

Apr 3rd, 1:30 PM - 2:00 PM

# Domenico Scarlatti: The Beginnings and Creation of the Classical Piano Sonata

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Stuart, Megan R., "Domenico Scarlatti: The Beginnings and Creation of the Classical Piano Sonata" (2019). *The Research and Scholarship Symposium*. 3.

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**THE BEGINNINGS AND CREATION OF  
THE CLASSICAL PIANO SONATA**

# **Domenico Scarlatti**

Presented by Megan Stuart

## **THESIS:**

**Domenico Scarlatti helped develop the Classical sonata and that development is seen in Scarlatti's personal history, his influences, and the elements used within his sonatas that became common for the eventual form of the sonata.**

# Personal History

## BEGINNINGS OF SCARLATTI

- Born on October 26, 1684 in Naples, Italy
- Father was Alessandro Scarlatti, well known for his contribution to opera
- Gained most of his music education from father and family
- Moved to Venice to begin career
- Moved to London to study with Handel
- Final move to Lisbon solidifies career

## SPAIN

- King Jao the V looking for a music master for Princess Maria Barbara
- Harpsichord sonatas were written for lessons with the princess
- Esercizi, 'excercises'
- Bulk of Scarlatti's compositions come from his time in Spain
- He stayed with the royal family until retirement in 1754
- Spent majority of life and career in Spain





# Influences

1

## ALESSANDRO SCARLATTI

First forty years of Domenico's life was influenced by Alessandro. His family was also an influence in his development as a musician.

2

## FELLOW COMPOSERS

Handel, Corelli, Princess Maria Barbara, Thomas Roseingrave , Pasquini , Gasparini, Vivaldi, and Marcellos .

3

## ENVIRONMENT

Due to the traveling he did with the royal family, Scarlatti mimicked his surroundings and the sounds he heard.

4

## OTHER INSTRUMENTS

Spanish guitar being the biggest influence, other instruments found in European orchestra and common instruments of Spain.

# Example:

SONATA NO. 449  
GUITAR INFLUENCE



The image displays a musical score for the final section of Domenico Scarlatti's Sonata in B minor, K. 27. The score is presented in three systems, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The music is in 3/4 time and features a prominent guitar-influenced style. The right hand plays a series of rapid, rhythmic patterns, often using slurs and accents. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment with chords and single notes. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'p' (piano) and 'pp' (pianissimo), and articulation marks like 'acc' (accent). The final measure of the section is marked with the number (45).

Scarlatti, Domenico. *Sonata in B minor K. 27 – L. 449*. YouTube Video, 4:48, March 23, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=syBnn-AgzVQ>

# Example:

EXAMPLE OF  
PUNTEADO STYLE  
(Mm. 10 - 12)

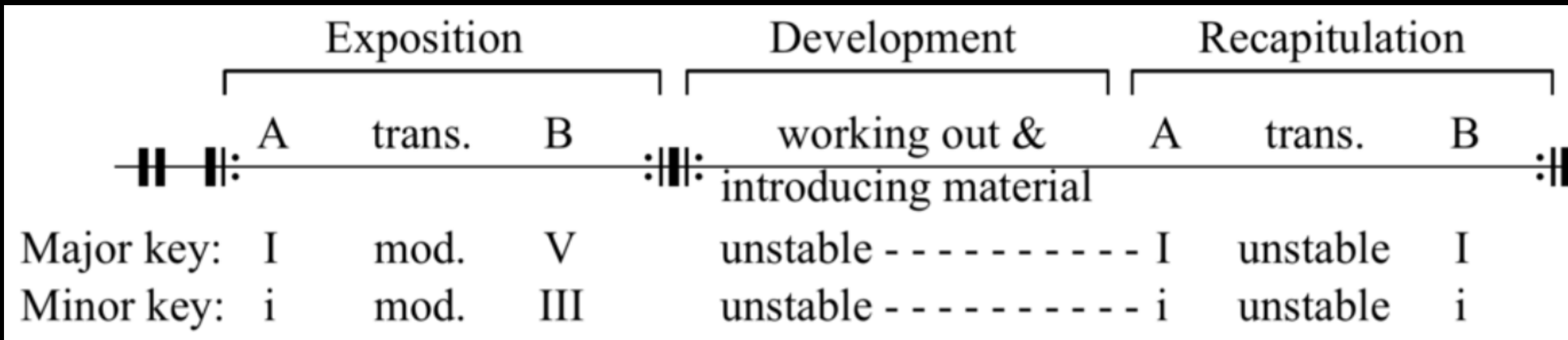


Scarlatti, Domenico. *Sonata in F Major K. 239 (Alexandre Tharaud)*.  
YouTube Video, 3:46, January 11, 2019,  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQ9QO83rCCg>



# Form of Classical Sonata

As seen in Mozart and Haydn's Sonatas



# Scarlatti's Sonata

## TYPICAL CHARACTERISTICS



# DEVICES USED

## DEVICES SCARLATTI USED IN COMPOSITION PROCESS

Altering  
Figures

Imitation

Thin  
Texture

Chordal  
Bass

Chromatic  
Passages

# FINAL THOUGHTS

## SCARLATTI'S INFLUENCE

- Through performance of his sonatas his ideas spread
- His pieces were used in learning the harpsichord
- At the tail-end of Classical period, he was pushing towards new ideas that eventually became popular
- His techniques are seen in Mozart's and Haydn's sonatas