

AFFRESCHI

Marco **Borghetto** | Francesco **Melani**

Harpsichord

Francesco **Melani**

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Fantasia e Fuga in La Minore BWV 904

Fantasia

Fuga

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Partita in Re Maggiore BWV 828

Ouverture

Allemande

Courante

Aria

Sarabande

Menuet

Gigue

Marco **Borghetto**

Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)

Ciaccona in Fa minore P. 43

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Capriccio sopra la lontananza del suo fratello dilettissimo BWV 992

I Arioso: Adagio. Ist eine Schmeichelung der Freunde,

um denselben von seiner Reise abzuhalten

II Andante: Ist eine Vorstellung unterschiedlicher Casuum,
die ihm in der Fremde könnten vorfallen

III Adagiosissimo. Ist ein allgemeines Lamento der Freunde

IV Allhier kommen die Freunde (weil sie doch sehen,
dass es anders nicht sein kann) und nehmen Abschied

V Allegro Poco, Aria di Postiglione

VI Fuga all'imitatione di Posta

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1798)

12 Variations über die Folie d'Espagne H. 263

With the release of the CD '**Affreschi**', the partnership between the *Digressione Music* record label and the *Wanda Landowska Festival and Competition*, two important cultural entities in Puglia, is solidified. They are committed to providing young musicians with significant opportunities for visibility, growth, and career advancement in the world of music through the worldwide publication and distribution of their recorded works.

Young harpsichordists **Francesco Melani** and **Marco Borghetto** distinguished themselves in the 10th Wanda Landowska Competition held in Terlizzi, Bari, Italy, in May 2023, by winning in the F categories (Borghetto) and the Wanda Landowska Prize 2024 (Melani).

"**Affreschi**", a title borrowed from Art History, sees the two harpsichordists focusing their musical choices on Masterpieces of German 18th-century Musical Art, among the greatest and most representative (J.S. Bach, J. Pachelbel, C.P.E. Bach). All pieces from the vast harpsichord repertoire that we can contemplate in listening to them as true Musical Frescoes.

Facing "Classic" repertoires of harpsichord literature, Melani and Borghetto demonstrate remarkable soloistic and technical abilities, each with their own personal vision of music and interpretation. They enthusiastically contributed to the liner notes, actively collaborating in the production of the CD. The recording and editing took place in the early months of 2024 on a German double-manual harpsichord by Mietke, crafted in the workshop of Francois Ciocca and provided by the studio of the *Digressione Music* record label.

Margherita Porfido, *director Festival Landowska*

A portrait of a man with dark, wavy hair and a mustache, wearing a dark turtleneck sweater. The background is black. The name "Francesco Melani" is written in white cursive script at the bottom left.

Francesco Melani

Francesco Melani began his musical studies under the guidance of Francesco Baroni, focusing on the organ and harpsichord. Later, he was admitted to the A. Boito Conservatory in Parma, where he pursued piano studies with Giampaolo Nuti, graduating with top honors. Simultaneously, he studied composition with Luca Tessadrelli, Roberto Sansuini, and Roberto Andreoni, and Jazz piano with Alberto Tacchini.

In 2023, under the guidance of F. Baroni, he graduated with honors in harpsichord and historical keyboards. During this time, he also attended courses by Roberto Loreggian and Frédérick Haas. Melani made his debut as a soloist in 2007, marking the beginning of a career that involved him as both a performer, soloist, and chamber musician, as well as a composer.

He performed at prestigious festivals and musical events such as Bolgheri Melody, Festival Verdi, ParmaFrontiere Jazz Festival, Bologna Festival, presenting his orchestral and recitative voice premieres "Welcome to Americazz..." and "Attentage." He was part of Rondò 2018, selected by the Divertimento Ensemble with a program entirely dedicated to Ligeti's keyboard music. Other appearances include Serate Musicali di Milano, Misano Piano Festival, Farnese Festival, Festival Marco Scacchi, and FestiVita. Melani also held an entirely improvised concert as a guest of the Labirinto di Franco Maria Ricci.

In 2014, as the first part of the Conservatory Orchestra, he participated in the realization of Luciano Berio's "Rendering" and collaborated with the Contemporary Music Ensemble of the conservatory on productions like "Elio è Frankenstein" and "Frank Zappa, The Yellow Shark." In 2015, he contributed to the rediscovery project of Arrigo Boito and Costantino Palumbo's opera "Pier Luigi Farnese."

Melani won a scholarship from Chiesi Farmaceutici in 2016 for creating the soundtrack of one of their commercials. His composition "Encore" for accordion and string quartet was selected and performed at the "PIF 2016." In 2017, he achieved first place at the Pieve di Sacco and Premio Crescendo di Firenze competitions. His composition "Psalm 122. A song of ascent" was broadcast on RAI2. He was selected for the project "E' il nostro tempo! Integrazione a ritmo di musica," promoted by SIAE and Fondazione Arturo Toscanini.

Melani gave a masterclass and concert dedicated to "Assassinio nella cattedrale" by Pizzetti at the Italian Cultural Institute in London. He curated the music for the show "My Time is Today," dedicated to George Gershwin, performed at Teatro Due in Parma. In 2021, he was an artist in residence for "Creative Tools," an initiative promoted by the Curci association in Barletta.

Between 2021 and 2022, he was invited to perform at the presentation of the latest volume of Scarlatti's Sonatas edited by Emilia Fadini and the presentation of A. Cappagli's book "Ricordati di Bach." Melani worked as a harpsichordist for the ancient music department of the Conservatory of Parma, gaining significant experience in vocal and instrumental repertoire from the 17th to the 18th centuries.

Recently, he performed as a harpsichordist and organist with the Par.M.A. Ancient Music Ensemble, presenting programs dedicated to Corelli's Concerti Grossi, "Il lutto dell'Universo" (Oratorio composed by Leopold I), and 18th-century Emilian composers whose music is preserved at the Biblioteca Palatina di Parma.

In 2023, Melani won the international harpsichord competition Wanda Landowska. Currently, he dedicates himself to his deepest passions: the study and performance of ancient music and composition.

The Fantasia and Fugue BWV 904 is one of those pieces in which the craft sense of composing is fully revealed, built on certain recurring stylistic features of early music such as the descending bass in the opening (A, G, F, E) notoriously linked to the theme of lament or the two subjects of the Fugue, one of an exquisitely cantabile and Diatonic character, the other Chromatic and darker. Qualities that the composers of the time knew very well and knew how to use with extreme skill being, before artists, craftsmen of sound.

The verticality of the exordium makes immediately clear and recognizable the harmonic sequence that will return other times within the Fantasia, alternating with horizontal musical patterns that we could easily associate with Couplets of a Rondo, always within a polyphonic clarity dear to the areas of Northern Europe. Diatonic and Chromatic coexist in the Fugue, and this is significant; they stand for two genres, two opposing attitudes and "affetti". Who knows at the time what emotions might have been stirred by such a daring coexistence...

The Partita in D Major BWV 828 presents us with a Bach dedicated to instrumental bliss in which compositional mastery finds its fulfillment in a colorful use of the keyboard.

The Overture, in the French style, from the outset hints at the energy and brightness of the plant tonality, with the fugue having orchestral tints and being extremely in focus, the same bright tints that we find in the Courante with its well-defined contours. The Allemande and Sarabande present a taste all about ornamentation, with very broad cantabile designs of excellent musical taste. The Aria, Minuet and Gigue maintain a clear design of musical figures by elaborating the material with sagacity and distinctiveness.



Marco Borghetto

Marco Borghetto was born in Vicenza on 15 February 1998. In 2017 he graduated in Piano with top marks and honors at the Vicenza Conservatory under the guide of Federica Righini.

In 2019 he obtained a Master's Degree in Musicology from the University of Pavia with top marks and honors with a thesis in Byzantine musical paleography on ecphonetic notation. After continuing his piano studies in Lugano with Mauro Harsch, also delving into the classical and pre-romantic repertoire on the Historical keyboards with Leonardo Miucci and Giovanni Togni, in 2023 he obtained the Master in Music Performance with honors in Harpsichord under the guidance of Stefano Molardi at the Conservatory of Italian Switzerland. He is currently enrolled in Stefano Molardi's Harpsichord Class, with whom he is also studying the organ repertoire and performance practice.

He won the overall First Prize category F at the Wanda Landowska Harpsichord Competition 2023.

The choice of these three works is intended to be a small fresco, also rather heterogeneous, of the musical workshop of the Bach family, a surname that in Thuringia was synonymous with musician. In Eisenach Pachelbel, who arrived in 1677, became friends with Johann Ambrosius Bach, Johann Sebastian's father. He moved to Erfurt the following year, where he continued his friendship with the family, living in the home of Johann Christian Bach, Johann Ambrosius' cousin, and teaching Johann Christoph, the elder brother and tutor of the young Johann Sebastian in Ohrdruf between 1694 and 1700: under his guidance Johann Sebastian studied the works of Froberger, Lully, Marchand, Buxtehude, as well as Pachelbel himself. The young but brilliant *Capriccio sopra la lontananza del suo fratello dilettissimo* presumably refers to another older brother, Johann Jacob, with whom Johann Sebastian had shared his stay in Ohrdruf. Carl Philipp Emanuel, on the other hand, was at the time the best-known son of Johann Sebastian, far surpassing his father's fame and being taken as a model by the three great Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven: he is in fact the most important exponent of the *Empfindsamkeit*, which combines the stylistic trends of gallant style and those of *Sturm und Drang*.

JOHANN PACHELBEL (1653-1706)

Ciacona in F minor P. 43

Born in Nuremberg, he was educated in his hometown by Heinrich Schwemmer, and later in Regensburg by Kaspar Prentz, a pupil of Johann Kaspar Kerll. Pachelbel's compositional style draws heavily on the Italian models of Frescobaldi and Froberger, with whom Kerll had studied in Rome. However, Pachelbel's presence in Vienna between 1673 and 1677 helped to absorb the Italian and French styles, in a city that had hosted composers such as Froberger and Muffat, and in 1673 welcomed the presence of Kerll himself, who may have taught Pachelbel. This aspect of his training comes close to his knowledge of the keyboard school of southern and northern Germany, and is thus an important point of reference for the members of the Bach family whom he met.

There is no information about the date of composition of this chaconne, one of the six that have come to us, among other things, in a single manuscript source preserved in Brussels. This piece, however, is representative of a mature compositional phase and is one of his most famous pieces. The variety of instrumental solutions of the 22 variations finds in the key of F minor an overall vision close to that of wailing and crying: a key described in these terms by Mattheson as well as by Rameau.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750)

Capriccio sopra la lontananza del suo fratello dilettissimo BWV 992

Johann Jacob Bach (1682-1722) worked from 1704 as an oboist in the honour guard of King Charles XII of Sweden, following him everywhere in his career. On 9 August 1703, Johann Sebastian obtained the position of official organist in Arnstadt, and only a few days later the news reached him that his brother Johann Jacob had decided to leave Eisenach to follow the King of Sweden. Many musicologists connect the writing of *Capriccio sopra la lontananza del suo fratello dilettissimo* to these facts: it is therefore a program music, in which a precedent can be glimpsed in the *Musicalische Vorstellungen einiger biblischen Historien in sechs Sonateti auf dem Claviere zu spielen* which Johann Kuhnau published in 1700 and which Bach certainly knew.

In the first piece the calm and serene key of B flat major accompanies the flattering rhythm for parallel thirds and sixths, in which one can already hear a reference to the postillion horn. The second is a fugue in G minor, where the modulations in distant tones such as F minor, B flat minor or E flat minor represent the difficulties that the brother might encounter on the journey. The third is a lament in F minor characterized by painful chromaticisms: here coexist the Italian *bassi ostinati* of the 17th century, and the recurring chromaticism in the works of Frescobaldi, Froberger and Pachelbel. In the fourth, the rather rich texture, in which two parallel fifths are hidden, evokes the atmosphere of confusion that the friends create before the arrival of the postal carriage, suggested by the repetition of the "Fa" in the last bars. The *Aria di Postiglione*, again in B-flat major, finally announces the theme of the postillion horn, first on the high and then on the low register, to indicate the approach of the carriage; a motif that is reworked as a counter-subject in the brilliant final fugue.

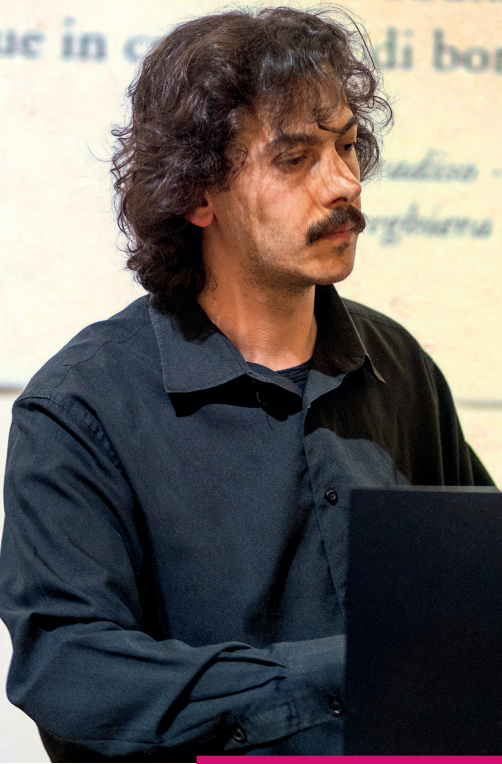
CARL PHILIPP EMANUEL BACH (1714-1798)

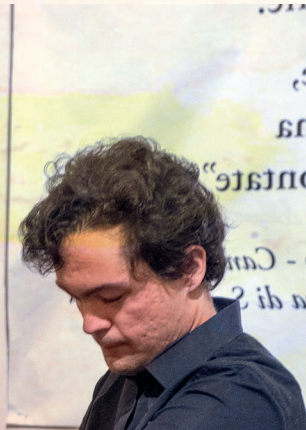
12 Variations über die Folie d'Espagne H. 263

La Follia is a Portuguese theme among the oldest in European music. In the late Baroque it found high levels of elaboration and variation thanks to Corelli, Vivaldi, Marais, Alessandro Scarlatti, just to name a few. Carl Philip Emanuel Bach wrote 12 variations on Follia in 1778, in which all the expressive and instrumental artifices proper to *Empfindsamkeit* emerge, achieved through a refined and always different use of vocality, counterpoint, dissonance, instrumental virtuosity.

...e in c... di bontate".

*Analisa - Canto XXXIII:
arghierra di S. Bernarda.*





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CREDITS

recording made at Digressione studios in February 2024

graphic design **samsastudio**

photo **Raffaele Puce**

liner notes **Marco Borghetto** and **Francesco Melani**

Prize Disc

raffled off by

DIGRESSIONE MUSIC

for the winners of the competition "Wanda Landowska"



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