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Clockwise from left: David Boldrini, Elena Pinciaroli, Filippo Conti

CONCERTI GALANTI

BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

Piano Concertos by
Clementi · Cimarosa
Paisiello · Stamitz
Pergolesi · Kozeluch
Boccherini · Cambini
Jommelli · J.C. Bach

David Boldrini · Elena Pinciaroli *pianos*
Orchestra Rami Musicali
Filippo Conti *conductor*



Concerti Galanti

CD1	56'41	CD2	54'14
Muzio Clementi 1752-1832		Carl Stamitz 1748-1801	
Piano Concerto in C		Piano Concerto in F	
1. I. Allegro con spirito	9'24	1. I. Allegro	9'11
2. II. Adagio e cantabile con grande espressione	5'35	2. II. Andante moderato*	6'20
3. III. Presto	5'40	3. III. Rondò: allegro	5'31
		Elena Pinciaroli <i>piano</i>	
		*Viktor Csanyi <i>violin solo</i>	
Domenico Cimarosa 1749-1801		Orchestra Rami Musicali	
Piano Concerto in B flat		Filippo Conti <i>conductor</i>	
4. I. Allegro	7'39		
5. II. Recitativo: Allegro moderato	1'22	Giovanni Battista Pergolesi 1710-1736	
6. III. Aria: Largo	3'40	Concert for 2 Pianos and String Orchestra	
7. IV. Rondò: allegretto vivace	6'42	4. I. Allegro non assai	4'58
		5. II. Adagio tardissimo	2'25
Giovanni Paisiello 1740-1816		6. III. Allegro	3'12
Piano Concerto in F No.2		David Boldrini <i>piano I</i>	
8. I. Allegro	6'01	Elena Pinciaroli <i>piano II</i>	
9. II. Largo	6'07	Orchestra Rami Musicali	
10. III. Allegretto	4'24	Filippo Conti <i>conductor</i>	
David Boldrini <i>piano</i>			
Orchestra Rami Musicali			
Filippo Conti <i>conductor</i>			

Leopold Kozeluch 1747-1818	
Concerto for 2 Pianos and String Orchestra	
7. I. Allegro	9'32
8. II. Adagio	6'31
9. III. Rondo – Allegretto	6'30
David Boldrini & Elena Pinciaroli	
<i>piano 4 hands</i>	
Orchestra Rami Musicali	
Filippo Conti <i>conductor</i>	

David Boldrini <i>piano</i>	
Orchestra Rami Musicali	
Filippo Conti <i>conductor</i>	
Niccolò Jommelli 1714-1774	
Piano Concerto in G	
6. I. Allegro moderato	4'59
7. II. Larghetto	5'39
8. III. Tempo di minuetto	4'31
David Boldrini <i>piano & conductor</i>	
Orchestra Rami Musicali	

CD3	56'14
Luigi Boccherini 1743-1805	
Piano Concerto in E flat	
1. I. Presto	3'28
2. II. Adagio ma non troppo	4'36
3. III. Moderato: Variazioni	4'48

Johann Christian Bach 1735-1785	
Piano Concerto in E flat Op.7 No.5	
9. I. Allegro di molto	6'28
10. II. Andante	4'34
11. III. Allegro	3'05
Elena Pinciaroli <i>piano</i>	
Orchestra Rami Musicali	
Filippo Conti <i>conductor</i>	

Carlo Andrea Cambini 1819-1865	
Piano Concerto in G Op.15 No.3	
4. I. Allegro	8'06
5. II. Rondò: allegretto	5'55

Concertos in the Galant Style: a brief introduction

‘Being galant, in general’, wrote Voltaire, ‘means seeking to please’. In his influential, German-language instruction manual of 1713, the music theorist Johann Mattheson addressed himself to the ‘galant homme’, though given the dedication of his volume to a lady, he doubtless had both genders in mind. But the phrase itself had evidently entered common aesthetic parlance by that point, and not only in its country of origin.

‘Galanteries’ are commonly found in 17th-century French keyboard suites as a capacious term to designate dances of a light and effervescent character, and Mattheson directed that such pieces should be played on the clavichord rather than the harpsichord in keeping with their more vocally conceived style, which another theorist, Johann Adolph Scheibe, ascribed to Italian theatre rather than to French studies of personality. True to such notions, the concertos on this album abound in singing, cantabile melodies.

Born in Rome but growing up as a teenager in England, to all effects sold by his father to a member of the notoriously eccentric Beckford family, Muzio Clementi made his name in London. As a 28-year-old he made a notable appearance in Vienna before the Emperor Joseph II on Christmas Eve 1781, as a contestant of keyboard virtuosity in competition with Mozart. The Emperor declared a draw, but Mozart was not impressed: he wrote to his father a few weeks later that ‘Clementi plays well, as far as execution with the right hand goes. His greatest strength lies in his passages in 3rds. Apart from that, he has not a kreutzer’s worth of taste or feeling – in short he is a mere mechanic’.

Be that as it may, the C major Concerto by **Muzio Clementi** undoubtedly gains some of its strength as well as brilliance from the composer’s encounters with firstly Haydn in London and then the young Beethoven in Vienna. Though probably composed

earlier for Clementi’s many successful London concerts, the Concerto’s sole surviving manuscript copy dates from 1796, the year of Beethoven’s own C major Concerto – known and published as his First, though written second – and there is a considerable degree of correspondence between them. Clementi’s concerto is scored for oboes, bassoons, horns, trumpets, timpani and strings, though he also arranged the whole piece for solo piano and published it in 1794 as the Sonata Op.33 No.3.

A grand introduction raises the curtain on a theatrical entry for the soloist, based on a rising C major scale, not dissimilar to Haydn’s keyboard writing in his late sonatas. The march-like first theme is contrasted with a songful second, and together the themes are closely woven and developed in the keys of E minor and A minor, leading smoothly back to the recapitulation. There is a written-out cadenza which largely confines itself to further exploration of the two themes before a splendid and assertive close.

Violins float the main theme of the central *Romanza* over a softly rippling accompaniment in the most Mozartian passage of Clementi’s concerto, but the ensuing development seems to anticipate the expressive intensity of Biedermeier-era concertos of Beethoven, Czerny and Hummel. The final Rondo returns us to the 1790s and the world of Haydn’s late symphonies, notably with the catchy pause and then heavy accent on the dominant (the fifth note of the scale) that characterises much music of a bourgeois ‘military’ nature from the time.

We may infer the composer’s own keyboard skills from the difficulties of the keyboard writing in the finale, which contains classic fingerprints of the ‘Viennese’ keyboard school as well as a sense of the fortepiano for which it was written struggling under the weight of expression, and pushing technology in this area ever onwards in order to accommodate and match up to the grandeur of the ideas struggling to be expressed within their limits.

The B flat Concerto by **Domenico Cimarosa** makes considerably less exigent demands on its solo instrument. It could be played with equal sympathy on a harpsichord, fortepiano, modern piano or even organ. Cimarosa was also presented to Joseph II during the summer of 1787, much to the pleasure of the emperor who demanded repeat performances while the composer and his wife were staying in Vienna en route to St Petersburg, where Cimarosa took up the position of *maestro di cappella* at the St Petersburg court of Catherine II.

We lack a conclusive date for the B flat concerto, but it was evidently designed to flatter the uncomplicated tastes of his aristocratic patrons, being cast according to a melodically straightforward and harmonically undemanding plan. The most individual aspect of the concerto is the recitative-aria form of the second movement, which harks back to the putative operatic origins of the galant style, and may have originally been composed as an interlude between the acts of one of Cimarosa's many operas and pasticcios. The concerto's most brilliant solo writing is reserved for the march-like finale, which confirms Cimarosa's musical personality as a man of the theatre above all.

Most of the concertos gathered on this album employ a relatively straightforward manner of keyboard writing, none more so than the F major Concerto of **Giovanni Paisiello**, who like Cimarosa made his name and his career as an operatic composer above all. Where Mozart and Beethoven wrote their concertos to demonstrate their own performing gifts at the keyboard, it should be remembered that these galant-style works were designed for performance not only to but by aristocratic patrons of considerably lower technical finesse.

Paisiello preceded Cimarosa as Catherine's director of music at her court in St Petersburg, and while there he composed seven keyboard concertos which he

dedicated to the Princess of Parma, perhaps with a view to sustaining his career once he had escaped the confines of Catherine's distant court. She kept him there with ever more generous emoluments, but he escaped back to Italy in 1783 on the pretext of his wife's ill-health and despite receiving a full year's paid leave never returned.

Paisiello's writing in the F major concerto is as simple as it is effective, creating an exquisite and theatrical dialogue between the solo instrument and the ensemble, ordered as if according to the plan of a contemporary Italian garden. The concerto's second movement recalls the aria 'Saper bramate' from his own version of *Il barbiere di Siviglia* based on the then-ubiquitous play by Beaumarchais: the soloist's right-hand figuration resembles the mandolin part of the aria. The finale inhabits the world of Paisiello's comic operas, full of close-knit banter and repartee.

Musical competitions such as the one staged in Vienna between Mozart and Clementi were commonplace in the courts of Europe during the 18th century: if one celebrated composer could be persuaded and paid to demonstrate his talents, why not two? Whether or not such events produced a culture of cooperation or adversarial combat was of secondary concern. It is in this context that the Concerto for two keyboards (again, potentially either harpsichords or fortepianos) by **Giovanni Battista Pergolesi** might fruitfully be considered. The themes of the concerto's outer movements are always advanced by one soloist and then extended by the entry of the other, as if to finish their sentence with a flourish of their own, but then the first soloist comes in with another point, and so the rhetorical contest continues.

Like Cimarosa a Neapolitan by birth and training, Pergolesi also had the theatre in his blood. His posthumous renown after his early death, linked to *La serva padrona* and to the Stabat Mater, spread throughout Europe and quickly turned him into a legend. The interest in and the subsequent reaping of financial benefit by making use

of the composer's name led to countless false or doubtful attributions, though the authorship of this particular undated Concerto seems to be fairly established. Where the two solo parts cooperate rather than competing is in the brief yet powerful *Adagio tardissimo*, with the two solo instruments weaving expressively between and around each other, while the string ensemble offers contrapuntal harmonic support together with the basso continuo entrusted in our case to the cello, bassoon and double bass.

In 1720 there was founded in the German city of Mannheim an ensemble which took on totemic significance for orchestral music in the second half of the 18th century. Four years earlier Duke Carl Philipp, had become Elector Palatine in succession to his brother Johann Wilhelm, who had ruled from Düsseldorf. The enlightened Carl Philipp moved the court to Mannheim and invited illustrious musicians from across Europe to work for his court. The earliest extant roster of the musical establishment, dated 1723, contains the names of 53 singers and instrumentalists, plus 12 trumpeters and two timpanists, but the ensemble numbered a personnel of 90 by the time the Palatine court transferred once more to Munich in 1778.

Appointed as a violinist in 1741, the first composer of significance to direct operations at the Mannheim court was the Czech composer Johann Stamitz. In 1745 or early 1746 he was awarded the title of Konzertmeister, and in 1750 he was appointed to the newly created post of director of instrumental music. In this capacity he gave instruction to many young musicians who would go on to be significant composers of the next generation, among them his sons, as well as coaching the Mannheim orchestra into the most renowned ensemble of the time, famous for its precision and its ability to render novel dynamic effects such as the famous 'Mannheim crescendo'. In the wake of Stamitz followed other composers undoubtedly influenced by him, despite their diverse origins, and these are gathered on CD3 of the present album.

The concertos of Stamitz, of Boccherini, Cambini, Johann Christian Bach and the others, all conform to a similar stylistic template, based on relatively conventional formal dimensions, but investing them with a new depth of expression designed to produce a new range of affections in the listener. This is the 'sentimental' style of composition that opened the door to *Empfindsamkeit* and to the *Sturm und Drang* movement most notably embodied by the mid-period symphonies of Haydn. Devices such as appoggiaturas and passing dissonances take on much greater harmonic significance within this style, which at times seems to fight against the confines of Classical form.

The concertos of **Luigi Boccherini** and **Niccolò Jommelli** share various characteristics: among them a first movement built on scales and arpeggios, a middle-movement, minor-key Andante with a noble melodic idea entrusted to the soloist's right hand (and in the case of Jommelli to a solo violin), and a concluding minuet. The concertos by **Carl Stamitz** (son of Johann) and **Johann Christian Bach** likewise share certain features: a sonata-form first movement, and bold divergations away from the home key by means of extended ornamental devices such as the trill. The finales of both concertos are cast as hunting scenes, scored with a pair of horns and doubtless designed to please their composers' hunting-mad overlords.

The Italian-born **Giuseppe Maria Cambini** made his career in Paris as a galant composer par excellence, fluently producing symphonies concertantes (82 of them) of abundant charm as well as a set of three piano concertos Op.15, published in Paris around 1780 and scored for keyboard, strings and ad lib pairs of oboes and horns. The third of the set is cast in two movements: an Italianate first with a grand introduction and smoothly flowing solo writing, leading to a development section of more closely worked harmony that anticipates Beethoven, especially in the written-out cadenza (first played on record by a young Claudio Abbado, in a Fonit Cetra

recording conducted by his father Michelangelo, who also arranged the score for modern performance). The concluding Rondo shares a spirit of carefree simplicity with Mozart's music for the birdcatcher Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* (composed a decade later), with the right-hand melody supported by a running Alberti bass part in the left hand.

The concerto by **Leopold Koželuch** is the first recorded instance of a keyboard concerto devised for performance by two performers at the same instrument. Having studied in Prague he made a career in Vienna, sufficiently successful that he could refuse an offer to succeed Mozart as court organist to the Archbishop of Salzburg. In 1785 he founded his own publishing house, and it was around then that he wrote this concerto, scored for strings with pairs of oboes and horns. Harmonious dialogue is the expressive key signature of the solo parts, which complement rather than contrasting with each other. A first movement of largely untroubled countenance leads to a serene Adagio surely influenced in its chromatic writing by Mozart's concertos albeit still drawing on Italianate tropes in the simple accompanying parts. The finale returns us to the world of Papageno as anticipated by Cambini, especially in its cheerful oboe parts and lively primo piano part. Here is the galant style in excelsis, carefree and seemingly oblivious to the burdens of life beyond the walls of theatres and palaces.

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