



CHANNEL CLASSICS

CCS 18298



Rachel Podger

baroque violin

TELEMANN

FANTASIES FOR VIOLIN SOLO



photo: Marco Borggreve

**Rachel Podger** was educated in Germany and in England at The Guildhall School of Music and Drama where she studied with David Takeno and Michaela Comberti. During her time in London Rachel co-founded two ensembles specialising in the music of the Baroque, Florilegium and The Palladian Ensemble, both of which have achieved international success as touring and recording artists.

In 1997 Rachel was appointed leader of The English Concert with whom she continues to tour throughout the world, often as a soloist.

Rachel's first solo recordings (for Channel Classics), of J.S.Bach's Sonatas and Partitas, were released in 1999 to great critical acclaim. These discs were followed, in 2001, by Bach's Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord, with Trevor Pinnock, again to critical acclaim. Future plans include discs of solo violin repertoire by Biber, Matteis and Westhoff,

Rameau and Mozart with Trevor Pinnock and Vivaldi's 12 Concertos "La Stravaganza" (Opus 4) with the exciting, young, Polish orchestra Arte dei Suonatori.

As a recitalist Rachel enjoys an increasingly busy career; during the coming season she will give solo concerts in America, Germany, England, Holland and Korea. Her work as guest director and concerto soloist will take her to America and Poland. During the coming season, Rachel will join Andrew Manze for double concertos by Bach and Torelli as well as chamber music recitals.

Rachel is Professor of Baroque Violin at The Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London and Visiting Professor of Baroque Violin at the Hochschule in Bremen. She also teaches at the Innsbruck Sommer Akademie in Austria.



Johann Mattheson in 'Der Vollkommene Capellmeister' (Hamburg 1739) says about a fantasia:

*"Even though they (the fantasias) all give the impression of being played ad-lib, most of them are nonetheless written down properly, however, they are so very little kept in place and order that no one could hardly find a better general term to designate them than the one describing a good idea."*

Good ideas they are indeed, and plenty of them! They often occur in rapid succession, chasing each other across the page in vibrant fast movements, pausing here and there to give room for the next inspiration, or unfolding gradually and reflectively in poignant slow movements. Unconnected ideas stand next to each other, unaware of each other's presence: motifs, rhythms, sequences of intervals and melodic lines change direction and character at a whim. Broken chords alternate with agitated scales and passagework, grave and solemn passages appear next to dance-like ones. The musical story throughout the movements is always clear as you become aware of Telemann's ingenious way of giving free reign to his imagination within a cohesive underlying musical structure.

Contrapuntal elements and two-part fugal writing are present in the first six fantasias, a style of writing which was regarded as distinctly old-fashioned during the middle part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (the fugues are not nearly as thoroughly 'worked' as Bach's). The more fashionable 'galant' style predominates in the second Six, with techniques that convey a delicate sensibility in movement titles such as *Dolce*, *Piacevolmente* or *Soave*, the kind described by Mattheson as the 'Sing-Art'. There are also binary pieces with a particularly strong rondo or concerto feel, and a number of last movements are straightforward rustic dances with the irresistible physical traits to get you hopping about! Telemann's frequent use of Polish folk-dance tunes and rhythms in his instrumental music go back to his time of employment in Upper Silesia, and as he recalls in one of his autobiographies, 'One would scarcely believe

what wonderful ideas the pipers or fiddlers have when they improvised while the dancers pause for breath. An observer could gather enough ideas from them in eight days to last a lifetime'.

Solo music sounds best when a sense of the musical structure underlies a feeling of improvisation. Although always an ideal, it is sometimes hard to achieve this as a player, especially if one is tempted to focus too much on specific technical challenges. Here there are no insurmountable difficulties or pyrotechnics to overcome as the pieces are written sympathetically for the violin. Telemann himself was a good violinist. Early on in his career he held the post as Konzertmeister at Eisenach. In his first autobiography of 1718 he says: *"a page with witchcraft in its lines, full of tricky passage-work, is a burden to perform. He who composes for the many, does better than he who writes for the few"*. So we are left to enjoy these 'notated improvisations' and to be enamoured by their ingenuity.

Rachel Podger

During his lifetime, he was considered the most versatile and productive composer of the eighteenth century: **Georg Philipp Telemann**. He produced not only an enormous quantity of religious compositions and operas, most of which have not survived, but also an unbelievable stream of instrumental works, many of them written to order for the *collegia musica* which he himself had founded in Frankfurt and Leipzig. Many times, the composer functioned as engraver and publisher of his own work, as is the case with the Twelve Fantasias for solo violin recorded on this cd. Telemann published these pieces in 1735. During the same period, he published one remarkable collection of chamber music after the other, including the 'Methodical Sonatas' (1728-29), the 'Getreue Music-Meister' (The faithful music-master, the first musical periodical ever published in Germany), the extensive series of 'Musique de Table' (1738), and comparable collections of solo fantasies without basso continuo for flute, viola da gamba, and harpsichord. The term 'fantasia' indicates a relatively free form of composition. Neither a suite nor a sonata, it can, however, include elements of both. Thus, the Fantasias for solo violin include move-

ments similar to the dance-based movement of a suite, a sonata movement, a concerto movement, or a toccata. Generally these movements are grouped together by key in threes or fours, each group making up a 'fantasia'.

Telemann, of course, following the example of the suite, sonata, and concerto, paid attention to contrasts within the various groups of movements: slow and fast movements alternate in pairs, as was the custom of the period.

A more novel feature of these fantasias is the presence of indications such as *Piacevolemente*, *Soave*, and *Spirituoso*, which refer more to character than to tempo. Naturally one also encounters the *allemande*, *courante*, *gavotte*, *bourree*, or *gigue* (and occasionally a *polonaise*), without the dance's name being specifically indicated. The true nature of such a movement is betrayed only by its time signature and musical character. Some of the short slow movements serve primarily as transitions between two faster movements. The fantasias often conclude with a dance-based movement in which Telemann produces a *chiaroscuro* effect by alternating the major and minor modes. In the Fantasias for solo violin, the imitative and suggestive style which Telemann inherited from the older polyphonic fantasia (a forerunner of the fugue) results in a kind of false polyphony produced by the various registers of the violin. The style is familiar in an even more extreme form in the Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin composed by Telemann's good friend and contemporary, Johann Sebastian Bach. The musical text contains two, and sometimes three recognizable simultaneous melodic lines, without their ever truly sounding simultaneously in a genuine polyphonic texture: the actual polyphony occurs only in the listener's head. This false polyphony produces wide melodic leaps between a high-lying melodic upper voice and the low bass tones which give the music its foundation, and also allows the composer an opportunity for wonderful echo-effects. Using the apparently limited instrumentation of a single violin, Telemann presents the listener with a real treasure trove of expressive devices, emotions, and inventive rhythms. Indeed, these Fantasias for solo violin truly support Telemann's characteristic pronouncement: "If nothing novel can be found in the melody, then one searches for it in the harmonies."

Clemens Romijn, translation: David Shapero

# COLOPHON

## Production

Producer	Channel Classics Records bv Jonathan Freeman-Attwood
Recording engineer, editing	C. Jared Sacks
Cover photo	Hanya Chlala
Cover design	David Louf, Utrecht, The Netherlands
Liner notes	Rachel Podger, Clemens Romijn

## Technical information

Microphones	Brüel & Kjær 4003
Digital converter	24 Bit Prism / Genex Recorder
Speakersystems	Audiolab & AKG K1000 Headphones
Recording date	November 2001
Recording location	St. Michaels's Church, West Compton, Dorset, UK <i>with special thanks to Deidre Martin, Duncan Stewart and John Key</i>

# DISCOGRAPHY ON CHANNEL CLASSICS

## Rachel Podger solo:

**CCS 12198** J.S. Bach: Sonatas & Partitas vol.1

**CCS 14498** J.S. Bach: Sonatas & Partitas vol.2

## with Trevor Pinnock, harpsichord and Jonathan Manson, viola da gamba:

**CCS 14798** J.S. Bach: The Complete Sonatas for Violin and Obbligato Harpsichord

## with Florilegium:

**CCS 5093** Telemann: Concerti da Camera

**CCS 7595** Le Roi s'amuse/Music of Leclair, Boismortier, Corrette

**CCS 8495** Vivaldi: Concerti

**CCS 9096** In the name of Bach: Music of G.C., J.E., W.F., J.C., and J.B. Bach

**CCS 11197** Sanguineus and Melancholicus: C.P.E. Bach - Sonatas

**CCS 13598** Telemann: Paris Quartets

## with Florilegium and cellist Pieter Wispelwey:

**CCS 7395** Haydn: Cello Concertos and Symphony no.104 (London)

**CCS 10097** Vivaldi: Cello Concertos

# Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

## Twelve Fantasies for Solo Violin -1735

*Rachel Podger*, baroque violin



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<i>Fantasia 1 in B-flat Major</i> TWV 40:14	8.06
<i>Fantasia 2 in G Major</i> TWV 40:15	4.38
<i>Fantasia 3 in F Minor</i> TWV 40:16	5.16
<i>Fantasia 4 in D Major</i> TWV 40:17	5.05
<i>Fantasia 5 in A Major</i> TWV 40:18	5.06
<i>Fantasia 6 in E Minor</i> TWV 40:19	8.51
<i>Fantasia 7 in E-flat Major</i> TWV 40:20	8.33
<i>Fantasia 8 in E Major</i> TWV 40:21	5.38
<i>Fantasia 9 in B Minor</i> TWV 40:22	6.29
<i>Fantasia 10 in D Major</i> TWV 40:23	5.46
<i>Fantasia 11 in F Major</i> TWV 40:24	6.04
<i>Fantasia 12 in A Minor</i> TWV 40:25	4.42

Total Time 75.20

Violin: Pesarinius 1739

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Production & Distribution

**CHANNEL CLASSICS**

RECORDS BV

Waalwijk 76

4171 CG Herwijnen

The Netherlands

Phone (+31.418) 58 18 00

Fax (+31.418) 58 17 82

E-mail

clubchannel@channel.nl

More information about

our releases can be found

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