



Franz Xaver  
**RICHTER**

**Sonatas for Flute,  
Harpsichord and Cello • 2**

**Pauliina Fred, Flute • Heidi Peltoniemi, Cello  
Aapo Häkkinen, Harpsichord**



## Franz Xaver Richter (1709–1789)

### Sonate da camera Nos. 4–6

Although Franz Xaver Richter's name is invariably connected with the famous Mannheim court orchestra he cannot be considered by any means a typical representative of that celebrated band of musicians which Dr Charles Burney later described as 'an army of generals'. He played an important rôle in the musical life of the court as one of its most respected and prolific composers but in his compositions he resisted many of the new formal and stylistic developments pioneered by the orchestra's famous music director, Johann Stamitz, preferring instead to root his works in an older tradition. As a consequence, his works are far richer harmonically than those of his colleagues and also more imaginative – or conservative, depending on one's notion of progress – in their part-writing. In some respects Richter was a conservative and even reactionary figure but his later works, and especially those written for the church, possess a level of technical finish and expressive power which elevates them far above the routine productions of most of his contemporaries.

Richter was of Moravian-Bohemian descent and may have been born in Holleschau. Little or nothing is known about his early education and musical training although the accomplished technique he displays in all of his works is evidence of a thorough professional training. It is believed that he was taught in Vienna by the Imperial Kapellmeister Johann Joseph Fux, a prolific composer and author of the influential counterpoint treatise *Gradus ad Parnassum*, and thus shares a teacher with another important composer of symphonies during the mid-eighteenth century, Georg Christoph Wagenseil.

In April 1740 Richter was appointed vice-Kapellmeister to the Prince-Abbot Anselm von Reichlin-Meldegg in Kempten, Allgäu, where he probably remained for the next five or six years. By 1747, however, his name appears among the court

musicians of the Elector Palatine Carl Theodor in Mannheim. Although Marpurg (1756) listed him as a second violinist in the court orchestra, there is no other contemporary reference to Richter as an instrumentalist. He was by profession a singer and contemporary descriptions of him as a *virtuoso di camera* presumably refer to this rather than any additional duties he may have undertaken as a violinist.

As a member of the Mannheim Kapelle Richter naturally composed a large number of symphonies but he also produced an important body of sacred music. In 1748 he composed an oratorio for Good Friday, *La deposizione dalla croce*, at the invitation of the Elector. Coming as it did in the first year of Richter's appointment, this invitation may indicate that Carl Theodor engaged him to strengthen this particular area of music at court rather than as yet another composer of symphonies for his burgeoning orchestra. Richter was also active as a teacher and between 1761 and 1767 he wrote a composition method, based on Fux's *Gradus ad Parnassum*, which he dedicated to Carl Theodor. Among his most important pupils were H.J. Riegel, Carl Stamitz, Ferdinand Fränzl and the exceptional Joseph Martin Kraus. In 1768 Richter was appointed a court chamber composer and thereafter his name disappears from the list of court singers.

Richter made tours to the Oettingen-Wallerstein court in 1754 and later to France, the Netherlands and England where his compositions found a ready market with publishers. These tours were undertaken in part because Richter was becoming increasingly displeased with the preoccupation with fashionable virtuosity at Mannheim. It was clear to him that even gifted composers such as Johann Stamitz were falling into an easy over-reliance on stock devices and musical effects. Nonetheless, he remained in Mannheim until April 1769, when he

succeeded Joseph Garnier as Kapellmeister at Strasbourg Cathedral.

During the remaining twenty years of his life Richter's professional activities turned increasingly to sacred music. These years saw the composition of some exceptional works which, for the moment, remain virtually unknown. In the mid-1780s – the exact date is unknown – Ignaz Pleyel, Haydn's former pupil and now one of the most popular and successful composers in Europe, was appointed Richter's deputy. Pleyel's years in Strasbourg were the most prolific of his career but his tenure as Kapellmeister following Richter's death in 1789 was cut short by the Revolution and its aftermath.

Dr Charles Burney considered Richter one of the foremost Mannheim composers even though he consciously eschewed the fashionable style prevalent there. His early works, with their strong Austrian Baroque flavour, found a much warmer reception in musically conservative centres such as London and Berlin than in the south of Germany. His instrumental counterpoint, both in the strict fugal style and also in its freer forms, was much admired in his day and is often deployed with great skill to animate otherwise predominantly homophonic movements. Burney's reservation that he occasionally weakened his melodic lines by overuse of the sequence is certainly justified but his enthusiasm for Richter's inventive approach to thematic construction based, as it is, on rather old-fashioned motivic manipulation, is typically astute.

Richter composed twelve sonatas for flute or violin, harpsichord and violoncello which were issued initially in two sets. The first, styled by the London publisher John Walsh as *Sonatas for the Harpsichord with Accompaniments for a Violin or German Flute and Violoncello*, appeared in 1759 and the second in 1763, this time published under the imprint of Peter Welcker. Whether the works were conceived in sets is unclear; neither, beyond their dates of publication, is it possible to establish when the works were composed.

Nonetheless, it seems likely that the sonatas in the first collection predate those in the second and they may have been among the works of Richter that created such a favourable impression on London audiences a few years earlier. With their intricate, pseudo-contrapuntal textures and expressive lyricism, it is no surprise that these fine *sonate da camera* were quickly picked up by an English publisher. The second set of six works may have been intended as a sequel and it is possible that it was commissioned by one of Richter's new-found English admirers. These early prints divide the works equally between the flute and violin. The instruments are not strictly interchangeable since the 'violin' sonata parts present problems in terms of range and also utilize multiple-stopping. In 1764 the six 'flute' sonatas were reissued in a new, revised edition by the Nuremberg publisher Johann Ulrich Haffner. The accuracy of the edition and the revisions to both the flute and harpsichord parts suggests that Haffner may have obtained the engraving copy from Richter himself. The title of the publication, *VI Sonate da Camera a Cembalo Obligato, Flauto Traverso o Violino Concertato e Violoncello*, may also derive from the composer.

The rôle of the harpsichord in Richter's *sonate da camera* is far closer in style and spirit to that found in J.S. Bach's flute and violin sonatas with harpsichord *obligato* than in the popular sonatas of Handel with their simple continuo accompaniments. Richter's harpsichord writing is thematically and contrapuntally rich. The upper voice is treated in effect like a second treble solo instrument which participates on equal terms with the flute in the unfolding musical argument. The flexibility of the harpsichord writing also extends to the flute which Richter occasionally relegates to an accompanying rôle while the keyboard instrument carries the important thematic material. To English audiences in the 1750s this style of writing must have appeared strikingly original. The flute writing is not virtuosic since Richter's primary concern is to integrate

the instrument into the ensemble. Nonetheless, he displays a great understanding of the instrument's technical qualities particularly with respect to the relative strength of the different registers.

Richter may have been conservative by the standards of some of his colleagues but the musical style of his *sonate da camera* is not rooted entirely in the past. If anything, the works owe more to the example of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach than to his celebrated father whose works were generally not well known outside his immediate environs. The piquant dissonances and expressively ornamented melodic lines in Richter's wonderfully expressive slow movements, so characteristic of the *empfindsamer Stil* of C.P.E. Bach, are applied to themes which radiate the Italianate grace more often encountered in the works of South German and Austrian composers. These musical characteristics are also in evidence in the outer movements of the sonatas although the expressivity of the melodic writing is frequently compromised by the greater contrapuntal density of the musical texture. Structurally, the majority of the movements adhere to an identical ground plan, the most important element of which is the recapitulation of earlier material (in the original key) in the last third of the movement. In other words, although much of the music sounds rather old fashioned, Richter employs the same fundamental structural model he uses in his symphonies. This amalgam of the old with the new is one of the defining characteristics of his musical style. Even the apparently old-fashioned fugal finales in two of the sonatas featured on this recording are not really archaic: this style of movement remained in vogue throughout the middle decades of the eighteenth century and was cultivated by progressive Viennese composers such as Haydn, Mozart, Dittersdorf,

Gassmann and Ordonez as well as more conservative figures such as Richter.

If the Mannheim style came to be typified by the symphonies of Johann Stamitz, Carl Toeschi, Anton Filtz and others, Richter's works – in all genres – were certainly not without their admirers and it might be argued that the origins of Kraus's highly concentrated and intense style can be found in the works of Franz Xaver Richter.

This recording also features Richter's two extant keyboard works, a *Praeludium in C* and an *Andante in F*. The musical style and compass of the *Praeludium* suggests that it may have been composed for organ. Unlike organs in the North of Germany, those typically found in the South and in Austria did not have a pedal board. Composers wrote for the organ in the same way they wrote for the harpsichord although in many cases the style and genre of the pieces provides useful clues to their origins. Richter's *Praeludium*, which is preserved in a contemporary manuscript copy in the Fürstlich Fürstenbergische Hofbibliothek in Donaueschingen (Mus. Ms. 1630), is atypical of mid-eighteenth century harpsichord music from this region but it does bear a striking stylistic resemblance to the *praeludia* of Johann Georg Albrechtsberger, the most celebrated organist in Vienna during the second half of the eighteenth century. Although the upper range of the *Andante* also allows for performance on the organ, its style and syntax is more reminiscent of the harpsichord sonata or divertimento. Only one copy of the *Andante* is known, that preserved in the Universitätsbibliothek in Augsburg (III 4 ° 381). The origins of the piece are unknown although it is possible that Richter composed it for teaching purposes.

Allan Badley

## **Pauliina Fred**

Pauliina Fred studied at the Sibelius Academy with Rabbe Forsman and with Jari S. Puhakka and Mikael Helasvuo and studied flute and recorder at the Utrecht and Amsterdam Conservatories under the supervision of Wilbert Hazelzet, Jed Wentz, and Paul Leenhouts. In 2004 she gave her début concert in Helsinki. She plays in the Helsinki Baroque Orchestra, the Finnish Baroque Orchestra and the Oslo Baroque Orchestra, and is also a dedicated chamber musician, playing in a range of different ensembles, including the Bravade Recorder Quartet, the Zetes Woodwind Quintet and the SAMA Folk Baroque Ensemble. She has performed as soloist and chamber musician in most European countries, in the United States and in Japan, and has recorded for the Naxos, Aeolus and BIS labels. Pauliina Fred plays a one-keyed transverse flute by Claire Soubeyran, Paris, 2006, after Godefroy Adrien Rottenburgh (Brussels, ca. 1760).

## **Heidi Peltoniemi**

Heidi Peltoniemi studied the Baroque cello and viola da gamba at the Sibelius Academy with Markku Luolajan-Mikkola, and at the Paris Conservatoire National Supérieur with Christophe Coin and Bruno Cocset. She is an active chamber musician, and has appeared with the Volante Quartet, Opus X ensemble, and the Helsinki Baroque Orchestra in several European countries and in the United States. The Vantaa Baroque Festival elected her Young Artist of the Year in 2008. Heidi Peltoniemi plays a cello by Thomas Edlinger, Prague, 1718.

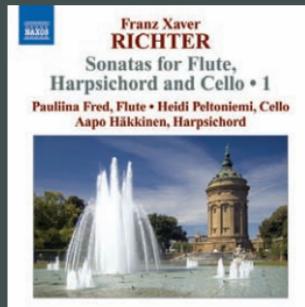
## **Aapo Häkkinen**

Aapo Häkkinen began his musical education as a chorister at Helsinki Cathedral. He took up the harpsichord at the age of thirteen, studying with Elina Mustonen at the Sibelius Academy. He studied with Bob van Asperen at the Amsterdam Sweelinck Conservatory, and with Pierre Hantaï in Paris. He was also fortunate to enjoy the generous guidance and encouragement of Gustav Leonhardt. In 1998 he won second prize at the Bruges Harpsichord Competition. He was also awarded the NDR special prize for his interpretations of Italian music. Since then, he has appeared as soloist and conductor in most European countries, in the United States, and in Mexico, in collaboration with distinguished colleagues, including Reinhard Goebel, Monica Groop, Erich Höbarth, Maria Cristina Kiehr, and Riccardo Minasi. He has recorded for the Aeolus, Alba, Avie, Cantus, Deux-Elles and Naxos labels. Besides the harpsichord, he regularly performs on the organ and on the clavichord. He teaches at the Sibelius Academy and at international master-classes, and is Artistic Director of the Helsinki Baroque Orchestra. Aapo Häkkinen plays a harpsichord by Frank Rutkowski and Robert Robinette, New York, 1970, after Johann Adolph Hass (1760).

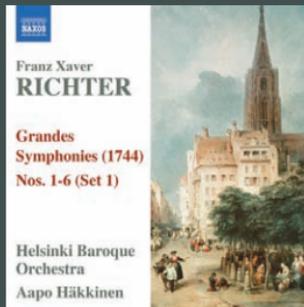


*Photo: Ville Paul Paasimaa*

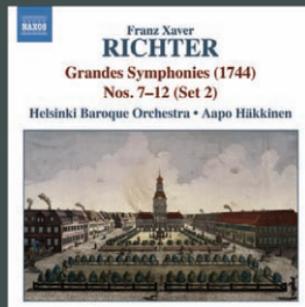
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Playing Time  
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Franz Xaver Richter's *Sonate da camera* have many of the same musical characteristics that make his symphonies so distinctive: ingenious part-writing, rich, expressive harmonies and delightfully unexpected melodic twists. Probably composed by Richter in the late 1750s, these remarkable works are firmly rooted in the Baroque trio sonata tradition yet contain subtle echoes of the new musical language being developed by his colleagues in the famous Mannheim court orchestra. Of the first volume (8.572029) *MusicWeb International* wrote: 'The three Finnish soloists... have first rate credentials and play with great sensitivity. Richter absolutely deserves much greater exposure.'

Franz Xaver  
**RICHTER**  
(1709–1789)

**Sonatas for Flute, Harpsichord and Cello • 2**  
(Sonate da camera Nos. 4–6, 1764)

Sonata No. 4 in C major	16:28	Sonata No. 6 in G minor	17:18
① Andante affettuoso	6:13	⑦ Andante	6:59
② Larghetto	4:02	⑧ Larghetto poco andante	4:54
③ Allegro	6:13	⑨ Allegro, ma non tanto	5:25
Sonata No. 5 in F major	20:51	⑩ Praeludium in C major	3:39
④ Moderato	7:49	⑪ Andante in F major	3:35
⑤ Larghetto	7:10		
⑥ Allegro, ma non troppo	5:52		

Pauliina Fred, Flute  
Aapo Häkkinen, Harpsichord  
Heidi Peltoniemi, Cello

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