

A portrait of Klára Würtz, a woman with long, dark, wavy hair, resting her chin on her hand. She is wearing a blue blouse and a gold necklace. The background is a blurred indoor setting.

KLÁRA WÜRTZ

Celebration

KLÁRA WÜRTZ CELEBRATION

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH 1685-1750

Goldberg Variations BWV988

1. Aria	4'29
2. Variatio 1	1'44
3. Variatio 2	1'18
4. Variatio 3 Canone all Unisuono	1'59
5. Variatio 4	1'04
6. Variatio 5	1'29
7. Variatio 6 Canone alla Seconda	1'13
8. Variatio 7 Al tempo di Giga	1'43
9. Variatio 8	1'49
10. Variatio 9 Canone alla Terza	1'31
11. Variatio 10 Fugetta	1'35
12. Variatio 11	2'06
13. Variatio 12 Canone alla Quarta	2'23
14. Variatio 13	5'19
15. Variatio 14	2'06
16. Variatio 15 Canone alla Quinta Andante	4'09
17. Variatio 16 Ouverture	2'47
18. Variatio 17	2'00
19. Variatio 18 Canone alla Sexta	1'30
20. Variatio 19	1'45
21. Variatio 20	1'54
22. Variatio 21 Canone alla Settima	2'42
23. Variatio 22 Allabreve	1'26
24. Variatio 23	2'04
25. Variatio 24 Canone all' Ottava	2'45
26. Variatio 25 Adagio	7'59
27. Variatio 26	2'02
28. Variatio 27 Canone alla Nona	1'50
29. Variatio 28	2'19
30. Variatio 29	2'04
31. Variatio 30 Quodlibet	2'02
32. Aria da Capo	4'15

Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 28/29 May 2020, Westvest Church, Schiedam, The Netherlands

Producer: Pieter van Winkel

Engineer, editing: Peter Arts

Piano: Steinway D, tuner Charles Rademaker

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WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART 1756-1791

Piano Sonata No.1 in C K279

33. I. Allegro	4'53
34. II. Andante	5'08
35. III. Allegro	3'16

Piano Sonata No.2 in F K280

36. I. Allegro assai	4'27
37. II. Adagio	5'56
38. III. Presto	2'49

Piano Sonata No.3 in B flat K281

39. I. Allegro	6'41
40. II. Andante amoroso	5'27
41. III. Rondeau: Allegro	4'32

Piano Sonata No.4 in E flat K282

42. I. Adagio	6'56
43. II. Menuetto	4'06
44. III. Allegro	2'57

Piano Sonata No.5 in G K283

45. I. Allegro	5'21
46. II. Andante	5'36
47. III. Presto	3'46

Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: Summer 1998, Maria Minor, Utrecht, The Netherlands
Producer: Pieter van Winkel
Engineer: Peter Arts
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Piano Sonata No.6 in D K284

48. I. Allegro	5'08
49. II. Rondeau en polonaise: Andante	4'20
50. III. Andante (Tema con variazioni)	15'31

Piano Sonata No.7 in C K309

51. I. Allegro con spirito	5'53
52. II. Andante un poco adagio	5'03
53. III. Rondeau: Allegretto grazioso	5'55

Piano Sonata No.8 in A minor K310

54. I. Allegro maestoso	5'56
55. II. Andante cantabile con espressione	7'00
56. III. Presto	2'44

Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: Summer 1998, Maria Minor, Utrecht, The Netherlands
Producer: Pieter van Winkel
Engineer: Peter Arts
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Piano Sonata No.9 in D K311

57. I. Allegro con spirito	4'23
58. II. Andante con espressione	4'46
59. III. Rondeau: Allegro	6'00

Piano Sonata No.10 in C KV330

60. I. Allegro moderato	6'36
61. II. Andante cantabile	6'29
62. III. Allegretto	5'38

Piano Sonata No.11 in A K331

63. I. Andante grazioso	12'50
64. II. Menuetto	5'50
65. III. Alla Turca: Allegretto	3'24

Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: Summer 1998, Maria Minor, Utrecht, The Netherlands
Producer: Pieter van Winkel
Engineer: Peter Arts
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Piano Sonata No.12 in F K332

66. I. Allegro	6'29
67. II. Adagio	4'39
68. III. Allegro assai	6'43

Piano Sonata No.13 in B flat K333

69. I. Allegro	7'18
70. II. Andante cantabile	5'29
71. III. Allegretto grazioso	6'30

Piano Sonata No.14 in C minor K457

72. I. Allegro molto	5'24
73. II. Adagio	7'38
74. III. Allegro assai	4'20

Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: Summer 1998, Maria Minor, Utrecht, The Netherlands
Producer: Pieter van Winkel
Engineer: Peter Arts
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Piano Sonata No.15 in F K533

75. Allegro	7'32
76. Andante	6'31
77. Rondeau: Allegretto	6'21

Piano Sonata No.16 in C K545

78. I. Allegro	3'16
79. II. Andante	4'06
80. III. Rondo	1'38

Piano Sonata No.17 in B flat K570

81. I. Allegro	5'40
82. II. Adagio	7'21
83. III. Allegretto	3'25

Piano Sonata No.18 in D K576

84. I. Allegro	5'07
85. II. Adagio	5'29
86. III. Allegretto	4'22

Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: Summer 1998, Maria Minor, Utrecht, The Netherlands
Producer: Pieter van Winkel
Engineer: Peter Arts
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FRANZ SCHUBERT 1797-1828**Piano Sonata in B flat D960**

87. Molto moderato	20'54
88. Andante sostenuto	8'43
89. Scherzo, allegro vivace con delicatezza	3'47
90. Allegro ma non troppo	8'07

Piano Sonata in A D664 (Op.120)

91. Allegro moderato	11'07
92. Andante	5'13
93. Allegro	7'28

Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 25 February 2014, Westvest Church, Schiedam, Netherlands
Producer: Pieter van Winkel
Engineer: Peter Arts
Piano: Steinway D
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Impromptus Op.90

94. No.1 in C minor Allegro molto moderato	9'07
95. No.2 E flat Allegro	4'20
96. No.3 in G flat Andante	5'21
97. No.4 in A flat Allegretto	6'34

Impromptus Op.142

98. No.1 in F minor Allegro moderato	10'49
99. No.2 in A flat Allegretto	6'37
100. No.3 in B flat Andante mit Variationen (Rosamunde)	11'08
101. No.4 in F minor Allegro vivace	5'55

Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 11 February 2009, Onder De Linden Valthermond (Op.142); 9 December 2010, Westvest90 Church, Schiedam (Op.90), The Netherlands

Producer: Peter Arts

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ROBERT SCHUMANN 1810-1856**Kreisleriana Op.16**

102. Äusserst bewegt	2'32
103. Sehr innig und nicht zu rasch	8'52
104. Sehr aufgeregt	4'15
105. Sehr langsam	3'46
106. Sehr lebhaft	2'57
107. Sehr langsam, durchaus leise zu halten	4'08
108. Sehr rasch	2'02
109. Schnell und spielend	3'08

Fantasie in C Op.17

110. Durchaus phantastisch und leidenschaftlich vorzutragen	12'42
111. Mässig, durchaus energisch	7'27
112. Langsam getragen, durchweg leise zu halten	10'15

Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 30-31 January 2001, Doopsgezinde Remonstrantse Gemeente Deventer, The Netherlands

Producer & engineer: Arts Music Recording, Rotterdam

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Piano Sonata No.1 in F sharp minor Op.11

113. Introduzione (un poco adagio)-allegro vivace	12'44
114. Aria	3'02
115. Scherzo e Intermezzo, allegrissimo	4'54
116. Finale, allegro un poco maestoso	11'43

Piano Sonata No.2 in G minor Op.22

117. So rasch wie möglichschneller- noch schneller	5'53
118. Andantino, getragen	4'59
119. Scherzo, sehr rasch und markiert	1'36
120. Rondo, presto	5'12

Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 4 December 2001 (No.1) & 4-5 March 2002 (No.2), Doopsgezinde Remonstrantse Gemeente Deventer, The Netherlands

Producer & engineer: Arts Music Recording, Rotterdam

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Faschingsschwank aus Wien, Phantasiebilder Op.26

121. Sehr lebhaft	8'46
122. Romanze, ziemlich langsam	2'34
123. Scherzino	2'03
124. Intermezzo, mit grösster Energie	2'03
125. Finale, höchst lebhaft	5'03

Piano Quintet in E flat Op.44*

126. I. Allegro brillante	8'19
127. II. In modo d'una marcia: Un poco largamente – Agitato	8'01
128. III. Scherzo: Molto vivace	4'34
129. IV. Allegro ma non troppo	7'01

Klára Würtz *piano*

*** Daniel Quartet**

Quirine Scheffers, Misha Furman *violins*

Itamar Shimon *viola*

Joanna Pachucka *cello*

Recording: 4-5 March 2002 (Op.26), Doopsgezinde Remonstrantse Gemeente

Deventer, The Netherlands

Producer & engineer: Arts Music Recording, Rotterdam

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Fantasiestücke Op.12

130. I. Des Abends	3'22
131. II. Aufschwung	2'53
132. III. Warum?	2'31
133. IV. Grillen	3'30
134. V. In der Nacht	3'47
135. VI. Fabel	2'31
136. VII. Traumes Wirren	2'12
137. VIII. Ende vom Lied	4'37

Waldszenen Op.82

138. I. Eintritt	2'00
139. II. Jäger auf der Lauer	1'16
140. III. Einsame Blumen	1'58
141. IV. Verrufene Stelle	3'13
142. V. Freundliche Landschaft	1'05

143. VI. Herberge	1'58
144. VII. Vogel als Prophet	2'50
145. VIII. Jagdlied	2'24
146. IX. Abschied	3'33

147. Arabeske Op.18	6'20
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Kinderszenen Op.15

148. I. Von fremden Ländern und Menschen	1'45
149. II. Kuriöse Geschichte	1'04
150. III. Hasche-Mann	0'29
151. IV. Bittendes Kind	1'07
152. V. Glückes genug	1'02
153. VI. Wichtige Begebenheit	0'48
154. VII. Träumerei	2'40
155. VIII. Am Kamin	0'54
156. IX. Ritter vom Steckenpferd	0'34
157. X. Fast zu ernst	1'50
158. XI. Fürchtenmachen	1'22
159. XII. Kind im Einschlummern	2'10
160. XIII. Der Dichter spricht	1'59

Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 19 March & 17 April 2007, Remonstrantse Doopsgezinde Kerk Deventer (Op.12) & Hervormde Kerk Rhoon (Op.18 & Op.82); 1999, Muziekcentrum Frits Philips

Eindhoven (Op.15), The Netherlands

Producer & engineer: Peter Arts

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FRANZ LISZT 1811-1886

161. Waldesrauschen	4'04
162. Gnomensreigen	2'47
163. Liebestraum No.3 in A flat	4'13
164. Mephisto Waltz No.1	11'18
165. Les jeux d'eaux à la Villa d'Este (From <i>Années de Pèlerinage</i> III)	7'40

FRANZ SCHUBERT 1797-1828

166. Impromptu in B flat Op.142 No.3 "Rosamunde"	11'09
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ROBERT SCHUMANN 1810-1856

167. Arabesque Op.18	6'19
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FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN 1810-1849

168. Ballade No.1 in G minor Op.23	8'25
169. Barcarolle in F sharp Op.60	8'05

CLAUDE DEBUSSY 1862-1918

170. L'isle joyeuse	5'47
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Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 30 June - 1 July 2003, Hervormde Kerk Rhoon, The Netherlands
Producer & engineer: Peter Arts, Arts Music Recording, Rotterdam
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LEOŠ JANÁČEK 1854-1928**In the Mist**

171. I. Andante	3'33
172. II. Molto adagio	4'34
173. III. Andantino	3'05
174. IV. Presto-meno mosso	4'13

On an Overgrown Path, Book I

175. Our evenings	3'35
176. A blown-away leaf	2'54
177. Come with us!	1'11
178. The Madonna of Frydek	3'22
179. They chattered like swallows	2'04
180. Words fail!	1'47
181. Good night!	3'02
182. Unutterable anguish	3'12
183. In tears	2'31
184. The barn owl has not flown away	3'32

ZOLTÁN KODÁLY 1882-1967**From Piano Pieces Op.11**

185. No.2 Rubato, parlando (-chanson populaire Székely-)	2'03
186. No.3 Allegretto malinconico (-il pleut dans la ville-)	1'20
187. No.6 Poco rubato (-chanson populaire Székely-)	3'22
188. Méditation sur un motif de Claude Debussy	5'30
189. Marosszék Dances	11'13

190. Méditation sur un motif de Claude Debussy	5'30
191. Marosszék Dances	11'17

192. Sonatina for cello and piano *	8'45
193. Adagio for cello and piano *	7'47

Klára Würtz *piano*
* István Várdai *cello*

Recording: 15 October 2015, 6 February 2016, Westvest Church Schiedam, The Netherlands (tr.171-191); 11-13 August, 2015, Kodály Center, Pécs, Hungary (tr.192-193)

Producer: Pieter van Winkel (tr.171-191)

Musical producer: László Dobos (tr.192-193)

Sound engineer: Zoltán Baranyai (tr.192-193)

Piano: Steinway D, tuner Charles Rademaker (tr.171-191)

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BÉLA BARTÓK 1881-1945

Sonata

192. Allegro moderato	4'30
193. Sostenuto e pesante	4'36
194. Allegro molto	3'21

195. Three Folksongs from the District Csík	2'58
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Suite Op.14

196. Allegretto	2'04
197. Scherzo	1'58
198. Allegro molto	2'02
199. Sostenuto	2'58

200. Allegro barbaro	2'42
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Gyermekeknek (For Children), Book 2

201. Allegretto	0'46
202. Táncdal (dance song)	0'48
203. Andante sostenuto	1'02

204. Parlando	0'44
205. Moderato	0'45
206. Tréfa (joke)	0'49
207. Kórusdal (choral song)	1'35
208. Ötfokú dallam (pentatonic song)	0'44
209. Gúnydal (mocking song)	0'39
210. Andante tranquillo	1'38
211. Andante	1'09
212. Allegro non troppo	0'53
213. Allegretto	0'34
214. Con moto	0'24
215. Részegek nótája (song of the drunkards)	0'37
216. Kanásznóta (pig shepherd's song)	0'36
217. Regös ének (Christmas song)	1'06
218. Allegro moderato	1'40
219. Kanásztánc (pig shepherd's dance)	1'41

Six Romanian Dances

220. Bot tánc (Stick dance)	1'03
221. Brâul (Sash dance)	0'28
222. Topogó (In one spot)	0'57
223. Bucsumi tánc (Horn dance)	0'42
224. Román Polka (Romanian Polka)	0'30
225. Aprózó (Fast Dance)-Aprózó (Fast Dance)	0'54

Mikrokosmos Book 6: 6 Dances in Bulgarian Rhythm

226. No.1	1'54
227. No.2	1'09
228. No.3	1'25
229. No.4	1'34
230. No.5	1'15
231. No.6	1'47

Klára Würtz *piano*

ZOLTÁN KODÁLY 1882-1967**Sonata Op.4 for cello and piano**

232. Fantasia	7'35
233. Allegro con spirito	9'12

István Várdai *cello* · Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 29 April 2011, Westvestkerk Schiedam, The Netherlands (tr.192-200);
9 November, University of Pécs, Hungary (tr.201-231); 11-13 August, 2015, Kodály
Center, Pécs, Hungary (tr.232-233)

Producer and engineer: Peter Arts (tr.192-231)

Musical producer: László Dobos (tr.232-233)

Sound engineer: Zoltán Baranyai (tr.232-233)

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LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN 1770-1827

234. Für Elise	2'39
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ROBERT SCHUMANN 1810-1856**Kinderszenen Op.15**

235. Von fremden Ländern und Menschen	1'50
236. Kuriöse Geschichte	1'04
237. Hasche-Mann	0'29
238. Bittendes Kind	1'07
239. Glückes Genug	1'02
240. Wichtige Begebenheit	0'48
241. Träumerei	2'40
242. Am Kamin	0'54
243. Ritter vom Steckenpferd	0'34
244. Fast zu ernst	1'50
245. Fürchtenmachen	1'22

246. Kind im Einschlummern	2'10
247. Der Dichter spricht	1'59

PIOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY 1840-1893**Album für die Jugend (Auswahl)**

248. Morgengebet	1'12
249. Wintermorgen	1'02
250. Soldatenmarsch	0'53
251. Die kranke Puppe	1'46
252. Der Puppe Begräbnis	1'55
253. Walzer	1'18
254. Die neue Puppe	0'46
255. Mazurka	1'09
256. Lied des Bauern	0'40
257. Russischer Tanz	0'47
268. Polka	0'41
269. Altfranzösisches Lied	1'00
270. Süsse Träumerei	1'27
271. Lerchengesang	1'02

CLAUDE DEBUSSY 1862-1918**Children's Corner**

272 Doctor Gradus ad Parnassum	2'05
273. Jimbo's Lullaby	3'32
274. Serenade for the doll	2'44
275. The snow is dancing	2'29
276. The little shepherd	2'25
277. Golliwog's cakewalk	2'43

Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 18-19 January 1999, Muziekcentrum Frits Philips, Eindhoven, The Netherlands
Recording producer: Pieter van Winkel
Recording: Aarts Music recording, Rotterdam
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LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN 1770–1827

Violin Sonata No.1 in D Op.12 No.1

278. I. Allegro con brio	8'01
279. II. Tema con variazioni	6'44
280. III. Rondo: Allegro	4'12

Violin Sonata No.2 in A Op.12 No.2

281. I. Allegro vivace	6'00
282. II. Andante, più tosto allegretto	4'59
283. III. Allegro piacevole	4'42

Violin Sonata No.3 in E flat Op.12 No.3

284. I. Allegro con spirito	8'04
285. II. Adagio con molt'espressione	5'26
286. III. Rondo: Allegro molto	3'57

Violin Sonata No.5 in F Op.24 'Spring'

287. I. Allegro	9'05
288. II. Adagio molto espressivo	5'31
289. III. Scherzo: Allegro molto	1'01
290. IV. Rondo: Allegro ma non troppo	6'09

Kristóf Baráti *violin* · Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 3-9 November 2011, 24-28 February 2012; Liszt Ferenc Concert Hall, University of Pécs, Hungary
Producer and engineer: Peter Arts
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Violin Sonata No.4 in A minor Op.23

291. I. Presto	6'55
292. II. Andante scherzoso, più allegretto	7'00
293. III. Allegro molto	4'49

Sonata No.6 in A Op.30 No.1

294. I. Allegro	6'51
295. II. Adagio molto espressivo	6'54
296. III. Allegretto con variazioni	7'28

Violin Sonata No.7 in C minor Op.30 No.2

297. I. Allegro con brio	7'06
298. II. Adagio cantabile	8'39
299. III. Scherzo, allegro	3'12
300. IV. Finale: Allegro	4'34

Kristóf Baráti *violin* · Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 3-9 November 2011, 24-28 February 2012; Liszt Ferenc Concert Hall, University of Pécs, Hungary
Producer and engineer: Peter Arts
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Violin Sonata No.8 in G Op.30 No.3

301. I. Allegro assai	5'44
302. II. Tempo di menuetto	7'34
303. III. Allegro vivace	3'11

Violin Sonata No.9 in A Op.47 'Kreutzer'

304. I. Adagio sostenuto – Presto	12'54
305. II. Andante con variazioni	14'21
306. III. Finale: Presto	8'16

Violin Sonata No.10 in G Op.96

307. I. Allegro moderato	10'06
308. II. Adagio espressivo	5'16
309. III. Scherzo: Allegro	1'48
310. IV. Poco allegretto	7'10

Kristóf Baráti *violin* · Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 3-9 November 2011, 24-28 February 2012; Liszt Ferenc Concert Hall,
University of Pécs, Hungary
Producer and engineer: Peter Arts
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Cello Sonata in F Op.5 No.1

311. I. Adagio sostenuto – Allegro	17'01
312. II. Rondo: Allegro vivace	6'20

Cello Sonata in G minor Op.5 No.2

313. I. Adagio sostenuto ed espressivo –	5'35
314. Allegro molto più tosto presto	9'53
315. II. Rondo: Allegro	8'28

Cello Sonata in A Op.69

316. I. Allegro ma non tanto	12'30
317. II. Scherzo: Allegro molto	5'03
318. III. Adagio cantabile – Allegro vivace	8'11

Timora Rosler *cello* · Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 19–23 January 2013, Sala congressi del Parco naturalistico di Onara,
Padua, Italy
Producer and engineer: Alessandro Simonetto, OnClassical
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Cello Sonata in C Op.102 No.1

319. I. Adagio – Allegro vivace	7'12
320. II. Adagio – Tempo d'andante – Allegro vivace	6'58

Cello Sonata in D Op.102 No.2

321. I. Allegro con brio	6'24
322. II. Adagio con molto sentimento d'affetto	7'48
323. III. Allegro – Allegro fugato	4'28

12 Variations WoO45 on 'See the Conqu'ring Hero comes' from Handel's
Judas Maccabeus

324. Thema: Allegretto	0'42
325. Variation 1	0'37
326. Variation 2	0'37
327. Variation 3	0'38
328. Variation 4	0'43
329. Variation 5	0'43
330. Variation 6	0'38
331. Variation 7	0'38
332. Variation 8	0'38
333. Variation 9	0'41
334. Variation 10	0'43
335. Variation 11: Adagio	2'58
336. Variation 12: Allegro	1'02

12 Variations Op.66 on 'Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen' from Mozart's *Die
Zauberflöte*

337. Thema: Allegretto	0'30
338. Variation 1	0'31
339. Variation 2	0'33
340. Variation 3	0'29
341. Variation 4	0'33
342. Variation 5	0'33
343 Variation 6	0'27

344. Variation 7	0'38
345. Variation 8	0'37
346. Variation 9	0'31
347. Variation 10: Adagio	1'08
348. Variation 11: Poco adagio, quasi andante	0'54
349. Variation 12: Allegro	1'58

7 Variations WoO46 on 'Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen' from Mozart's
Die Zauberflöte

350. Thema: Andante	0'44
351. Variation 1	0'38
352. Variation 2	0'42
353. Variation 3	1'03
354. Variation 4	1'16
355. Variation 5: Si prenda il tempo un poco	0'36
356. Variation 6: Adagio	2'06
357. Variation 7: Allegro ma non troppo	1'49

Timora Rosler *cello* · Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 19–23 January 2013, Sala congressi del Parco naturalistico di Onara,
Padua, Italy

Producer and engineer: Alessandro Simonetto, OnClassical

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Quintet in E flat Op.16 for piano, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon

358. I. Grave – Allegro ma non troppo	12'26
359. II. Andante cantabile	6'50
360. III. Rondo: Allegro ma non troppo	5'30

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART 1756-1791

Quintet in E flat K452 for piano, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon

361. I. Largo – Allegro moderato	9'34
362. II. Larghetto	8'00
363. III. Rondo: Allegro moderato	5'19

Klára Würtz *piano*

Netherlands Wind Soloists

Hans Meijer *oboe* · Henk de Graaf *clarinet*

Martin van de Merwe *horn* · Peter Gaasterland *bassoon piano*

Recording: January 1997, Reformed Church, Rhoon, The Netherlands

Producer & engineer: Peter Arts

Cover image: Thomas Gainsborough, The Mall (1783)

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FRANZ SCHUBERT 1797-1828

Piano Trio No.1 in B flat D898

364. I. Allegro moderato	14'24
365. II. Andante, un poco mosso	8'53
366. III. Scherzo – Trio – Allegro	6'26
367. IV Rondo – Allegro vivace – Presto	8'21

368. Notturmo in E flat D897	10'17
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Klaviertrio Amsterdam

Joan Berkhemer *violin*

Klára Würtz *piano*

Nadia David *cello*

Recording: November 2006, Dutch Reformed Church, Rhoon, The Netherlands

Producer: Peter Arts, Arts Music

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Piano Trio No.2 in E flat D929

369. I. Allegro	11'36
370. II. Andante con moto	9'07
371. III. Scherzando: Allegro moderato	7'08
372. IV. Allegro moderato	13'25

Klaviertrio Amsterdam

Joan Berkhemer *violin*

Nadia David *cello*

Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 10 & 11 February 2009, Onder de Linden, Valthermond, The Netherlands
Producer: Peter Arts, Arts Music
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FELIX MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY 1809-1847**Piano Trio No.1 in D minor Op.49**

373. I. Molto allegro ed agitato	8'56
374. II. Andante con moto tranquillo	6'22
375. III. Scherzo: Leggiero e vivace	3'26
376. IV. Finale: Allegro assai appassionato	8'09

Piano Trio No.2 in C minor Op.66

377. I. Allegro energico e con fuoco	10'05
378. II. Andante espressivo	6'45
379. III. Scherzo: Molto allegro quasi presto	3'40
380. IV. Finale: Allegro appassionato	7'10

Klaviertrio Amsterdam

Joan Berkhemer *violin*

Nadia David *cello*

Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 1999, Hervormde Kerk Rhoon, The Netherlands
Producer & engineer: Peter Arts, Arts Music Recording, Rotterdam
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JOHANNES BRAHMS 1833–1897**Sonata No.1 in G Op.78**

381. I. Vivace ma non troppo	10'02
382. II. Adagio	7'05
383. III. Allegro molto moderato	7'11

Sonata No.2 in A Op.100

384. I. Allegro amabile	7'49
385. II. Andante tranquillo – Vivace – Andante – Vivace di più – Andante – Vivace	6'21
386. III. Allegretto grazioso (quasi andante)	5'06

Sonata No.3 in D minor Op.108

387. I. Allegro	8'01
388. II. Adagio	4'23
389. III. Un poco presto e con sentimento	2'42
390. IV. Presto agitato	5'20

Kristóf Baráti *violin*

Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 19–21 August 2013, Kodály Centre, Pécs, Hungary
Producer: László Dobos
Balance engineer: Zoltán Baranyai
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CLAUDE DEBUSSY 1862-1918

Violin Sonata L140 (1917)

391. Allegro vivo	4'32
392. Intermède, fantasque et léger	4'04
393. Finale, très animé	4'11

MAURICE RAVEL 1875-1937

Violin Sonata No.2 in G M77 (1923-27)

394. Allegretto	8'09
395. Blues. Moderato	5'26
396. Perpetuum mobile, allegro	3'46

CÉSAR FRANCK 1822-1890

Violin Sonata in A FWV8 (1886)

397. Allegretto ben moderato	5'35
398. Allegro	7'37
399. Recitativo-Fantasia, ben moderato	6'43
400. Allegretto poco mosso	6'09

Kristóf Baráti *violin*

Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: August 2014, Kodály Centre, Pécs, Hungary

Engineer: László Dobos

Production and Editing: Ibolya Tóth

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PIOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY 1840-1893

Piano Trio in A minor Op.50 "In memory of a great artist"

401. Pezzo elegiaco: Moderato assai – Allegro giusto	18'26
402. Tema con variazioni: Andante con moto	18'16
403. Variazione finale (Allegro risoluto e con fuoco) e coda (Andante con moto-Lugubre)	7'33

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF 1873-1943

404. Trio élégiaque No.1 in G minor 13'16

Klára Würtz *piano* · Dmitri Makhtin *violin* · Alexander Kniazev *cello*

Recording: 26/27 June 2017, Westvest Church Schiedam, The Netherlands

Producer & engineer: Peter Arts

Piano: Steinway D, tuned by Charles Rademaker

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FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN 1810-1849

405. Polonaise Brillante in C Op.3 8'27

MANUEL DE FALLA 1876-1946

Suite populaire Espagnole

(after "Siete Canciones populares Españolas")

406. El paño moruno	2'09
407. Nana (Berceuse)	2'09
408. Canción	1'31
409. Polo	1'16
410. Asturiana	2'17
411. Jota	2'56

CLAUDE DEBUSSY 1862-1918**Sonate for Cello and Piano**

412. Prologue: Lent	3'51
413. Sérénade (Modérément animé)	2'55
414. Finale (Animé)	3'31

BENJAMIN BRITTEN 1913-1976**Sonata in C for Cello and Piano**

415. Dialogo	6'05
416. Scherzo-pizzicato	2'16
417. Elegia	5'41
418. Marcia	2'22
419. Moto perpetuo	2'26

Timora Rosler *cello* · Klára Würtz *piano*

Recording: 29-30 may 2001, Doopsgezinde Gemeente Deventer, The Netherlands
Producer & Engineer: Peter Arts, Arts Music Recording, Rotterdam
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GYÖRGY LIGETI 1923-2006**Három Weöres-dal**

Three songs on poems by Sandor Weores

420. I. Tancol a hold	0'51
421. II. Gyumolcs-furt	2'13
422. III. Kalmar jött nagy madarakkal	1'59

Öt Arany-dal

Five songs on poems by Janos Arany

423. I. Csalfa sugar	1'42
424. II. A legszebb virag	1'50
425. III. A csendes dalokbol	0'55
426. IV. A bujdoso	2'58
427. V. Az ordog elvitte a financot	1'46

ZOLTÁN KODÁLY 1882-1967

428. Magos kösziklának (Magyar népzene K.49, V. No.1)	4'04
429. Ifjúság, mint sólyommadár (Magyar népzene K.49, V. No.3)	2'09
430. Az hol én elmegyek (Magyar népzene K.49, I. No.2)	3'23
431. Csillagom, révészem (Magyar népzene K.49, V. No.5)	2'56
432. Magos a rutafa (Magyar népdalok K.22, No.12)	2'59

BÉLA BARTÓK 1881-1945**Nyolc magyar népdal BB 47**

Eight Hungarian Folk Songs

433. I. Fekete főd	1'17
434. II. Istenem, istenem	1'19
435. III. Asszonyok, asszonyok	0'58
436. IV. Annyi banat az szívemen	1'08
437. V. Ha kimegyek	1'06
438. VI. Toltik a nagy erdő utjat	1'20
439. VII. Eddig valo dolgom	1'39
440. VIII. Olvad a ho	1'01

Öt magyar népdal BB 97

Five Hungarian Folk Songs

441. I. Elindultam szep hazambol	0'58
442. II. Altal mennek en a Tiszan ladikon	0'47
443. III. A gyulai kert alatt	1'00
444. IV. Nem messze van ide kis Margitta	2'13
445. V. Vegigmentem a tarkanyi	0'43

from **Tíz magyar dal BB 43**

Ten Hungarian Songs

446. I. Tiszan innen, Tiszan tul	2'02
447. II. Erdők, volgyek, szűk ligetek	1'49
448. VIII. Sej, mikor engem katonanak visznek	1'26
449. X. Kis kece lanyom	0'31

Falun BB 87

Village Scenes

450. I. Szenagyűjteskor	1'05
451. II. A menyasszonynál	1'19
452. III. Lakodalom	2'40
453. IV. Bolcsődál	3'54
454. V. Legenytanc	1'51

Katalin Karolyi *mezzo-soprano* · Klara Wurtz *piano*

Recording: 27 & 28 Juni 2018, Westvest Kerk, Schiedam, The Netherlands

Producer: Peter Arts, Arts Music Recording, Rotterdam

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WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART 1756–1791

Piano Concerto No.9 in G K271 'Jeunehomme'

455. I. Allegro	10'13
456. II. Andantino	9'51
457. III. Rondo: Presto	9'38

Piano Concerto No.21 in C K467

458. I. Allegro maestoso	14'23
459. II. Andante	6'04
460. III. Allegro vivace assai	6'42

Klára Wurtz *piano*

Prima La Musica

Dirk Vermeulen *conductor*

Recording: 3 & 4 November 2008, Studio Steurbaut, Sint-Amandsberg, Belgium

Producer: Luc Vaes

Recording engineer: Gilbert Steurbaut

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LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN 1770-1827

Piano Concerto No.3 in C minor Op.37 (1800)

461. I. Allegro con brio

462. II. Largo

463. III. Rondo. Allegro

Piano Sonata No.14 in C-sharp minor Op.27. No.2 "Mondschein" (1801)

464. I. Adagio sostenuto

465. II. Allegretto

466. III. Presto agitato

Piano Sonata No.8 in C minor Op.13 "Pathétique" (1798)

467. I. Grave - Allegro di molto e con brio

468. II. Adagio cantabile

469. III. Rondo. Allegro

Klara Würtz *piano*

Czech Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra Pardubice (Op.37)

Vahan Mardirossian *conductor*

Recording: 2020, Westvest Church, Schiedam, The Netherlands (464-469);

19-20 October 2023, Pardubice, Czech Republic (461-463)

Sound engineer: Jakub Stratílek (461-463)

Session producer: Pavel Kuncar (461-463)

Engineer & editing: Peter Arts, Arts Music Recording, Rotterdam (464-469)

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SERGEY RACHMANINOFF 1873-1943

Piano Concerto No.2 in C minor Op.18

470. Moderato	10'10
471. Adagio sostenuto	11'06
472. Allegro scherzando	11'30

ROBERT SCHUMANN 1810-1856

Piano Concerto in A minor Op.54

473. Allegro affetuoso	15'02
474. Intermezzo	5'16
475. Allegro vivace	10'28

Klára Würtz *piano*

National Symphony Orchestra of the Ukraine

Vladimir Sirenko *conductor* (1-3)

Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie

Arie van Beek *conductor* (4-6)

Recordings: 16 November 2001, Philharmonie Hereford, Germany (Schumann);
1 February 2003, Theater, Breda, The Netherlands (Rachmaninoff)
Producer & engineer: Peter Arts, Arts Music Recording, Rotterdam
© 2006 & © 2025 Brilliant Classics

BELA BARTÓK 1881-1945

Piano Concerto No.3

476. I. Allegretto	7'20
477. II. Adagio Religioso	9'35
478. III. Allegro Vivace	6'48

MAURICE RAVEL 1875-1937

Piano Concerto in G

479. I. Allegramente	8'18
480. II. Adagio Assai	9'18
481. III. Presto	3'59

Klára Würtz *piano*

Janáček Philharmonic Orchestra

Theodore Kuchar *conductor*

Recorded: 4-5 April (Bartók) & 2-3 June (Ravel) 2008, Concert Hall Ostrava, Czech Republic
Producer: Matthias Kadar
Sound engineer: Jaroslav Stranavsky, Music Master Slovakia
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ABOUT KLÁRA

In universities and conservatoires across America and western Europe, tuition is now spooned out in a few 'contact hours' per week. The economics of further education obliges students to pursue a course of self-motivated study while running up impressive debts for the privilege. These students would likely be astonished – perhaps appalled – to learn how different, and how intense, was the instruction given to their predecessors at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest.

Writing in 1973, the Croatian-born, American-resident violinist Robert Gerle recalled his years at the Academy, from his entry as a 10-year-old in 1934. In addition to the major instrument, students took classes (most of them daily) in solfège, harmony, theory, form and analysis, piano (even as a string-player), viola (to learn inner-part harmony), conducting, music history, Hungarian folk music (led by Zoltán Kodály), chamber music with piano (with Leo Weiner), string quartet (with Imre Waldbauer), and orchestra.

'There were two orchestras, the great Student Orchestra and another for conducting students. We had to participate in numerous student concerts, given in the great Concert Hall. These were not only public and very well attended, but all reviewed in the press.' Tuition on the principal instrument occupied two or three afternoons per week. On top of all this, several hours of daily practice was taken as read. This was the rigorous course of instruction experienced by pianists such as Géza Anda, Annie Fischer and Andor Földes, all of whom went on to become noted teachers themselves. Their playing spoke of the comprehensive nature of their education, with an intellectually grounded musicianship which draws its strength from a full grasp of the possibilities in a musical score, as well as the means to achieve them. So too do the recordings of their successor, Klára Würtz. Born in Budapest in 1965, Würtz entered the Academy as a gifted teenager, in 1979. 'Géza Anda didn't even have to get through what

we had to endure,' she points out. 'On top of all those compulsory subjects, we had to do political science, according to the principles of Marxism. We had classes in Russian, in communist aesthetics, in the history of Marxism and Leninism: everything had to follow the ideology of communism. These were fake subjects, in a way. Everybody hated them. We had to take a state exam in Russian. I remember what a farce it was. I learned Russian phonetically. My essay was about how "Sviatoslav Richter is my favourite pianist." I could hardly speak a word of Russian, but my pronunciation was so good that I got a five, which was the highest mark. And the teacher was like a partner in crime. He didn't ask too many questions!' Würtz had been schooled in the self-discipline attendant on professional music-making from early on, as a member of the Children's Choir of Hungarian Radio and Television. She took her first piano lessons at the age of five, and joined the choir a year later. 'Looking back, it's interesting to me that I was used to recording from early on – or the atmosphere of recording studios. Our choir rehearsals took place after school in the radio building. The old headquarters of Hungarian Radio was a beautiful building, which has unfortunately been taken over by the current government, and they have done away with all the studios. The incredible history of the place is all gone. But the rehearsals were very tough, three hours every day, preparing for tours.' A fellow chorister was Katalin Károlyi, who would become celebrated as a mezzo-soprano specializing in new and early music, and who is reunited with her childhood friend in the collection of Hungarian songs on CD30. Meanwhile, Würtz carried on with the piano, which she had taken up in the first place to follow in the footsteps of her older sister. 'At some point, I became good enough to play the more difficult stuff, and I started to accompany the choir. So I also became their pianist. Later on, they asked me to play solo pieces in the middle of concerts with the choir. So I had an uneven sort of musical development, because

my instrumental skills were secondary. I was mostly a singer, though in myself I always considered myself a pianist.'

Whatever other depredations were visited upon their populations by postwar communist governments behind the Iron Curtain, music and musical training were taken seriously, and lavishly subsidised. 'My school provided excellent instrumental teachers for members of the choir. It was a full package of musical education. My teacher at that age was a stern lady with high expectations and a frightening personality! And she was frustrated with my progress: she wanted me to move on, but I was away so much, on tour with the choir.

Eventually she suggested that I take an audition for the Talented Children's Class at the Liszt Academy. I took the exams, and I was successful, and from that moment on, I devoted myself to the piano.' Authoritarian rule left Hungarian cultural life in pieces. Fleeing first Horthy-era, anti-semitic fascism, and later Soviet communism, the likes of Anda, Földes, György Ligeti and Georg Solti made their homes and careers on foreign shores, from Vienna and Munich westwards. Meanwhile some of their colleagues, even afforded the opportunity to leave, stayed behind, and they were seen as heroes by younger Hungarians: the conductor János Ferencsik, the composer György Kurtág, the pianist Ferenc Rados. These figures passed on the heritage of their own training to younger generations. Kodály and Weiner had taught Kurtág and Rados, who taught Zoltán Kocsis – and all three of them taught Klára Würtz.

'An incredible possibility at that age,' says Würtz as she thinks back to those Liszt Academy days. 'Of course, I didn't understand half of what was going on, but later you realize what treasure was placed in your hands.' In his chamber-music classes, Kurtág spent six months taking his students through a bar-by-bar analysis of a single exposition in a Classical-era sonata-form movement. He has never suffered fools gladly: a Hungarian trait. 'He was an incredible sceptic, an incredible thinker, like somebody from the Enlightenment. He always tried to make you understand what you are doing. He laughed

when you talked about emotions. That was his favourite reason to laugh at a student: "What does it mean that you *feel* it like this?"'

The classes of Rados presented a salutary contrast. 'He was asking, and asking us, what is the *meaning* of these big pieces? Whereas Kurtág's teaching was all about the *content* of a piece, and how intensively you understand that content.' The vexed aesthetics class was led by József Ujfalussy: 'A wonderful musicologist who wrote beautiful books on Bartók and Mozart. He had to teach this wonderful topic on a Marxist basis, but his lessons were unforgettable. He would shuffle the ideology to the side, and give the lesson how he wanted to give it.'

Most precious of all was a little time spent with the pianist and pedagogue Pál Kadosa (1903-83), who had studied with Kodály and taught all of Würtz's other teachers. Kadosa was nearing the end of his life: 'He had the most beautiful apartment, looking over the Danube, filled with antiquities and art. He would sit in a big chair, and he talked very little and very softly. So you had to kneel down next to him, by the side of this armchair. And he would whisper a few words. But those few words were like a balm to my ears, because he was so human, and so wise, and so kind, compared to all my other teachers: positive, tender, encouraging.

'When I was applying for a place at the Academy,' recalls Würtz, 'I learned later that after I had finished my audition, Kadosa said in his soft voice, "Oh, there is finally someone who can play the piano." I once played a piece of Bach for him. I was embarrassed by how poorly I played, and I apologised for it. He asked why, and I said that it was disorganised: it was like a jungle, and it should be like a garden. Kadosa fell silent. He said nothing for some time, and then he said, "But the jungle is also beautiful." Even this response belongs to a tradition that teaches students to be their own most stringent critic (Kurtág perhaps excepted): it should be their own ears that are best equipped to tell them when they are falling short.

As for her principal teacher, Kocsis: 'He had also been a student of Kadosa. And Kadosa passed on a very clear aesthetic, and moral attitude, towards music making. We can trace this philosophy back to Bartók. It concentrates on the musical essence of a piece. It targets the essential musical message.' This style of teaching has nothing to do with technique. 'No one talked about that. There was no discussion of how to use your thumb in this passage, or how to finger that phrase. Actually, Rados was interested in the different methods of piano playing, but only so that he could then laugh and say they were all useless. He was interested in what he called hand choreography, so that you are not awkward or blocked in the way you approach a phrase, but it was always in order to serve a specific musical goal: technical discussion was always integrated within the musical imagination.'

Nevertheless, that philosophy evolved over the years. 'The generation of my teachers – Kocsis, Schiff, Jenő Jandó and Sándor Falvai – introduced a new level of perfection in terms of execution. Before that, there was a kind of accepted sloppiness, I think, because technique wasn't considered so important. It may also be connected to recording techniques, and the so-called "objectivity" of the 70s. Kocsis took for granted that you already knew what to do on a technical level, and he would mock you without mercy if he found something wrong: "You still haven't practised enough!" He would always repeat the same phrase: "Quantity turns into quality." He was very firm that a student has to put in a tremendous amount of hard work, and quite simply repetition.'

Würtz has gone on to plough her own furrow – or it would be better to say her own field, bearing in mind the breadth of repertoire, in terms of chronology, style and genre, represented in this collection. She graduated from the Academy, and left Budapest behind in 1989, just months before the Wall fell, and communism with it. By then she had won prizes at competitions in Dublin and Milan, as well as a contract with Columbia Artist Management, who arranged a long tour of the

US. After a while she put down roots in the Netherlands, living firstly in Groningen, and then Amsterdam.

It took Würtz a few years 'to be able to breathe again', as she puts it, after being bruised by the school of hard knocks at the Academy. As an experienced teacher herself, with a piano professorship at the conservatoire in Utrecht, she can look back dispassionately on the nature of her formation. 'In the end, a musician should be able to breathe and feel free and feel confident. I think over-drilling, making your student insecure and doubting everything about themselves, is not the best preparation for a performing career. I was sad when Kocsis died young [in 2016, aged 64] because he was such a positive person: very demanding, but somehow very human. Once I asked him, "Why? Why do you have to come out with these wild remarks? And he replied, "Because you have to get stronger. Because life will be very hard." He would come out with these commonplaces: "I'm not here to give you milk, you have to eat beefsteak." These days, I also teach this age category. I don't think it's necessary as a teacher to be so scrupulous and almost sadistic.'

Around this time, her association with Brilliant Classics began, when the label's founder and executive producer Pieter van Winkel invited her to record the complete sonatas of Mozart in 1998. 'He had to talk me into it; I was reluctant to begin with. But he said, "Please don't over-think these pieces. Play as spontaneously as you can." I had studied Mozart in depth at the Academy, playing in violin sonatas for Rados, and in trios for Kurtág. This informed my approach to the logic of the music, to the sound world in general. The logic of how a particular piece should be done was fed by doing all the other pieces. You become part of a flow of musical thinking, and it makes sense somehow.'

That flow of musical thinking encompasses the western classical tradition in an unbroken span of dialectic, which is why Würtz is as much at home playing the Goldberg Variations as she is Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff trios and Bartók concertos. She traces the source

of this flow all the way back to Leo Weiner: 'He was the godfather of all these other teachers. And the essence of his thinking was chamber music. Even when you play solo, you sing chamber music – in terms of voices which sing and speak and argue and answer each other. As pianists, we deal with polyphony all the time.' The success of the Mozart sonatas on record brought Würtz both professional and personal fulfilment; she and van Winkel married in 2003.

Würtz feels a particular connection to the inner world of Schubert. 'Someone wrote so beautifully and clearly about the difference between poetry and prose. A writer of prose wants to educate, they want to tell the reader something. The poet doesn't want any of that. They simply want to converse with the gods. It's a different way of making music, even a different performing style. There are virtuoso performers, and then there are poets who are a little bit removed from the world, like Youri Egorov. I love his way of playing. He found incredible regions of spiritual playing in his late period, when he was already very sick. And this region I associate most of all with Schubert. You have to get close to his personality. My teacher called him a loser, and he meant that in the best sense. I consider myself a melancholy person, deep down, and I feel drawn into this world of loneliness, this introspective conversation and longing. "War wo du nicht ist, das ist Glück" – where you are not, that is where happiness is. That is his motto.'

It is a motto that symbolises the Romantic-era wanderer, the truth-seeker, the poetry of Hölderlin and the paintings of Friedrich, and it could hardly strike a more dissonant chord with modern encomia to self-help and self-love. It also taps into a peculiarly Hungarian strain of melancholy, distilled in the 1930s by Rezső Seress's *Gloomy Sunday* song, which was soon assimilated as an emblem of national identity. 'I never expected to spend so much of my life in a recording studio,' says Würtz, 'mostly in churches in this case, but empty ones. You are alone, but you are telling your story, knowing that hopefully many people will listen to you. Somehow it has worked out, this

feeling of being alone with my instrument, and with microphones that report what you have to say but never talk back. In the end, I have to say, I like this kind of solitude very much.'

The pandemic of 2020 enforced solitude worldwide. Würtz took the opportunity to immerse herself in a score which embodies a private world of music-making, the Goldberg Variations of Bach. 'It's a terrifying piece to take on, but at the same time you feel that everything will be fine when you sit down to play it. I found it like therapy, like one big piece of consolation. What it does to the mind and the soul is incredible. It's incredible because it keeps you busy all the time. You have to be so alert with every voice and every rhythmic shift between variations. But at the same time, the emotional content, what he brings you through, over the course of 70 minutes, is quite addictive. There were times when I didn't have to play anything, but still I wanted to play it through every day.'

The loneliness of the long-distance pianist is counterbalanced, in Würtz's career, by her many happy chamber-music partnerships, with Joan Berkhemer and Nadia David in the KlavierTrio Amsterdam, with the violinist Kristóf Baráti and the cellists Timora Rosler and István Várdai, and many other musicians. When she sat down with Dmitri Makhtin and Alexander Kniazev, preparing to rehearse the trios of Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff, Würtz found that 'from the first moment, we spoke the same language. It goes beyond national boundaries. And that's where I think back to my years of study. It was more expected of us to be good musicians than to be piano virtuosos.'

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ABOUT THE MUSIC

J.S. BACH *Goldberg Variations* BWV988

The history and structure of J.S. Bach's *Goldberg Variations* BWV988 In his Leipzig period – probably in the late 1730s – Bach came into contact with various personalities of the higher aristocracy in Dresden as a result of his connections with the Dresden electoral court. One of these aristocrats was Hermann Carl, Count von Keyserlingk, who became a very special patron of Bach's. Indeed, it was through his intervention that Bach was nominated 'court composer to the King of Poland and the Elector of Saxony'. The Count maintained a small private band, in which a pupil of Bach and of his son Wilhelm Friedemann played the harpsichord: Johann Gottlieb Goldberg. An anecdote handed down to us through the first Bach biography by Johann Nicolaus Forkel (1802) links the genesis of the *Aria mit verschiedenen Veränderungen* BWV988, now known as the *Goldberg Variations*, with Keyserlingk and Goldberg: 'The Count was often sickly, and then had sleepless nights. At these times Goldberg, who lived in the house with him, had to pass the night in an adjoining room to play something to him when he could not sleep. The Count once said to Bach that he would like to have some clavier pieces for his Goldberg, which should be of such a soft and somewhat lively character that he might be cheered up a bit by them in his sleepless nights. Bach thought he could best fulfil this wish by variations. The Count thereafter called them nothing but "his" variations. He was never weary of hearing them. And for a long time, when the sleepless night came, he used to say, "Dear Goldberg, do play me one of my variations".'

In his *Goldberg Variations*, Bach summarised the characteristic species of Baroque keyboard music, the theme and variations. The work, published in 1741 as Part IV of the *Clavier-Übung*, is organised in the fashion of many of the compositions from the latter part of Bach's life. The theme is a sarabande (a slow, majestic Baroque dance) in two

balanced sections, the bass and harmonic structure of which are preserved in all thirty variations, and the form of the whole is that of a chaconne or passacaglia. The variations are grouped in threes, the last of each group being a canon, with the canons comprising successive intervals from the unison (first canon) to the ninth (last canon). The thirtieth and last variation, however, is a quodlibet, a mixture of two popular song melodies combined in counterpoint above the fundamental bass. After this the theme is repeated da capo. The non-canonic variations are of many different types, including inventions, fuguettes, a French overture, ornamental slow arias, and, at regular intervals, bravura pieces for two manuals. The diverse moods and styles in these variations are unified by means of the recurring bass and harmonies and also by the symmetrical order in which the movements are arranged; the entirety is a perfectly organised structure of great proportions.

In the *Goldberg Variations*, three essential features of Bach's keyboard music are thus united: stylistic diversity, virtuosity and strict counterpoint. These elements correspond with the tripartite grouping of the variations (the character piece, the virtuoso piece and the canon), and during the course of the work all three become more and more distinctive: the style becomes more diverse in every ensuing character piece, the virtuosity gradually increases, and canon technique grows steadily in interval – even incorporating the novel element of the quodlibet, as mentioned above.

The *Goldberg Variations* were probably first performed publicly by Bach himself at one of his last concerts in the Leipzig Collegium Musicum in 1741. The events in the famous Forkel anecdote – the young virtuoso Bach pupil (only fourteen years old!) playing the work during his patron Keyserlingk's sleepless nights – probably took place shortly after publication, for it is known that Bach stayed in Keyserlingk's Dresden home in November 1741.

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MOZART Complete Piano Sonatas

Sonata No.1 in C K279

Mozart wrote this first real sonata when he was 19 years old during his concert tour to Italy, while he was working on the composition of the opera *La finta giardiniera*. The style of the sonata draws elements from different musical sources. The first movement is strongly rooted in the Classical style with Baroque elements, the slow movement has a singing Italianate character, and Papa Haydn is peeping around the corner in the witty finale. All three movements are in sonata form. The piano writing is very 'pianistic', and demands great dexterity and even virtuosity from the player. In the recapitulation of the first movement Mozart does not simply repeat the exposition but is constantly inventing surprising turns of melody and harmony, in an almost improvisatory way. The second movement is unique with its aria-like melody and free flow of ideas, evoking a sweet, 'dolce', mood. The finale brims with vitality and good humour, spiced with almost burlesque elements.

Piano Sonata No.2 in F K280

This sonata is modelled on a sonata of Haydn in the same key, which had appeared some time earlier. Both slow movements of the sonatas are in F minor and are marked Adagio, and both are in the Siciliano rhythm. The principal theme, consisting of several contrasting motifs, is followed by a subject in triplets, containing some interesting chromatic episodes. The movement abounds in playful scales and runs, giving the player ample opportunity to exhibit his virtuosity. The slow movement is a miracle of concentration and expression of feeling. The profundity and the expression of pain and anguish foreshadow the later Mozart in his great dramatic minor-key works. The finale clears all dark clouds, and is a feast of surprises, jokes and *Spielfreude*.

Piano Sonata No.3 in B flat K281

In the first movement Mozart fully explores the tonal resources of the instrument, letting it sound in rich chords and vibrating accompaniments. The movement abounds in free improvisatory development and rich variation of the lyrical main theme. The slow movement is a perfect example of the 'gallant style'. The amoroso character of the music demands a graceful execution, never yielding to explicit sentimentality. The rondeau third movement is based on a theme in Gavotte style. The music, although refined after the French style, also contains unexpected dramatic passages in minor keys.

Piano Sonata No.4 in E flat K282

This sonata unexpectedly begins with a slow movement, followed by a minuet, and ends with an Allegro movement. The extraordinary Adagio is full of lyricism and quietly flowing cantilenas. The second movement consists of two minuets, both in simple, folk-like language. The last movement is reminiscent of Haydn and concludes the sonata in a light-hearted and carefree mood.

Piano Sonata No.5 in G K283

This sonata in G major (the only one in this key) is full of light, gaiety and song-like phrases, and reminds one of the sonatas of Johann Christian Bach, who was an important model for the young Mozart. The 'Italian' character of the music is clearly shown already in the first movement, where even in the development section, usually of dramatic character, there is not a trace of struggle, all minor-key feelings being avoided. The slow movement brings an innocent feeling of happiness, which is clouded over in the middle section, where the theme appears in A minor. The recapitulation brings relief and flows on in radiant cantilenas. The last movement is a sparkling Presto, bearing a close resemblance to the finale of the Piano Sonata No.2, also in 3/8 measure, and breathing the spirit of the *opera buffa*.

Piano Sonata No.6 in D K284

Mozart wrote this sonata in 1775, when it was commissioned by Baron Thaddäus von Dürnitz. The style of the first movement is bold, daring and spectacular, brilliantly written for the piano, using pianistic effects like hand-crossing and tremolo. It contains influences from the Mannheim style, whereas the rich singing lines have an Italian character. The second movement is a Rondeau en Polonaise, a wonderfully 'orchestrated' dance-like piece, where Mozart gives his imagination and fancy full reign. The third movement is a set of variations on a theme with a Gavotte character. This beautiful set of variations not only offers an embellished version of the original theme, but is constantly changing the character of the theme, from peacefully dreaming to joyfully galloping. Mozart skilfully explores all the pianistic resources of the time, using passages in parallel thirds, octaves, hand-crossing and trills.

Piano Sonata No.7 in C K309

Mozart composed this sonata for Rosa Cannabich, daughter of the well-known composer of that time, who was an admirable player. The first movement opens with a powerful unison theme, followed by a graceful melody, bringing immediate contrast in the first subject. The second theme appears further on, and creates a mood of charming and delightful ease. The development follows the rules of the sonata form by presenting the theme in different keys, and in dark minor colours. The slow movement gives a musical picture of Rosa Cannabich, of whom Mozart had a high opinion (he describes her as highly intelligent, kind and amiable). The music is a series of variations on a theme of great intimacy, evoking a sense of simplicity and lightness. Noteworthy are the many detailed performance marks, which should be strictly observed, according to Mozart. In the final Rondeau Mozart introduces orchestral effects reminiscent of the Mannheim Schule. The writing is of virtuoso and brilliant standard. The piece ends surprisingly with a pianissimo coda.

Piano Sonata No.8 in A minor K310

The background to this tragic minor-key sonata is the unexpected death of Mozart's mother, while he was giving concerts in Paris in 1778. The work is of an unusual dramatic character, and is the expression of deep personal feelings. The first movement's principal theme, marked 'maestoso', begins with a dissonant appoggiatura. The dotted rhythm of the theme dominates the whole movement with an almost obsessive pressure. The second theme is in C major, but the underlying tension also casts a shadow on this episode, especially when it resolves into minor in the recapitulation. In the development section the dotted rhythm rages furiously in both fortissimo and pianissimo, and creates an almost unbearable tension. The second movement is an Andante, marked 'cantabile con espressione'. The many execution marks relating to phrasing, articulation and dynamics give a good insight into Mozart's performance practice. The aria-like first section is interrupted by a dramatic middle section in the minor key, where the bass is making bold gestures under a frantically leaping accompaniment in the right hand. The third movement brings no consolation or smiling faces. It is a restless Presto, in which the music breathlessly chases a phantom. The middle section, in the character of a musette, gives a glimpse of a better world, but immediately the first theme takes its course again, and comes to a violent end in the minor key.

Piano Sonata No.9 in D K311

From 1777 to 1778 Mozart made a journey from Mannheim to Paris, which played an important role in his career. During the journey three piano sonatas were composed, one of which is this sonata in D major. He wrote the sonata for Josepha, the pretty daughter of Court Counsellor Freysinger (a former schoolfriend of Mozart's father Leopold). The music is filled with a light and playful spirit, and still shows influences from the Mannheim School. One example of this is found in the closing Rondeau, where a cadenza is inserted before the

main theme appears again, a technique only used in a piano concerto. This proves that Mozart wanted to enlarge the structure of the 'simple' piano sonata, introducing concerto-like elements. The first movement is marked *Allegro con spirito*. The gentle second subject is enriched by beautiful counterpoint in the left hand. The development makes clever use of the Mannheim 'sigh' motive, a descending second, which was introduced as a little coda to the exposition. The song-like second movement contains some moving melodic episodes, and ends with a richly accompanied coda, evoking a feeling of sweet nostalgia. The *Rondeau* is a real concert piece, with flourishing cascades of scales, its 6/8 time playfully dancing towards an effective end.

Piano Sonata No.10 in C K330

The enchanting simplicity of the opening theme is the starting point of a wonderful movement in which simple scales and broken chords turn into pure music of sublime beauty. In the development Mozart applies rich and manifold thematic material expressing emotion and unrest by using frequent syncopation and 'sigh' motives. Mozart's marking 'dolce' is significant in the execution of the slow movement, which is in ternary form. The gentle, flowing atmosphere of the beginning is clouded over by the darker mood of the middle section, in the minor key. The reappearance of the first melody comes then as a ray of sunlight. The joyful Rondo is in rondo-sonata form. The music brims over with witty themes and brilliant virtuosity, reminding one of a jolly scene from one of Mozart's operas.

Piano Sonata No.11 in A K331

This is one of Mozart's most frequently performed sonatas. It was probably composed around 1783 when Mozart was working on his opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. This would explain the appearance of Turkish elements in both the opera and the sonata. Mozart was well aware of the popularity of exotic Turkish music in Vienna at the time, and introduced such elements not only into his

opera but also into his piano works, hoping for better sales of his music. The Turkish march is not the only unique feature of the sonata. Unusual is also the first movement, being a set of variations, and the Minuet in place of the slow movement. In fact none of the movements is in sonata form. The sonata does not require bravura technique, and it seems that Mozart composed this work bearing Viennese amateur pianists in mind. The first movement, *Andante grazioso*, is a set of variations on a beautiful theme in A major. The gently rocking melody develops into six variations of different character: playful, dark, peaceful and bristling. The second movement is a minuet. The writing and structure of the piece is a far cry from the simple minuets used in other works. Mozart employs complex counterpoint and audacious harmony, which, combined with the irregularity of phrase construction, makes this one of his most original minuets. The third movement is the well-known *Marcia alla Turca*, in A-B-C-B-A-B'-Coda form. The B section is the most Turkish in character: festive drums and cymbals sound on the piano, evoking a joyful march parade.

Piano Sonata No.12 in F K332

In 1781 Mozart, at the age of 25, moved from Salzburg to Vienna and started his mature creative activities. This is one of his sonatas which are presumed to have been composed between 1781 and 1783, his first years in Vienna. The pleasant first subject, a graceful melody in 3/4 time, is followed by sudden 'Mannheim rockets', upwardly surging figurations. The innocent second subject in C major seems to try to calm down the disturbance. The development does not offer dramatic struggles, but gently introduces the second subject again, and after a building up of tension the soothing first melody sets everything a peace. The beautiful slow movement, with its tender aria-like melody, lacks a more dramatic middle section, so as not to disturb the atmosphere of peaceful quietness and unclouded beauty of sound.

The finale presents a whirlwind of semiquavers in 6/8 time. It presents a fine display of virtuosity, and it's exhilarating momentum never fails to make a deep impression on the audience.

Piano Sonata No.13 in B flat K333

Mozart wrote this sonata in the summer of 1778, during his stay in Paris. Its close resemblance to the sonatas of Johann Christian Bach is further explained by the fact that he was also staying in Paris at that time. Both composers had frequent contact and had great respect for each other. In the first movement the music flows smoothly with an amiable smile and an Italian grace. Yet the part-writing and the darker shadows sometimes cast on the sunny landscape unmistakably bear stamp of Mozart's genius. The slow movement reveals intimate and deep feelings, as often heard in Mozart's works in E flat major. In the development the fragmented first subject is loaded with a brooding tension, which hangs over the movement until the very end. The third movement, Allegretto grazioso, is a rondo which has evident concerto-like episodes, notably the alternations of 'solo' and 'tutti', and the full-scale cadenza at the end, concluding this delightful sonata.

Piano Sonata No.14 in C minor K457

This sonata was written in 1784, the only sonata in the minor key, together with the A minor K310. The work is one of Mozart's darkest and gloomiest creations, full of anguish, drama and grief. The piano-writing is of high calibre, calling for virtuoso powers, and already foreshadows the piano works of Beethoven. A bold subject in parallel octaves in the minor key sets the tone and atmosphere. No smiling and flowing Italianate melodies here, but tight, grim structures, moving on in inexorable pace. The second subject is in E flat major, which is transformed into C minor in the recapitulation, the minor version having a totally new strength and tension. The development rages towards a climax, and the recapitulation brings no relief, the coda ending in a dark abyss of C minor. The slow movement is a richly

embellished cantilena, wandering off in distant keys. It gives the player the opportunity to give his own imagination free reign, a practice which is customary in the piano concertos. The last movement presents a syncopated first subject of restless and breathless character, followed by a violent outcry of repeated octaves and leaps, which mercilessly recurs several times. The tight and concise character of the music makes it all the more dramatic and effective. The coda introduces a further new element which brings this extraordinary sonata to a violent close.

Piano Sonata No.15 in F K533

The movements of this sonata were composed separately, and were later combined into what is now regarded as one sonata. The writing of the first movement is daring, using many contrapuntal devices (canon, imitation), and extensive harmonic digressions into far-away minor keys. It recalls the works of Bach and Handel, whose compositions Mozart had studied closely. The coda presents some extraordinary chromatic shifts, before closing with flourishing triplet runs. The slow movement is in sonata form. It presents some of Mozart's most original music – listen to the asymmetrical phrase structures and the strange harmonic development, which must have sounded oddly dissonant to audiences at the time. The third movement, marked Allegretto, eases the tension of the two preceding movements, and is a pleasant Rondeau, in which the theme is differently ornamented each time it reappears. The minor episode again demonstrates clever counterpoint. A skilful, cadenza-like piling up of the theme is followed by the recurrence of the theme in the bass, and the movement ends peacefully.

Piano Sonata No.16 in C K545

This sonata, composed in 1788, bears the subtitle 'Little Sonata for beginners'. Today it is known as 'Sonate facile', and is popular with piano amateurs, often being the first music of Mozart to digest (but it

needs a lot of chewing...). The structure of the first movement is of notebook discipline. It starts with a singing principal theme, followed by running scales. The recapitulation is the standard repeat of the exposition. The slow movement is touching in its simplicity, and through very modest means is still able to build up to a moving climax. The theme of the short Rondo is reminiscent of the cuckoo's call.

Piano Sonata No.17 in B flat K570

It was not until after this sonata was written in Vienna in 1789 that the style known as that of Mozart's last years became apparent in his piano sonatas. There is no trace of splendour and richly singing cantilenas, as in the B flat major K333, or the tragic and overtly dramatic tensions of the C minor K457 sonata. The language of this sonata is simple and clear with a deep inner meaning. The first movement begins with a calm theme in unison triads, followed by a some conventional musical patterns. Two sudden chords introduce the singing second theme in E flat major. The recapitulation is almost identical to the exposition. The Adagio is reminiscent of an ensemble of wind instruments, notably the first bar's 'horn call'. The profound, almost processional development of the music is interrupted by an episode in C minor, introducing gentle 'sigh' motives. In the middle a new theme appears, singing innocently in A flat major. The cheerful and lilting theme of the Rondo appears only twice, the middle section introducing a jovial episode in staccato repeating notes, which could have come straight out of *Die Zauberflöte*.

Piano Sonata No.18 in D major K576

Mozart played this sonata in Berlin before the King of Prussia Frederick William II, in 1789. The King commissioned him to write some string quartets and piano sonatas of a 'light' character. Mozart only completed three string quartets and one piano sonata, this sonata in D major. It is far from being 'light': indeed the Baroque-like counterpoint makes this one of the most difficult sonatas to perform.

The 'hunt' fanfare of the first theme is used in the development in fugato-like episodes. The Adagio in A major exudes intimacy. The richly ornamented flow of melody and the strong underlying tensions of the music are characteristic of the late Mozart. The last movement, marked Allegretto, is a fine example of Mozart's use of sonata-rondo form. The skilful contrapuntal devices and the virtuosic finger work make it a worthy conclusion to this ambitious sonata.

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SCHUBERT Piano Sonatas D960 & D664

Schubert had every reason to feel cheerful in the summer of 1819. He was for once not short of money, having received an advance from the Kärntner theatre on his fee for the operetta *Die Zwillingsbrüder* which he had completed earlier in the year, and had been asked by his good friend Michael Vogl to accompany him on his annual holiday in Steyr. The weeks he spent in Upper Austria were pleasant – the company was good, the weather fine, the scenery magnificent and there was much opportunity for both music making and composing. Schubert lodged with the Schellman family who arranged for a piano to be moved into his room (it was rare for him to have such easy access to a keyboard) and the two men took their meals together at the house of Josef von Koller whose daughter Josefine was both "very pretty" (according to Schubert) and an accomplished pianist. At the end of his visit, he presented her with a sonata in A major, a key it shares with the "Trout Quintet" composed soon after his return to Vienna, which also owes its origins to this holiday, as a commission from a local amateur cellist Sylvester Paumgartner. The cheerful and sunny optimism shared by the quintet and the sonata reflect this carefree episode in Schubert's life.

The *Sonata in A major* (D664) occupies a transitional position between the youthful sonatas written between 1815 and 1818 and his "middle period" works of 1823-26. It is in three movements, omitting a

scherzo, with the movements linked by a falling B-A note sequence which ends the first movement, opens the second an octave higher and the third a further octave higher at the beginning of a descending scale which mirrors the assertive ascending scales of the first movement development. The first theme is a drawn out, singing melody, with the second subject, when it eventually arrives, similar in mood and structure, thus limiting the potential for contrast in the development. The underlying dactylic rhythm of the second subject nods in the direction of the Allegretto of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, a Schubert favourite which crops up in many of his works. Unusually, both the development and recapitulation sections are repeated, but in this short work and with such material, this presents no hardship to the listener. The second movement andante gently breathes out its gentle theme which is constructed out of a single seven bar rhythmical motif. The prevailing mood is one of calm contemplation, interrupted briefly in the central section after which the first theme recurs in canon between the hands (a similar feature occurs in the first movement development). The Allegro finale maintains the good natured spirit of the first movement, scampering up and down the keyboard with Mozartean lightness and breaking into a waltz with the second subject.

Although double forte runs and emphatic chords try to introduce a stern note at the end of the development, the dance-like qualities of the movement prevail.

D960 is one of three sonatas Schubert completed in September 1828, six weeks before his death, and are contemporary with the songs collected and published as *Schwanengesang* and the C major *String Quintet*. Given the circumstances of their composition, there is a temptation to invest these works with a valedictory quality, yet while Schubert was aware that the long-term prognostication of his condition was not good (he had contracted syphilis six years before) and although he had been suffering from headaches and dizziness in

the preceding months, there is no suggestion he was aware that his remaining time was so short. So while *D 960* turned out to be his final work for piano, it should not be interpreted as embodying some kind of farewell to life. He annotated them as Sonatas I, II and III, clearly intending them as a set (and acknowledging the precedent of Beethoven's Opp. 2, 10 and 31) while perhaps also seeing in them a new beginning (one alas to remain unfulfilled).

All three sonatas make some reference to Beethoven – *D958* and *D959* overtly (to the C minor Variations and Op.31 No.1 respectively), and *D960* more obliquely, its opening recalling both thematically and structurally that of the *Archduke* trio (while also echoing the introduction to *Am Meer*). After an unhurried statement of the elegiac first theme, there is a pianissimo G flat trill in the lower depths followed by a pause, trills and pauses to become recurring features of the movement. This theme is restated twice, first in a more agitated G flat major variant then fortissimo in the home key. When the second subject finally appears it is in an emotionally charged F sharp minor, moving to the dominant F major for a secondary theme with triplet accompaniment. As the exposition seems to be drawing to its close on a series of dynamically contrasted chords and cadences, the comprehensive treatment of its subject matter leads one to expect an immediate move into the development. However, an exposition repeat is indicated via nine bars of transitional material. The observance of this repeat has become the subject of controversy: on the one hand it is argued that the presence of the transitional bars confirms that it is not optional (although as these end on two rests they are not inexorably linked to the material to be repeated); on the other, that a repeat not only upsets the internal equilibrium of the movement (since the repeated material reappears almost unchanged in the recapitulation) but renders it out of all proportion to the rest of the sonata. Whether or not the repeat is observed (as it is on this recording) the transition to the lengthy C sharp minor development is made through three hushed chords in that key which seem to spring

from nowhere. The development moves through successive climaxes in D flat major and D minor before returning, via the trill, to the original B flat major theme.

The Andante Sostenuto continues in the remote C sharp minor of the development, a key it shares with the slow movement of the String Quintet, which it superficially resembles. The syncopated octave figure of the outer sections was apparently inspired by the rhythmic pattern set up by a group of workmen wielding sledgehammers which Schubert had once observed and notated. If this is the case, never has such everyday material been so magically transformed. The more straightforwardly melodic A major central section is reminiscent of *Der Lindenbaum* from *Winterreise* and on its return, the C sharp minor theme is given added texture by accompanying triplets in the bass. After two such profoundly introspective movements Schubert lightens the tone with a Scherzo marked *con delicatezza* whose apparent simplicity conceals complex tonal progression and the jerky B Flat minor trio is not as straightforward as it appears. The Rondo finale opens on octave G, whose bell-like sounding will announce each recurrence of the opening theme which after momentarily appearing to be in the “wrong key” of C minor resolves into the expected B flat major. Schubert works effortlessly through three further themes until the bell-like octave slipping downwards stepwise to the dominant F introduces a boisterously presto coda. After his death, the three sonatas passed into the hands of Diabelli who eventually published them in 1839. Schubert had intended to dedicate them to Hummel but since he had himself died a few years before publication, that honour went to Schumann. However although a strong advocate of Schubert and his work, Schumann did not find these pieces satisfying and in this finds himself out of step with posterity.

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SCHUBERT Impromptus Op.90 & Op.142

When Schubert wrote the two sets of Impromptus (D899 and D935) in 1827, the year before his death, his piano music was hardly known beyond his inner circle, since he had published little and performed less – unlike Beethoven or Mozart he rarely played in public and then only as an accompanist. The previous year he had offered some solo piano works to various Leipzig publishers in an attempt to promote his reputation beyond Vienna and earn some much-needed money. Their negative response was disheartening but the rejection note from Probst, informing him that “the distinctive, often ingenious but at times rather unusual nature of your mind’s creations is not sufficiently and generally understood by our public” may have prompted him to try his hand at something more calculated to win popular acceptance. The idea of producing a sequence of short, independent character works of a quasi-improvisatory nature was not entirely original. Beethoven’s idiosyncratic Bagatelles had appeared in 1802 and various sets of short, lyrical pieces by the Bohemian composer Vaclav Tomášek had been introduced to Vienna by his pupil Jan Voříšek with whom Schubert was acquainted. It was probably Voříšek’s own Op.7 Impromptus of 1822 that provided the Viennese publisher Tobias Haslinger with a name for the four untitled pieces Schubert presented to him in the late summer of 1827.

The first of these, in C minor, begins in arresting fashion with a stark, widely spaced octave chord introducing a bare unadorned theme which gradually fills out as it maintains its relentless onward march. This piece inhabits the bleak world of *Die Winterreise* which Schubert was then in the midst of composing, recalling the measured tread of “Gute Nacht” from the already published Part 1 and “Der Wegweiser” of Part 2.

Despite a more lyrical A flat major episode, the prevailing mood is one of sombre introspection. The following E flat major impromptu is a complete contrast and its seamless, rippling moto perpetuo arpeggios may reflect the pianistic style of Schubert himself, whose hands were

supposed to “scamper like mice” over the keyboard. The B minor inner section brings the piece down to earth and its gravitational pull is strong enough to bring it to a close in E flat minor, thus forming a bridge with the following impromptu in G flat major, its relative major (this key relationship also shared by first two pieces). This is the only unitary work in the set and is in the style of a romantic nocturne or a pre-Mendelssohnian “song without words”. The final A flat major impromptu returns to the ternary format. The delicate descending arpeggios of the outer parts alternate with simple chordal passages and are then underpinned by a broad rising melody while the dramatic C sharp minor trio section overflows with a surging passionate theme. The second set (D935) was completed in December 1827 and in the autograph Schubert numbered its parts 5 to 8, making it clear that he considered it a sequel to the first. It has a more obviously unified structure than its predecessor, with the opening and closing pieces sharing the key of F minor, and some commentators, taking a lead from Schumann, discern in it a four movement sonata in disguise (albeit one which does not display certain characteristics of Schubert’s actual sonatas). However when offering the work to the publisher Schott of Mainz, Schubert indicated that its parts could be published separately, so he could not have been overly concerned about maintaining its inherent unity. The opening F minor impromptu is the most serious-minded piece of either set and certainly displays many features one might expect in the first movement of a sonata – a first and second subject exposition and extended recapitulation – but lacks anything like a development section. Had this been a sonata, the A flat major Allegretto, in the form of a minuet and trio, would be its “dance” movement and the B flat minor Andante its “slow” movement. This takes the form of five variations on a theme from Rosamunde which Schubert had also used as basis of the slow movement of the A minor String Quartet (D804). Schumann’s verdict that these are “undistinguished variations on an undistinguished theme” proves that even the most acute critical sensibility can lapse

on occasion. The final part returns to F minor and is one of Schubert’s most brilliant works for the piano. Marked scherzando, its witty hesitations and heavy-footed leaps recall Beethoven while the dazzling runs and trills and general Hungarian ambience anticipate Liszt, not least in the precipitous six octave descent of the keyboard at the coda’s end. Any hopes Schubert may have entertained for these works were to be disappointed. Haslinger issued only the first two parts of the D899 set, the others remaining unpublished until 1857 when the third was transposed from G flat major to G to make it easier to play! The D935 set fared even worse: Schott rejected them entirely as “too difficult for small pieces” and they were not published until 1839, eleven years after Schubert’s death.

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SCHUMANN Fantasiestücke Op.12 · Waldszenen Op.82 Arabeske Op.18 · Kinderszenen Op.15

More than any of his contemporaries, Robert Schumann (1810–1856) was ‘a dreamer, a [...] tone poet and writer whose inner voices were those of childhood, of wonder, of love, of turmoil, even of madness’ – a man at his happiest in miniature and song, character piece and variation. Using ‘his prodigious talents to compose in great haste and voluminously’, fearing death, ‘he immortalised himself through creative achievement, and he brought an end to his life through suicide’ (Peter F. Oswald 1985). He was the passionate, rampant incarnation of German Romanticism’s high noon.

Admired and played by Liszt, the eight (originally nine) numbers comprising the *Fantasiestücke* (Fantasy Pieces) Op.12 (1837) were the outpouring of a single July week. ‘Dreams transmuted into music,’ Marcel Brion called them (1956), ‘with that combination of realism and fancy that is the property of all dreams.’ Schumann took his title from E.T.A. Hoffmann’s *Fantasiestücke in Callots Manier* (1814–15), a collection of writings in the style of the 17th-century French engraver

Jacques Callot – a fact, Ronald Taylor says in his biography of the composer (1982), ‘inviting us to hold side by side in our minds a vision of Callot’s prints, with their freedom, their variety and their extraordinary concentration of figurative detail in a minute space, and the sounds of Schumann’s highly original musical sketches, equally free-ranging and equally intense in the expressiveness of their individual moments of unity, like that of Callot’s engravings and Hoffmann’s stories, is a unity not of substance but of imagination.’

The cycle is divided into two books of four pieces each, centred around D flat and F respectively. Familiar Schumann images crowd the pages, not least Eusebius and Florestan, the lyrical and the ardent. But it is his wife-to-be, Clara Wieck, forbidden by her father from seeing him, who lingers most. From the outset (the ciphered ‘Clara scale’ descent of *Des Abends* [At Evening] so familiar from the sonatas and Op.17 *Fantasie*) the music is an impassioned, tender love song to her (‘You want everything [in art] to be stormy all the time, with flashes of lightning, as though it’s all new and has never happened before. But there are also old and eternal states that control us’). Of *Ende vom Lied* (End of the Song), the last movement, Schumann wrote autobiographically, ‘I thought that, now I had reached the end, everything would resolve itself in a merry wedding. But as I thought of you [back to the ‘Clara scale’], sorrow came over me, and the result was a chime of wedding bells mingled with a death knell.’ His favourite, *In der Nacht* (In the Night, No.5), he told her (21 April 1838) was about Hero and Leander: ‘You know how it goes. Every night Leander swims across the water [the Hellespont/Dardanelles] to his beloved who waits in the lighthouse and lights the way for him with a torch. It is a wonderful, romantic old legend. When I play [this music] I cannot get the picture out of my mind – first, how he dives into the sea. She calls, he answers. He swims through the waves and arrives safely at the other side. Then comes the *cantilena*, when they embrace; then

he has to return but cannot bear to part – until night again shrouds the whole scene in darkness.’

‘The *Fantasiestücke*,’ André Boucourechliev claimed in his centenary study of the composer (1956), ‘offer us one of Schumann’s works that was always faithful to its nightmares, turned towards the night (*In der Nacht*), its dreams confused (*Traumes Wirren*, No.7) and with the black butterflies of melancholy (*Grillen*, No.4). In this dark universe the eternal “Why?” (*Warum?*, No.3) remains unanswered.’ Schumann framed the pieces in descriptive, extra-musical terms. However, following *Carnaval*, the titles were actually added afterwards, the composer letting his ‘imagination wander over the field of pictorial or narrative associations that the sounds brought to his mind, anxiously reading into notes a meaning that would relate to his condition’ (Taylor).

Of the several structural/emotional scenarios entertained, the boldest is that of *Fabel*, contrasting reflective ‘once upon a time’ narrative (*Langsam*) with rapid flashback episodes (*Schnell*). And the most transparently immediate are those of *Aufschwung* (Soaring) and *Grillen* (Whims), orbiting around sonata-rondo form.

‘Schumann’s delight in the child mind,’ observed the English critic Joan Chissell (1972), ‘went back to the time when he was the young Clara’s “moonstruck maker of charades”.’ In the 13 precious stones of *Kinderszenen* (Scenes from Childhood) Op.15 (1838) we meet with a grown-up remembering childhood and the make-believe of children – ‘Adult reminiscences for adults’, their maker called them. ‘Whether it was an echo of what you said to me once, “that sometimes I seemed to you like a child”,’ he tells his beloved, ‘anyhow, I suddenly got an inspiration, and knocked off about 30 quaint little things, from which I have selected 12 [13] and called them *Kinderszenen*.’

They will amuse you, but of course you must forget that you are a performer [...] they all explain themselves, and what's more are as easy as possible' (March 1838).

Cyclically cross-referenced through the opening motif of the first number, *Von fremden Ländern und Menschen* (Of Strange Lands and Peoples), the compression and poetry of these 'wild imaginings and dreams' make for a unique universe. *Hasche-Mann* (Blind Man's Bluff, No.3), a *staccato* scherzo in two; *Glückes genug* (Lots of Happiness, No.5); the upliftingly buoyant, third-beat accented *Ritter vom Steckenpferd* (Knight of the Hobbyhorse, No.9), at first all bright and brittle C major, then chimingly sonorous in *fortissimo* reprise. *Fast zu Ernst* (Almost too serious, No.10) in dark G sharp minor, right and left hands out of sync; *Fürchtenmachen* (Frightening, No.11), recollecting the atmospheric mood contrasts of *Fabel* from the *Fantasiestücke*; *Kind im Einschlummern* (Child falling asleep, No.12), a delicately layered lullaby with a rocking, tender E major heart, the moment of sleep and dream leaving wakefulness on an out-of-the blue A minor (rather than home-key E minor) chord – a touch comparing with the unresolved dominant seventh at the end of *Bittendes Kind* (Pleading Child, No.4). *Der Dichter spricht* (The Poet Speaks, No.13), where chorale, recitative and die-away meet in a fading, slowing, bass-descending G major epilogue such as only Schumann could have imagined. Most famous, 'like a perfect poem of two short stanzas by Heinrich Heine' (Clayton Johns, *The Etude Music Magazine*, April 1924), is *Träumerei* (Reverie, No.7) – the part-playing and *legato* voicing so much harder than appears on the page. 24 bars of F major magic that Horowitz was to make the late-20th century's most celebrated encore.

Written in nine winter days, over New Year, Schumann's *Waldszenen* (Forest Scenes) Op.82 (1848–49) explore an intimate Romantic vein – a sequence of impressionistic watercolours glimpsing the mysterious and the spectral, shadows and thickets, 'the breath of evening [...]

distant peaks [saluting] the last rays of the sun'. Originally each of the nine *morceaux* was prefaced by a poetic motto, omitted on publication save for that for the slow, double-dotted D minor rhythms of No.4 – Friedrich Hebbel's 'flowers that grow so high are here as pale as death; only in the middle grows one which gets its dark red not from the sun's glow but from the earth which drank human blood'. Like *Kinderszenen*, here are perfected miniatures of rarefied tracery and infinitely stratified texture, critically testing in the importance they place on expression, characterisation and tone painting. Music to stop time by.

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JANÁČEK In the Mist · On an Overgrown Path, Book 1 KODÁLY From Piano Pieces Op.11 · Sonatina & Adagio

In the 1880's Janacek became involved in the collection and preservation of Moravian folk culture – travelling widely through the countryside recording folk songs and dances and transcribing the improvised performances of native instrumentalists, particularly on the cimbalom – a process which culminated in the appearance in 1899 of the massive volume of *Moravian Folk Songs Newly Collected* (produced in collaboration with the ethnographer František Bartoš who probably provided the scholarly ballast for the work). Two years previously he had been asked to contribute folk material (arranged for harmonium) for a series entitled *Slovanske melodie*, and in 1900 he finally got round to submitting five pieces, which appeared in 1901 and 1902, individually untitled but under the collective name *Po zarostlém chodníčku* (On an Overgrown Path), a phrase taken from a Moravian wedding song. These were not the simple folk song arrangements "harmonized in an easy style... for inexperienced players" which the editor was expecting, but original miniature "mood" pieces bearing the hallmarks of Janacek's emerging highly individual style. In 1908 he was contacted by the Prague critic Jan Branberger with a similar

request and he immediately offered seven, then nine “piano works” - the five pieces from *Slovanske melodie*, which became Nos. 1, 2, 4, 7 and 10 of the new collection and four unpublished works (with no modifications for the change of instrument). When Branberger asked for background information, he submitted brief descriptive notes for most but not all the pieces, and titles for those which were published as Nos. 4 and 7. Since this is generally considered one of Janacek’s most autobiographical works, it is interesting to compare his immediate thoughts – jotted down on the back of a letter from Branberger of May 1908 – both with his more considered response (made on 8th June) and the final published titles. For example, No.5 began as “The Bitterness of Reproach”, was modified to “The Bitterness of Disappointment” and ended up as the less revealing but actually more eloquent “Words Fail!” No.2 originally described as “a love song” became the impressionistic but emotionally neutral “A Blown away Leaf”; the open simplicity of No.3 (whose jaunty melody fits the words of a traditional song “Come with us my lads” which no doubt suggested its eventual title) is complicated by the revelation that the final two bars, whose wistful descending motif permeates the work, represent “a letter put away for ever”. Perhaps aware that he was in danger of revealing too many personal associations he later said that each listener should “add to the titles what is appropriate to his own life”. Knowledge of Janacek’s troubled marriage – estranged from but living with his wife Zdenka in a relationship emptied of meaning by the death of their children and his affairs – offers an easy (possibly too easy) reading of “Our Evenings” as a depiction of marital tensions lurking beneath an apparently cozy domesticity. Not all the pieces however contain a potential hidden subtext: that of No.4 is self-explanatory: the village of Frýdek close to Janacek’s childhood home of Hukvaldy possessed a statue of the Madonna and after the solemn opening chords (a legacy of the original harmonium setting) the processional hymn of the pilgrims can be heard (Janacek later used its opening phrase in a setting of the *Ave Maria* for tenor choir,

violin and orchestra in 1904). No.5 is also descriptively titled although Janacek’s explanatory note for Branberger which fits the published piece was accompanied by a quotation which bears no resemblance to this or any other existing work, suggesting that it was actually written after June 1908 (with the original now lost). His note for No.7 pointed out that the principal motif suited the words ‘good night’ (*dobrou noc*), an early example of his use of *napevky mluvy* – speech melody. The final three pieces relate to the illness and death of his daughter Olga in 1903. No.8 does not figure in the early correspondence with Branberger and so may also postdate June 1908 and its title was a phrase Janacek frequently used in describing this devastating event in his life. In connection with No.9 he wrote “Perhaps you will sense weeping in [it] a premonition of certain death. During the hot summer nights that angelic being lay in such mortal anguish.” Olga Janacek died of rheumatic heart fever in February 1903 and so the reference to “hot summer nights” must refer to the previous year when she began suffering the full effects of her condition. Given the context its simple monothematic and harmonically stable melody is surprisingly calm and lyrical. This mood is however dispelled by the final piece: the little owl - *syček* - is considered a bird of ill omen in many cultures and in Silesian folklore it was believed that if one could drive away an owl heard calling near the house of a sick person, they would recover. Janacek wrote this piece before Olga’s final illness and death and so it was not specifically related to it, but he obviously felt it an appropriate coda to the preceding pieces and titled it accordingly – since in her case, alas, the owl did not fly away. Among his many notations of animal and bird cries is that of an owl - a minor third followed by a triplet - although his attribution of it here to the little owl is ornithologically suspect (it more closely resembles the call of the tawny owl). The owl motif - an arpeggio flurry (beating of wings?) followed by hollow call - at first alternates with an affirmatory E major chorale, described by Janacek as “a song of life”. The two themes become intertwined in a contest

between life and death in which death, at the end, emerges as the victor.

After various publishing difficulties the cycle appeared in September 1911 to favourable review, which encouraged Janacek to produce another, completed by April 1912. He successfully entered it in the annual competition for new compositions organized by the Friends of the Arts Club of Brno, anonymously as was the rule, although covered as it was by his musical fingerprints, the identity of the composer could not have been a great secret. "In the Mists" described by the conductor and early biographer of Janacek, Jaroslav Vogel, perhaps rather melodramatically as "one long struggle of resignation and recurring pain which predominates even at the end" is in four untitled parts with no obvious programmatic associations. The first piece is built around a five note theme heard in the opening bars against an ostinato figure, with the middle section comprising a chorale theme (faintly reminiscent of the opening of the *Andante con moto* section of the *Sinfonietta*) first in alternation with rippling cimbalom-like figures, then in passionate combination with them. The *Adagio Molto* is constructed out of four note sequences which undergo protean transformations of constantly shifting tempi and metre, while in similar fashion the *Andantino* passes a simple melody through various keys and moods. The final part is the most uncompromising and varied in tempi, metre and dynamics and has the feel of improvisatory performances on the fujara (shepherds pipe) and cimbalom. Marosszék is one of the seats (districts) of Székely Land, an area of Transylvania (now located in Romania) and where according Kodály's introduction to the *Marosszék Dances* "most of the old –folk-dance music has been preserved to our time". However it is clear that although its melodies derive either from his own field transcriptions or the phonographic recordings made by Bela Vikra in the 1890s, the *Dances* are not intended as an accurate musicological reconstruction, but a record of "a fairyland that has disappeared". He

began working on it in 1923 in connection with the commission to produce a work to celebrate the anniversary of the unification of Buda and Pest but abandoned the idea in favour of what became the

Psalmus Hungaricus.

It was completed in 1927 in two versions, for orchestra and for piano (the latter probably coming first) which were premièred more or less simultaneously in March 1927 (the piano version by Louis Kentner). It takes the form of a seven-part rondo in which the main theme appears in different guises between three contrasting episodes followed by an extensive coda. The principal theme was based on a transcription made by Kodály on a visit to Csik County in 1912, but after its initial appearance where it corresponds more or less to the original, it undergoes a series of radical transformations. The first episode is a *Marosszéki* dance, the second a *parlando* melody imitating the shepherd's flute and the third a *sebes* or fast dance (also collected by Kodály). The coda introduces completely new material in the form of a hectic dance from the Hajdu region of eastern Hungary .

In 1907 Kodály visited Paris where he became acquainted with the music of Claude Debussy and on his return to Budapest composed the *Méditation sur un motif de Claude Debussy* (taken from the String Quartet). The works of Op.11 (apart from No.3 of 1910) date from 1917-18. In No.2, the words of Székely folk song "Weep mother so long as I am with thee" appear above the four bars of the bare melody which becomes more complex upon repetition. No.3 *Allegretto malinconico* is an impressionistic illustration of the epigraph from Verlaine – *il pleut dans la ville* (it is raining in the town): rain drops fall regularly in staccato chords, more and more insistently in broken chords and then short quaver figures before gradually ceasing. No.6 is another Székely melody in which the piano imitates the cimbalom, first voiced simply against spare accompaniment, then with increasingly elaborate runs and flourishes and heavier

accompaniment and finally in an imposing double octave statement against vast sequences of broken chords.

The cello features prominently in Kodály's music for strings, beginning with the *Romance Lyrique* for cello and piano, his earliest known composition, written in 1898 when he was 16. He had taught himself to play the cello to a reasonable standard (also the violin and viola) and while, as he freely admitted, not a natural virtuoso, he had a feeling for the instrument which is obvious in his writing. The *Adagio*, his first published work, was originally written for violin and piano in 1905 (and later transcribed for both cello and viola) and might have been intended as the slow movement of a larger work which never materialised. It predates his academic interest in folk music and first folksong collecting expedition to Galanta, where he had lived as a child, and therefore does not consciously display any folk inspired characteristics. It is also unaffected by other great influence on him - the music of Debussy, which he first encountered when he visited Paris the following year. The *Adagio* was to become one of his most popular works and Kodály ruefully commented that had he continued to write in this "fluent" and "accessible" style, he would have found success much easier to achieve.

The *Sonatina* dates from 1921-2 and is the last of Kodály's major original chamber works. It has been speculated that he intended it as a replacement for the rejected first movement of the Op.4 *Sonata*, then finally achieving publication, but developments in his style in the intervening period meant it failed to "recapture the spirit" of the earlier work. It shows the influence of Debussy's *Cello sonata* (1915) particularly in the piano part but as the title suggests, does not conform to strict sonata form with no real development section. The piano opens with cimbalom-like flourishes and then provides rippling accompaniment to lyrical statement in the cello. The movement alternates moments of quiet reflection with passionate intensity – exploiting the contrasting characteristics of the two instruments,

setting the sustained cello voice against the more percussive qualities of the piano.

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BARTÓK Piano Music

KODÁLY Sonata Op.4

Bartók's Sonata Sz80, dedicated to his second wife Ditta Pasztory, is his only work for solo piano in sonata form and was composed in 1926 for a concert tour of the United States the following year. Bartók later deemed it suitable only for the most sophisticated listeners and once declined to programme it on the grounds that it would "frighten the audience". It is characterised by a martellato (percussive) style, polyphonic writing and extensive use of chromatic "tone clusters" in which contiguous notes are sounded together (at one point there is a seven note cluster in which three notes are played by the thumb). This work and the earlier Allegro Barbaro Sz49 (1911), characterised by wide octave leaps, offbeat accompaniments and a wide dynamic range (pppp to fff) has given Bartók an unfair reputation for wild primitivism, although to a certain extent he played up to this stereotype by composing the Allegro in response to an unfavourable review which described him as one of the "jeunes barbares hongrois".

Bartók's early music was written under the spell of Wagner, Richard Strauss and Liszt, whose pupil István Thoman taught him piano at the Budapest Conservatory, and was very much in the late-Romantic mould. However during a country holiday in 1904, he overheard a Transylvanian girl singing a simple folk song, which transformed his life and music. He resolved to "collect the finest examples of Hungarian folk music and raise them to the level of works of art". With the aid of a wax cylinder phonograph he began the arduous task of collecting authentic folk melodies in the field. For the next twelve years, Bartók and his recording apparatus travelled all over Hungary,

Transylvania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Romania and North Africa, seeking out traditional music in remote villages which had remained untouched by the “modern” world. He always described this period as the happiest of his life, and by 1918, despite the difficulties imposed by First World War which was to destroy the rural societies of his sources, he had collected over eight thousand songs and dances. His work in analysing, classifying and tracing the influences and crosscurrents in traditional folk music was to earn him a considerable reputation as an ethnomusicologist in his own right.

The Three Hungarian Folk Songs from the Csík District Sz35a (1907) were the first published fruits of his interest in folk song collection and are faithful transcriptions from the recordings he made of modal peasant melodies (the first Dorian, the second and third Aeolian) filled out lightly with bare harmonies. The Six Romanian Folk Dances Sz56 (1915), dedicated to Ion Busitia who had assisted Bartók during his collecting tour in Transylvania (then part of Hungary), also preserve the recorded melodies unaltered, but are supplied with preludes and postludes, and have more elaborate accompaniments which Bartók described in terms of the mountings in which jewels are set. The six dances are Stick Dance, Braul or waistband dance in which each couple is linked by a sash, Stamping Dance where the dancers remain on one spot, Buciumena or hornpipe dance, a Polka and a Fast Dance. In contrast, the movements of the Suite Op.14 Sz62 (1916) contain no actual folk melodies, each being an original composition by Bartók. They represent the first break from his early Romantic compositional style and also show him beginning to experiment in modern musical forms (the second movement contains a twelve-note row). They do however reveal the influence of the folk music he had recorded, especially the first and the third movements, which contain elements of Romanian and Algerian styles respectively.

The two volumes of *Gyermekeknek* (For Children) Sz42 (1908-9) combine two of Bartók’s abiding interests - folk music and piano teaching. He considered most of the music that had been written as children’s teaching aids of negligible musical value and backward-looking, and thought that the strong, simple and often familiar melodic lines and modal harmonies of traditional music provided a much sounder basis on which to build an appreciation of modern music in the young. The short pieces of For Children volume 2 are based on a variety of traditional forms - circle dances, nonsense and play songs, carols - in contrasting tempi - Old Style (slow) e.g. 16, 20, 41, New Style (fast) e.g. 14, 15, 18, 19, 63 and Mixed Style e.g. 13, 39. The six books of *Mikrokosmos* Sz107 written between 1926 and 1939, were intended to provide a “synthesis of all the musical and technical problems which were treated and only partially resolved” in his earlier works in this area. The first books were composed specifically for use by his son Peter (often extempore at the time of his music lessons) and are elementary both musically and technically, but the later books become increasingly more challenging and require an advanced if not virtuoso technique. The Six Dances in Bulgarian Rhythm (Book 6 148-153), as the title suggests, employ the asymmetrical, syncopated rhythmic pattern characteristic of Bulgarian music - the aksak which combines units of two and three beats. No 151 was recognised by Bartók to be “very much in the style of Gershwin”.

Bartók’s assessment of Zoltán Kodály’s music as “the most perfect embodiment of the Hungarian spirit” will strike a chord with those familiar with the suite from his opera *Háry János*, the *Psalmus Hungaricus* - written to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the amalgamation of Buda and Pest in 1873 - the *Dances from Galanta* and the *Peacock Variations*. Kodály would indeed be celebrated even if he had not written a note of music – firstly as an ethnomusicologist, his pioneering work in the collection and preservation of Hungarian

folksong (originally in the company of Bartók) culminating in the magisterial *Corpus Musicae Popularis Hungaricae*, the first volume of which appeared in 1951: secondly as a musical educationalist dedicated to the encouragement of singing in people of all ages, but especially children. The popularity of his few orchestral works and the sheer volume of his folk song arrangements and choral works have however obscured the small but significant body of chamber music he produced in the first two decades of the 20th century. Between 1900 and 1906 Kodály studied at the Pázmány University, the Eötvös Kollégium and the Academy of Music, acquiring a doctorate and diplomas in languages, music and teaching, and after a period of study in Berlin and Paris, he was appointed professor at the Academy in 1907. The *String Quartet No. 1* Op.2 (1908-9) was quickly followed by the *Sonata for Cello and Piano* Op.4 (1909-10) which received its first performance in Paris at a concert of Hungarian music, the *Festival Hongrois*, on 12th March 1910, when it was played by Bartók (whose music also featured prominently in the programme) and János Mihálkovics. The following week it was repeated in Budapest in a concert devoted to Kodály's music, with Bartók again taking the piano part but this time partnered by Jeno Kerpely, from the youthful Waldbauer-Kerpely quartet (whose combined ages totalled 81!). While the last two movements only were played in Paris, the Budapest performance apparently included the opening one, which Kodály later discarded, with the result that while most unfinished pieces lack an ending, the Op.4 sonata lacks a beginning! The *Fantasia* is episodic in nature and characterised by constant changes of rhythm. It has been noted that the opening cello theme is vaguely reminiscent of the first bars of the slow movement of Brahms' *Double Concerto* but this resemblance must be accidental as Kodály apparently was not familiar with it. The piano enters with Debussyian musings and the instruments take turns in developing the material before a return to the opening theme. The *Allegro con spirito* is infused with the rhythmic dynamism of the dance, its sprightly fourth-based melody

characteristic of folk music, with a meditative recollection of opening *Fantasia* theme in the final ten bars. This circularity creates a sense of unity between the two movements (although whether this was effected after the dropping of the original first movement is unknown). The concert received a mixed reaction – although some critics praised it as 'brilliantly modern', others considered Kodály a "heretic" who held "both thought and harmony in contempt" and for many years his music was neither published nor played in Hungary.

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BEETHOVEN Violin Sonatas

Three Sonatas Op.12

This triptych was composed circa 1798 and sent into the world by the 29-year old Beethoven as big and representative works. It is evident from the diverse range of style and ideas that these early masterpieces display, one in the group is a grandly scaled effort; one is an intentionally more diminutive essay; and one which defies easy classification. All three Sonatas follow the general synopsis of a first movement in sonata form a slow movement and a Rondo. But each is markedly different in mood, emotional appeal and internal structure. The composer dedicated his Op.12 to Antonio Salieri (who was Beethoven's favourite mentor-pace Haydn, Albrechtsberger, and particularly, the bum rap made notorious by the play and film 'Amadeus', and the Rimsky-Korsakov opera 'Mozart and Salieri'). The proofs were sent for correction to one of Beethoven's publishers, Artaria and were printed between December 1798 and January 1799. In June, a review appeared in the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* and a perplexed critic wrote: 'Herr Beethoven goes his own way, and what a bizarre way it is! Learned, learned and always learned – and nothing natural; no song. The sonatas are *overladen* with difficulties: Yes, to be accurate, there is only a mass of learning here, without good

method, and an obstinacy which fails to interest us. A striving for strange modulations, a heaping of difficulties until one loses patience or enjoyment.'

However, several month later, a second review in the same publication (from the same critic perhaps) is more conciliatory: 'It is not to be denied that Herr v. B., is a man of genius; possessed of originality...'. The critic has tried to accustom himself more and more to [Beethoven's] manner and has learned to admire him more than he did at first.

Beethoven was annoyed but certainly not devastated: 'Let them talk' said the composer. 'They will certainly never make anybody immortal by their twaddle; nor will they rob of immortality those whom Apollo has favoured.' In the spring of 1801, he twitted Breitkopf und Härtel, another of his publishers, and incidentally the owner if the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*: 'You should recommend to Messrs, your critics greater care and wisdom.'

Sonata No.1 in D

The first movement *Allegro con brio* opens with four bars of unison upward and downward arpeggios as a call to order, immediately followed by its first subject, comprised of flicked upward octaves against scalar passages. A running passage in sixteenth notes derived from aforementioned scalar elements and finally, ff upward scales, leads to the gentler second theme stated first by the piano and then answered by the violin. An immediate repetition of this idea, embellished by triplets, then leads to the subsequent third theme group based on triplets from the piano against the flicked octaves of the opening idea, heard again from the violin. Two antiphonal smashing chords and upward semiquaver scales conclude the sizable exposition in A major. The development begins in F major, based on the closing chords and the ingredients of the first subject. In its last stage, the working out utilizes a build-up from the movement's

opening theme. The recapitulation is without notable incident, and there is no coda.

The *Andante con moto* second movement is a theme with four variations. Its tema in two parts (strains) is first stated by piano alone and the written out repetition of this first strain is sung by the violin accompanied by the piano. Both strains are repeated in the same manner.

In *Variation I*, the piano predominates and both strains are repeated verbatim. *Variation II* belongs to the running violin enlivened by bracing rhythmic underpinning from the piano. Again, both strains are repeated in the same manner. *Variation III* Minore is highly dramatic: its first phrases, marked P and crescendo are suddenly answered by slashing subito *ffs* from the piano with plunging downward scales in the right hand against stormy 32nd note groups in the left. The written out repetitions of the two strains reverse the roles of the two protagonists. *Variation IV*, once again in the original A major tonality, is a much gentler affair with dolce syncopations and leads to a wistful coda.

The third movement is a rumbustious *Rondo* whose jolly dancelike theme is characterized by jabbing afterbeat sforzandos. Two fermatas just before the first reappearance of the principal theme are an insidiously provocative invitation for any pianist to insert quasi-cadenzas (taboo in more puritanical 'play as written' times).

Sonata No.2 in A major

This Sonata is a more diminutive contrast to Nos. 1 and 3, more in the playful tradition of Mozart's lighter works in the same genre. The opening *Allegro vivace* presents a dancing 6/8 metre constantly in motion: four bars of upward appoggiaturas (and then another four of downward ones) are followed by semiquaver runs from the piano and then with violin and piano together.

This sixteen measure first subject is reiterated, with the violin's restatement of the appoggiaturas completed by the piano. The

remainder of the short exposition is replete with darting motivic imitations thrown back and forth by the two protagonists. An idea stated by the two players in unison octaves serves as a closing theme. The development commences in C Major (injecting a mild note of drama). Otherwise, working out and recapitulation are pretty pro forma and without incident. The movement ends with a sly restatement of the upward appoggiaturas.

The *Andante più tosto Allegretto* consists of a wistful two-part melody in two strains, the first stated by the piano alone, repeated with the violin accompanied by the keyboard instrument. The answering second strain in C Major, again by piano alone, is reiterated with violin accompanied by the piano. A central second theme in F Major is followed by a four bar transition back to a reprise of the movement's first part in A minor, and a coda.

The (for Beethoven) mild mannered *Rondo, Allegro piacevole*, has a few moments of bracing upward arpeggios from the piano, and a D major second episode with a new insistently reiterated motif.

Sonata No.3 in E flat

The E flat Sonata is the 'grand' member of the Op.12 group. Its *Allegro con spirito* has a piano part of commanding brilliance (although the fiddle is hardly neglected). Its hurling momentum is typical of the audacious Beethoven working within the strictures of classical decorum.

The first theme is stated by both instruments, the contrasted second subject is initially introduced by the violin, then is handed over to the piano. But it is the closing material of this exposition that supplies most of the grist for the development section.

Incidentally one passing incident (at measure 50 to 51; again at measure 146-147 in the recapitulation) clearly foreshadows the *Rondo* of the Third Piano Concerto, Op.37. An amply proportioned coda, based largely on the same material that served for the development brings the movement to a dramatic close.

The *Adagio con molt' espressione*, for all its serene song-form elements, introduces some nerve tingling harmonic turns and also a spacious breadth and profundity that is in arm's reach of the great slow movements of Op.30 No.2 and Op.96.

The concluding *Rondo (Allegro molto)* is, as so much else in this Sonata, stylistically reminiscent of Mozart (that composer's Sonata, K.481 in the same key, particularly). This easy-going, extroverted, busily animated Finale keeps both players busy, either declaiming thematic material, or accompanying by way of tightly wound, broken Alberti chords.

Sonata No.5 in F Op.24 'Spring'

These two highly contrasted but closely related sonatas bear the same vintage date, 1801. Beethoven had originally planned to have them published together as Opus 23 but the immense popularity of the so-called 'Spring' Sonata prompted the composer to keep it as a separate entity from the more experimental (and less accessible) A minor work. For all their distinct differences the two masterpieces share the same DNA: Consider the upward accacciaturas in the Presto of Op.23 and also in the second theme of Op.24's first movement; and the thematic similarities between Op.23's second movement and the Spring Sonata's 'off-beat' Scherzo (both of these movements were later echoed by Robert Schumann in his 'Soldatenmarsch' from his *Album für die Jugend*).

Sonata No.4 in A minor Op.23

The sportive first movement of Op.23 is a fiery affair in 6/8 metre which moves with abrupt, constant stops, starts and jolting surprises. The two main ideas follow in short order and a third comes to the fore in the development section (beginning at bar 136) and is heard from again in the coda. Both halves of the movement are repeated.

The *Andante scherzoso, più Allegretto*'s proto-Schumann first theme and its subsequent fugal bridge passage lead to the second subject

(bar 51) with its hemidemisemiquaver note twiddle followed by two staccato eighth note. Incidentally, this second movement is likewise in sonata form. This movement does double duty as the work's missing slow movement and Scherzo.

The *Allegro molto* culmination returns to the work's opening Presto's essential mood, sporting a dramatic rondo theme – unlike a classic rondo theme in spirit, but, behaving as one, reappearing over and over in same key (A minor). The movement's constant motion is broken by slow and reflective episodes (the second is in F major). Another subordinate idea brings to the fore a motif of two staccato crotchet chords followed by minim rests. A fourth statement of the rondo theme introduces a rhapsodic fantasy on the preceding material, calling for considerable virtuosity up to the climactic statement of the first theme.

Sonata No.5 in F Op.24 'Spring'

This sonata gave the public everything it had probably missed in its immediate predecessor: for once the nickname, though spurious, is entirely apropos.

The first movement spins along with a melodious first subject ten bars in length, first sung by the violin, and then immediately reheard from the piano. A *fortissimo* bridge passage from the keyboard alone in unison scale passage leads to the second theme with its aforementioned acciacaturas buoyed by rising quaver chords. When the exposition comes to its end we feel that we have heard all of the movement's essential ingredients. The ensuing development is undramatic by Beethoven's usual standards and is mostly devoted to the second subject and activity in triplets. The recapitulation seemingly passes without incident. But this time the piano goes first, with the violin following suit. The coda combines the main theme with the triplets from the development against the sixteenth notes of the opening melody.

The *Adagio molto espressivo* in B flat major can be considered analogous to the still-to-come Scene by the Brook of the Sixth Symphony. The flow is supplied by the almost constant semiquaver ostinato to the effusive melody played by the piano's right hand with the violin sometimes joining in. An exquisitely benign and florid lyricism pervades, replete with broken thirds (quasi-bird calls). Beethoven's humour introduces an ironical twist in the miniature *Scherzo, Allegro molto*: the violin has to work hard at playing out of sync with the piano. And in the whirlwind unison Trio that follows, both protagonists must hang on for dear life lest their ensemble is unwittingly thrown adrift!

The *Allegro ma non troppo* is remarkably analogous to the counterpart finale of the Op.22 Sonata for solo piano: not only are the main themes of the two movements almost identical in themselves, but both subsequently are subjected to similar procedure and embellishment in their metamorphoses.

A distinction can be made between these sibling Sonata-Rondos: the second episode of Op.22 is a boisterous intrusion while the one in the 'Spring' Sonata, with its Ostinato triplets, is more well behaved and less conspicuous.

Three Sonatas Op.30

Beethoven's three sonatas which make up Op.30 were composed in 1802 (at the same time as his three solo piano sonatas Op.31 and a year before the landmark 'Eroica' Symphony) As with Opus 12, these three are once again intriguingly contrasted in mood and even scale. The pieces are dedicated to Czar Alexander I of Russia.

Sonata No.6 in A Op.30 No.1

The first sonata of Op.30 is probably the least popular of Beethoven's ten for this instrumental combination but it is (for perhaps the very reason for its lack of fame) one of the most subtle, and certainly

among the most lyrical. As an analysis of its *Allegro* first movement tellingly reveals, Beethoven's adventurous use of even his atypically unassertive material is both rigorous and wonderfully dramatic. Note, for instance, how the movement's development section deploys and combines aspects of all the thematic and motivic events encountered in the foregoing exposition: the 'groupetto' of the first subject; the graceful second theme (which is broken apart into canonic fragments); the leaping bridge passage (which is now used to accompany the 'groupetto' of the opening theme).

The second movement is analogous to the Fourth Symphony's Adagio in its pervasive dotted ostinato and flowering lyricism. The D major of its principal part momentarily darkens to B minor but the movement's real surprise comes with its introduction of the central episode in E flat major, where the dotted ostinato ceases as the key changes. A reprise of the opening theme returns the music to its home tonality of D major – but in place of the ostinato, the restated melody is now accompanied by flowing triplets (as also happens in the Fourth Symphony, except that the triplets there supplement rather than supplant the ostinato). But in the sonata, the ostinato only recurs in the movement's final bars.

For whatever reason, Beethoven frequently turned to the variation form in these sonatas: the cycle has no fewer than four instances of such usage (two as slow movements, two as finales) as opposed to only five in the course of the thirty-two piano sonatas! The Tema of Op.30 No.1 is a jolly *alla breve* affair, propelled by quavers and anchored by a sturdy bass line. This theme is in two-part binary form, with each of its parts (strains) repeated but these repeats are themselves varied and thus written out. Variation I is cast in triplets, (here, as in most of the subsequent variants, the repeats of the two strains are not varied.) Variation II has the material as flowing, horizontal lines. Syncopations are introduced in the second half. Variation III is again characterized by accompanimental triplets. But its mood is more energetic than that of the first variation with a

vigorous dialogue between piano and violin. Variation IV alternates slashing multiple stopped violin chords with more lyric material from the piano. The minor-key fifth variation places the thematic elements in the piano's bass register while the violin joins in a counter-melody on top. The writing becomes increasingly contrapuntal and complex. Incidentally varied repeats are again used in this, the most emotionally charged of the variations thus far. The shadows lift in the Sixth and last variation and a return to the pervading A major brings forth a change of metre to 6/8. Its swaggering persona brings the Sonata to a close with an effective (but still relatively low-key) coda. Before leaving discussion of this sonata, it is fascinating to note that Beethoven had originally intended to end this work with the brilliant tarentella-like movement that we know as the Finale of the 'Kreutzer' Sonata. It is hard to conceive of its placement in the earlier context – a mismatch that seems to me as ill-advised and jarring as the use of the *Grosse Fuge* as the culmination of the String Quartet Op.130!

Sonata No.7 in C minor Op.30 No.2

As with Beethoven's characteristic Sturm und Drang efforts in the key of C minor (the Piano Trio Op.1 No.3; The String Trio Op.9 No.3; the Piano Sonata Op.10 No.1; the String Quartet Op.18 No.4; the Third Piano Concerto Op.37; *Coriolan* Overture, Op.62; and of course the Fifth Symphony Op.67), the Violin Sonata, Op.30 No.2 gives us the familiar dichotomy of emotive, spitfire explosiveness and its countervailing lyricism (usually reserved for the second themes in the relative major).

The sonata's opening Allegro con brio begins with a *sotto voce* opening salvo stated by the piano alone – a minim followed by four semiquavers and a crotchet – is immediately repeated a fourth higher, and then followed by an ominous downward chromatic run and three soft chords. The violin then takes up the already heard theme in a more outgoing manner while the piano furnishes a sinister backdrop of rumbling neighbour notes in the bass (sometimes taking the form of

a written out trill; at other times as fairly exploding arpeggios). Slashing chords bring us to the second subject, a jaunty, dotted alla marcia, introduced by the violin against a running sequence of staccato quavers in the right hand of the piano part. An energetic passage follows, alternating upward scales back and forth between the two protagonists. The exposition concludes with a return to the movement's opening motif in the major key.

This is the first of Beethoven's sonata movements to bypass an exposition repeat. The next instances were to come in Op.57 (the 'Appassionata' Sonata) and Op.59 No.1 (the F major 'Rasumovsky' Quartet). The working out is typically thorough, beginning with the germinal opening motto but giving full attention to both the second subject and the energetic material that permeates the rest of the movement. The grandly proportioned edifice ends with an extended coda, almost a second development.

As in the first movement, the piano states the Adagio cantabile's first part by itself, and restates it in tandem with the violin accompanied by the piano. The answering second strain is likewise repeated in the same manner. A central episode, built upon sustained chords against arpeggio figurations eventually leads to reprise of the original melody, the arpeggios of B section continuing and evolving into a full scaled active ostinato accompaniment. Twice in the coda, hair-raising upward C major scales jolt the music into an alien F major. But both times it recovers its poise (and rightful A flat major tonality). The movement ends benignly, the violin alternating pizzicato with arco, the piano brushing past with gossamer demisemiquaver scales.

The C major Scherzo, with its perky nose-thumbing asides, is almost symphonic. At one point, the violin lets forth with a series of repeated Es, like sparks from a blow torch. The Trio section's first part offers a canon between the violin and the piano's left hand; with the latter's right hand supplying the rhythmic momentum with rolling triplets. (The second strain of this central episode reverses the roles of the two instruments).

The finale brings us back to those ominous neighbour notes in the first movement. Out of this restless beginning comes a spacious theme closely related to the second subject of the Op.18 No.4 Quartet's last movement.

Other splendid ideas come to the fore; one of them particularly analogous to the bustling fugato in the second episode likewise encountered in the Rondo of the Third Piano Concerto. The cited Op.37 Piano Concerto ends with an optimistic C major dash to the finish line; but in this Sonata, as in Op.10 No.1 and Op.18 No.4, the aura of C minor tragedy persists to the final bar.

Sonata No.8 in G Op.30 No.3

In decided contrast to the introspective A major Sonata and the explosive C minor, the G major Sonata Op.30 No.3 is an ebullient, light-hearted work. Although its outer movements (particularly the opening Allegro assai) suggest a scowling, unkempt Beethovenian persona, the musical growling is done in the best of good fun. The opening movement is permeated with a blithe mixture of gruffness and courtly elegance that never loses impetus.

The central movement, like the one in Op.31 No.3, has a geniality that almost borders on languid sentimentality. However, a distinction ought to be made between these two siblings: The Piano/violin Sonata is somewhat more expansive than the Op.31 No.3 Piano Sonata (which conforms more closely to the traditional and conventional Minuet/Trio/Minuet da capo format). The subordinate idea in Op.30 No.3 is joined to the main body of the movement, and characterized by displaced accents in the bass. At the end, violin and piano share the original minuet melody and alternate in restating it (foreshadowing the closing pages of the Variation movement of the 'Kreutzer' Sonata). The Finale is a moto perpetual rondo whose mood – and also its content – share much with the work's opening movement. (In fact, the second part of its exuberant theme is none other than a reincarnation of the Sonata's opening phrase!) Both performers are kept on their

toes (fingers?) as the composer puts his romping materials through their paces. Near the end, there is the ‘surprise’ accidental stumbling into the distant key of E flat (Beethoven’s counterpart of Alfred Hitchcock’s appearances in his own films). The ‘mistake’ is of course righted, and the music comes to a happy, vigorous conclusion.

Sonata No.9 in A major Op.47 ‘Kreutzer’

Here is a unique, insofar as I can tell, situation of a musical composition that inspired a literary masterwork that, in turn, brought forth another piece of music: the ‘Kreutzer’ Sonata’s brilliance obviously affected Leo Tolstoy — who thought the work so passionate and incendiary that in his story of the same name, one of its central characters took offence (to put it mildly) at finding his wife playing it with another man. In writing his first string quartet based on Tolstoy (and, obviously, Beethoven as well), Leos Janacek argued on behalf of music’s ability to heal the spirit whereas Tolstoy celebrated its capacity to provoke violence.

In any event, musicologists now know that Beethoven’s penultimate piano/violin sonata, which in its perfected version is dedicated to Rudolf Kreutzer, was originally composed for George Bridgetower, a mulatto violist whom Beethoven considered a dear friend. The two, alas, quarrelled, but whether the sonata was the cause of their falling out is not known (Incidentally, Kreutzer is known to have disliked the work and he never played it). Although the Adagio sostenuto that opens the first movement is indeed in A major, it soon enough leads to the tonality of A minor.

It is unusual, even for the excitable Beethoven, to find a work with two of its movements designated ‘Presto’. Beethoven describes this as ‘a Sonata that is written in a very concertante style’ and we can assume that Bridgetower’s virtuosity must have been as considerable in its way as Beethoven’s, judging from the music’s slashing, incisive persona. Beethoven’s audacious demands obviously inspired Schubert’s C major Fantasy D934, and, together, these two

compositions foreshadowed Paganini’s diabolical musical exploits. For all its breathless agitation, the opening movement of this sonata is of enormous breadth and scope, as are, indeed, the two which follow. The central Andante con variazione presents a spacious theme with four variants and a coda. Piano and violin take turn sharing the honours in stating the two-part binary idea (each of its two parts repeated in a varied manner). Variation I primarily belongs to the piano, with the fiddle merely contributing to the dancing triplets of the keyboard part’s rhythmic impetus. Variation II, on the other hand, gives pride of place to the violin (who takes up the theme in piercing repeated notes) while the piano part for all its harmonic importance, is essentially an accompaniment.

In the minor-key Variation III, the contributions of the two instruments melt in perfect equilibrium. The basically dark, solid, tonal characteristics of this third variant provide a perfect contrast with the delicate, lacy sonorities of Variation IV. In this final treatment, Beethoven returns to his practice (as originally set forth in the Tema itself) of writing out his sectional repeats in varied instrumentation: each half of the two-part theme is initially taken by the piano while the violin embroiders with pizzicatos and like thematic fragments, and then the violin (with the piano’s accompanying syncopations suggesting elements of hidden counter melody). This leads directly into the serene and expansive coda in which the two protagonists reminisce in dialogue on aspects of the Tema’s material. The movement ends with the violin climbing high to the F above the treble staff and the keyboard dropping down to the same note (and an a tenth higher) way down in the bass.

Although the ‘Kreutzer’ Sonata was one of the two in this cycle not composed as part of a group – the G Major Op.96 was the other – it should be chronicled that its brilliant third movement (Presto) was originally to have been the Finale of the Sonata in A Major Op.30 No.1. Beethoven was utterly correct in rejecting this brilliantly assertive rondo in that earlier context (where it would have clashed disastrously

with the soft-spoken aesthetics of that work's two earlier movements). On the other hand, pressing it into service at the last moment (Beethoven as was so often his wont, had procrastinated in composing his new sonata, and needed a 'quick fix' to meet the impending date of a scheduled first performance!) was fortuitous.

Sonata No.10 in G major Op.96

The last of Beethoven's ten violin sonatas (it dates from 1812, the same year as the Seventh and Eighth Symphonies and nine years after the 'Kreutzer') might well have been dubbed the 'Archduke Sonata' since it is dedicated to the composer's loyal friend and patron, Rudolph of Austria, along with the Piano Trio Op.97 which does have that eponymous nickname. Its first performance took place on 29 December of that year at the home of Prince Lobkowitz, another of Beethoven's patrons: Rudolph was the pianist, and the violinist on that occasion was the celebrated Frenchman, Pierre Rode.

It is conjectured that the sonata was begun as early as February but, as was frequent with Beethoven, its finale was completed only days before the premiere. Because of its G major tonality and its lyricism tinged with muscular drama, the Op.96 Sonata is a stylistic sibling to the Fourth Piano Concerto (also dedicated to Rudolph). Its first movement is a spacious yet cogent sonata structure. The violin's trilling opening phrase is immediately answered in like fashion by the piano, and this intimate music proceeds with an aura of lofty tranquillity (like the cited Fourth Concerto, a motif using repeated notes, and an arching legato dialogue between piano and violin, also remind the listener of this concerto). The contrasting second subject comprises a jaunty melody set in tripping dotted notes figurations and set against a backdrop of rolling triplet eighth notes. A bit of rhythmic conflict is created by Beethoven's sometimes pitting those triplets against normal duplets, three against two.

He also has a surprise in store for us at bar 59 when a grand end to a big cadence leads to B flat major instead of the expected D major

(which returns four bars later only to repeat the same incident and its solution). The development commences quietly with the haunting phrase of the exposition's closing theme and its most notable facet is that the already flowing triplets of the second theme never cease. And whereas Beethoven's developments are so often densely active, this one appears content to gently reminisce. Then, just before the recapitulation, the triplet activity stops and alternating trills between piano and fiddle bring forth the reprise of the opening theme (but this time the piano rather than the violin going first). The coda is based on the various aspects of the first theme.

The Adagio espressivo, in E flat major, begins with a piano solo, a long-limbed cantabile in quavers set against flowing inner voice semiquavers (such as we find in the second movement of his 'Pathétique' Sonata). I would also suggest that aspects of Op.96's Adagio undoubtedly served as an inspiration (perhaps unconscious) to Brahms in his G Major Violin Sonata Op.78.

As with the 'Serioso' Quartet Op.95, Beethoven's line of thought moves directly onto the third movement, Scherzo. This jovial G minor movement is characterized by its sforzando accented upbeats. The contrasting Trio in E flat major is flowing and Ländler-like. A varied da capo of the Scherzo culminates with a coda in which the movement's main idea is given a bright restatement in G major. (The violin's culminating trill on B, lest you overlook it, recalls the opening of the first movement!)

The finale is one last theme and variation form. The Tema (Poco allegretto) is another simple dance tune in binary form. Seven variants follow and, because each flows into the next continuously, a listener can be pardoned for initially failing to grasp the structure here. The first four variations are, by Beethoven's standards, relatively uneventful; all proceed in the same tempo as the tema, and all but the first are double variations (with both halves of the theme varied instead of merely repeated – this holds true of the theme itself). In Variation V, however, the tempo changes to Adagio espressivo and the

emotional content deepens considerably. The original faster tempo is reinstated, and a seeming restatement of the original theme in something close to its unadorned first incarnation suddenly goes away harmonically, and — truncated—leads to a vigorous coda in the correct G major (the false truncated restatement, as it turns out, was in the ‘wrong’ key of E flat major). In the course of this coda, two more complete variations appear. There are twelve bars of poco adagio contemplation of the tema’s second half and, finally, eight bars, forte and presto, being the sonata to a stomping conclusion.

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BEETHOVEN Cello Sonatas - Variations

The two *Op.5 Sonatas* (in F and G minor) were composed during a visit to the court of Frederick II in Berlin and were performed by Beethoven with one of the court cellists, Jean-Louis Duport (although Frederick was himself a keen and competent cellist). These sonatas were the first to be composed for this combination of instruments for some time, and break new ground in placing both players on an equal footing rather than subordinating the keyboard to a continuo role. Each has only two movements (an Allegro and Rondo), and the absence of a slow movement may have been designed to address the problem of the dynamic imbalance between the two instruments which would have been accentuated in extended adagio passages (although both sonatas open with a substantial slow introduction). Beethoven’s accomplishment as a composer for the cello is underlined by the fact that Duport incorporated many of the techniques found in these sonatas into his instructional manual for the cello.

Apart from the three sets of variations on ‘See the Conqu’ring Hero Comes’ (WoO45) from Handel’s *Judas Maccabeus*, ‘Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen’ (Op.66) and ‘Bei Männern’ (WoO46) from *Die Zauberflöte*

of 1796, 1797 and 1801 respectively, Beethoven did not write for the cello again until 1807 – when he began the *Op.69 Sonata* in A major dedicated to his friend Baron Ignaz Gleichenstein. Like the *Op.5* sonatas, it has no proper slow movement, although there is a short 18-bar Adagio section between the second movement (Scherzo) and the finale.

Another nine years were to pass before Beethoven returned to the cello, this time at the request of his friend and confidante Countess Marie Erdödy. In 1808 she had played a major part in organising the payment of an annuity to Beethoven by Archduke Rudolph and Princes Kinsky and Lobkowitz, which was designed to relieve him of financial pressures (although in reality it was some years before this was assured). Beethoven, however, quarrelled soon afterwards with her (this was a recurring feature of his tempestuous personal life), and it was only in 1815 that they were reconciled – the olive branch on her part being the gift of 34 bottles of wine. The composer was happy that relations had been re-established with Erdödy and her young family, of which he was very fond, and possibly it was these personal associations that prompted the writing of this deeply-felt work in a period otherwise devoid of creativity.

Beethoven wrote the sonatas with the cellist Joseph Linke in mind. Linke had recently become part of the Erdödy household as music tutor to the children (following the disbanding of Prince Rasumovsky’s private quartet, in which he had played, after the disastrous fire which destroyed Rasumovsky’s palace). Beethoven was therefore well acquainted with him and his playing style, and may have consulted him on matters of technique.

Op.102 No.1 in C major is a two-movement work that follows the pattern of the previous sonatas in omitting a slow movement, although, as in the *Op.5 Sonatas*, it opens with a slow introduction begun by the unaccompanied cello (like *Op.69*). On this occasion, the

second Allegro is also introduced by an Adagio passage, after which the opening bars are recalled in a fashion that looks forward to the Op.101 Piano Sonata and ultimately the Ninth Symphony.

Op. 102 No.2 in D major is a three-movement work which, at last, includes a full-scale slow movement before a massive fugal finale that points the way towards Beethoven's fascination with that form in the late-period works.

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BEETHOVEN & MOZART Quintets for Piano and Winds

Theme and Variation: Two Classical Wind Quintets

On Thursday 1 April 1784, at the Imperial and Royal National Theatre in Vienna, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart presented 'a grand musical concert' for his own benefit which included 'an entirely new grand quintet'. Mozart was the pianist for this performance. In a letter to his father on 10 April he declared the Quintet K452 to be 'the best thing I have written so far in my life ... I wish you could have heard it – and how beautifully it was performed!'

The Quintet dates from what may very well have been the busiest and happiest months of Mozart's life. He had moved to Vienna several years earlier to escape his unhappy and intolerable employment with the Archbishop Colloredo of Salzburg, and he would soon achieve the height of his popularity as both pianist and composer.

The Quintet opens with an introductory Largo – an unusually slow tempo marking – whose weight offsets the brightness of the home key and which portends a degree of seriousness surprising for the choice of instrumentation. It provides space for each participant to be properly introduced, with a regard for balance and individual timbres that remains a principal concern throughout the piece. The Allegro moderato is remarkable for the degree of harmonic ingenuity and exploration compressed into its very brief development section. The

second movement, a Larghetto in B flat, is at once deeply involving and yet always forward-moving, offering a poignancy of expression that is heightened by carefully moderated chromaticism. The Rondo finale, even with its darkly coloured central section, is more expectedly innocent and includes a written-out 'cadenza in tempo' for all five players before the final return of the rondo theme.

In the years following his arrival in Vienna in November 1792, Ludwig van Beethoven made his reputation primarily as a pianist and as a composer for that instrument. Haydn, with whom Beethoven studied for about a year, remained a strong presence, and Haydn's dominion over the genre of the string quartet may explain Beethoven's initial avoidance of the genre. In fact, most of the younger composer's chamber music was for winds. There was also Mozart to emulate, and Beethoven seems to have done just that with his Quintet for piano and winds Op.16, in the same key and for the same combination of instruments as Mozart's work.

The gravity and breath of the introduction are preparation less for the energetic character of the Allegro than for its size: the opening movement accounts for half the Quintet's length. Although Beethoven's forceful approach to the keyboard is the driving power behind the Allegro, the wind instruments nevertheless hold their own, with the clarinet frequently paving the way. Just before the lead-back to the recapitulation, there is a 'false reprise' *à la* Haydn. The opening of the slow movement, an Andante in B flat, could be from a Classical piano sonata, but the winds' entrance for the second strain of the theme is all the more striking for their initial silence, and each of the theme's returns is increasingly embellished. There are two contrasting episodes in the minor mode, the first beginning with a melancholy song in the oboe, the second with a long-breathed melody in the horn. The finale is an exuberant sonata-rondo in the 6/8 metre of the hunt. Since the central minor-mode episode draws extensively upon the main theme, Beethoven foreshortens the final reprise, opting instead for a brief and witty coda.

SCHUBERT Piano Trios

Franz Schubert's two piano trios are surrounded with questions. He probably wrote them between October 1827 and January 1828. Many years earlier, when still a teenager, he had composed a one-movement sonata which he rejected and withdrew. Many people blame Schubert's enormous admiration for Beethoven for this long neglect. To a certain extent this is an explanation. Schubert was one of the bearers of Beethoven's coffin in 1827 in Vienna and composed his trios only after Beethoven's death. Maybe he wanted to wait until Beethoven was just a ghost, but this doesn't explain why in his symphonies and his string quartets he already had presented some kind of answer to Beethoven's shadow. His trios are, in any case, quite similar to those of Beethoven's. Both trios have four movements – of which three are in the tonic key – and have the piano as its leading instrument. Both composers wrote trios that were intended for performances in relatively small ambiances (mostly big houses from aristocrats and rich citizens) and trios in which, at the same time, the limitations of the genre and its small space were greatly expanded. The piano parts are much more virtuosic than the piano parts of its most famous predecessors (by Haydn and Mozart) and the string parts show a range of dynamics and emotions that prove that Schubert was on the border between classicism and romanticism. Schubert's First Trio D898 was first published in 1836 under the title 'Premier Grand trio' which indicates that the piece, by contemporary standards, was a long and demanding work, lasting more than half an hour – and the second trio is even longer and more demanding.

The reputation of the pieces was settled in 1836 when Robert Schumann, a great admirer of his older colleague, wrote a favourite review, in which he described the B flat trio D898 as 'passive, lyrical and feminine' and the E flat D929 by contrast as 'more spirited,

masculine and with a dramatic tone'. Although it is now unfashionable to describe music in these gender-related terms, the differences between both trios are great and obvious, just as the similarities. Schubert, unlike Beethoven, is not very interested in small motives which are almost endlessly transformed in all kinds of directions. He is much more a master of long melodic lines which he likes to repeat almost endlessly with slight variations which function as transitions between the sections of the piece. While Beethoven is a master of instrumental drama, Schubert is a master of lyricism. Schubert's heavenly length, a term used by Schumann in order to describe Schubert's 'Great' Symphony in C major, is equally appropriate for the trios.

Just as in Beethoven's trios we clearly here the sections exposition, development and recapitulation, but with Beethoven the harmony has a big role in emphasizing the structure, while Schubert is much more varied in his use of keys. He often works with keys that are on the one hand far enough away to make the harmony sound adventurous and dreamy and on the other hand close enough to maintain the sense of a solid harmonic center. Unlike Beethoven, who clearly emphasises in a phrase the strong and weak parts of the bar, Schubert tends to blur this distinction.

Another difference between Schubert and his master is the treatment of counterpoint. Beethoven, like Bach, tends to show off his mastery in the form of complex and ingenious textures, difficult to play and to listen to. Schubert, by contrast, prefers to write beautiful melodies in eloquent dialogues and thereby deviates from the conventional approach. He had some hesitations while doing so and even decided to take lessons, during the last months of his life. But the trios show to which extent he had mastered the technique and was able to adapt his skill to his style.

Although the trios are instrumental pieces, they betray Schubert's great affinity with song. A proof of it can be found in the second movement of D929. Schubert quotes a Swedish song which was

hugely popular in the months Schubert wrote his trio. It was often performed by a Swedish singer, Albert Berg, who sang it at parties and other occasions Schubert attended. The title of the song (in English) is 'the sun has set' and it is tempting to regard it as a programme for the trio. Schubert himself never explicitly described the content of the piece and was perfectly aware of the idiosyncrasies of both vocal and instrumental music.

In his final years Schubert wrote many instrumental pieces of a big size, not just these trios. But, no matter how long these works sometimes were, they had to fit within a multi-movement composition. This explains the fate of the Notturmo D897. Initially it was the second movement of D898 but apparently Schubert rejected it as such, probably because it is too long and because it sounds too much as an independent and self-sufficient work. When both trios became very popular in the concert hall, the Notturmo proved to be an excellent encore. It also explains the fate of the finale of D929. After the premiere, in March 1828, Schubert decided to cut the finale with a third, because otherwise the piece would have been much too long. He asked his publisher to respect this decision, but we are not sure whether Schubert saw the printed proof when it was sent to him.

Nowadays the compositions have a secured place in the canon and almost all the ensembles play Schubert's pieces, as if they have the same undisputable position as the trios of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms. For a long time however, this was the case. Immediately after his death Schubert was an unfashionable composer and several of his major pieces were published only decades after his death. The First trio came out in 1836, the Second much later. The trios were known and performed however, like many other compositions by Schubert, but only at small circles. Schumann's judgment on Schubert gave Schubert's music a reputation of being written for very sensible people, mostly women, who prefer sentiment to force and intuition to intelligence. (This cliché was partly confirmed by reality.) The trios could often be heard at gatherings from rich citizens, not only

in Vienna and other German cities, and for a good reason. Schubert's style had a great influence on romantic popular music. Besides, the classical essentials of it could be easily transformed in a style for the modern age. Most popular music from the Weimar era (1923–33) seems to have its roots in songs by Schubert (hugely popular in Germany during the nineteenth century and afterwards) and Kurt Weill must have assimilated Schubert's style before he wrote his *Dreigroschenoper* (1929). Its immense popularity at the time was possible thanks to a mixture of a subtle and slightly veiled comment on actual events and a deliberate attempt to copy the classical fundamentals of Schubert's style.

It took the 20th century to understand Schubert's individual language and his undeniable voice, very different from Beethoven's, but just as personal and convincing. His language was equally intriguing and showed, especially in his late and long instrumental compositions, a perfect control of architecture, phrasing, harmony, rhythm and melody. As so often the reputation got an enormous boost by an excellent recording by outstanding musicians, in this case the first recording D898, made in the twenties by the pianist Alfred Cortot, violinist Jacques Thibaud and cellist Pablo Casals. After the war, its reputation became unquestionable. The music has a vocal touch, but it could only have been written for instruments. It is solidly grounded in the classical style, but the fluent melodies and the harmony, which often avoid clear marking points in the structure, preclude the romantic style. In fact, the trios are just as romantic as those of Mendelssohn, and certainly more than those of Schumann, Brahms and Dvorak, which are in a sense much more classical than those of Schubert, Haydn, Haydn and Mozart.

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MENDELSSOHN Piano Trios Nos. 1 & 2

In 1832 Felix Mendelssohn wrote to his favourite sister Fanny (a pianist-composer herself) that he would like to write some 'good' trios. He soon began composing a trio for violin, viola and piano that was however left unfinished.

In 1839 he completed his First Piano Trio, Op.49. Mendelssohn's friend and colleague composer Ferdinand Hiller- who appreciated the modern French sound of Berlioz and Liszt- considered the broken chords of the piano part outdated. He suggested several alterations, and was proud to learn that Mendelssohn had taken his advice. Robert Schumann reviewed the 1840 Leipzig premiere for his *Neue Zeitschrift*, praising a masterpiece that would surely '...bring joy to our children and grandchildren'.

The piece represents the classical element in German romanticism. It is closely related to the Lied (classical song) and reflects the relation of man and nature as in Goethe's work. The brilliant piano part shows the influence of Chopin and Liszt. The skilled treatment of the main theme and its counterpoint mark the first movement, as does the well balanced instrumentation. The piano part of the slow movement (Andante con moto tranquillo) is reminiscent of the Songs Without Words, while the Scherzo (Leggiero e vivace) echoes another *Midsummer Night's Dream*. The passionate Finale (Allegro assai appassionato) is soothed by a charming tune given to the cello.

The second Piano Trio in C minor Op.66 was written six years later in 1845, and was dedicated to Louis Spohr. Its character is rather different, foreboding the dark tension in for instance the works of Robert Schumann. This was Mendelssohn's last great chamber music work. Compared to the earlier piece the C minor trio has lost its light-heartedness. In the last movement a choral theme appears from the 1562 Geneva Psalter (also used in J.S. Bach's Cantata 130: *Herr Gott, Dich fürchten alle wir*). The first movement has symphonic aspirations and a highly inventive and complex structure. The repetitive structures in the following Andante Espressivo (the first four notes of the main

theme recur again and again) seem to suggest an underlying idea of persistence and acceptance. The Scherzo again reflects the mercurial *Midsummer Night's Dream* style. The hunting theme again mirrors Schumann ('Aufschwung', from the *Fantasiestücke* Op.12 of 1837). Towards the end there is a perhaps meaningful attempt to connect the galloping hunt and the choral theme.

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BRAHMS Violin Sonatas

In the First Violin Sonata in G Op.78, written directly after the Eight Piano Pieces Op.76 and the Violin Concerto Op.77 in 1878–79, Brahms sought to combine the intimacy of Op.76, intended for a chamber-sized setting, with the broader gestures of Op.77, written for a large auditorium. At the same time, while employing great instrumental virtuosity, his intention was to evoke a lyrical rather than dramatic mood. Brahms was not only an established composer who took the conventional taste of his largely conservative audience into account; he also desired to lard his music with harmonic and rhythmic passages that were extremely modern for the time. Thus these modernisms were to be accommodated in a flowing Classical-Romantic discourse, with Brahms effectively uniting the two poles in a happy marriage. Hardly surprising, therefore, that these sonatas have enjoyed much popularity ever since their first appearance.

As with all his sonatas, the opening fast movement is written in conventional sonata form. The dramatic and concise approach of the Classical masters, however, is replaced by great lyricism (which recalls Beethoven's last violin sonata, Op.96, one of his most Romantic compositions) and a certain diffuseness, with flowing transitions between the episodes. The slow movement of Brahms's sonata has three sections in accordance with Classical tradition: a rather idyllic opening in the major key, a turbulent sequel in the minor, and a return to the beginning, though with a temperamental

undertone. In the last movement, Brahms quotes from two of his own songs: 'Regenlied' Op.59 No.3 (hence the work's nickname 'Regensonate') and 'Nachklang' Op.59 No.4, both dating from 1873. Most surprising is the end of this movement: after a long episode in a conspicuously minor key, Brahms quotes quite without warning the main theme of the second movement in the major key, and now in a fast tempo. After this unexpected turn the work comes to a tranquil end.

The Second Violin Sonata in A Op.100 was written in 1886–87 and is known as the 'Meistersinger' on account of its opening motif, taken from the third act of Richard Wagner's opera *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. The instrumental virtuosity, particularly in the piano part, is considerable, though the musicians may not attempt to surpass one another, and the melody is most songlike – indeed, it is hardly surprising that Brahms used the second theme of the first movement again in the song 'Wie Melodien zieht es mir' Op.105 No.1, dating from the same period. The second movement is quite Schubertian in one respect: Brahms combines sonata form and rondo form. He also combines two very characteristic textures: a dignified melody accompanied by solemn full chords, and a melody with a popular air accompanied by highly complex, academic music. What precisely must prevail in this second texture is a matter for the musicians. Brahms's friend, the critic Hanslick, imagined 'the delicate tranquillity of a romantic summer evening' upon hearing this sonata.

The Third Violin Sonata in D minor Op.108 of 1886–88 is the most dramatic of the three and the only one to be cast in a minor key as well as four movements. Brahms also treats his musical material much more concisely here, with all movements based on Classical examples: the first is in sonata form; the second takes the form of an adagio; the third a scherzo; and in the fast final movement the instruments compete with one another more emphatically. In the breadth of the work we hear an energetic and generally late-Romantic composition; in terms of detail, however, it is full of modernisms.

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DEBUSSY, RAVEL & FRANCK Violin Sonatas

Shortly after the first performance of his sonata for violin and piano on 5 May 1917, **Claude Debussy** wrote gloomily to a friend that it might be of some "documentary interest" as an example of what "a sick man can do in time of war", an analysis which starkly encapsulates the circumstances of its composition. He was in great pain from the cancer that would kill him the following year, in acute financial difficulty and had suffered terribly from the shortages, particularly of coal, during the winter of 1916-7. He had begun work on a sonata for "piano and violin" (as he originally termed it) the previous spring, the third in a projected series of six chamber compositions, the first two (for cello and piano and flute, viola and harp) having appeared in 1915. As it turned out, he did not live to write the other three, and this sonata proved to be his final work. The war had aroused fiercely patriotic sentiments in Debussy which found an outlet both in nationalistic, not to say, chauvinistic compositions and at the other end of the spectrum, these chamber sonatas in which, as "Claude Debussy, musicien français" he looked back to "old French style", evoking the spirit of Rameau and Couperin whom he greatly admired.

While the previous two sonatas embraced the Franckian cyclical technique, in which the movements are linked by thematic recollection, this one employs it sparingly, almost perfunctorily – the main theme from the opening movement recurring only once at the beginning of last, the central movement being musically independent. Despite this, Debussy considered the work as an integral whole and refused to encore the middle movement separately at what was to be his final public appearance in September 1917. The first movement opens with hushed piano chords and a tentative improvisatory violin line, settling into G minor before gaining momentum in a more lively E

major middle section. The central movement, *Intermède* (Debussy chose archaic names for several of the late sonata movements) shares the marking *fantasque et léger* with the cello sonata and its jaunty rhythms recall the *Golliwogg's cakewalk* and *General Lavine* (Prelude II.6). He had immense difficulty with what he described as the “terrible finale”, rejecting the first version as an “awkward neighbour” to the previous two and working through four subsequent versions before ending up with “a simple idea which turns back on itself like a snake biting its own tail” and which “by one of those very human contradictions is full of happiness and uproar”.

Maurice Ravel began contemplating a violin sonata for his friend Hélène Jourdan-Morhange after her performance of his *Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré* in late 1922. This was to become his second sonata for violin and piano after a previously unpublished single movement work in A minor, composed in 1898 for his fellow student George Enescu, appeared in 1975. However he made little progress, taking up and abandoning the work several times over the next few years and a scheduled premiere in April 1924 with the Hungarian violinist Jelly d'Arányi was cancelled, d'Arányi performing the hastily written *Tzigane* instead (Jourdan-Morhange had by then ceased performing after rheumatism affected her hands but she continued to advise on technical aspects of the work and was its eventual dedicatee). It was only finally completed under pressure from Ravel's publisher Durand who wished to include it in a concert on May 30 1927. Ravel only just made the deadline, arriving at the apartment of Enescu, who was to repeat the role he had performed almost thirty years before, on the day of the performance, the “ink still drying” on the manuscript according to Enescu's pupil, the eleven-year-old Yehudi Menuhin. Ravel and Enescu went through the work twice – the second time with Enescu playing from memory – and the performance that evening was a great success.

Ravel was interested in exploring what he considered the essential incompatibility of the two instruments and wrote for them accordingly, occasionally subverting their usual roles by giving the piano the initial lyrical statement and making the violin pound out the rhythmic figures in the second and third movements. The pastoral mood of the first was, according to Ravel, an expression of his nostalgic feelings for France, which he had just left on a trip to England, uniting a “large lyrical idea with.... a more concrete idea of the French countryside in its most every day nature, which is to say villages, farms chickens” – their bucolic clucking first heard in the piano under the violin's opening statement of the theme. The syncopated rhythms of the second movement, *Blues* (which may actually have been written first) continues Ravel's love affair with jazz, and many detect within it echoes of Gershwin and Jelly Roll Morton, although as Ravel said, this was “stylized jazz, more French than American”. The violin's banjo-like strumming across all four strings and swooping glissandi were not however to Enescu's taste and he apparently detested this movement! Finding a suitable finale troubled Ravel as much as it had Debussy and his pupil Manuel Rosenthal witnessed the destruction of a version which Ravel liked very much but which did not fit the sonata, Ravel ruefully admitting that its replacement was “not so good but a good finale.” The frantic *perpetuum mobile*, which recycles material for the previous movements, continues his fascination with the machine-like ostinati of the *Bolero* and *la Valse* with the violin bearing the brunt of the furious onslaught, playing for 180 consecutive bars.

Towards the end of his life **César Franck** returned to the composition of chamber music, a genre which he had ignored for decades during which he concentrated on large scale orchestral, organ and choral works. The *Sonata in A Major* for violin and piano of 1886 is a marvellous example of this late rediscovery of the small scale, albeit in somewhat monumental form, its four movements being an example of a “tetra-logical effort” that Debussy deliberately avoided in his own

sonata. In 1858 Franck had promised to write a sonata for Liszt's daughter Cosima, possibly intended as a wedding present after her marriage to Hans von Bulow the previous year. Cosima however made no mention of ever receiving it, and if Franck had actually begun work, there are no surviving drafts or sketches to show whether he recycled any material in the later work. This was also intended as a wedding present for his compatriot Eugène Ysaÿe who married on 28 September 1886. Franck, unable to attend in person, sent his friend Charles Bordes with the manuscript which was presented to Ysaÿe at the reception. He insisted on playing it immediately accompanied by Bordes' sister-in-law Marie-Léontine Bordes-Pène who had travelled with him. Fortunately she had been shown the piece in advance by Franck and so did not have to sight read the prodigiously difficult piano part. She and Ysaÿe also gave the first public performance in the Museum of Modern Painting in Brussels, on the afternoon of 16 December. The work appeared late in the programme and by the time they had finished the first movement darkness was falling. The museum director however refused to allow any artificial lighting in the room, and so the musicians continued in the increasing gloom, playing from memory as it became impossible to read the music.

Vincent d'Indy, Franck's devoted pupil and acolyte, referred to this sonata, with some exaggeration, as "the first and purest model of the cyclical use of themes in sonata form" and although the concept of thematic recurrence and transformation had been explored by Beethoven and Schubert and fully developed by Liszt, Franck was certainly among the first to adopt it in his early chamber music and it was to become a signature characteristic of his later works. The principal theme constructed from rising and then falling thirds dominates and permeates the entire work. The first movement (originally intended to be slow but eventually marked *Allegretto* after Franck approved Ysaÿe's faster interpretation) is in modified sonata form, its yearning mood giving way to the passionate outburst of the

following *Allegro* which the piano takes on a more virtuosic role without dominating the violin which comes to the fore in the contemplative central section. The *Recitativo Fantasia* surveys the material of the previous movements and introduces a new theme which is to play an important role in the finale which follows without a break, a canonic rondo ending in a hectic coda.

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TCHAIKOVSKY & RACHMANINOFF Piano Trios

Tchaikovsky's negative sentiments towards the piano trio were clearly set out in a letter of October 1880 to his patron, Nadezhda von Meck, in response to her enthusiastic praise for one composed by her resident pianist – a young Frenchman called Claude Debussy (a piece long thought lost but rediscovered in 1985). In rejecting her hint that he should write something similar, Tchaikovsky elaborated on his antipathy to the format, not only on principle – the characteristics of violin, cello and piano being in his view inherently incompatible – but for the purely subjective reason that their combination would be "pure torment" for him (notwithstanding the passages for exactly those instruments in the second movement of the recently completed Second Piano Concerto). While conceding that other composers, notably Beethoven Mendelssohn and Schumann, had produced excellent examples, he could not be tempted in that direction. And that seemed to be that.

The sudden death in Paris of Nikolai Rubinstein on March 23rd 1881 seems to have been the catalyst for an abrupt change of mind. Although their relationship had always been prickly – Rubinstein had famously damned the First Piano Concerto as, among other things, badly written and vulgar – it was based on solid friendship and mutual respect and Tchaikovsky was devastated by the news. He did not however embark on the work which he was to dedicate to "the memory of a great artist" immediately: it was only in mid-December

that he wrote from Rome to Mme von Meck indicating that he was thinking of experimenting with the form he had previously dismissed so comprehensively. The elegiac nature of the passages in which piano, violin and cello played together in the Second Concerto, dedicated to Rubinstein but which he never lived to play, may have encouraged him to attempt a full scale work using these same forces and, although quite different in detail, the thematic contours of the relevant parts of two works are not dissimilar. After initially finding composition hard going, Tchaikovsky warmed to the task and the trio was completed by mid-January 1882, in time to be sent to Russia for private performance on the anniversary of Rubinstein's death. He was aware of potential flaws as result of his "excessive haste", and insisted that before the premiere, the performers Taneyev, Hřímalý and Fitzenhagen should play it through to members of his musical circle so everyone present could provide constructive feedback. After hearing the work himself in April he made several changes in detail and structure, including some large scale ad libitum cuts, and this revised version received its first performance in October 1882.

Its unconventional format – a sonata-form movement followed by an extended theme and variations – takes as its model Beethoven's final sonata Op111. The monumental first movement is built around two main themes – the first, based on a falling five note figure, is stated by each instrument in succession, the second (*allegro giusto*) is introduced by the piano in double forte octave chords, and the thematic material undergoes sequential elaboration rather than conventional development. The recapitulation, preceded by a transitional passage for solo violin, is at a much slower tempo (Tchaikovsky expressly instructs the players to follow all his markings "extremely closely") which has the effect of applying a brake to the movement's seemingly inexorable momentum and in the coda, unison violin and cello repeat phrases from the main theme obsessively over the piano's fragmentary figures. The emotional intensity of the first movement is dispelled by the lighter mood of the

second and there are some who find this disparity unsatisfactory. Although Tchaikovsky dismissed the suggestion that the variations represented different facets of Rubinstein's life, he admitted privately to some [auto]biographical associations derived from "memories" of their shared experiences, including visiting an amusement park and attending a ball and the charmingly lopsided theme is apparently based on a folk melody he had heard in Rubinstein's company. Loosely related to the work's opening motif, the theme is recognisably elaborated in the first four variations but loses its shape in the fifth with its tinkling music box effect. There is a change of theme (and key) in the waltz of the much longer sixth variation, but the original is restored in the gruff seventh and is then given a lengthy fugal treatment – perhaps embodying Rubinstein's roles as a teacher and theorist, in the eighth (which Tchaikovsky indicated could be omitted). An *andante flebile*, prefiguring the mood of the coda, is followed by a sprightly mazurka. When revising the work, Tchaikovsky introduced a break between the tenth variation and the sonata form *Variatione finale* (with its modified theme and new key) dividing the movement into two distinct parts. He also authorised a substantial cut after the statement of the theme (which is adopted in this performance) taking the music directly to the recapitulation and considerably shortening this section (although at the expense of its formal structure). It ends in massive double forte restatement of the principal theme of the first movement, violin and cello once more in unison over surging piano before fading away in the bleak coda to the accompaniment of spare *pianissimo* piano chords.

Tchaikovsky died in October 1893 almost exactly eleven years after the first performance of the revised version and on the same day Rachmaninoff began work on a *Trio élégiaque* in D minor in his memory. This was not however his first attempt at this format. At his first major public concert in Moscow in late January the previous year, he had performed a single movement elegiac trio in G minor, together with cellist Anatoly Brandukov and violinist David Krein. According to

the dates on the score, it had been composed rapidly a few days before the concert, but it was probably written much earlier and revised specifically for that performance. It has no known commemorative associations and was perhaps intended as a stylistic exercise paying homage to the celebrated trio by the then living Tchaikovsky. This is demonstrated most clearly in its first theme which is closely related to main theme of the earlier work and the ending where the *alla marcia funebre* mirrors its coda. Episodically constructed, it is a less assured work than the supposedly earlier First Piano Concerto (suggesting that it in fact predates it) and once its more substantial and identically titled successor appeared, it fell into obscurity, remaining without an opus number and unpublished until 1947.

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CHOPIN, DE FALLA, DEBUSSY & BRITTEN Music for Cello & Piano

Mellowest and probably one of the best suited of instruments for the Romantic repertoire, the cello is similar to the baritone voice of singers. The violoncello, to give it its full title, is the third instrument in the violin family, ranging in pitch after the violin and the viola and above the double bass. Taking over from the former range of viols, the violin family emerged during the sixteenth century and had come to prominence by the late seventeenth century. The cello soon became part of the group of players in the baroque Trio Sonatas of the time and then came to prominence as a solo instrument in the works of Boccherini and his contemporaries as well as the great cello suites of J.S. Bach. Although neglected by Mozart, Haydn composed successful cello concertos and Beethoven added cello sonatas to the repertoire. But, it is with the Romantic repertoire that the song-like qualities as well as the virtuoso aspects of the instrument come into their own and the cello was to become a favourite solo instrument for many of the

composers of the mid to late nineteenth as well as the twentieth centuries.

Of the twentieth century's Sonatas for cello and piano, the works of Debussy and Britten manage to retain the lyricism of their predecessors and combine this with a new and innovative language for the new century. Debussy was born in 1862 and although seen as something of a radical by his peers and teachers, he was able to win the prestigious Prix de Rome in 1884 which gave him the opportunity to study in the Italian capital. Like Saint-Saëns, he was much influenced by the words and music of Wagner but also saw a need to break away from Wagner's influence. He was equally influenced by the paintings of the French Impressionists and by the music of Russia and Spain. That Debussy considered Wagner as something of an end of an era is reflected in his opera *Pelleas and Melisande*, itself something of a dead end in operatic style, albeit a particularly impressive one. His debt to the Impressionists can be found in works such as the seamless Prelude to the *Afternoon of a Faun* of 1894 and the Whistler like triptych of orchestral *Nocturnes* of 1900.

The Cello Sonata is Debussy's only work for this combination and is a companion to the Violin Sonata. In the field of his chamber music, both Sonatas are somewhat overshadowed by the justifiably popular String Quartet but all the elements of Debussy's style are present here. The work is in three movements, each bearing a specific title – Prologue, Serenade and Finale. Elements of Spanish rhythms, jaunty melody, strange halting tonalities and a lengthy ruminative aspect reflecting the scenic portraits of the opera *Pelleas*, alternate throughout balancing the elements of mystery and openness so typical of the composer.

Benjamin Britten was born in Lowestoft in 1913 and was to become the most prolific and successful of the new School of English composers that emerged after the second World War. It was Britten, in fact, who set off the renaissance of Opera in England with the premiere of his *Peter Grimes* in 1945, an opera that has remained

firmly in the repertoire of the world's major companies and become something of a British national opera. Although he concentrated on the operatic form and widened the scope of the form in Britain, creating chamber operas as well as full scale operas and short dramatic Parables, he also wrote works in most forms.

His unique position in music at the time gave him access to many of the great performers of the day particularly his companion, the tenor Peter Pears and the Russian virtuoso cellist Mstislav Rostropovich.

It was for Rostropovich that Britten wrote his Cello Symphony towards the end of his career and the cello Sonata of 1961. Begun at Christmas the previous year, the Sonata was sent to the eager Rostropovich, at home in Moscow, in February 1961 – the cellist immediately began to learn the piece and fell in love with it at once. Rostropovich's wife, the soprano Galina Vishnevskaya, described the work as “full of mood swings – expressive, low, grumbling, gay and carefree”. It is conceived in five sections with graphic and self-explanatory titles – Dialogo, Scherzo, Pizzicato, Elegia, Marcia and a final Moto Perpetuo.

The final works in this collection show a nationalist trend in music. Bartók was an avid collector of Hungarian folk music which he then recycled in his works whilst de Falla built on a tradition of Spanish folk songs, often creating his own melodies and Chopin, although associated so often with the French Salon, gave homage to his homeland in the Polonaise brilliant.

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LIGETI, KODÁLY & BARTÓK Hungarian Songs

When I was a child – back in the 1980s and 1990s – ‘I spent as much time as I could in the Northern Hungarian village of my ancestors with my dearest great-grandmother who was an enchanting storyteller. The village was next to a small town where Bartók did a significant folksong-collecting trip. Spending entire afternoons with my

grandmother, I felt at home not only in the world of the early 20th century but also in even earlier times as she often recalled family and village stories from the past – a world that was lived practically unaltered from the middle ages to the late 20th century in countless rural parts of Central and Eastern Europe, but by now almost fully lost. My almost 90-year-old Great-grandmother's stories featured ghosts, talking animals, spells, hexes, and charms, and as she gave such a candid account of them no one doubted how believable her stories were. But when as a modern city child, I was puzzled by these phenomena and once asked her whether they were real and why they don't exist anymore, she simply and self-evidently responded: “Then the world was so different: it was still full of ghosts, spells, and charms, but you know, my little son, we don't have them anymore...”.

This is the world the three greatest 20th-century Hungarian composers, featured on this recording, lead us back to. In their own rather different ways, they were able to subtly capture the touching mystery and the candour of it. But back in the 1900s and 1910s, what the two young, introverted lower-middle-class men raised in various Hungarian small-towns, friends and musical allies **Zoltán Kodály** and **Bela Bartók**, searched for in their twenties and thirties in the Hungarian rural countryside, was no mystery. Rather, it was novelty and freedom – freedom from the artificiality of the rapidly modernising urban milieu and freedom from the overwhelming German influence in music. What they found in remote villages, immediately enchanted and stunned them: a musical culture oft-times rooted in an ancient, almost inconceivably distant past. Before redefining and recreating Hungarian art music by rooting it, on one hand, in the Western art music tradition – from Palestrina through Bach and Beethoven to Debussy – and, on the other, what they found in the countryside, they desired to share their treasured findings with the audience of urban concert podiums. Only one year and a half after their first meeting in Budapest in early 1905, Bartók and Kodály were eager to jointly

publish their first settings of Hungarian folk songs. In their foreword to the volume *Magyar népdalok* (Hungarian Folk Songs), they declare their goal thus: "...to get the general public to know and appreciate folk songs". Then they explain that "[i]t is necessary to select the best ones and bring them closer to the audience with some kind of musical arrangement. [The folk song] needs the clothes when we bring them from the fields to the city. But in urban dress, it is shy and anxious. You have to tailor the robe to it so that it doesn't choke its soul. Whether we arrange it for choir or piano, the accompaniment should only try to replace the lost field and village". Later, Bartók also emphasised a noteworthy compositional question: "It is of the greatest importance that the musical qualities of the setting should be derived from the musical qualities of the melody, from such characteristics as are contained in it openly or covertly, so that melody and all additions create the impression of complete unity".¹

The *Ten Hungarian Folk Songs* from 1906 (BB 43), Bartók's earliest and still quite rudimentary but imaginative and very sensitive folk-song arrangements were collected by the 25-year-old himself mostly in three regions of the Hungarian countryside: near Budapest, Bekescsaba, and the lake Balaton - the latter, where Klara Wurtz's father was born. This set, from which we can listen to four arrangements on this album, has never been offered by Bartók to be published. The full set was printed only in 2002 by Bartók's second son, Peter, though a first recording has already been made in Budapest in 1968. The same is true of the *Five Hungarian Folk Songs* (BB 97). Bartók modernised the arrangement of five items from the 1906 *Magyar népdalok* for a His Master's Voice recording in 1928, where he accompanied three famous Hungarian singers, recording besides these five songs Kodály's arrangements from his monumental collection of folk-song settings of stunning originality, the *Magyar népzene* (Hungarian Folk Music) series, from which you can listen to four on the present album. Denijs Dille, a Belgian priest and Bartók

scholar, the first head of the Budapest Bartók Archives, complemented in the late 1960s the manuscript of the sketches for the new harmonisations of the five early Bartók settings by what he heard on the 1928 recording. In turn, the peasant songs featured in Bartók's *Eight Hungarian Folk Songs* (BB 47) were founded by the young musician as early as 1907 in Transylvania (then part of Hungary), and while the arrangements of the first five songs are nearly contemporary with BB 43, the last three were composed ten years later, in 1917.

Having collected peasant music from regions of the Hungarian Kingdom where significant Romanian and Slovak minorities lived, Bartók immediately became intrigued by the peculiarities - and from his point of view, musical freshness - of both nations' songs and instrumental dances. Indeed, he turned out to be one of the founders of Slovak and Romanian ethnomusicology. His reverence to the folklore of the Slovaks can be felt in the five arrangements of the *Falun* (Village Scenes) series (BB 87), composed in 1924 and based on folk songs from the Zolyom (in Slovakian: Zvolenska) region of what was then Upper Hungary (now Slovakia) he collected in 1917 from village women. These arrangements of bursting energy, enchantingly deep emotionality and transcendence also bear testimony to Bartók's discovery of Stravinsky's music he was galvanised by in the early 1920s. The texts are sung by Katalin Karolyi in Hungarian here, not in their original Slovak-language version.

Before leaving Hungary for Austria and West Germany after the fall of the 1956 revolution, **György Ligeti** (1923-2006) not only collected folk music in his native Transylvania (one of the Hungarian lands of greatest historical and cultural importance, most of which became part of Romania during Ligeti's youth, between 1920 and 1940) but also worked for the Institute for Folklore in Bucharest and Kolozsvár (which became again part of Romania after WW2 as Cluj) in the late 1940s. Thus, in his twenties and thirties, he followed the footsteps of

his idols, Bartók and Kodaly. Kodaly then became his protege when he moved from Kolozsvár/Cluj to Budapest to study and then to teach at the Liszt Academy of Music in 1950, after a few extremely challenging and adventurous war years. A considerable part of his early compositions features Transylvanian Hungarian and Romanian peasant-song and peasant-dance settings, alongside invented (actually, mimicked) folk-like music. But he also followed Kodaly – who was eager to turn to Hungarian poetry from earlier centuries in his songs. In the last months of 1952, Ligeti set to music five poems by Janos Arany, a leading figure of 19th-century Hungarian poetry. Both text and music are deeply rooted in Hungarian folk songs; indeed, most of Ligeti’s melodies, or parts thereof, could be actual folk songs, just like Arany’s texts from almost a century earlier could be folk-song texts. The last piece is an exception, being a daring musical setting of Arany’s 1868 Hungarian translation of Robert Burns’ humorous song *The Deil’s Awa Wi’ Th’ Exciseman* (1792), where we hear an obvious reference to the open fifths of the devil’s instrument – and this also reminds us of the Mephisto Waltz No.1 by Arany’s most famous contemporary Hungarian musician, Franz Liszt. The other set of short songs, recorded here, presents a Mozartian genius of Hungarian poetry, Sandor Weores (1913–1989), one of the leading 20th-century Hungarian poets, whose works Ligeti often set to music, once even in his late period (the *Síppal, doobby, nádihegedűvel* [With Pipes, Drums, Fiddles] was written for Katalin Karolyi in 2000). These songs’ more experimental musical setting unmistakably refers to Bartókian characters and textures (nevertheless giving prominence to Ligeti’s sense of the grotesque). The settings are farther from the folk idiom – just like the texts are, two of which come from a celebrated Weores collection of “songs, epigrams, rhythm-experiments, sketches, fragments”, the Rag-carpet. Ligeti composed the three songs during his Liszt Academy studies with composer and renowned teacher of multiple generations, Ferenc Farkas (1905–2000), who also taught him earlier, at the Conservatoire in Kolozsvár. Ligeti himself remembered

that “*The Three Weöres Songs (Három Weöres-dal)* from my first year of studies (1946) mark the beginning of a compositional development which was to be abruptly broken off two years later by the establishment of the Communist dictatorship. Before the faithful year 1948 I was a typical young leftist intellectual: anti-Nazi, opposed to the conservative Hungarian right, a believer in the Socialist Utopia”.²
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¹ “On the Significance of Folk Music,” in Bela Bartók, *Essays*, ed. Benjamin Suchoff (London: Faber & Faber, 1976), 342.

² See György Ligeti *Edition*, Vol. 4: Vocal Works, Sony Classical SK 62311, CD booklet, 9–10.

MOZART Piano Concertos

Mozart is not the inventor of the piano concerto, but he did bestow upon the genre the prestige it still has. Before Mozart several composers, especially Joseph Haydn and the sons of Johann Sebastian Bach, adored the genre for which no laws existed yet and tried to experiment with almost every aspect: the relation between orchestra and soloist, the role of harmonic and motivic development and instrumentation, among other things. This is not to say that Mozart’s main contribution is the codification of the concerto. When he began to compose, some patterns were indeed more or less generally accepted and Mozart knew these patterns and used them to a certain extent. But he also demonstrated that these standardized forms give the composer an enormous freedom in the handling of many aspects.

More or less common in Mozart’s days were the following elements. The first movement has a fast tempo and a long introduction for orchestra entirely in the main key of the concerto and with the two most important themes of the first movement. Follows a long section for piano and orchestra with the same motives in the same order but developing to the dominant key (the exposition), a small section for

orchestra, leading towards an often long and more dialogue-like relation between soloist and orchestra (development), and a return of the themes of the exposition but now beginning and ending in the central key (recapitulation). The second, slow movement, often in a different key, has no standard form. The third, fast movement reiterates the central key and often has the form of a rondo.

Mozart was not a completely mature composer right from the start. Only at the age of twenty did he discover his real nature: as an opera composer. From that year on, all the pieces in every genre, no matter how veiled, show his sense of drama, his appetite for dialogue and the wish to combine rhythmic energy with melodic beauty. To surprise within the conventions was for him just as crucial as, when he thought so necessary, to violate the standards. His Piano Concerto K271 (1777), the first piano concerto written after the decisive discovery, is a revolutionary piece. It opens not with a conventional long orchestral introduction, but with a short dialogue between orchestra and soloist. Not unusual was the cadenza just before the end of the first movement - and in this case we have a cadenza by Mozart. The second movement has the hallmark of an instrumental recitative and contains a short cadenza. Apparently Mozart loved the concerto, since he wrote several cadenzas for this movement, which doesn't need to prevent the soloist to improvise his or her own cadenza, as was the habit in Mozart's time. The third movement is one of the longest final movements and also one of the most complex. It has a rondo form, but the central section is entirely unexpected: a different genre (a minuet) in a different key and a different tempo. It lacks a cadenza, but even without that the demands for the soloist are enormous. Madame Jeunehomme, for whom Mozart allegedly wrote this concerto, must have been an outstanding pianist.

The chance and necessity to explore further the territory of the concerto came in 1781, when Mozart moved to Vienna. He had broken with his employer and decided to live as a free artist (a rarity in those days). In order to make a living, Mozart started to organize concerts

destined for the new class of the rich bourgeoisie who had enough money to devote to the arts. Mozart gave subscription concerts on which he was composer (of music in many genres), performer, improviser, and, above all, entertainer. For this new class he composed most of his piano concertos. Again he played with the conventions and with the musical knowledge of his listeners and performers. About the first concertos in this series he wrote to his father: 'They are halfway between too difficult and too easy - they are pleasant for the ear, of course without becoming empty - of course only the experts will have satisfaction, and the non-experts will be happy too without knowing why.' Mozart always knew his quality and always liked to tease others.

The concerto K467 (1785) is one of the most majestic. Mozart chose to give the orchestral part an almost symphonic grandeur and make the piano part more virtuosic than he had ever done before. The development section is not based on the main themes of the exposition, but on subsidiary material. Mozart was a master of architecture and perfectly able to distinguish between materials of different importance. The second movement sounds like a precursor of romantic music, especially because of the long, beautiful melodies and the accompaniment in the strings. This movement got famous around 1970 when it was used for the film *Elvira Madigan*, which is a love story located in the 19th century. The second movement is very similar to opera aria's in which the singers (often women) confess their love and in which a conventional framework and down to earth approach is heavily intensified by a romantic longing for sensual beauty in the melodies. In fact, some of Mozart's contemporaries thought of him as romantic and the movie demonstrates to which extent the structures of 19th-century music, especially of early Italian opera, are derived from classical standards. After the subtle complexities of the slow movement the final is more conventional and strongly resembles the sonata form of the first movement. To build a piece of more than 400 bars on a phrase no longer than two bars was a

stunt Mozart couldn't and didn't want to miss. Within this form Mozart demonstrated he could easily write a concerto with the dramatic force of opera.

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RACHMANINOFF & SCHUMANN Piano Concertos

With the second Piano Concerto in C-Minor, Op. 18, **Rachmaninoff** had a sweeping success. After the disastrous premiere of his First Symphony in 1897 Rachmaninoff fell into a deep depression and was unable to go on composing for three years. Only daily consultation with doctor Nicolai Dahl cured him so he could continue his composing: with the second Piano Concerto. However, he had not parted totally with the old self-doubts: "I have just played through the first movement of my concerto, and have realized that the transition from the first theme to the second is not good, and that this way the first theme is no more than an introduction; when the second theme starts, no one would believe it to be the second theme. Everybody would think that it is the beginning of the concerto.

The whole movement is a failure and from this moment on dreadful for me. I am simply desperate", he wrote just after the completion of the composition, to his friend Nikita Morosow. Only after the great success of the concerto's premiere on October 27th, 1901, was the artist's mind reassured. Until today, this concerto is one of Rachmaninoff's most famous works.

The themes are rooted in Russian folk music and help creating the concerto's melancholy, passionate mood. Moreover, the similar structure of the themes give motivic unity to the whole piece. Introduced by piano chords reminiscent of bells, it is played in unison by the rich string-ensemble, accompanied by filling piano-figures. The side movement is first played by the piano, the theme being strongly linked to the second theme of the final movement with its

characteristic syncopation in the second bar. In the development, a new rhythmic figure is imperceptibly introduced in the low strings, setting off the climax. By way of this rhythmic characterization, the main theme is transformed into a majestic march.

The second movement is based on an expressive theme with chromatic steps, first heard in the solo flute. After the vivid middle part, a dense figure, taken from the main theme and played as a dialogue between piano and wood instruments, leads to the cadence. Compared to the preceding movements, the final movement is artistically more elaborate and brought to life by distinctively contrasting themes. A slow tempo distinguishes the side movement from the rhythmic main movement, whose theme becomes melodically interesting only in the fugue of the development. The theme of the side movement leads to the highly effective finale, after the cadence, and thus reveals its real potential of expression.

Schumann's only full length Piano Concerto began life as a one movement monothematic Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra (1841) It was put aside until 1845 when the composer tinkered with the original version and then added two more movements - an Intermezzo (Andantino grazioso), and a Rondo (Allegro vivace). The reasons for the expansion were apparently twofold: It can be surmised that Clara had anxiously hoped for a full-fledged bravura vehicle from her new husband (they had been married the previous year); and, furthermore, publishers were not, to say the least, enthused with the idea of issuing a one movement work. In any event, the complete reworked concerto received its first public hearing in December 1845, with Clara again the soloist; the conductor was Ferdinand Hiller.

In its familiar version, the orchestra fires the opening salvo with a low E and the piano jumps in with an impressive volley of fully voiced chords (interestingly, the original Fantasy had the soloist preceding the orchestra's E-which may well have complicated problems of ensemble - and, from my recollection of only a single hearing of the

first draft at a concert with the late Malcolm Frager presiding, there were also a few differences in the C major section and a few extra bars in the cadenza).

As noted, the Allegro affettuoso first movement takes the shape of a monothematic sonata form. The plaintive oboe theme, immediately taken up by the piano, begins with the notes C, B natural, A, A (which some familiar with Schumann's fondness for spelling out musical anagrams will recognize Clara's presence - C, H, (i) A, (r) A is her name in its Italian form (she is likewise commemorated in the eleventh section of *Carnaval*, Op. 9). The same idea passes through various mutations as the movement progresses: first in C major; against a backdrop of rising solo figurations against a clarinet solo; then transformed into a gently lyrical A flat major passage; and then a fervent and turbulent G major section (*passionato*) before settling peacefully in to the recapitulation. A resourceful cadenza in the conventional place is alertly followed by a 2/4 Allegro molto coda based on yet another transformation of the Chiarina idea. The wistful Intermezzo has very little to do with the preceding movement, but is notable for its gracious repose - and particularly for an expansive central Trio with a luscious cello that effusively embraces the piano's answering figurations.

A few transitional bars allude to the first movement once again and propels an exhilarating Finale whose syncopated second subject deceptively suggests a slower 3/2 metre than the actual 3/4 (Hiller, the conductor, is said to have been nonplussed at the first performance). Although certain sceptics complained of a deficiency of bravura in 1845 (a moot conjecture), the concerto eventually garnered universal approval. Schumann's widow Clara championed it all her life, and the distinguished English critic, Sir Donald Francis Tovey, memorably characterized the composition as “recklessly pretty”. The orchestration calls for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, strings and the solo piano.

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BARTÓK & RAVEL Piano Concertos

Béla Bartók (1881–1945) is a composer with a remarkable musical development. Although his Third Piano Concerto is among his final compositions, it makes sense to describe the stages of his career, since all of them left their mark on this concerto. He began his career in the tradition of the late-Romantic concertos and orchestral works and was a great admirer of Beethoven, Liszt and Strauss. Like so many composers of his day, he also was a great performer (in his case pianist) who knew the realities of concert life and the possibilities of each instrument inside out. In 1905 his fellow countryman Zoltán Kodály brought him into contact with the national folk music.

Initially Bartók forgot his classical instinct, especially after he became enchanted by the non-classical music of Claude Debussy. But after a few years his classical habits hit back. Again he composed works in classical genres, witnessing his sonatas, string quartets and concertos and succeeded to integrate a sense of classical form with the language of expressionism. After 1930 the expressionism ceded to a more Apollonian tone of expression, especially after 1940 when he left Europe for the US.

The Third Concerto, like almost all the pieces he wrote in America, shows Bartók at his most serene and the writing for the piano is much less violent and incisive than in the First and Second Concertos. Another reason for this difference may be the fact that Bartók composed it as a birthday present for his wife, a former pupil, who was a good pianist, but not as virtuosic as he was.

The second movement is a beautiful blending of the choral-like style of Bach, one of Bartók's favourites, and the sounds from nature, especially birds. The influence of folk music is still present (it never left Bartók), but it is not in melodies or easy rhythms, but in gestures.

The taken elements are made abstract in a new style. Their most obvious presence is in the third movement, especially in the spiky rhythmic and melodic accents. It combines the energy of folk music with the exuberant serenity Bartók demonstrated in his final works.

When he started this composition, in 1944, he was already ill, and the composer died in the summer of 1945, when he had almost finished the concerto. After his death his pupil Tibor Serly could, with the help of the composer's instructions, complete the orchestration of the final bars. The premiere took place in 1946 and the work had and immediate success. The Western musical world in the 1950s still balked at modernism in music, and cherished this concerto as one of few pieces by Bartók outside this style. Since then, fortunately, many of his other pieces have found their way to a general audience.

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937) is the composer of a relatively small oeuvre. One of the reasons for this is his determination to write only one piece of the same kind – if he wrote more than one within a genre, the compositions are very different. This is true for both his operas, both his violin sonatas, his many songs and pieces for piano solo and his concertos. He composed his two piano concertos around 1930. The Concerto for the left hand was commissioned by the pianist Paul Wittgenstein, who had lost his right arm during World War I. The mood is gloomy, the piano writing highly demanding and the structure apparently very unclassical.

The contrast with the Concerto in G is striking. Ravel initially wrote it for himself as a soloist, but when he realized the piano part was beyond his ability he dedicated it to Marguerite Long, who gave the premiere and made the first recording. Ravel described the piece as a *divertissement* and declared Mozart and Saint-Saëns as his main sources of inspiration; he even acknowledged that Mozart's Clarinet Quintet had left its mark on the slow movement. On hearing the first bars of the long opening solo, the listener may expect a beautiful

waltz, but gradually the waltz is overloaded with remarkable accents in phrasing and harmony giving this concerto a typically French flavour and elegance.

Ravel has sometimes been accused of being a composer who only wrote refined scores with a great sense for magic and sensuality and who was not primarily interested in great human emotions. This reproach (often directed towards French general in general) is not true, but leads towards an important feature of the music of Ravel (and of French music in general): emotions are often only touched at and for that reason much stronger felt than when explicitly presented. In the central movement, even those antipathetic to Ravel would have to admit that here his great sensibility is at the service to a strong expression, even when it is presented implicitly.

Far more explicit is the abundant joy and playfulness of the outer movements, the influence of Saint-Saëns to the fore in the apparent lack of deep emotions and the blending of beautiful melodies and virtuosic accompaniment in the piano.

The outer movements also demonstrate Ravel's admiration for jazz. He was a great lover of certain kinds of non-French music, especially when he was able to give it his own signature. The final movement is the most swinging and energetic music Ravel ever wrote and the final bars are the perfect mix of joy hiding strong feelings, and saying much with only a few laconic gestures. What these two concertos have in common is to be found within their harmony, sometimes their writing for piano and their sense of classical proportions, even when the forms don't obey the rules of classical forms as described in textbooks. Tradition and renewal are in Ravel's music always in balance.

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