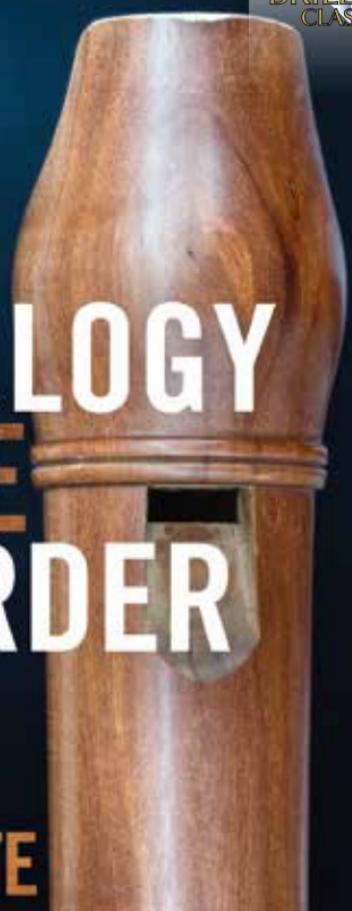


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BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

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HANDEL
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SPADI
STONINGS
TELEMANN
TRABACI
TYE
VIVALDI
WARD
WOODSTOCK



**ANTHOLOGY
OF THE
RECORDER**
**MUSIK
FÜR
BLOCKFLÖTE**

To distinguish the modern flute from its precursor, the recorder, one needs some historical knowledge of their various names. The recorder, an instrument which came in different sizes and pitches, was regarded as a kind of flute, variously known as flûte à bec, blockflöte, flauto diritto, flauto dolce, etc. What we know as the modern flute, which has been used for 300 years, was originally known as the flauto traverso (traverse or sideways). Nevertheless, the terminology was often confused. For instance, Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto* No.4 is scored for 'fiauți d'echo', which all available evidence suggests were recorders. Scholars have decided that generally, when indicated in the original source, the simple term 'flauto' (without any adjective) would have implied the recorder. Both Bach and Handel composed for the recorder, but Telemann left a greater quantity of fine music – in many different contexts and combinations – for the instrument. The heyday of the recorder family, whose chief members were soprano, alto, tenor and bass, was the early 18th century, before it was gradually replaced by the flauto traverso. By the 1720s this new flute had superseded the recorder in popularity, though composers continued to write for the older instrument.

Nowadays the modern flute is used as a replacement for the recorder in many performances of music from the Baroque period and earlier, but our greater awareness of early performance practice has made the uniquely pure tonal quality of the recorder, almost entirely free from overtones (or high harmonics), seem a more desirable option than formerly. Conversely, the widespread enthusiasm for early instruments has led to the substitution of the recorder for the originally intended flute on many occasions.

Jacob van Eyck (c.1590–1657), a contemporary of Rembrandt, was one of the most outstanding Dutch musicians of his time. Blind from birth, he became an expert in bell-casting and bell-tuning, and internationally famous as a carillonneur. When he settled in Utrecht he became Director of the Carillons. He also became a virtuoso on the recorder. His large collection of pieces *Der Fluyten Lust-hof* (The Flute's Garden of Delights) appeared in five successive editions between 1644 and 1656. Illustrating van Eyck's cosmopolitan interests, the two volumes comprise about 150 melodies – folk songs, psalm tunes, dance tunes, etc. – from around Europe. Each melody is followed by variations in a process of diminution, i.e. progressively shorter note-values. This has the effect of demonstrating in successive stages the performer's virtuosity. *Der Fluyten Lust-hof* remains the most extensive collection of music for a solo wind instrument by a single composer. The technical demands suggest a high standard of amateur music-making in Utrecht at that time.

Van Eyck's technique of variation by diminution had been employed by earlier composers. The tradition was cultivated at St Mark's Venice by Giovanni Bassano (as in his divisions on Clemens non Papa's madrigal *Frais et gaillard*), and in the sonatas of Giovanni Paolo Cima, the violin virtuoso Giovanni Battista Fontana and Dario Castello. These early Italian sonatas, in which brilliant extrovert display plays a significant role, are sometimes described as 'free sonatas', being in several short sections, rather like the fantasia. This 'sonata' genre evolved in turn from the tradition of basing an instrumental piece on a vocal canzona or song. Cima was one of the first composers to use the title 'sonata' – for instrumental compositions which we would describe as trio sonatas.

Arcangelo Corelli (1653–1713) was one of the many composers who wrote variations on *La Folia* (from his Violin Sonata Op.5 No.12); his are wonderfully diverse in character. In common with hundreds of other works composed in this period, Corelli's Violin Sonatas Op.5 were published in alternative versions for recorder. BWV529 is the fifth of six so-called trio sonatas for organ, three-movement works composed for three independent voices or parts.

In Italy in the late Renaissance period, the recorder was among the most popular instruments, along with the lute and the viol. The tonal purity of the recorder (or group of recorders) made it particularly versatile for adaptations of music originally written for other vocal or instrumental combinations. A vast amount of music – whether a Palestrina *ricercar*, canzonas by Giovanni Gabrieli, Merula and Trabaci or capriccios by Frescobaldi – has been shown to be marvellously suited to rescoring for a group of recorders of different sizes.

The Elizabethan period was a golden era for English composers. Byrd, Dowland, Gibbons and Tallis are now considered to be the finest (and among the very greatest English composers of any period), though there are dozens of slightly less familiar names such as Christopher Tye, John Ward, John Bull, Thomas Campion and Robert Johnson. Many of the madrigals of this period became very popular and remain so today, but the consort music is also highly regarded. An instrumental consort comprised a set of viols, or sometimes viols and lute (a so-called broken consort). Popular songs were often used as the basis for consort pieces. One typical song, known as *Browning*, was used by William Byrd (c.1540–1623) and many other composers. Byrd's version (*The leaves be greene*) is among the very finest of these compositions, but Henry Stonings, Clement Woodstock, John Baldwin and Elway Bevin also based works on *Browning*. The *In nomine*, based on a fragment of plainsong melody, was another popular form of the period. Christopher Tye composed more than 20 pieces of this kind. The *Fantasia*, a composition in several contrasting sections, superseded

the *In nomine*. Recorder group arrangements of consort music are widely available and very effective.

Alessandro Scarlatti (1660–1725) was born in Sicily, the second of eight children and a member of a musical family. One of his own children, Domenico, particularly celebrated for his 550 keyboard sonatas, is now more highly regarded than his father. Alessandro's vocal music generally receives the most attention, but his output of instrumental works was considerable. His 12 Sinfonie di concerto grosso (1715) are scored either for different combinations of concertante instruments or for recorder and strings. One likely reason why the 55-year-old Scarlatti decided to turn to instrumental music was his need for greater income at a time of financial insecurity. These works were belatedly published in London in 1740 by Benjamin Cooke, but this timing may be explained as a deliberate move by Cooke to exploit the name of Scarlatti, the first edition of Domenico's keyboard sonatas having been published only two years previously.

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767) was one of the great masters of the Baroque period, a composer of prodigious fluency, invention and versatility, whom both Bach and Handel admired tremendously. Today reverence for his two great contemporaries has never been greater, but we should not overlook the delights of Telemann's finest music. Proficient on several instruments, he wrote idiomatically and sensitively for each one. His 12 Fantasias for solo flute (TWV40:2–13) are typically varied and imaginative. The number of movements ranges from two to six. As in Bach's music for solo violin or solo cello, harmony and counterpoint are often implied. Among Telemann's many concertos for two or more instruments is the E minor concerto for recorder and flute (TWV52:e1). He also wrote several fine concertos for flute, while some of his hundreds of orchestral suites include recorder parts. Scholars have suggested that the 'flûte pastorelle' cited for the Suite in E flat major TWV55:Es2 may well have been a recorder. Among Telemann's most popular orchestral works is the Suite in A minor for recorder and strings TWV55:a2, a thoroughly delightful piece ending with a polonaise, illustrating the composer's first-hand experience of (and affection for) Polish folk music. Telemann's recorder sonatas number about half a dozen, the F minor work being of doubtful authenticity. They were included in the collections *Der getreue Music-Meister* (70 pieces for diverse combinations, published in 1728–9 in the form of a fortnightly magazine) and *Essercizii musici* – sonatas and trio sonatas, again for various instrumental combinations. Telemann used the recorder in many diverse contexts, writing for a pair (as in

the B flat concerto TWV52:B1), or in combination with other solo instruments (the bassoon in the F major concerto TWV52:F1, or the viola da gamba in the A minor concerto TWV52:a1). Generally his treatment of the instrument is much more ambitious than the simple mode – naively pastoral or lamenting – typical of so much Baroque recorder music. Telemann's writing is much more virtuosic, showing an advanced understanding of the recorder's capability and greatly extending its expressive range.

Johann Sebastian Bach's (1685–1750) partitas for solo keyboard and for solo violin are well known, but he also composed works of this type for lute and for transverse flute. Dating from c.1723, the four-movement flute work, BWV1013, was given the name 'partita' by 20th-century editors, whereas the only surviving copy from around the composer's lifetime is simply entitled 'solo'. For the final movement Bach replaces the more usual gigue with a bourrée anglaise.

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741) composed around 500 concertos. Of about 350 solo concertos, more than a dozen were scored for transverse flute and a handful for recorder, while a 'flautino' is specified for at least three. It is generally believed that this would have been a soprano recorder, while some scholars also maintain that some of the flute concertos were originally intended for recorder. Of Vivaldi's six concertos, Opus10 'La notte' ('The Night' – also the name of a Vivaldi bassoon concerto) is programmatic, two movements being entitled 'Ghosts' and 'Sleep' respectively. *Tempesta di mare* RV98 should not be confused with a violin concerto of the same name. Vivaldi wrote several, variously scored concertos with this 'storm at sea' title. Storms were among the most commonly evoked phenomena in Baroque programme music. Vivaldi's trio sonatas are among the numerous works often published for two violins or recorders/flutes, with continuo. One advantage of using recorders is that the player may select which instrument (soprano, alto, etc.) best suits the character of a particular piece or movement. Unsurprisingly there is much entertaining music in these sonatas, whether virtuosic or, in the slow movements, introverted. Variations on the famous melody *La Folia* (also used by much later composers including Liszt and Rachmaninov) comprise the final sonata (RV63) of the set Opus 1.

The six recorder sonatas from *Il pastor fido* were long attributed to Vivaldi as his Op.13, but are now believed to have been composed by Nicolas Chédeville (1705–1782). He made an agreement with Jean-Noël Marchand to have these sonatas published under the name of Vivaldi, just as many other composers marketed their works under the name of a greater master.

J.S. Bach composed at least half a dozen works including one or two recorders. It has been established that some of his concertos known in versions for harpsichord are Bach's own transcriptions of works originally composed for oboe or violin. Such transcriptions, as well as recyclings, were common practice at that time. The concertos BWV 1055, 1053 and 1059 are played here on the recorder, while the Recorder Concerto in G is an arrangement of three movements from cantatas (Bach used an obbligato recorder in some arias).

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759) composed about 20 solo sonatas for different instruments. Several of these, dating from the mid-1720s, at the height of his operatic ventures in London, are for the recorder. The music is quite often borrowed from Handel's own operatic works or is operatic in character. In common with Telemann, Handel demands of the recorder player considerable technical skill.

The brothers Giuseppe Sammartini (1695–1750) and Giovanni Battista Sammartini (c.1700–1775) were born in Milan. Giuseppe, who spent much of his life in London, was reputedly the finest oboist of his day. Many of his works include the recorder or flute, both of which he played extremely well. His Concerto in F is his most popular work. The younger and more forward-looking Giovanni Battista is best known for his contribution to the early development of the symphony, but he also composed over 50 sonatas.

Born in Naples, Francesco Mancini (1672–1737) worked as first organist at the Royal Chapel from 1704–06, then as director. From 1720 he served as director of the Santa Maria di Loreto Conservatory. A successful opera composer of the Neapolitan school (with nearly 30 examples to his name), he also wrote more than 200 cantatas, but today he is probably best known for his recorder sonatas, in which traces of his operatic experience are evident. His collection of 12 works in this genre was published in London in 1724, reflecting the flourishing market for recorder music in early 18th-century England. Mancini also composed 12 concertos for flute/recorder, equally valuable additions to the repertoire.

Also among the Baroque composers of recorder concertos were the Neapolitans Nicola Fiorenza (c.1700–1764) and Giovanni Battista Mele (c.1694–c.1752). Little is known about Fiorenza, except that from 1758 he was principal violinist in the Royal Chapel Orchestra, while his works include sonatas and concertos, often with parts for one or more solo violins, but also including several recorder concertos. Mele subsequently moved to Madrid and worked at the Spanish royal court. Apparently his only concerto was the lively and engaging work for recorder in F major.

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714–1788) was the most gifted of J.S. Bach's sons. Symphonies – at least 20 – and concertos – over 50 – represent a significant proportion of his extensive output. The prestige of Emanuel's employment at the court of the flute-playing, all-round intellectual Frederick the Great must be balanced against the king's ultra-conservative taste, which acted as a restraint upon such an adventurous creative spirit. Emanuel wrote many concertos, but in the same category may be included other works entitled 'sonatina'. One of these, the Concerto/Sonatina in E flat major Wq108, is scored for solo keyboard, two recorders and strings.

The German Johann Joachim Quantz (1697–1773) worked for over 30 years as flute teacher, flute maker and composer at the court of Frederick the Great. His compositions including solo flute total more than 500 (including about 150 sonatas and nearly 300 concertos), while his treatise on flute-playing is a classic. Quantz was also among those (like Telemann) who composed music illustrating the contrast between the recorder and the flute, as in his Trio Sonata in C major for recorder, flute and basso continuo.

The final disc in this anthology shows what a satisfying and versatile instrument the recorder is, in transcriptions of music across five centuries. From the Renaissance period: vocal music by the English composers Thomas Tallis, Christopher Tye, Anthony Holborne, Giovanni Coprario (or John Cooper) and Robert Johnson, and the Spaniard Tomás Luis de Victoria; organ music by Max Reger (1873–1916) and a piece from 2012 by Aspasia Nasopoulou (born 1972). Selected from the Baroque period is a movement from a Brandenburg Concerto by Bach, whose music generally is very effective in all manner of arrangements.

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