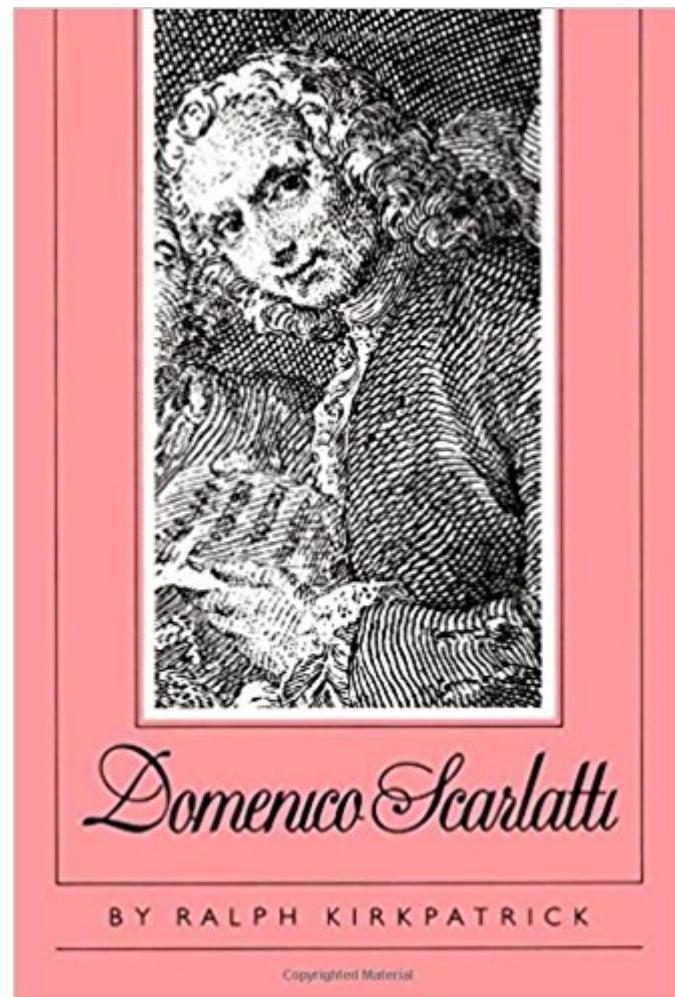


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# Domenico Scarlatti



## **Synopsis**

Again available in paperback, this definitive work on the genius of Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757) is the result of twelve years of devoted effort by America's foremost harpsichordist and one of the principal authorities on eighteenth-century harpsichord music. Mr. Kirkpatrick traveled extensively to collect material that has tripled the known facts about Scarlatti's life, providing the first adequate biography of one of the greatest harpsichord composers of the eighteenth century and one of the most original composers of all time. The second half of his book is an illuminating study of Scarlatti's 555 sonatas, concluding with a chapter on their performance. The book contains extensive appendixes, including discussions of ornamentation and Scarlatti's vocal music, and an updated section of addenda and corrigenda.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"Not only the best examination of the subject which has appeared up to the present time, it is the only one commensurate with [Scarlatti's] true artistic stature, and the significance of his music to his time and ours."--The New York Times

"[Ralph Kirkpatrick has brought the composer to life as a man and as an artist against an eighteenth-century background as vigorous and as detailed as a picture by Canaletto."--Virgil Thomson

Harpsicordist and musicologist Ralph Kirkpatrick's Domenico Scarlatti has been the work that all the encyclopedia's quote when speaking of Domenico Scarlatti. It was extremely well researched, and I believe that when he says there's "no known information" about something he looked long and hard for it. The book is informative without being too technical. It is the authority on Domenico Scarlatti's life and body of work. If you are a pianist and especially if you play his sonatas, it is well worth reading.

The first 7 chapters are historical narratives without unusual merit except as an introduction to the real book which is about music. There is a chapter on harpsichords. Kirkpatrick was not the first thinker on Scarlatti as evidenced by the extensive bibliography and appendix. He did establish the K identification number system which has stood the test of time at least in this country. His real contribution is in identifying Scarlatti as a real musician writing music of extraordinary merit. His chapter on Scarlatti's harmony is very difficult reading. The last chapter on "Performance of the Scarlatti Sonatas" should be read again and again by every musical teacher and student (he talks about tempo, rhythm, phrasing, articulation and attitudes). Of course, one must have the sheet music on hand to see what it's all about, and a mind-set ready to accept Scarlatti into the company of Chopin and Liszt as well as Granados and Albéniz. Kirkpatrick talks a little about the influence of Iberian song and dance forms on the sonatas of Scarlatti; a few others have scattered hints on this subject. I think the world would welcome a full-blown research here as a fitting sequel to this book.

Ralph Kirkpatrick's 1953 work remains THE book on Domenico Scarlatti and his keyboard sonatas. There have been no substantial revisions in the biography of DS since 1953. Georgio Pestelli and many others have questioned Kirkpatrick on chronology, but when it comes to analysis of individual sonatas, Kirkpatrick is strong. And his performances speak well even 50 years later. Kirkpatrick was not a musicologist, so his book is actually interesting to read!

Very interesting history of this composer by an outstanding musician which I continue to enjoy. Much of the musical terms are over my understanding but nevertheless the book is a great read

I enjoyed the material about Domenico's life. There was also quite a bit about the times as well. I have yet to read the analyses though.

This book is so crucial for any one playing Scarlatti sonatas. There is so much detail, historical context, and yet the writing is such that even an amateur pianist like me can get a grasp on how to

interpret the sonatas. There are some nice sections on how to approach them on the piano. I wish I could find similar books for every other composer!

An indispensable reference for all those interested in one of the greatest keyboardists of all time. Kirkpatrick's work is one of real scholarship. Written in 1953, no one has since bested it.

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