Sonata in F

For flute and basso continuo
Anna Amalia, Princess of Prussia
(1723-1787)

Transcribed for organ by

CHRISTA RAKICH

Copyright © 2015 by Christa Rakich. All rights reserved.

A Program Note

Princess Anna Amalia was Frederick the Great's sister, and some 11 years his junior. She is perhaps best remembered as a collector of music scores, and it is thanks to her library that many Bach works have reached our hands today.

But she also thought of herself as an organist, and commissioned not one, but two large organs, in 1755 and 1772. She also wrote music, including this Sonata for Flute. She may well have written it for her brother the king, who was an accomplished flutist.

As is typical of compositions of the time, we are given a flute part and a bass line. In this transcription I've given the flute part to the right hand and the bass line to the feet. The left hand fills in the blanks, as a continuo player would.

Does adding a middle voice make the piece into a trio sonata, like the famous six by J.S. Bach? Not really. First of all, we don't have three balanced voices; we have a solo voice, meant to be showy, and an accompaniment that plays a supporting role. And secondly, the urge to play more than one note at a time in the left hand, to dramatize a particular harmony, is, for a continuo player, irresistible. All that said, the sonata nevertheless makes a lovely organ piece.

The reference to J.S. Bach's *Prelude in C*, BWV 547, at the end of the first movement is intentional, an *hommage* to Bach's visit to the court of Frederick the Great in 1747. The event is much discussed in musicological circles, and was the inspiration for Bach's great *Musical Offering*, BWV 1079. It is hard to imagine that Anna Amalia would not have been present at that event, and I like to think of her drawing as much inspiration from "Old Bach's" improvisations as the men in the room did.

This sonata's three movements are distinguished not so much by tempo as by color. Partly because this sonata doesn't fit into the fast-slow-fast mold, I wonder if there is not a fourth movement missing. Whatever the case may be, Anna Amalia writes elegantly in the *empfindsamer Stil*, or sensitive style, that characterizes so much of the work of Frederick's famous court musician, Bach's son Carl Philipp Emanuel.

Finally, I gratefully acknowledge my own inspiration from Annette Richards's magnificent recording *Music for a Princess*, Loft CD 1129, available at http://www.gothic-catalog.com/Music_for_a_Princess_p/lrcd-1129.htm.

This transcription had its first performance on June 20, 2015 at the Church of the Transfiguration in New York City, as part of *The Muse's Voice*, a conference on Women Organists.

Christa Rakich
June 2015

Sonata in F

For Flute and Basso Continuo
Transcribed for Organ by
Christa Rakich

Anna Amalia
Princess of Prussia
(1723-1787)

17
22
27
tr
32

38
44
50
55

59
63
tr
67

Allegretto
4
6
8

11
14
16
18
1.
2.

20
tr
22
tr
24
26

28
30
tr
32
34
tr

36
tr
38
tr
40
42

44
tr
46
3
tr
47
1.
2.

Allegro ma non troppo
9
14
21

28
1.
2.
34
40
46

53
59
66
70
1.
2.