

Quantz

Concerto in A major, no. 256

Allegro di molto, Arioso ma con tenerezza, Presto

Johann Joachim Quantz (1697-1773) is usually remembered as the flute teacher of Frederick the Great and author of the extensive treatise *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen*. By the time of his entry into service at the Prussian court in 1741 Quantz was well known and respected as an extremely versatile, widely travelled and experienced musician. He had met and impressed Alessandro Scarlatti, Hasse and Handel, who apparently would have liked him to remain in England. Frederick, as crown prince of Prussia, first heard Quantz play in Dresden and his mother arranged flute lessons, kept secret from his autocratic father who attempted to quash Frederick's cultural interests. One clandestine meeting was suddenly interrupted by the king's approach. Frederick stuffed Quantz, flutes, music, stands and all into a tiny ante-room, ripped off his French clothes to don his military uniform just before his father arrived, though not in time to change his hair-do! The box room where Quantz was holding his breath, however, was particularly airless and cramped and so dreadfully hot that it was known as 'the oven'; he was well and truly roasted! Frederick repaid him handsomely when he succeeded to the throne, eventually engaging him on a staggering salary of 2000 thalers per year for life plus bonuses for each new flute and every new composition. The concerto in A major is one of three hundred! Needless to say, Quantz became one of the richest musicians of his day.