New Grove/2</u>,

iv, 559). Although of the same generation as Quantz and surely the better flautist of the two due to Quantz having taken up the flute at the relatively late age of 22, it was the latter who was to attract the patronage of Frederick rather than his more experienced French colleague. Powell ((2002), 104) claims that Quantz was the better musician: "though Quantz studied with Buffardin... his own teaching and practice far surpassed Buffardin", but this is not confirmed by any other writer.

<sup>8</sup> Quantz/Reilly (2001), xx.

<sup>9</sup> Cüstrin or Küstrin is a small town on the banks of the River Oder on the German-Polish border, today part of Poland and known as Kostrzyn. Lieutenant Keith later escaped to serve in the Portuguese army and only returned to Prussia when Frederick succeeded his father (MacDonagh, 1999, 71).

<sup>10</sup> MacDonagh (1999), 67. Even after Katte's execution, when Frederick was allowed slightly more freedom, although still lodged at the fortress, "there were to be no foreign languages, literature or music.... He still had little contact with the outside world" (ibid., 74-5). The king even denied Frederick's request to have music played on the occasion of his nineteenth birthday on 24 January 1731 (ibid., 77). Only from August 1731 was Frederick allowed to "spend his afternoons outside the fortress" (ibid., 80).

<sup>11</sup> Powell (2002), 98. The instrumentation of this ensemble is not known.

<sup>12</sup> By staying in Dresden Quantz's salary was increased from 250 thalers (in addition to a stipend of 216 thalers) to 800 thalers (ibid.).

<sup>13</sup> Helm (1960), 15, quoting P. Gaxotte, Frederick the Great, transl. R.A. Bell (New Haven, 1942), 97-8.

<sup>14</sup> Ruppin (now Neuruppin) was a garrison town in Brandenburg from 1688 onwards.

<sup>15</sup> MacDonagh (1999), 95.

<sup>16</sup> Rheinsberg is also a town in Brandenburg. Frederick was granted an old castle by his father and had it restored. It later became the residence of his brother.

<sup>17</sup> J.G. Graun (1703–1771) was initially employed by Frederick in 1732 as a composer and violinist, and he became *Konzertmeister* of the Berlin Opera on Frederick's accession to the throne in 1740. C.H. Graun (1704-1759), Johann's younger brother, joined Frederick's ensemble in 1735 as director of chamber music and composer of Italian cantatas; he also taught Frederick music theory and composition and became royal *Kapellmeister* on his accession. Franz Benda (1709-1786) was employed by Frederick in 1733 as a violinist in his court ensemble on Quantz's recommendation, and in 1771 he succeeded J.G. Graun as *Konzertmeister* after the latter's death. Johann Benda (1713-1752), Franz's younger brother, entered Frederick's employment in 1734 as a viola player but later played the violin. Schaffrath (1709-1763) played harpsichord in Frederick's ensemble from 1733 but from 1741 onwards chiefly worked as a musician for one of Frederick's sisters, Princess Amalie. Janitsch (1708-1763) was engaged by Frederick in 1736 to play the double bass (he was also an organist). All of these musicians also composed (information from <u>New Grove/2</u>: see bibliography for individual citations).

<sup>18</sup> Helm (1960), 16. Helm uses the word "continued" in relation to both Frederick's flute and composition lessons but makes no mention whatsoever of any previous composition lessons with Quantz.

<sup>19</sup> Quantz/Reilly (2001), xxi.

<sup>20</sup> Helm (1960), 49. Frederick presumably began his composition lessons with Graun in the same year that the latter entered his service.

<sup>21</sup> In 1740, for example, Emperor Charles of Austria died and Frederick took this opportunity to invade and claim Silesia.

<sup>22</sup> Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach (1714-1788) "must initially have been paid from the prince's privy purse", since he was not officially appointed to Frederick's service until 1741, remaining there until 1767 (<u>New Grove/2</u>, ii, 388).

<sup>23</sup> Two new operas by Graun and occasionally works by Hasse were staged each season.

<sup>24</sup> These evening concerts were held daily apart from the months of December and January and the Queen Mother's birthday on 27 March, which were reserved for theatrical performances. Operas were performed every Monday and Friday during these two months.

<sup>25</sup> Quantz/Reilly (2001), xxii: translation of a quotation from 'Herrn Johann Joachim Quantzens Lebenslauf, von ihm selbst entworfen' as cited by F.W. Marpurg, *Historisch-kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik*, (Berlin, 1755), i, 248.

<sup>26</sup> Helm (1960), 159.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 120.

<sup>28</sup> Fasch (1736-1800) was appointed as Frederick's second harpsichordist in 1756, alternating with C.P.E. Bach as the king's accompanist. In 1774 he succeeded Johann Friedrich Agricola (1720-1774) as director of the Royal Opera in Berlin for two years, and he remained in Frederick's service until the king's death in 1786 (<u>New Grove/2</u>, viii, 586-587).
 <sup>29</sup> Helm (1960), 36, taken from G. Thouret, *Friedrich der Grosse als Musikfreund und Musiker* (Leipzig, 1898),

<sup>29</sup> Helm (1960), 36, taken from G. Thouret, *Friedrich der Grosse als Musikfreund und Musiker* (Leipzig, 1898), 137. The portable *Reiseclavier* was made in three separate pieces by Marius in Paris: it accompanied Frederick to the battlefield during every campaign.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 37, also taken from Thouret, 135.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., taken from J.F. Reichardt, *Musikalische Anekdoten*, Musikalisches Kunstmagazin, ii (1791), 40.

#### Chapter 2

#### Frederick's Flutes and his Flute Playing Ability

The first half of this chapter will focus on the flutes that Frederick 'the Great' played, most of which were made for him by Quantz. The construction and other features of the instrument at that time will be compared with those specific to Quantz's flutes. The second half of the chapter will discuss Frederick's flute playing ability, examining the available historical and anecdotal evidence.

#### **Frederick's Flutes**

Quantz first began to design and make flutes in 1739 due to the lack of availability of good

instruments.<sup>1</sup> C.F. Nicolai gave an account of how he first became interested in this:<sup>2</sup>

"Already in Dresden Quantz had made many observations on the true tuning of the notes of the flute. He knew how difficult it is to play in tune on this instrument. He sought to remedy this defect [and] had his flutes turned [on a lathe] with great care from the best wood, then himself very carefully measured off the tuning, and bored [i.e. drilled] the holes of the flute himself."<sup>3</sup>

He also mentioned that Quantz praised a trunk of ebony from Portugal as the best he had ever

seen.<sup>4</sup> In his Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversière zu spielen, Quantz described the

different materials used for making flutes at the time:

"Flutes are fashioned out of different kinds of hard wood, such as boxwood, ebony, kingwood, lignum sanctum, granadilla, &c. Boxwood is the most common and durable wood for flutes. Ebony, however, produces the clearest and most beautiful tone. Anyone who wishes to make the tone of the flute shrill, rude and disagreeable can have it cased with brass, as some have tried."<sup>5</sup>

From the initial quotation above it is apparent that Quantz employed someone else to craft the basic instrument and then took over himself for the vital tasks of measuring and boring the holes and putting the finishing touches to it, being engaged at every stage of the flute's production. This certainly reflects a far greater personal involvement than was implied in 1800 by the German flute player, maker and teacher, Johann George Tromlitz (1725-1805),

who claimed "Quantz made no flutes with his own hands but only gave his ideas to the instrument maker working for him."<sup>6</sup>

After 1741, the year in which he finally entered the service of Frederick, Quantz made flutes for the king, who regularly procured foreign woods for these instruments. In his autobiography Quantz wrote that he was to receive "a hundred ducats for each flute that [he] would supply".<sup>7</sup> An extract from a letter written by Frederick from Silesia on 6 October 1745 to one of his servants, Fredersdorf, shows how specific his demands were regarding his flutes:<sup>8</sup>

"Quantz is going to make two new flutes for me, very unusual ones; one will have a strong tone and the other will blow very lightly and have a sweet upper register. He will have them ready for me when I return."<sup>9</sup>

On 9 October he expressed his dissatisfaction with one of these instruments:

"I have received Quantz's flute, but it is not very good. I have given Quantz one that is better to keep for me. Give it to me in Berlin."<sup>10</sup>

According to Waterhouse, Quantz "supplied Frederick in 1745 with two flutes at 100 ducats

each, in 1751 four flutes at 1100 reichsthaler, in 1754 with three flutes".<sup>11</sup> Helm includes a

description given in 1932 by the German flautist Georg Müller (1882-1956) of some of

Frederick's flutes:

"Two of the instruments were made of ivory, each having one key (E flat); one was of amber with two golden keys (E flat and D sharp); four were of ebony, each with two silver keys; and one was of boxwood, having a single key."<sup>12</sup>

Figure 1 is a table of the extant flutes made by Quantz and their current locations.

Quantz's serial number	Location and catalogue number (if known)
III	Karlsruhe, Germany: private collection
IV	Leipzig: Musikinstrumenten Museum – 1236n
XIII	Washington D.C., USA: Library of Congress – DCM 916
XV	Hamamatsu, Japan: City Museum
XVII	Berlin: Kunstgewerbemuseum – Hz 1289
XVII	Potsdam: Schloss Sans Souci – V18
XVIII	Berlin: Staatliches Institut für Musikforschung – PKB 5076
None	Hechingen, Germany: Burg Hohenzollern

#### **Figure 1: Current Location of Quantz's Extant Flutes**<sup>13</sup>

The Baroque flute emerged around 1670, consisting of three or more pieces, one or more keys and with a conical bore.<sup>14</sup> The tapered bore improved the tuning of the overblown notes but also flattened the scale, and, in order to compensate for this, the fingerholes were more closely spaced. The six fingerholes were under-cut, the diameter of the holes being greater inside the tube and gradually decreasing towards the exterior of the instrument. These holes were covered directly by the fingers. A seventh hole was covered by a key called the D# (Eb) key, which was added to the flute around 1670. It allowed a hole to be vented between the end of the flute and the first hole, which was out of reach of the fingers. The hole was covered by a key which was controlled by the little finger of the right hand by means of a lever. This new flute could play chromatic notes more clearly and could play in a wider range of keys than ever before.<sup>15</sup>

In 1726, on a visit to Paris, and long before he started to design and make flutes himself, Quantz had had a second key added to his flute. He favoured mean tone over equal temperament, even though many keyboard players had already accepted the latter. Quantz and many of his contemporaries preferred to distinguish between enharmonic notes. A whole tone was divided into nine equal parts called commas: a large or diatonic semitone was made up of five commas, while a small or chromatic semitone consisted of four commas. For example, Eb and D# were a comma apart, the flattened note being slightly higher in pitch than the sharpened note.<sup>16</sup> So Quantz added a second key, also operated by the little finger of the right hand, which closes a slightly smaller hole bored beside the Eb hole. According to Quantz's fingering chart the second key was used for four notes:  $d\#^1$ ,  $a\#^1$ ,  $d\#^2$  and  $a\#^2$ . This key made the precise tuning of these enharmonic distinctions easier, although it was never widely accepted.<sup>17</sup>

As there were large differences in pitch throughout Europe during the eighteenth century, it was necessary to find a way to change the basic pitch of the flute as it was not practical for flautists to own several flutes at different pitches. One solution, known as the *corps de réchange*, was devised around 1722. This involved the division of the central body of the flute into two pieces. Replacements were constructed for the upper middle section of various lengths, and so the pitch of the flute could be raised or lowered accordingly. Figure 2 shows Quantz's flute XIII (currently in Washington D.C.) with four additional upper middle sections. Substitution of the *corps de réchange* required the position of the cork in the flute to be adjusted, and so the heavy ornamental cap of the Baroque was replaced by the screw cap and plug assembly, which was much smaller and lighter and could be screwed in and out easily. Quantz adopted this device for his own flutes although it was relatively uncommon with other makers.<sup>18</sup>



Figure 2: The Washington D.C. Flute XIII by Quantz<sup>19</sup>

In his autobiography, Quantz claimed to have invented the tuning slide in 1752.<sup>20</sup> This is a second tenon and socket in the head piece, much thinner and longer than the tenon that joins the head piece to the middle section. It was used for making minute pitch adjustments that were too small to require a change of the upper middle section. This slide eventually became a common feature of flutes made in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.<sup>21</sup> Other tuning devices included the foot register, which was a telescoping section at the end of the foot joint that was used to lengthen or shorten that joint corresponding to the length of the *corps de réchange* being used. Quantz disapproved of this mechanism for the following reasons:

"The purpose is supposed to be to make the foot a little shorter for each shorter middle piece, so that with the help of six middle pieces [*corps de réchange*] the flute might be made a whole tone higher or lower.... But since shortening the foot makes only the D higher, while the following notes, D#, E, F, G, &c., remain for the most part unchanged and do not rise with the D in the proper proportion, it follows that the flute does indeed become a whole note higher, but also that it becomes completely out of tune, except [when it is used] with the first [i.e. the longest] piece."<sup>22</sup>

Surviving flutes by Quantz show that he favoured quite low-pitched instruments: the extant *corps de réchange* give a range from a' = 392 to a' = 415, which was uncommonly low for European flutes of this period. Quantz's preference was also for a wide-bored instrument

producing a dark and mellow lower and middle register. This was achieved at the expense of the high register, as high notes are difficult to produce on flutes with such wide bores. Quantz's flutes are not typical of the mid-eighteenth century but are more in keeping with those made in France in the early 1700s.<sup>23</sup>

#### **Frederick's Flute Playing Ability**

There is much available historical and anecdotal evidence of Frederick's performing ability on the flute. Although there is an abundance of quotations from a variety of writers, some of these were certainly more qualified than others to comment on his playing, such as Reichardt, C.P.E. Bach, Nicolai, Benda and Fasch, who were all musicians in Frederick's court, although their comments may have also been influenced by their position as his employees.<sup>24</sup> His principal accompanist, C.P.E. Bach, for example, who stated in his autobiography that he "had the honour of accompanying the 'first flute solo' played by the new king 'alone at the harpsichord'",<sup>25</sup> may have resented Frederick as he was not as highly valued as other musicians such as both Grauns and, above all, Quantz, despite his superior talent. Others who commented on Frederick's performances included the soprano Elizabeth Mara and Baron Jakob Friedrich von Bielfeld, a friend of Frederick's who, although not a musician himself, was present at several of the evening concerts at Rheinsberg and in close proximity to the performers: "I have often had the honour of standing behind him during his performances".<sup>26</sup>

The flute music written for Frederick surely provides firm evidence that he was a competent flautist. His court composers were aware of his technical abilities and presumably took these into account when composing solos for him. The fast movements, with long semiquaver passages in the middle register and few opportunities for breath are still considered difficult by today's soloists.<sup>27</sup> Dr. Charles Burney arrived in Berlin in 1772, and before going on to Potsdam, he met with many of the court musicians, including Agricola,

Nicolai, Kirnberger,<sup>28</sup> Benda and Quantz. He received a tour of *Le Nouveau Palais* and heard Frederick perform at one of his private concerts, although the king was 60 years old at this time and may not have been at his best. Burney wrote about the private concert he attended: "His majesty played three long and difficult concertos successively, and all with equal perfection."<sup>29</sup> He had already heard of Frederick's reputation as a flautist before he visited his court:

"The celebrity of his majesty's performance on the German flute had long excited in me a strong desire to hear him play, and I had now, in concert with several friends, taken the most likely measures for gratifying that wish....As the court was now at Sans–Souci, and several of the most eminent musicians of the King's band were there in waiting, I was impatient to go thither, in hopes of satisfying my curiosity relative to his majesty's musical abilities."<sup>30</sup>

Benda supported the fact that Frederick's flute playing was well known: "He is known throughout the world for his singular ability with this instrument."<sup>31</sup> Burney, however, may have believed that this reputation had been exaggerated due to his prominent position, as when he finally heard the king perform he was "surprised at the neatness of his execution".<sup>32</sup> Elizabeth Mara, a soprano at the Berlin Opera from 1771 to 1780, had obviously heard some negative reports on Frederick's ability but was also pleasantly surprised by his ability: "Contrary to what many say, he does not play like a king at all, but is an excellent performer."<sup>33</sup>

Frederick's *adagio* playing in particular was highly praised. Baron von Bielfeld claimed that he had "been especially impressed by his adagios".<sup>34</sup> According to Nicolai, Quantz wrote his *adagio* movements to suit Frederick's preference: "either peaceful and contented (zufrieden ruhig), never mournful or sad, for the king did not like that."<sup>35</sup> Nicolai maintained that he never heard anyone to play *adagios* more beautifully than his employer. In his opinion, Frederick played "with a simplicity and intimate feeling (innere Empfindung),"<sup>36</sup> deficient in other soloists. Reichardt also admired his *adagio* playing and thought his

ornamentation and cadenzas were in good taste, and he claimed that he "could scarcely hear

him without tears":<sup>37</sup>

"The King's virtuosity was most evident in his playing of adagios. He had modelled his style on that of the greatest singers and instrumentalists of his time, especially Franz Benda. Without doubt he had a strong feeling for everything he played. His melting nuances-particularly his accents and little melodic ornaments-bespoke a delicate, sensitive musical nature. His adagio was a gentle flow, a pure, subdued, often stirring, song: the surest evidence that his beautiful playing came from his soul."<sup>38</sup>

Reichardt also professed that: "...he played adagios with so much inner feeling, with such

noble, moving simplicity and truth, that his audience seldom listened without tears."<sup>39</sup> Fasch,

Frederick's other harpsichord accompanist, was of a similar opinion and declared that "of all

the musicians I heard, the King, Bach (C.P.E.) and Benda played the most moving adagios."40

This is corroborated by Zelter who wrote:

"Fasch [Karl Fridrich Zelter, telling of Fasch's remarks]: Fasch, who served the King for thirty years and outlived him by twelve years, said to me on several occasions that he had heard only three virtuosi who could perform a truly noble and moving adagio. The first was his friend Emanuel Bach at the clavier; the second, Franz Benda on the violin; and the third, the King on the flute."<sup>41</sup>

There are many critiques of various aspects of Frederick's technique. One of the earliest on record is that of Baron von Bielfeld, who reported of his visits to Rheinsberg: "He handles the instrument with complete authority; his embouchure, as well as his fingering and articulation, are peerless...".<sup>42</sup> Burney commented on the flute concerto with which the concert he attended in 1772 at *Sans Souci* began:

"in which His majesty executed the solo parts with great precision; his *embouchure* was clear and even, his finger brilliant. And his taste pure and simple. I was much pleased and even surprised with the neatness of his execution in the *allegros*, as well as by his expression and feeling in the *adagios*: in short, his performance surpassed, in many particulars, anything I had ever heard among Dilettanti, or even professors."<sup>43</sup>

Elizabeth Mara declared that "he has a strong, full tone and a great deal of technique",

presumably referring to his finger dexterity.<sup>44</sup>

Many people commented on Frederick's rigorous practice routine. Reichardt describes the king's daily flute exercises:

"The morning exercises are accomplished by reading through a long chart containing various kinds of scale passages. First he plays the natural scale of d-e-f#-g-a-b-c#-d, and so

forth; then d-f#, e-g, f#-a, g-b, a-c#, b-d, c#-e, etc., then d-e-f#-d, e-f#--g-e, f#-g-a-f#, and so forth, through all the octaves; then all the exercises are played in descending motion; then all the foregoing is repeated one half-step higher, etc. Every day the same routine is followed."<sup>45</sup>

Frederick possessed four copies of these exercises, composed both by himself and Quantz,

and assigned three of these to his residences of Sans Souci, Charlottenburg and the Berlin

Stadtschloss.<sup>46</sup> Burney describes seeing one copy during his tour of the *Nouvais Palais* at

Potsdam:

"His majesty's concert room... on the table lay a catalogue of concertos for the *new palace*, and a book of *Solfeggi*, as his majesty calls them, or preludes, composed of difficult divisions and passages for the exercise of the hand, as the vocal *Solfeggi* are for the throat. His majesty has books of this kind for the use of his flute, in the music room of every one of his palaces." <sup>47</sup>

Burney later heard Frederick warming up before a concert. The king played Solfeggi and

practised difficult passages from the music to be performed:

"I was carried to one of the interior apartments of the palace, in which the gentlemen of the King's band were waiting for his commands. This apartment was contiguous to the concert-room, where I could distinctly hear his majesty practicing *Solfeggi* on the flute, and exercising himself in difficult passages, previous to his calling in the band."<sup>48</sup>

This practice routine was not met with universal approval. Reichardt obviously doubted the

merits of persisting with these exercises when, in his opinion, they did not improve his

technique:

"His perseverance with these boring exercises is worthy of notice, but even more noteworthy is the fact that all this dull work does little to help him cope with difficult passages or perform an allegro with the fire and flash which his lively personality demands." <sup>49</sup>

This is not the only criticism of Frederick's playing. One common complaint was of

his tendency to change tempo according to the technical difficulty of the music. The author

Fétis explains that C.P.E. Bach's task of accompanying Frederick "was not without difficulty,

because of the irregularity of beat in the monarch's performance."<sup>50</sup> Another anecdote tells of

a guest exclaiming "What rhythm!" in praise of Frederick's performance, when C.P.E. Bach

was heard to mutter "What rhythms?"<sup>51</sup>

Towards the end of the Seven Years War (1756-1763), Frederick's performing ability had declined due to health reasons. Burney commented on this following his cited visit to Berlin in 1772, when Frederick was already perhaps past his best:

"His breath control had deteriorated due to age.... It is easy to discover that these concertos were composed at a time when he did not so frequently require an opportunity of breathing as at present; for in some of the divisions, which were very long and difficult, as well as in the closes, he was obliged to take his breath, contrary to the rule, before the passages were finished."<sup>52</sup>

Although the quoted comments on Frederick's performances are mixed, ranging from complimentary to critical in the extreme, it is likely that his abilities lay somewhere in between. Personal accounts, being at least partly subjective (some appear to be thoroughly sycophantic), may naturally be biased in either direction, but the technical difficulty of the music written for him to perform leads to the assumption that Frederick was at least a proficient dilettante musician. His playing of slow movements was more highly praised than his fast ones, which may imply that his tone was unusually warm and expressive. While his finger technique and articulation during rapid figurations in fast movements may have stretched his technical abilities to their limit or even somewhat beyond them, the less technically demanding slow movements were clearly an opportunity for Frederick to display his musicality.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Waterhouse (1993), 315.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Christoph Friedrich Nicolai (1733-1811), an author and publisher, was, according to Reilly, a possible member of a club referred to in a letter from the author Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781) to the poet Karl Wilhelm Ramler (1725-1798). The club met regularly on Friday evenings and counted Quantz, another of Frederick's court musicians, Johann Friedrich Agricola (1720-1774), the aesthetician Christian Gottfried Krause (1719-1770), Ramler and Lessing among its members (Quantz/Reilly 2001, xxvii).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Powell (2002), 95. The words in parentheses are Powell's.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Quantz/Reilly (2001), 34-35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Waterhouse (1993), 315.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Quantz/Reilly (2001), xxii: translation of a quotation from 'Herrn Johann Joachim Quantzens Lebenslauf, von ihm selbst entworfen' as cited by F.W. Marpurg, *Historisch-kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik*, (Berlin, 1755), i, 248.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Fredersdorf (his first name is unknown) was a prominent flautist in Rheinsberg. He was originally employed at Frederick's father's court as a lackey rather than a flute player. When Frederick became king, he gave him land and a title (Gerber (1790-92; R/1969), col. 446).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Reilly (1997), 432.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Waterhouse (1993), 315.

<sup>12</sup> Helm (1960), 35.

<sup>13</sup> Dehne-Niemann (1997), 4. In addition to the extant flutes that Quantz made for Frederick, a further four are presently missing (ibid.). In 1932, long before any relocation that took place following the end of World War II, the flutes were housed "in the Hohenzollern Museum, in Monbijou Castle, at Sans Souci, in the Berlin municipal collection of musical instruments, and in the Heimat-Museum of Potsdam" (Helm (1960), 35). Dehne-Niemann (ibid.) states that the flute numbered 'XVII' had actually been divided into two different instruments, one consisting of only the head and middle joints and the other the remaining parts.

<sup>14</sup> Each section had a bore of decreasing diameter from head to foot.

<sup>15</sup> Solum (1995), 42.

<sup>16</sup> Powell (2002), 83. Violinists use their third finger to play D# while  $E_{\flat}$  is played with the little finger.

<sup>17</sup> Ouantz/Reilly (2001), 46-47.

<sup>18</sup> Solum (1995), 41.

<sup>19</sup> Powell, Ardal, <u>flutehistory.com</u> (2000).

<sup>20</sup> Helm (1960), 162.

<sup>21</sup> Solum (1995), 46.

<sup>22</sup> Powell (2002), 97.

<sup>23</sup> Solum (1995), 45.

<sup>24</sup> Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1752-1814), a violinist, lutenist, singer and keyboard player, succeeded Fasch as Kapellmeister of the Berlin Opera in 1776 (New Grove/2, xxi, 137-141).

New Grove/2, ii, 388.

<sup>26</sup> Münnich (1936), 914.

<sup>27</sup> Yorke-Long (1954), 129. Frederick's flute figurations will be discussed in Chapter 3.

<sup>28</sup> Johann Friedrich Agricola (1720-1774) was director of the Berlin opera from 1759 although he did not have the title Kapellmeister (New Grove/2, i, 230-232). Johann Philipp Kirnberger (1721-1783) played violin in Frederick's ensemble from 1751-1754, and from 1758 he worked for Frederick's sister, the Princess Amalie (<u>New Grove/2</u>, xiii, 628-630). <sup>29</sup> Burney (1773; R/1959), 181.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 168.

<sup>31</sup> Helm, 29, quoting F. Benda, Auto-Biographie von Franz Benda, ed. C. Freiherr von Ledebur, Neue Berliner Musikzeitung, x (6-27 August 1856), 269.

<sup>32</sup> Burney (1773; R/1959), 181.

<sup>33</sup> Helm (1960), 30.

<sup>34</sup> Münnich (1936), 914.

<sup>35</sup> Yorke-Long (1954), 129.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Helm (1960), 29-30, quoting G. Lenzewski, *Die Hohenzollern in der Musikgeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, (1926), 29-30. <sup>39</sup> Ibid, 30, quoting J.F. Reichardt, *Musikalische Anekdoten von Friedrich dem Grossen*, Musikalisches

Kunstmagazin, ii (1791), 40.

<sup>40</sup> Yorke-Long (1954), 129, quoting J.F. Reichardt, *Briefe eines aufmerksamen Reisenden die Musik betreffend* (2 vols., 1774 & 1776): vol. no. & page no. not cited.

**4**1 Helm (1960), 29, quoting J.K.F. Müller-Blatteau, Karl Friedrich Zelter's Rede auf Friedrich den Grossen, Deutsche Musikkultur, i (August-September 1936), 171.

<sup>42</sup> Münnich (1936), 914.

<sup>43</sup> Burney (1773; R/1959), 181.

<sup>44</sup> Helm (1960), 30, quoting Spitta (1889), I, ix.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 32.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, 33.

<sup>47</sup> Burney (1773; R/1959), 178.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 180.

<sup>49</sup> Helm (1960), 31, quoting J.F. Reichardt, Musikalische Anekdoten von Friedrich dem Grossen, Musikalisches Kunstmagazin, ii (1791), 40.

<sup>50</sup> Helm (1960), 31, quoting F.-J. Fétis, *Frédéric II*, Biographie Universelle des Musiciens, iii (1874), page no. not cited.

<sup>51</sup> Geiringer (1958), 339.

<sup>52</sup> Burney (1773; R/1959), 181.

#### Chapter 3

#### **Frederick's Compositions**

Frederick 'the Great' composed four flute concertos and 121 flute sonatas, 11 of which are lost. Philipp Spitta edited and published all of the concertos but just 25 of the sonatas. Apart from these, only one sonata, Sonata 122 in B minor, has to date been published elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Frederick's compositions were originally preserved in manuscript form alongside similar works by Quantz, and copies of these were kept in the music room at each of Frederick's residences. Manuscripts were marked 'pour Potsdam' if intended for the music room at *Sans Souci*, whilst others were marked 'pour Charlottenburg' or 'pour le Nouvais Palais'.<sup>2</sup> These works were primarily intended for the private enjoyment of the king. His four concertos along with 196 concertos by Quantz were kept in the same manuscript volume and he performed them in rotation:

"The compositions of Frederick the Great were not intended for the public, and during his life-time very few of them were known to wider circles.... At the regular *soirées musicales* at which he played those compositions, he only very occasionally allowed an outsider to be present, and the pieces that he played were intended for his own pleasure."<sup>3</sup>

Frederick's compositions obviously remained in manuscript form since they were never intended for public performance or for publication.

There has been some difficulty in cataloguing Frederick's other works however, due to the very fact that his compositions were unpublished and remained in manuscript in the music rooms of his various palaces after his death. Christoph Friedrich Nicolai (1733-1811) compiled the first detailed list of his compositions, but this contains many errors.<sup>4</sup> It was not until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, 100 years after his death, that interest in Frederick was revived with publications by Kothe (1869), Spitta (1889), Thouret (1898) and Mennicke (1906).<sup>5</sup> In addition to his compositions for flute he possibly wrote three marches (two of which are dated

1741 and 1756 respectively) and four Italianate sinfonias.<sup>6</sup> Each of the latter is in three relatively brief movements and is scored for strings and continuo, except for the Sinfonia in D of 1743, which includes two oboes and horns in the outer movements but flutes in the slow movement. Frederick also composed as many as ten arias between 1746 and 1753,<sup>7</sup> mainly for insertion into operas by either C.H. Graun or Johann Adolph Hasse (1699-1783) and three secular cantatas that are no longer extant. The remainder of this dissertation will focus solely on Frederick's compositions for flute.

Many critics have accused Frederick of not composing his own music. J.F. Reichardt, who succeeded Johann Friedrich Agricola (1720-1774) as Frederick's court *Kapellmeister* in 1775, describes Frederick's method of composition:

"He wrote the top part down in notation, and added in words what the bass or other accompanying instruments had to do. Here the bass moves in quavers, here the violin on its own, here everything in unison etc. This musical shorthand was generally translated into notated form by Agricola."<sup>8</sup>

Spitta argues that, although Frederick may have composed his concertos in this manner, the sonatas are all his own work. Eighteenth-century solo sonatas were traditionally written as a solo line over a figured bass line. The figures may have come from the composer but were often the work of the copyist or the keyboard player. Frederick was certainly capable of writing a solo line for his own instrument and of providing an appropriate accompanying bass line. Carl Friedrich Nicolai (1733-1811) gives an account of one instance of a first performance of a flute sonata by Frederick. C.P.E. Bach, who was accompanying on harpsichord, discovered some consecutive fifths in the keyboard part and played them distinctly. The king said nothing at the time but later corrected them with the help of Benda.<sup>9</sup> For the concertos Frederick again provided the solo and bass parts, "but a lesser mortal will have been called upon to provide the often more perfunctory orchestral accompaniment, in accordance with contemporary practice."<sup>10</sup> An example of this practice can be seen in a note

to the violinist Franz Benda (1709-1786) on a March in  $E \flat$  in Frederick's own handwriting. The manuscript already contains the melody with bass parts and Frederick writes instructions as to how the piece should be completed: "To Concertmaster Benda. No middle voices, please, except for a trumpet part – and have the music copied out. Frederick."<sup>11</sup>

Frederick began studying composition with the cathedral organist Gottlieb Hayne from the age of seven, with whom, according to Helm, he studied four-part settings of psalm tunes and chorales, figured bass and counterpoint.<sup>12</sup> Although counterpoint is not a common feature of his work, being alien to the Italian *galant* style so favoured by Frederick, McCulloch points out that this does not mean he had never studied it.<sup>13</sup> His Flute Sonata no. 2 ends with a fugue, for example (Ex. 1).





McCulloch suggests that the general absence of counterpoint in Frederick's music was due to personal taste and not a lack of ability:

"His rejection of the fugal overture form was partly the result of his dislike for French music *per se*, and partly his antipathy towards any use of polyphony in secular music. On the other hand he looked upon the fugue as having a rightful and integral place in the context of church music. The fact that church music was not cultivated at his court is to be explained by his general *Weltanschauung*, for Frederick, as a Deist, quite logically had no interest in a form of music that derives its strength from Christian convictions."<sup>15</sup>

Frederick continued his studies in composition in Ruppin and Rheinsberg with his Kapellmeister, Carl Heinrich Graun, and according to Helm, in 1735 he had already written a symphony (no. 1?), which Graun corrected. In 1743 Quantz corrected another symphony for strings, flutes, oboes and horns (no. 3), finding only one mistake in the bass part.<sup>16</sup>

The music of Quantz was the chief model for Frederick's own flute compositions, his principal oeuvre consisting of flute sonatas and concertos. The sonatas of Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770) and the concertos of Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741) form the models for Quantz's own flute works. The combined works of Frederick and Quantz were arranged in a numbered catalogue comprising 274 sonatas and 300 concertos in total. Six original manuscripts in Frederick's own hand survive. These contain only sonatas, and so the main sources of his music are the manuscripts made by the copyists for the music rooms of the different palaces.

Frederick did not develop themes to any great extent in his flute works. They return in various keys but remain unchanged apart from accommodations made to the instrument's range. Quantz includes fingerings for pitches from d'-a''' in his *Versuch*. When he composed for the instrument, however, Frederick rarely went beyond d'-e''', only occasionally going up as far as  $f \ddagger$ ''', presumably because the intonation and the tone of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century flute were unreliable beyond this point (see Ex. 2).

Example 2: Flute Sonata 3 in B minor: (ii) – Allegretto, bars 14-16<sup>17</sup>



Quantz's flutes had an unusually wide bore, giving them a very strong low register, and so Frederick frequently made use of this, as in the following passage from the second movement of Concerto 1 in G (Ex. 3). The light accompaniment of upper strings only (with the violas supplying the bass line) allows the flute to be heard without any potential balance problems.



Example 3: Flute Concerto 1 in G: (ii) – Cantabile, bars 28-32<sup>18</sup>

Although C.P.E. Bach, one of the pioneers of the Classical 'sentimental' (*Empfindsamer*) style, worked for Frederick for many years, Frederick's own music remained a fusion of early-Classical *galant* and Italian late-Baroque styles. Evidence of the former can be seen especially in the slow movements of the first and second concertos. Example 3 above shows repeated notes in the bass line, an indication of a slower harmonic rhythm. The melody is also simpler and less ornamented than those in other movements. Evidence of the late-Baroque style can be seen in the bass line, which is generally independent of the melody and is mostly continuous with a rapid harmonic rhythm (Ex. 4).

### Example 4: Flute Sonata 13 in G minor: (i) – Adagio, bars 1-4<sup>19</sup>



Uneven phrase lengths (Ex. 5) and continuous melodies (Ex. 6) are other Baroque characteristics of his works.

### **Example 5: Flute Sonata 12 in C: (i)** – *Grave*, bars 1-12<sup>20</sup>

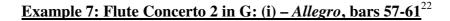




### **Example 6: Flute Concerto 3 in C: (i)** – *Allegro*, bars 105-125<sup>21</sup>



Sequences are a frequent feature of the flute sonatas and concertos, especially in the semiquaver passages for solo flute in the concertos (Ex. 7).





Burney was disappointed that the style of music at Frederick's court in Berlin seemed to have stood still:

"Upon the whole, my expectations from Berlin were not quite answered, as I did not find that the style of composition, or manner of execution, to which his Prussian majesty has attached himself, fulfilled my ideas of perfection."<sup>23</sup>

The evening concert that Burney attended featured three of Quantz's flute concertos: one had been composed for the king 20 years earlier, while the other two were 40 years old and must have been even more old-fashioned.<sup>24</sup> This presumably explains Burney's dissatisfaction with the style of the music that he heard. Since none of Frederick's own music was performed on that occasion, Burney left no contemporaneous opinion of the king's compositions. Apart from the previously mentioned comments on his method of composing, there is very little

anecdotal evidence of the contemporary reception of Frederick's music. The king was certainly interested in composition from a relatively early age and, as a dilettante, experimented with a number of musical genres. As he grew older, however, his taste appears to have stagnated. It is difficult to know why he rated the music of Quantz above that of more esteemed composers in his employ other than as a simple matter of personal taste.<sup>25</sup> Frederick was first and foremost a flautist, and his flute music therefore obviously received most of his compositional attention. It was surely for this reason that he modelled his works for this instrument on those of his flute teacher Quantz rather than any other composer at his court.

His flute sonatas and concertos will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters.

- <sup>4</sup> Helm (1960), 39.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>15</sup> McCulloch (1990), 227.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> McCulloch (1990), 217. The autograph of this sonata (no. 122 in the thematic index) came into possession of Franz Liszt and was published in Munich in 1923, although according to McCulloch, it is not a reliable edition by modern standards.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Sans Souci and the Nouvais Palais are both at Potsdam, whilst Charlottenburg was originally on the outskirts of Berlin.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> McCulloch (1990), 217, quoting Spitta (1889), i, i-ii.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The authorship of two of the four sinfonias continues to be debated: of the two that are in G, one may be by J.G. Graun, and the Sinfonia in A may also be by someone other than Frederick. The undated march (in E flat) is similarly controversial.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> As with the symphonies, the precise number of these is still debated. Frederick also elaborated an aria for the castrato Porporino (McCulloch (1990), 232). Porporino (1719-1783) was born Anton Hubert or Antonio Uberti (his father was a German soldier who married an Italian while stationed in Italy) in Verona and took his name from his vocal teacher in Naples, Nicola Porpora. He entered the service of Frederick in 1741 when C.H. Graun brought a number of castrati from Rome back to Berlin (Arsace, <u>www.haendel.it</u> (2007)).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> McCulloch (1990), 227.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Yorke-Long (1954), 126.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> McCulloch (1950), 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Helm (1960), 49.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> McCulloch (1990), 227.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Spitta (1889), i, 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Helm (1960), 49.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Spitta (1889), i, 17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Ibid., iii, 15.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Ibid., ii, 117.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Ibid., i, 106.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Ibid., iii, 15.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Burney (1773; R/1959), 79.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Ibid., 183.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> It is common knowledge, for example, that Frederick did not appreciate C.P.E. Bach's forward-looking music written in the *empfindsamer* style.

## Chapter 4

## **The Flute Sonatas**

Frederick's 121 flute sonatas comprise the most substantial part of his compositional output. As previously stated, they were preserved in manuscript alongside similar works by Quantz, with the combined sonatas by both composers numbered consecutively, the first of Frederick's as 106. When Spitta published his anthology in 1886, he included a thematic index, logically renumbering Frederick's sonatas as 1 to 121. His publication of 25 of these has caused considerable confusion, however, by renumbering them (but not the other 96) yet again, as Figure 1 clearly demonstrates. For the purposes of this chapter and to avoid yet more confusion, the sonatas discussed will conform to Spitta's published numbering system of 1 to 25.

Spitta	MS	Key	Sp.	Spitta	MS	Key	Sp.	Spitta	MS	Key	Sp.
no.	no.		ed.	no.	no.		ed.	no.	no.		ed.
1	106	C	1	42	148	Еþ		83	189	b	
2	107	g	13	43	149	А		84	190	с	2
3	108	С	16	44	150	g	25	85	191	G	
4	109	Вþ		45	151	a		86	192	D	
5	110	G		46	152	Вþ		87	193	Вþ	
6	111	Еþ	14	47	153	E		88	194	C	
7	112	b		48	154	e	9	89	195	G	
8	113	G		49	155	Е		90	196	D	
9	114	c	15	50	156	e	19	91	197	А	
10	115	А		51	157	А		92	198	c	
11	116	F		52	158	Еþ		93	199	Вþ	
12	117	А	20	53	159	с		94	200	F	
13	118	G		54	160	D		95	201	b	
14	119	a	17	55	161	Е		96	202	G	
15	120	C		56	162	F		97	204	Вþ	
16	121	Вþ		57	163	G		98	205	e	
17	122	b		58	164	С		99	206	Α	
18	123	D		59	165	Вþ		100	207	C	
19	124	С		60	166	G		101	208	D	

**Figure 1: The Numbering of Frederick's Flute Sonatas**<sup>1</sup>

20	125	G		61	167	D		102	209	G	
21	126	a		62	168	b		103	210	Еþ	
22	127	А		63	169	с		104	211	g	
23	128	F		64	170	С		105	212	Еþ	
24	129	g		65	171	G		106	213	А	
25	130	D		66	172	А		107	214	d	11
26	131	G		67	173	F		108	215	F	
27	132	c		68	174	b		109	216	G	7
28	133	d		69	175	Еþ		110	217	D	
29	134	Еþ		70	176	d		111	218	Вþ	
30	135	А	18	71	177	a		112	255	Вþ	4
31	136	С		72	178	D		113	256	С	12
32	137	D		73	179	с		114	257	А	5
33	138	Вþ		74	180	А		115	258	c	
34	139	g		75	181	e		116	259	g	22
35	140	G		76	182	Вþ		117	260	Еþ	10
36	141	D	21	77	183	F		118	261	F	8
37	$143^{2}$	b		78	184	g	6	119	262	G	23
38	144	G		79	185	А		120	263	b	3
39	145	F		80	186	D		121	264	D	
40	146	С		81	187	Еþ					
41	147	G		82	188	С	24				

Of the 25 sonatas included in Spitta's anthology, all but two follow a three-movement plan, three in B minor and 23 in G, both of which are in four movements. Sonata 3 adopts a slow – moderate – very fast – very fast structure. The first movement of Sonata 23 does not have any tempo indication but is likely to be slow, since only two of the opening movements of the 121 sonatas in the Spitta edition are moderate in tempo while three are unmarked, with the remaining 116 either slow or very slow in tempo. Therefore the movement plan of Sonata 23 is [slow] – fast – very fast – moderate. The structure of the three-movement sonatas is virtually always slow – fast – very fast, corresponding to the so-called 'Berlin' sonata layout rather than the 'standard' fast – slow – fast encountered virtually everywhere else in Europe at the time. Tempo markings in Frederick's time did not correspond exactly to their meaning today. Quantz identified five tempo categories, which may be summarised under the headings very fast, fast, moderate, slow and very slow.<sup>3</sup> Figure 2 shows these categories in relation to

the actual tempo indications used by Frederick in the 25 sonatas. Any markings used by Frederick but not categorised as such by Quantz have been inserted into what is believed the relevant category with the addition of a question mark.

Figure 2: Quantz's Five Tempo Categories in Relation to Frederick's Tempo Indications

	~
Тетро	Category Definition
Very Fast	common time $\sigma = 80$
Allegro assai	common time = 30
Allegro di molto	Alla breve $\mathbf{O} = 80$
Presto	
Fast Allegro Allegro e scherzando? Poco Allegro Tempo giusto? <sup>4</sup> Vivace Vivace ma arioso? <u>Moderate</u> Allegretto	• = 120 Quantz describes this entire category as a moderate <i>Allegro</i> : "It frequently occurs in vocal pieces, and is also used in compositions for instruments unsuited for great speed in passage work." <sup>5</sup>
Allegro ma non molto?	common time $\bullet = 80$
Allegro ma non presto	Alla breve $\phi = 80$
Allegro ma non tanto	
Allegro ma non troppo	
Andante e cantabile	
Moderato	
Slow	
Adagio?	common time $ = 80 $
Adagio Cantabile	
Adagio un poco Andante?	Alla breve $\bullet = 80$
Adagio spiritoso	
Affettuoso	
Alla Siciliano	
Amorevole?	
Andante ma sostenuto?	
Arioso	
Cantabile	
Dolce	
Larghetto	
Largo e cantabile?	
Largo?	
Maestoso	
Poco Andante	
Pomposo	
Recitativo?	
Soave	

Very slow	
Adagio assai	
Adagio pesante	common time $\bullet^{\gamma} = 80$
Grave	Alla breve $\bullet$ = 80
Grave e cantabile?	
Grave ed affetuoso?	
Largo assai	
Lento	
Mesto	

Now that Frederick's tempo indications have been defined, the 25 sonatas can be categorised according to the relative speed of each of the movements, as Figure 3 demonstrates.

## **Figure 3: Formulaic Movement Schemes in Frederick's 25 Published Flute Sonatas**

Scheme	Major Key (Sonata no.)	Minor Key (Sonata no.)
1. Progressively faster	1, 4-5, 7, 20	2, 6, 11, 15, 22
a) very slow – moderate – fast	20	
b) very slow – moderate – very fast		15
c) slow – moderate – fast		2
d) slow – moderate – very fast	7	22
e) slow – fast – very fast	1, 4-5	6, 11
2. Slow – equally fast	10, 12, 14, 18, 24	9, 25
a) very slow – fast – fast	24	
b) very slow – very fast – very fast	10, 12	9
c) slow – fast – fast	14	
d) slow – very fast – very fast	18	25
3. Slow – (very) fast – less fast	8, 16, 21	13, 17, 19
a) slow – fast – moderate	16, 21	19
b) slow – very fast – fast	8	13, 17

## a) <u>Three Movement Sonatas</u>

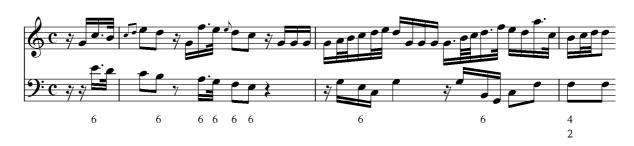
## b) Four Movement Sonatas

Scheme	Major Key (Sonata no.)	Minor Key (Sonata no.)	
1. Very slow – faster – equally fast		3	
2. Progressively faster – slower	23		

The form and style of the 25 sonatas follow the model of Frederick's teacher Quantz exactly, who in turn based his sonatas on those of the Italian composer Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770).<sup>6</sup> Each movement within all 25 sonatas is in the same key, similar to a Baroque suite, and each contains modulations to closely related keys such as the dominant, subdominant, relative minor or major as relevant, and to the dominant major in the case of minor-key sonatas. They are all homophonic in texture apart from Sonata 2, which is fugal. Spitta suggests that this sonata was influenced by J.S. Bach as it was probably composed in 1747, the same year as Bach's visit to Potsdam.

The first movement of all 25 sonatas in the Spitta edition is generally in a rounded binary structure (without repeats) that in a number of instances clearly moves in the direction of early sonata form. It is in these slow movements that Frederick shows his compositional skills to best advantage. While the fast movements tend to be somewhat formulaic, with passagework containing repetitive motifs and sequences, the slow movements are composed with more imagination and feeling. The opening movement of Sonata 1 in C is in rounded binary form (see Appendix I). There is no distinct second subject area as such, which makes it still a binary structure, but the 'B' section is very substantial and clearly makes use of material from the 'A' section. Although there is no obvious reprise of music from 'A', much of the material from the upbeat to bar 12 to the end clearly relates to the opening. The dotted rhythm found throughout is a frequent feature of Frederick's slow movements and is clearly derived from the Baroque French overture. Grace notes and demisemiquaver and even hemidemisemiquaver ornaments are typical of Frederick's *adagio* writing for the flute (Ex. 1).

Example 1: Flute Sonata 1 in C: (i) – Adagio, bars 1-3



The first movement of Sonata 6 in G minor is a good example of rounded binary form that is moving towards early sonata form (see Appendix II). As in Sonata 1, there is a relatively short 'A' section but a long and developmental 'B' section that also relies on sequences (Ex. 2). The fermata in bar 66 may indicate a short, improvised cadenza. The reprise of the 'A' section of Sonata 6 is much clearer than that of Sonata 1.

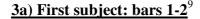
## Example 2: Flute Sonata 6 in G minor: (i) – Arioso, bars 20-25<sup>8</sup>



The fast movements all follow an early type of sonata form, with both sections repeated. The first section generally ends in the dominant key, or the relative major in the case of minor-key sonatas, and the second section commences in this new key and returns to the tonic by the end of the movement. The early sonata form movements have an exposition that usually contains a brief first subject of rarely more than four bars followed by a modulatory transition passage that is often longer than either the first or second subjects and generally consists of continuous semiquavers. The second subject is also usually quite short, often lasting only two bars before the codetta. The exposition is always repeated apart from the second movement of Sonata 2, which has a *da capo* repeat of the first section. The following

examples are taken from the second movement of Sonata 4 in B flat (see Appendix III for the entire movement). Both the first and second subjects are just two bars long (Ex. 3a and 3b), while the transition and codetta are substantially longer in comparison (Ex. 3c and 3d). Both the transition passage and codetta are made up almost entirely of semiquavers and obviously gave Frederick the opportunity to display his skills as a performer.

#### Example 3: Flute Sonata 4 in B flat: (ii) – Allegro





## **<u>3b)</u>** Transition: bars 3-9<sup>10</sup>



#### 3c) Second subject: bars 9-11<sup>11</sup>



## **<u>3d) Codetta: bars 11-14</u>**<sup>12</sup>



In the major-key sonatas the development section always begins with the first subject in the dominant key (as from the end of bar 14 in Appendix III). In the minor-key sonatas, however, it commences in either the relative major or dominant minor, the choice usually corresponding with that of the second subject in the exposition. In the case of Sonatas 2, 3, 9, 15, 19 and 25 both the second subject in the exposition and the first subject at the start of the development sections of both fast movements are, as might be expected, in the relative major key.<sup>13</sup> In the second movement of Sonata 6 and the two fast movements of Sonata 13 both themes are in the dominant minor key (as Ex. 4a and 4b show with reference to Sonata 6), whereas in the second movement of Sonata 17 the second subject is in the dominant minor in the exposition, but the first subject appears in the relative major at the start of the development (Ex. 5a and 5b), where it is followed by some minor-key development of material from the exposition.

#### Example 4: Flute Sonata 6 in G minor: (ii) - Allegro

4a) Second subject: bars 43-51<sup>14</sup>



## 4b) First subject in the dominant minor at the start of the development: bars 61-66<sup>15</sup>



#### Example 5: Flute Sonata 17 in A minor: (ii) - Allegro assai

5a) Second subject: bars 10-12<sup>16</sup>





**5b**) 1<sup>st</sup> subject in relative major at beginning of development: bars 15-18<sup>17</sup>

In general, themes reprised in new keys have their endings slightly altered. Fragments of themes are also regularly treated sequentially. This section often contains semiquaver passages that may or may not relate to material from the transition passage in the exposition. Example 6 shows how the first subject is treated sequentially in Sonata 4. The ending of the theme is also slightly changed from its original appearance. In the first two and a half bars of this example the amended theme appears as a descending sequence, a third lower each time. On the third occasion the theme is again altered and is again heard as a sequence, this time descending by step.

#### Example 6: Flute Sonata 4 in B flat: (ii) – Allegro



Example of sequences in the development section: bars 26-32<sup>18</sup>

The recapitulation usually commences with the first subject in the tonic followed by an altered transition to accommodate the return of the second subject followed by an exact repeat of the codetta, both in the tonic. The second section repeat is a vestige of the rounded binary structure. In many sonatas the recapitulation is incomplete, however: for example, that in the second movement of Sonata 3 begins with a shorter, altered first subject (Ex. 7a and 7b), while the third and fourth movements omit it altogether.

#### Example 7: Flute Sonata 3 in B minor: (ii) – Allegretto

## 7a) First subject: bars 1-4<sup>19</sup>



## 7a) First subject in the recapitulation: bars 39-41<sup>20</sup>



In the second movement of Sonata 6 the start of the first subject is slightly different when it returns and only properly reaches the tonic four bars later, whilst in the second movements of Sonatas 9, 10, and 20 the first subject is completely omitted. In the second movement of Sonata 25 the first subject returns in the subdominant minor, and the music does not return to the tonic until the second subject (Ex. 8a and 8b).

#### Example 8: Flute Sonata 25 in G minor: (ii) – Allegro assai

#### 8a) First subject: bars 1-5<sup>21</sup>



#### **<u>8b) First subject in subdominant minor in recapitulation: bars 85-89</u><sup>22</sup>**



In the recapitulation of Sonatas 17 and 18 the transition is omitted, and in Sonatas 12, 14, 15, 19 and 22 the main themes are slightly altered when they return.

The third movements follow the same structure as the second movements. Frederick makes no real distinction between the two fast movements of his sonatas. Quantz advises

"The *second Allegro* may be either very gay and quick, or moderate and arioso. Hence it must be adjusted to the first Allegro. If the first is serious, the second may be gay. If the first is lively and quick, the second may be moderate and arioso."<sup>23</sup>

Appendix IV shows the third and final movement of Sonata 25 in G minor. The third movements are generally shorter, however, and regularly omit the first subject or shorten it in the recapitulation. In Sonata 25 the recapitulation begins halfway through the transition passage. The third movement, *Presto*, of Sonata 25 is in simple duple time in contrast to the second movement, *Allegro*, which is in Common time.

The 25 flute sonatas that form the basis of this chapter are worthy of the attention of any flute player. They comply with Quantz's model as set down in his *Versuch*. The fast

movements stick a little too rigidly to the formula, and the fast passages for flute are sometimes too repetitive, with many sequences. The slow movements, however, are generally more expressive than the fast movements, with attractive melodies for the flute that lend themselves to ornamentation. They are less constrained by the rigidities of strict form than the faster movements. The sonatas are still played today, especially by flautists specialising in early music such as Rachel Brown and Mary Oleskiewicz.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In Figure 1 major keys are given as an upper-case and minor keys as a lower-case letter. Due to lack of space 'Spitta edition' has been abbreviated as 'Sp. ed.' <sup>2</sup> Sonatas 142 and 203 in the original catalogue are by Quantz, as are those numbered 219-254 inclusive.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Quantz/Reilly (2001), 284-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Tempo giusto is defined by <u>New Grove/2</u> as "the concept of a normal or correct speed for music..." (xxv, 274). Leopold Mozart wrote that "Tempo Giusto tell[s] us that we must play [the piece] neither too fast nor too slowly, but in a proper, convenient, and natural tempo. We must therefore seek the true pace of such a piece within itself...." (Mozart/Knocker (1985), 50).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Quantz/Reilly (2001), 286.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Helm (1960), 50.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Spitta (1889), i, 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Ibid, 44-45.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Ibid, 28.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Ibid, 29.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> In the case of the four-movement Sonata 3, all three fast movements follow this usual convention with the second subject in the relative major key.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Spitta (1889), i, 49.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Ibid, 49-50.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Spitta (1889), ii, 150.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Ibid, 16-17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Ibid, 19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Spitta (1889), ii, 206.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Ibid, 209.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Quantz/Reilly (2001), 319.

## Chapter 5

## **The Flute Concertos**

Frederick the Great's four flute concertos are structurally based on those of Vivaldi, as are those by Quantz, who also laid out rules for concerto composition in his *Versuch*, which Frederick followed precisely. All four works follow the same three movement structure, fast – slow – fast:

Concerto 1 in G: *Allegro – Cantabile – Allegro assai* Concerto 2 in G: *Allegro – Grave e cantabile – Allegro assai* Concerto 3 in C: *Allegro – Grave – Allegro assai* Concerto 4 in D: *Allegro – Adagio – Allegro* All three movements in Concertos 1 and 2 are in G. The second movement of Concerto 3 is in the tonic minor, whilst that of Concerto 4 is in the dominant A.

The above advice is taken from Quantz's *Versuch*, from the section outlining the required characteristics of the first movement of a "*serious* concerto for a *single solo instrument* with a *large accompanying body*."<sup>2</sup> Frederick's concertos conform to these requirements. Modulations within each movement are quite conservative, mainly restricted to the dominant, subdominant and relative minor keys (major in the case of the minor-key second movement of Concerto 3). More distantly related keys sometimes feature as local dominants. For example, the first movement of Concerto 2 in G modulates to the dominant, subdominant and relative minor. It also modulates to A major (the dominant of the dominant) and to B minor, the relative minor of the dominant (see Appendix V).

The fast movements all follow the same basic structure as outlined in Quantz's *Versuch*, commencing with:

"A majestic ritornello... of suitable length... [containing] at least two principal sections. The second, since it is repeated at the end of the movement, and concludes it, must be provided with the most beautiful and majestic ideas."<sup>3</sup>

The number of *ritornellos* framing the solo episodes varies in each movement, but there are

generally fewer in the slow movements, as Figure 1 shows.

Concerto	Movement 1	Movement 2	Movement 3
1 in G	5 ritornellos	5 ritornellos	5 ritornellos
2 in G	5 ritornellos	4 ritornellos	5 ritornellos
3 in C	5 ritornellos	4 ritornellos	5 ritornellos
4 in D	5 ritornellos	3 ritornellos	5 ritornellos

#### Figure 1: Movement Structure – Ritornellos

Each movement ends with a repetition of the opening *ritornello* minus its opening bars and possibly with some slight alteration thereafter. For example, that of the first movement of Concertos 1 and 3 essentially excludes the initial six and seven bars respectively, whilst that of Concerto 4 is identical to the last ten bars of the opening *ritornello* apart from an alteration to the octave level of two bars of the bass line. The 18-bar final *ritornello* of the third movement of Concerto 4 is reprised from the last 15 bars of the opening *ritornello* and extended by a three-bar cadential section based on the original closing cadence.

The flute concertos are scored for solo flute, four-part strings and basso continuo. The texture is predominantly homophonic. In the fast movements, the violins regularly play the melodies of the tutti *ritornello* sections in unison (see Ex. 1), only breaking into harmony when providing accompaniment to the solo flute sections. This conforms to Quantz's maxim:

"There must be no more middle parts than the principal part allows; a better effect is frequently produced by doubling the principal parts than by forcing in unnecessary middle parts."  $^4$ 

The viola often follows the rhythm of the continuo part but is otherwise independent, apart from passages in which all the instruments are playing in unison or octaves. The bass line is very much in the Baroque style with a fast harmonic rhythm, and occasionally it interacts with the other parts, perhaps echoing the melody, as Ex. 1 also demonstrates.



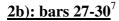
## Example 1: Concerto 2 in G: (i) – Allegro, bars 1-4<sup>5</sup>

There are also occasional instances of imitation between the parts, as in the opening *ritornello* of the first movement of Concerto 1 (Ex. 2a). The tuttis are sometimes played entirely in unison at cadence points or as a type of fanfare to introduce the solo part: the opening *ritornello* of the first movement of Concerto 1 ends with three such bars in unison (Ex. 2b).

## Example 2: Concerto 1 in G: (ii) - Allegro assai

# Violin I Violin II Viola Continuo e Basso ripieno 6 45 6 5

#### **2a): bars 19-20**<sup>6</sup>





First and second violins are more independent of one another in the slow movements, often playing the melody in thirds and occasionally in sixths (Ex. 3).



#### **Example 3: Concerto 4 in D: (ii)** – Adagio, bars $1-2^8$

Frederick observes Quantz's rules in adhering to Vivaldi's alternation of tutti *ritornellos* and solo episodes. Ex. 4 shows how the flute may take over part of the *ritornello* melody (in bars 222 and 227), and it also illustrates interaction between the parts, with unison violins imitated by the bass line, then the solo flute and finally the violas. The solo episodes are occasionally scored for solo flute accompanied only by basso continuo, "*senza basso ripieno*" (see Ex. 5). The continuo part may or may not be omitted in these sections: for example, the first solo episode in Concerto 4 is accompanied first by continuo, then by violins and violas (Ex. 6).



Example 5: Concerto 3 in C: (iii) – Allegro, bars 23-26<sup>10</sup>

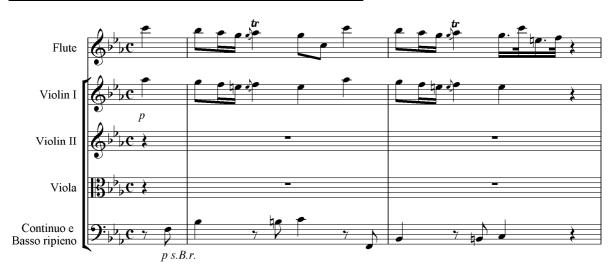








The strings occasionally provide a light accompaniment during these solo episodes, with the violins occasionally playing the melody line a third below the flute (Ex. 7). At other times both violin parts may accompany the flute with repeated notes (Ex. 8).



Example 7: Concerto 3 in C: (ii) – Grave, bars 24-25<sup>12</sup>

Example 8: Concerto 3 in C: (i) – Allegro, bars 63-68<sup>13</sup>



The first movement of Concerto 2 in G is a typical example of one of Frederick's fast movements (the score is reproduced in full as Appendix V). In total there are four solo episodes for flute in this movement interspersed between five orchestral *ritornellos*, as in the other three concertos. The opening orchestral *ritornello* introduces the main themes of the movement (see bars 1-23). In keeping with Quantz's rules, the final six bars of this *ritornello* also conclude the movement. The first *ritornello*, following Quantz's advice, is the longest, while the internal *tuttis* are shorter, the fourth being only four bars long. The episodes are occasionally broken up by short ritornellic interjections, which allow the soloist time to breathe. This opening *ritornello* is followed by the first entrance of the solo flute,

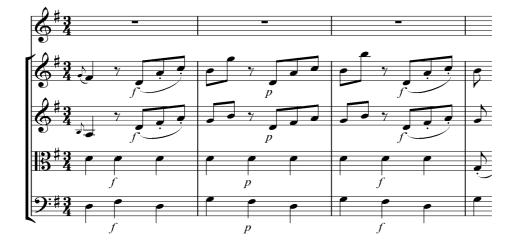
accompanied by first and second violins and continuo (see bars 24-32). The violins play quavers in thirds for the first three bars, then join join together in unison to play the syncopated figure in harmony with the flute.

Each of the solo episodes contains passages of continuous semiquavers with numerous motifs and sequences. A good example of this is the second half of the third episode (bars 86-94), where the flute part is entirely based on figurations that are typical of any such semiquaver passage written by Frederick for the instrument. A motif taken from bar 3 of the opening orchestral *ritornello*, however, is heard five times in the violin accompaniment (as in bars 86, 88 and 90). The eight bars of continuous semiquavers (without any time to take a breath), so typical of Frederick's fast movements, make this a technically challenging passage for the flute soloist.

The slow movements of Frederick's flute concertos are generally more expressive and less formulaic than the fast ones, and they are also much shorter. The flute parts are more melodious than the violin ones. The slow movement of Concerto 1 in G is marked *Cantabile*, is in 3/4 time, and is in G like the outer movements (the score is included as Appendix VI). The opening 27-bar *ritornello* introduces the main themes of the movement as usual. The flute takes up the expressive first and most important of these in its first episode in bar 28, modulating eventually to the supertonic major (the dominant of the dominant). This is followed by a short orchestral interjection with an important arpeggio motif taken from the opening *ritornello*, modulating to the dominant. Example 9a shows this motif as it first appears in bar 15, and Example 9b as it is used as a link between the first and second episodes. This short *ritornello* is an exact transposition of the original which is typical of Frederick's compositional style. As discussed in Chapter 3, themes return in different keys but otherwise invariably remain unchanged.

## Example 9: Concerto 1 in G: (ii) – Cantabile

## **9a): bars 15-18**<sup>14</sup>



## **<u>9b): bars 44-47**<sup>15</sup></u>



This movement has five *ritornellos* framing four solo episodes. Although the episodes of the concerto slow movements are less formulaic than those of the fast movements, they do make use of sequences. For example, bars 113-119 of the final solo episode include a chromatic, descending sequence leading to the dominant. The remaining bars of this episode are in the tonic. As is usual, the final ritornello reprises material from the second half of the opening one.

The third movement of Concerto 3 in C is typical of Frederick's final movements (see Appendix VII). It is in simple duple time like those of Concertos 1 and 2 (that of Concerto 4 in D is in simple triple time) and is dance-like in character. It is marked *Allegro assai* which falls into Quantz's very fast category. There are five orchestral *ritornellos* alternating with four solo episodes. As in his other concerto movements some of the episodes for solo flute are broken up by short ritornellic interjections. The final *ritornello* is again based on the second half of the opening. Four of the solo episodes feature semiquaver passages, the longest being in the second episode (bars 132-151). In accordance with Quantz's advice that the "passagework must be easy, so that quickness is not impeded",<sup>16</sup> the semiquavers move mostly by step unlike that of the first movement which contains many leaps.

Frederick II's four flute concertos are indisputably craftsmanlike, well-formed works, following Quantz's rules to the letter. Despite this, the fast movements suffer from being too formulaic, in particular with at times overly repetitive rapid passages in the flute. The slow movements, however, which Frederick himself preferred playing, are far more expressive and imaginative, containing some beautiful melodies. It should be remembered that these concertos were only ever intended for the king's own private enjoyment, and as such, undoubtedly served their purpose perfectly. They are nevertheless still performed today, with the third in C being the most popular: relatively recent recordings of it include ones made by Emmanuel Pahud and Patrick Gallois.

- <sup>4</sup> Ibid., 311.
- <sup>5</sup> Spitta (1889), iii, 33.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid., 2.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid., 3.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid., 73. <sup>9</sup> Ibid., 51.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid., 54.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid., 74-75.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Quantz/Reilly (2001), 312.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid., 311.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid., 311-312.

- <sup>12</sup> Ibid., 63.
  <sup>13</sup> Ibid., 57.
  <sup>14</sup> Ibid., 15.
  <sup>15</sup> Ibid., 16.
  <sup>16</sup> Quantz/Reilly (2001), 315.

## Conclusion

King Frederick II 'the Great' of Prussia was a lover of the arts in general and music in particular from an early age onwards. Despite opposition from his father he succeeded in completing his musical education, becoming proficient on the flute. He also studied composition and explored a number of musical genres, including the symphony, whilst focusing on works for his own instrument. These were composed for performance at his private concerts with either himself or J.J. Quantz as soloist: they were never intended for public performance or publication, and they were therefore written for the king's own personal satisfaction, not to please others. Music remained a lifelong passion for this monarch and must have provided much needed relief from the pressures of his royal duties. His court, where he assembled some of the greatest musicians of the time, was for a considerable number of years widely regarded as one of the most important centres of music-making in Germany.

The anecdotal evidence of Frederick's performing ability on the flute is varied, ranging from deferential to critical. While personal accounts may naturally be biased, the flute music written for and by him surely provides sufficient evidence that he was at the very least a competent performer. His court musicians and composers, including Quantz, Franz Benda and even C.P.E. Bach (most of his flute concertos were relatively conservative in style and may well have been composed for Frederick), were cognisant of his strengths and weaknesses and presumably took these into account when writing for him. His playing of slow movements was more highly praised than his fast ones, which may possibly partly have been due to his tone being unusually warm and expressive. While his finger technique and articulation during rapid figurations in fast movements may have stretched his technical abilities to their limit or even somewhat beyond them, the less technically demanding slow movements were clearly an opportunity for Frederick to display his musicality.

Although there is an abundance of quotations from various commentators on Frederick's playing abilities, there is hardly any anecdotal evidence of the contemporary reception of his music. Charles Burney, for example, heard Frederick perform three of Quantz's concertos and was therefore unable to comment on the king's own music, although he was disappointed that the style of the music that he encountered on his visit to Frederick's court was highly conservative and even old-fashioned. This may be attributed to the fact that, whatever else he may have heard there, the flute concertos performed by Frederick had been composed by Quantz decades previously: the fact that this music was chosen over more recent works by one of his other more gifted composers is likely to be a good indication and reflection of Frederick's personal musical taste. Quantz's compositions were also the preferred models for Frederick's own works for flute, his principal oeuvre consisting of flute sonatas and concertos. It is regrettable perhaps that he focused so much on instrumental music for his own instrument and favoured the compositions of the conservative Quantz over those of more talented musicians in his court such as Franz Benda or C.P.E. Bach (Frederick did not appreciate the latter's 'modern' empfindsamer Stil compositions). Frederick was primarily a flautist, and so his flute music naturally received most of his compositional attention, and it was indubitably for this reason that he based his works for this instrument on those of his flute teacher Quantz rather than any other composer at his court.

While Frederick's music cannot claim originality, for an aristocratic dilettante musician, his 121 flute sonatas and four concertos form an impressive oeuvre and must be considered a valuable part of the historic flute repertoire. The 25 flute sonatas published in Spitta's edition are well worth examining, not only as an insight into the musical life and taste of this major historic figure, but also on purely musical grounds. They conform exactly to Quantz's rules as set down in his *Versuch*, to the extent that the fast movements become restricted and formulaic. In particular, the passagework for solo flute can become monotonous as motifs and sequences are occasionally overused. The slow movements, however, are generally more expressive, with pleasing melodies for the flute, and they are less constrained

by the rigidities of strict form as many are through-composed or in a type of rounded binary form. The sonatas are still performed today, particularly by flautists specialising in the field of early music such as Rachel Brown and Mary Oleskiewicz.

Frederick's four flute concertos are also well written within the parameters of Quantz's guidelines for the composition of the genre. The fast movements, similar to those of the sonatas, may be restricted by the inflexibility of their formal structures, but the slow movements are freer, as in the sonatas. Anecdotal evidence tells us that Frederick's performance of slow movements or *adagios* was much admired, and it was also said that he preferred playing *adagios* to *allegros*. It is perhaps for this reason that Frederick's own slow movements are better compositionally speaking than his faster counterparts. It is also important to bear in mind that these concertos were only ever intended for the king's own private enjoyment, and as such, surely served their purpose perfectly. They are, furthermore, also still played today, with recent notable recordings by Emmanuel Pahud and Patrick Gallois.



## Sonata 1 in C: (i) - Adagio



## **Appendix II**

## Sonata 6 in G minor: (i) - Arioso







## Appendix III

## Sonata 4 in B flat: (ii) - Allegro







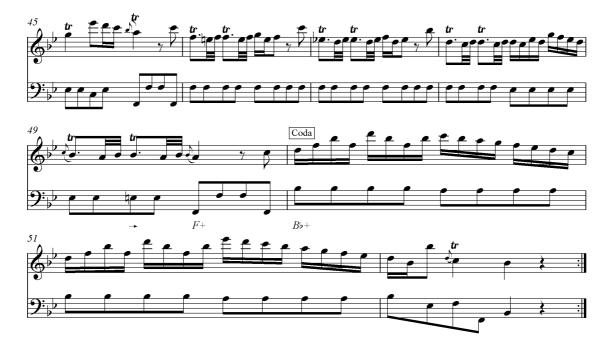












## Appendix IV

## Sonata 25 in G minor: (iii) - Presto







# Appendix V

### Concerto 2 in G: (i) - Allegro







Frederick II



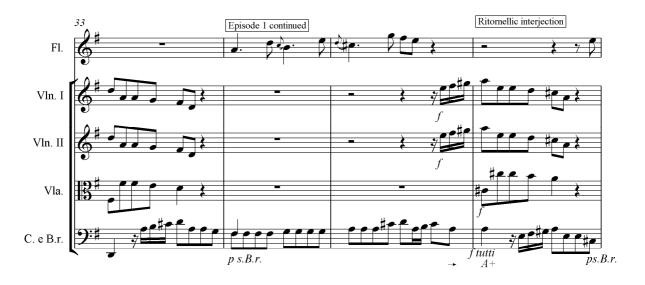




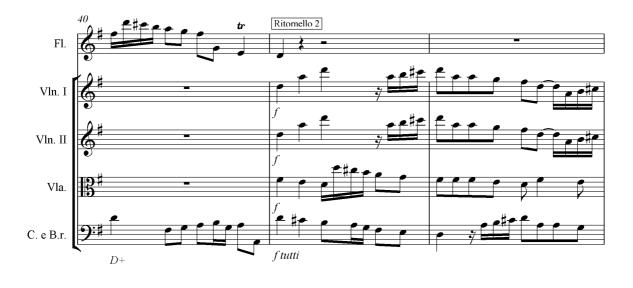






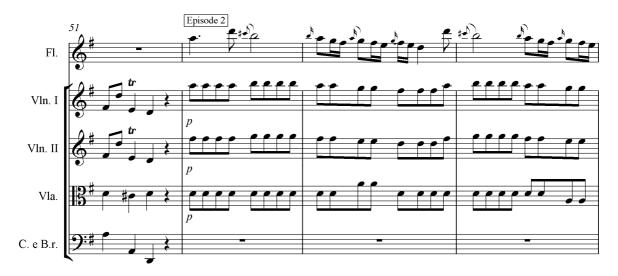














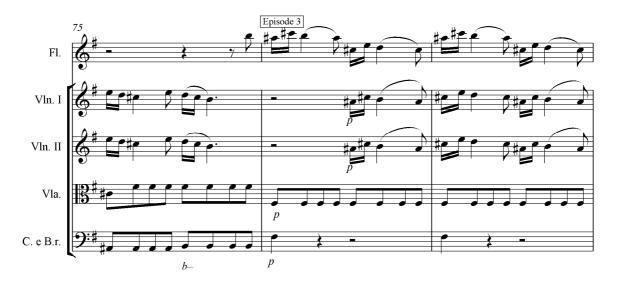






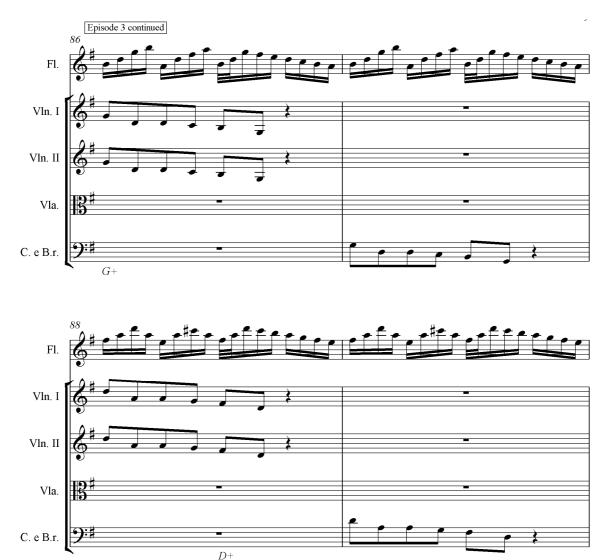




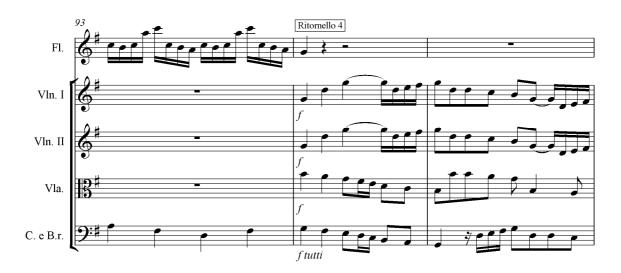






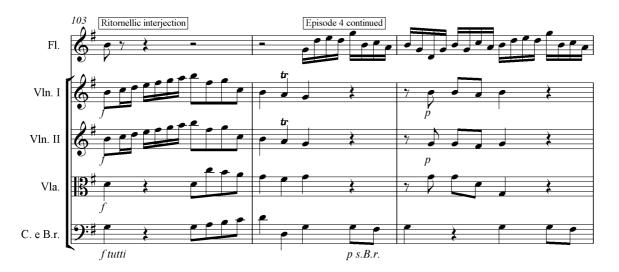








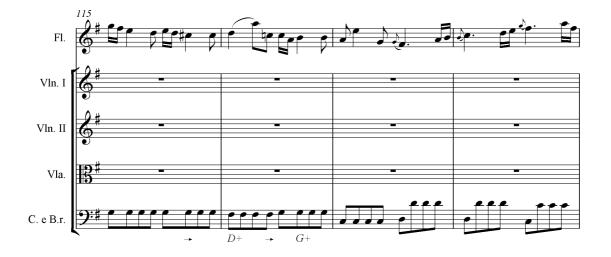


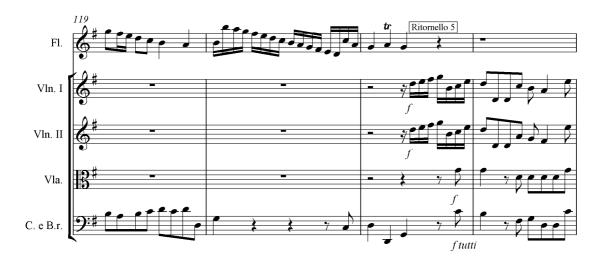














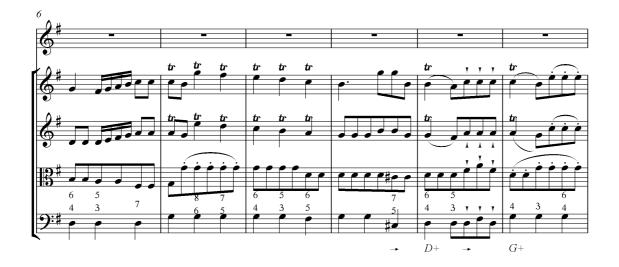




## Appendix VI

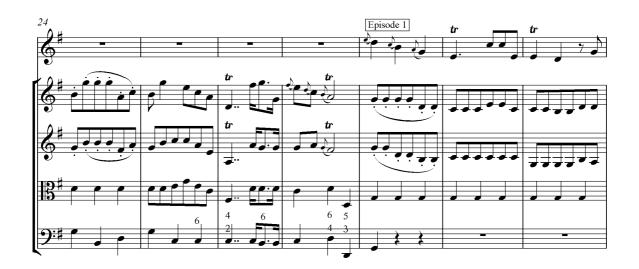
#### Frederick II Cantabile Ritornello 1 Flute Un poco piano. tr t Violin I Violin II Viola 6 5 3 7 6 5 7 4 4 3 Continuo e Basso ripieno 9 tutti G+



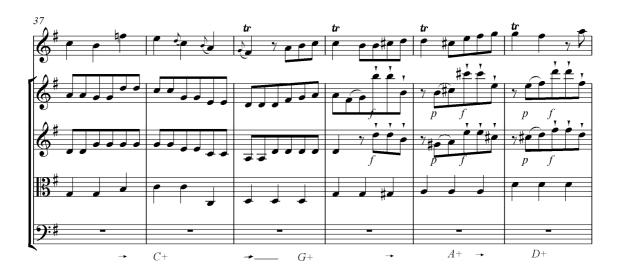


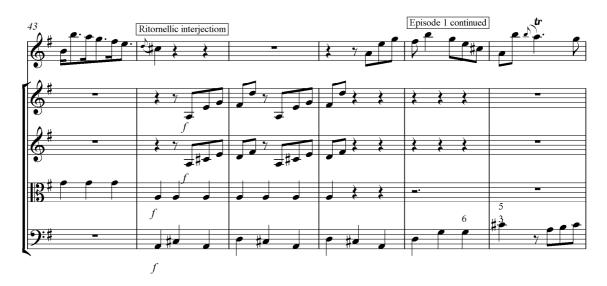


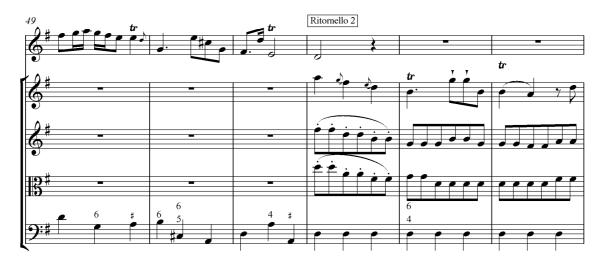




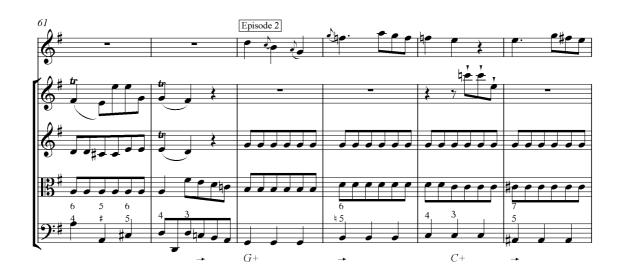




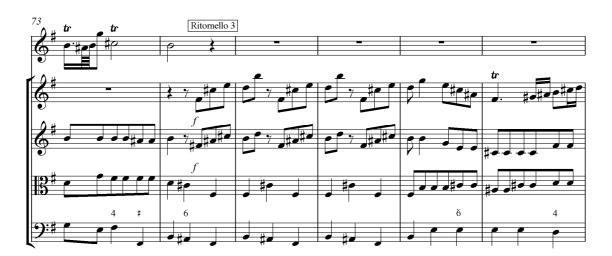


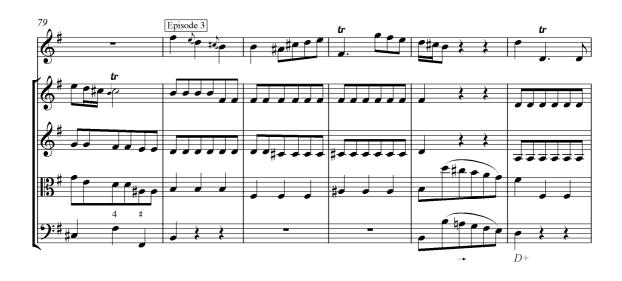






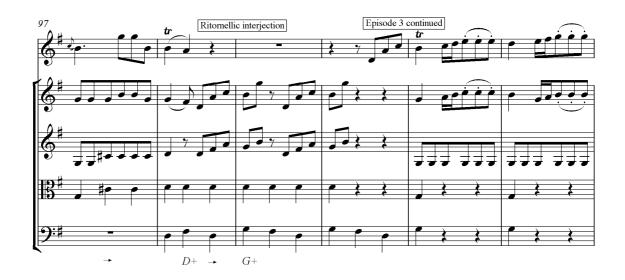


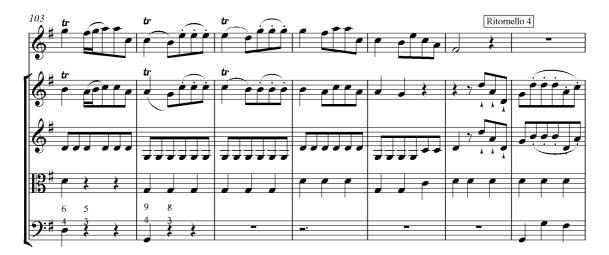


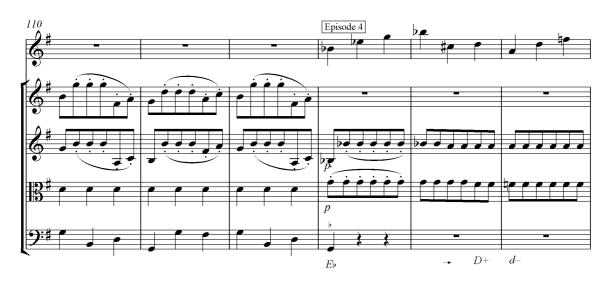


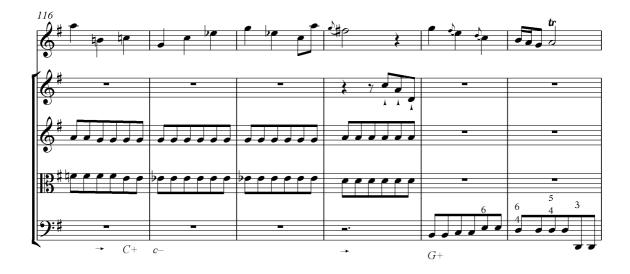


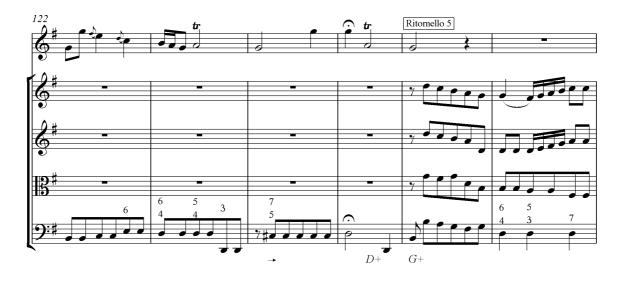








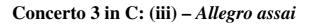








## Appendix VII





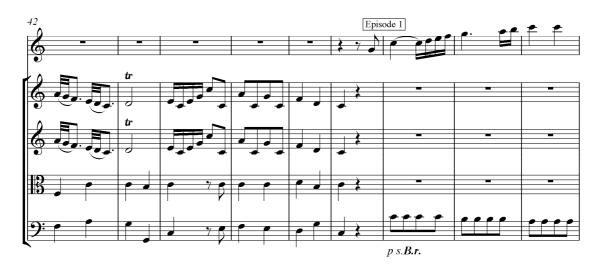




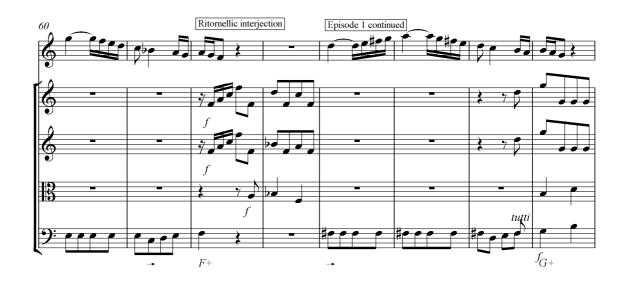
Frederick II













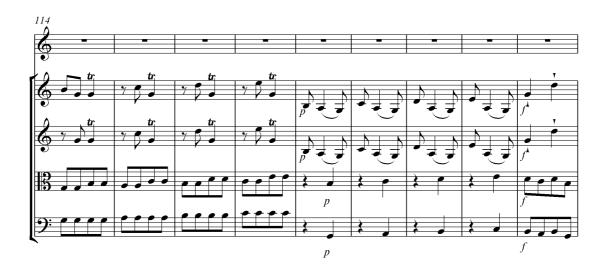






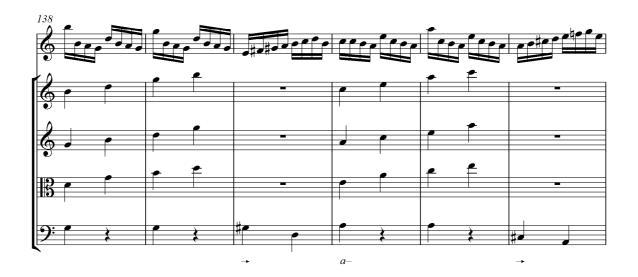




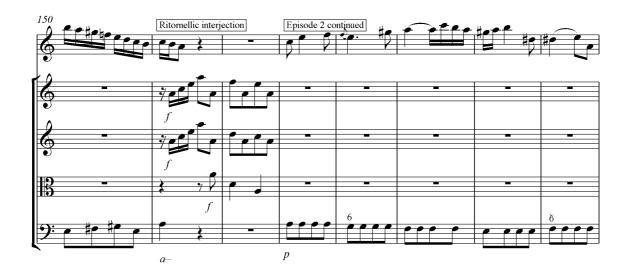






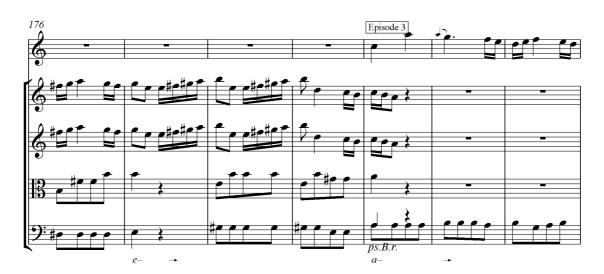




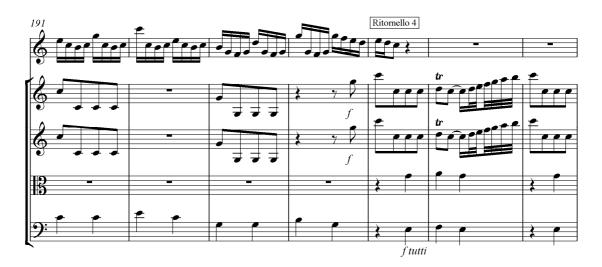




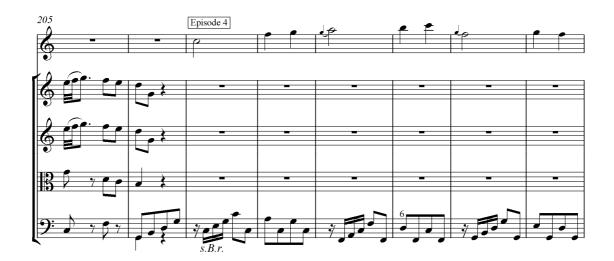


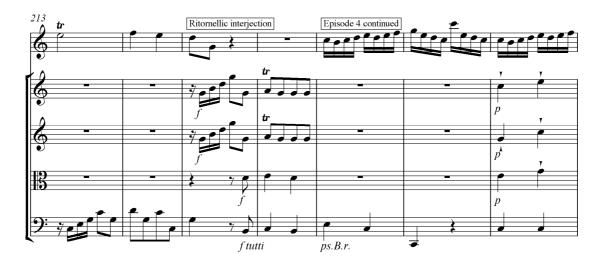


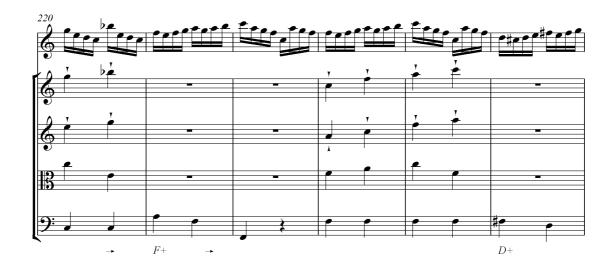










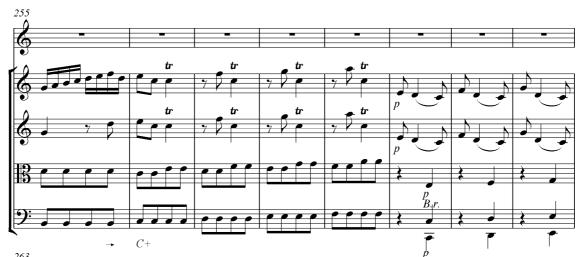














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