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A MASTER'S PIANO RECITAL  
AND PROGRAM NOTES

by

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B. A., University of Dayton, 1975

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A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

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Department of Music

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## PREFACE

Acknowledgements are due to Doctor Robert Edwards for his advice, assistance, and guidance in the preparation of this program and of the program notes, and to Doctor Chappell White for his critical reading and helpful suggestions concerning this report.

GRADUATE STUDENT RECITAL No. 101

SEASON 1976-1977

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

presents

## LAWRENCE BOMMARITO, Pianist

B.A., UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON, 1975

Thursday, March 24, 1977

All Faiths Chapel

8:00 p.m.

## A MASTER'S RECITAL

presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Master of Music

## PROGRAM

SONATA OP. 53, IN C MAJOR ("WALDSTEIN") *Ludwig van Beethoven*  
Allegro con brio (1770-1827)  
Adagio molto; Allegro moderato

NOCTURNE OP. 15, NO. 2, IN F SHARP MAJOR . . . *Frederic Chopin*  
(1810-1849)

ETUDE OP. 10, NO. 10, IN A FLAT MAJOR

BALLADE OP. 23, IN G MINOR

PIANO SONATA (1960) . . . . . *Donald Keats*  
Comfortably flowing (born 1929)  
Fast and precise  
Slow, in a free style  
Very fast and with vigor

The "Waldstein" Sonata, composed in 1804 by Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), is a product of its time and a forerunner of the future as well. All of Europe had been in the grip of revolution and war; Napoleon's conquests began, and the Holy Roman Empire was ended. And Romanticism, the new artistic fervor of the budding nineteenth century, soon came to the fore. In the piano sonatas of Beethoven's so-called "second creative period" (1802-1816) an attempt is made by the composer to create works of vaster dimensions. Opus 53 in C Major reflects this basic conception. "It is the perfect example of the composer's 'middle period' by reason of its self-confidently vigorous, triumphant attitude, the bold grandeur of its design and its well balanced mastery."<sup>1</sup>

Although the piano sonatas are distributed over Beethoven's career as a composer, they are not distributed evenly. That is to say that there is a progressive decline in quantity over the years. If the "easy" sonatas are excluded, a tabulation shows that thirteen sonatas were written up to 1800, five in the single year 1801-1802, only ten between 1802 and 1815, five between 1817 and 1823, and none thereafter in the remaining four years of his life. "This distribution doubtless has something to do with Beethoven's employment of the piano sonatas as a sort of 'proving ground'; namely, we find in the piano sonatas, especially those composed after 1801, considerable variety in the forms, procedures, and types employed by Beethoven, so much so that this variety becomes a main feature of these works taken as a whole."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Hugo Leichtentritt in The Beethoven Companion, ed. Thos. K. Scherman and Louis Biancolli (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1972), p. 747.

<sup>2</sup>Frank Kirby, A Short History of Keyboard Music (New York: Free Press, 1966), p. 209.

The date of composition of the "Waldstein" Sonata is close to the beginning of Beethoven's most productive decade. As George Marek points out in Beethoven: Biography of a Genius, an astonishingly large number of Beethoven's most famous creations were composed in a relatively short time. From 1804 to 1810, the list is a succession of successes. In those seven incredibly productive years he created

OPUS	PIECE	YEAR
53	Waldstein	1804
54	F Major Piano Sonata	1804
55	Eroica Symphony	1804
72	Fidelio	1805
57	Appassionata Sonata	1806
61	Violin Concerto	1806
58	Piano Concerto No. 4	1806
59	3 Rasoumovsky Quartets	1806
72b	Overture, Leonore No. 3	1806
60	Symphony 4	1807
62	Coriolan Overture	1807
67	Fifth Symphony	1807
68	Pastoral Symphony	1808
70	2 Piano Trios (D and E <sup>b</sup> )	1808
81a	Les Adieu Sonata	1809
73	Emperor Concerto	1809
84	Incidental Music to Egmont	1809
95	Quartetto Serioso--F Major	1810

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The dedicatee of the work was Count Ferdinand Waldstein, a close friend who had helped Beethoven during much of his life, having given him the much-needed gift of a piano in the composer's earlier years. The "Waldstein" Sonata has just two movements: an Allegro con brio, then a final Rondo marked Allegretto moderato. The rondo, however, is prefaced by a brief Introduzione: Adagio molto that assumes the position of a central slow movement even though it is only an introduction.

Among the more than 7500 pages of sketches and rough drafts that have come down to us, the only known sketches for the "Waldstein" Sonata are contained in the important "Eroica" sketchbook. Noteworthy is the

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<sup>3</sup>George R. Marek, Beethoven: Biography of a Genius (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1969), p.373.

fact that sketches are included for a middle movement to this "sonata grande". These sketches are correctly placed between work on the first and last movements, and consist entirely of ideas for the piece which later became known as the "Andante Favori" WoO 57. Beethoven later withdrew this middle movement and replaced it by the present short "Introduzione" to the Rondo. "The change of movements was made in the manuscript which still exists, as is clearly shown by the different ink used for the Introduzione."<sup>4</sup>

In the "Waldstein" Sonata Beethoven's compositional processes appear with a heightened element of virtuosity to produce a work of great effectiveness. Like the roughly contemporaneous Fifth Symphony and Triple Concerto, the piece is one conceived in basic terms, especially from the standpoint of thematic material. Indeed, Charles Rosen points out that "the use of the simplest elements of the tonal system as themes lay at the heart of Beethoven's personal style from the beginning."<sup>5</sup> Beethoven's creative impulses were more often than not completely encompassed in tiny fragments and rhythmic mottos. And in many ways, the noble stature of the sonata is made all the more prominent by this very severity and frugality of its thematic constituents. In fact, Heinrich Schenker's analysis of the first movement of the "Waldstein" reduces it to a C Major triad. "Beethoven established the root of his chord in the tremolo opening theme; he then moves to its third (the second subject is in the mediant E Major rather than the conventional dominant key of G) and finally--at the end of the turbulent working out

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<sup>4</sup>Hans Schmidt, Beethoven Sonatas, Op. 53 and Op. 101, Emil Gilels, piano (Deutsche Grammophon 2530 253).

<sup>5</sup>Charles Rosen, The Classical Style (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1972), p. 389.



--to its fifth."<sup>6</sup> Yet, paradoxically, the sparseness of thematic material appears within a formal structure which is larger overall than any of the twenty previous solo piano sonatas composed to this time. Donald Grout states the case cogently: "(it's) formal order has, as it were, been expanded from within by the resistless force of Beethoven's musical imagination expressed in themes of elemental power that require a structure of hitherto unknown tension and concentration to support their natural development and completion."<sup>7</sup> In effect, this expansion of structure was a direct result of the composer's conscious manipulation of harmonic rhythm and figural elements.

Idiomatic pianistic figuration comes to the fore in this work, as can be readily demonstrated by a cursory visual inspection of the score. Correspondingly, the harmonic rhythm moves inversely as the speed of the figuration, so that a piece such as this with much figuration implies a generally slow harmonic motion. Hence, the structure needed to complete a harmonic progression is consequently larger. And that is precisely the case with this piece. In the accompanying musical example on the following page this process is easily seen. With the exception of measures 136 and 139 the harmonic motion is quite slow, but the figural element is quite prominent through this section.

The principal theme of the first movement is merely a rapidly repeated chord in subdued dynamics, and then, upon repetition, the chord is simply broken up; here, the rhythmic motion is very agitated and the harmonic motion very slow. While the second theme is a chordal one (mm.

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<sup>6</sup>Harris Goldsmith, Beethoven Sonatas 19, 20, and 21, Bruce Hungerford, piano (Vanguard VSD 71186).

<sup>7</sup>Donald J. Grout, A History of Western Music (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1972), p. 527.

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(130)



(135)



(140)



(145)



38-41) which makes an effective contrast with the original theme, the figurational element is again prominent in the closing theme which consists almost entirely of arpeggiated figures (mm. 50-60). Near the end of the development section (m. 141; refer to previous page) another, perhaps more vivid, example of this occurs in the retransition to the recapitulation. "This is a large crescendo in which all is figuration, the motion is very fast (sixteenth notes for the most part), and again we note the static quality in the harmonic rhythm. The whole passage is merely a dominant triad; there is an ostinato-like repeated scale-wise descending motion through a fourth in the bass, ascending scale fragments rising with constantly increasing loudness until the culmination is reached, and an abrupt descending scale run that ushers in the recapitulation."<sup>8</sup> This manipulation is not limited to the first movement exclusively, but the two instances cited here sufficiently make the case.

Because of this manipulation of figurational elements, the composer is able to exert a psychological pull and effect upon the listener. This is achieved specifically by Beethoven's handling of the rhythmic figures to create a momentum and tension which permeates the work. The pulsating rhythms also help to give the piece its considerable energy and virtuosic character. As a case in point, we may consider the closing section of the exposition in the first movement (mm. 50 and following). The rhythmic motion for eight measures is in eighth note triplets, which changes to a sixteenth note figuration, increasing the motion and pointing toward the climax of the exposition. At measure 62, the left is given a driving eighth note rhythm (a three note pulse of the subdominant chord, followed by an eighth rest) which builds a tremendous amount of tension,

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<sup>8</sup>Kirby, p. 216.

and points even more strongly toward the inevitable cadence. The wait is made longer by Beethoven with the insertion through the next four measures of a cadential tonic chord in second inversion, and four more measures of the dominant seventh, culminating in a trill in the left hand over a sixteenth note figuration in the upper register of the keyboard. Finally, the tonic chord is presented, but only after the long and tension-filled buildup which precedes it, and which is effected primarily through consciously employed rhythmic devices.

There are, in addition, other stylistic features worthy of mention in this movement. The composer makes skillful use of the different registers of the keyboard throughout the movement to provide contrast (mm. 3-4), tension (mm. 147-155), and anticipation (mm. 71-72). The thematic material of all four main themes is related, as they all move in a step-wise fashion, and are all based on scale progressions. Specifically, a descending scale a fifth long is the basic fragment from which the other themes are fashioned. Charles Rosen states that the "Waldstein" establishes its themes in a generic order; that is, each theme appears to have been derived from another. "The descending fifth outlined in the fourth measure (itself an expanded echo of the third measure) produces the right hand of what will become the fourth or closing theme (mm. 71-76). It is only on paper, however, that we can identify this with the descending fifth outlined more slowly by the opening of the 'second group' (mm. 35-36): they are only distantly related, as the descent of the second theme is more directly present as an inversion of the rising motion of the first three measures of the movement."<sup>9</sup> Noteworthy also is the contrast between the first theme, conventional in character but treated in dramatic dialogue, and the calm and stately chordal struc-

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<sup>9</sup> Rosen, pp. 397-8.

ture of the second theme. Finally, the choice of key for the second theme just mentioned is unusual (the modulation is to the mediant key E Major, achieved through a secondary diminished triad of the dominant in measure 22), but is not unique in Beethoven's sonatas. This device of modulation by the diatonic third became a rather common stylistic feature of later nineteenth century composers.

Following the Allegro con brio first movement is an Adagio molto of only 27 measures, which is considered by many to be a full and complete middle movement, although the piece is actually an introduction to the subsequent Rondo. With the exception of the example in Op. 27, No. 1 in E<sup>b</sup>, the inclusion of a slow introduction which itself did not come to a definite ending, but which, without a break, led logically and directly into the finale, was a novel though entirely satisfactory experiment for the composer. "This was the same problem of organic growth and thematic connection that Beethoven was to solve so brilliantly in, for example, the first movement of the Fourth Symphony (Op. 60) and the Egmont Overture (Op. 84)."<sup>10</sup> Other piano works by the composer (G Major Concerto, Op. 81a) have similar short "movements" which serve as psychological points of repose for the listener. Structurally speaking, the introduction is designed in a small ternary form, with a delayed cadence of considerable length at measure 20. The interval of a minor second is the main motive throughout, and it occurs primarily in the left hand in the lower register. The entire first phrase, for instance, is based on a chromatic descent from F to C. Harmonically, the section begins in an unstable fashion: what is heard as the dominant seventh of B<sup>b</sup> (F-A-C-E<sup>b</sup>) is actually an augmented sixth chord (F-A-C-D#) leading to a major triad

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<sup>10</sup>Lionel Salter, Beethoven Sonatas, Op. 53 and Op. 57, Walter Gieseking, piano (Angel 35024).

built on E. The aural illusion is repeated at various transpositions throughout the introduction. The piece is written in the subdominant key of F Major, but the harmonic rhythm is relatively fast for such a short and slow movement. Overall, it is a highly compressed movement, but nonetheless affecting for its concentrated brevity. The Introduction plays a significant role in the overall scheme of the sonata. Its existence not only depends upon but gives added meaning to the Rondo which follows.

The composer returns to C Major for the concluding Rondo marked Allegretto moderato. The return is made all the more satisfying by the harmonic ambiguity of the preceeding introduction, and the feeling of tranquility achieved in the Finale is in large part due to the subtle preparation of that same introduction. The central rondo theme which is heard throughout the movement is a brief and simple one of a strongly diatonic character. It is heard in the upper register of the keyboard over a sixteenth note arpeggiation at the outset and at each return of the theme. The intervening episodic material is presented variously in the relative minor, the parallel minor, and, finally, in the tonic major, though the last episode modulates to the dominant in preparation for the coda. This large movement is full of idiomatic figuration of all kinds --rapid arpeggiations, octave passages, and long internal trills, and the composer does not hesitate to introduce long digressions of purely keyboard effect into the fabric of the movement (mm. 343-376). With the exception of Beethoven's concertos, it is rather unusual to find a rondo structure in a large piece such as this. It is conceivable, though speculative, to suggest that the composer might have had in mind a piece which would offer some relief from the relative severity of the preceed-

ing material. However, the conception of the rondo is not that of a frivolous virtuoso conclusion with little musical weight. On the contrary, the main theme presents an intensely lyric figure in a somewhat gentler and quieter style than that which typifies the opening movement. To be sure, the episodic material provides suitable contrast to the main theme, as has been pointed out, and the movement, like most other rondo-finales, is somewhat less weighty in character than that which precedes it. Yet the movement as a whole provides a musically convincing statement of considerably more substance than might initially be suspected.



More than any other leading composer, Frederic François Chopin (1810-1849) devoted himself to the piano to the virtual exclusion of all other media of music. He composed no symphonies, operas, or oratorios; chamber music is represented by a handful of works; it was piano music, and chiefly the new genres connected with the character piece, to which his attention was directed. "The character piece was closely bound up with the Romantic ideal of the art work as the subjective emotional expression of its composer and that such a view gave rise to a glorification of inspiration as the source of all art; the extent of which this quality can be captured by the artist is the measure of the quality of his composition."<sup>11</sup>

The nocturne is quite typical of the character piece in general. Chopin borrowed the idea of the nocturne from the Irish pianist and composer John Field (1782-1837), who had a great reputation in Europe. Field published between 1815 and 1834 some twenty (the exact number is debated) works called "nocturnes" that are in three-part form with lyrical melodies, often greatly embellished and accompanied by standard types of broken-chord figuration patterns in the bass. Generally, a uniform character is maintained throughout the composition. The nocturne in Chopin's hands, however, was something of a greater musical stature. Chopin clearly transcended Field's musical contributions in this form. While it is true that a certain resemblance exists in the works of both composers in terms of theme, accompaniment, and decorative detail, ... "the compositions of Chopin are of incomparably greater range and inspiration; he succeeded in endowing this song form with a singing, vibrating life of its own."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Kirby, p. 275.

<sup>12</sup>E.W. Schallenberg, Frederic Chopin (Stockholm: Continental Book Co., 1951), p. 112.



In general terms, the Chopin nocturne yields a simple lyrical melody over a simple patterned accompaniment, the melody often ornamented with grace notes, coloratura runs, and turns; generally the melody is conceived in even periods of balanced phrases organized in accordance with a simple repetitive scheme. In contrast with Field's preservation of a single character throughout, the nocturnes of Chopin often depart from this by the introduction of a contrasting middle section using new themes, different styles of writing, and a different key. "Frequently, the middle section presents an impassioned climax that then subsides as the first part is recapitulated."<sup>13</sup>

Much has been made of the supposed influence of the Italian operatic vocal idiom on the melodic writing in Chopin's works (the nocturnes are often cited as prime examples of this influence). The ornamentation would especially seem to confirm this. While there certainly are similarities between the two styles, Field's earlier work of this type, and the fact that Chopin composed his nocturnes of Opus 9 even while he was in Warsaw, before he became acquainted with Bellini, tend to raise objections with the claim of a deliberately adopted vocal idiom.

Chopin's Nocturne in F# Major, Op. 15, No. 2 is among the best known and most frequently played of all Chopin's works. This piece and the other nocturne in the set (no. 1 in F Major) were composed in 1830-1831, in Chopin's twenty-first year. They were first published in 1833 and were dedicated to Ferdinand Hiller.

The chief subject is a two-measure melody presented in the right hand over a rather typical arpeggiated chordal pattern in the left hand. The main theme is repeated throughout the first section in various orna-

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<sup>13</sup>Kirby, p. 282.

mented guises while the accompaniment continues a steady eighth-note pulse, lending stability to the florid melodic writing. The harmonic writing throughout the first section is basically diatonic, though occasional use is made of the chromatic chord vocabulary. The relative harmonic stability evinced in this first section, coupled with the leisurely tempo indication and conservative dynamic markings, give a definite feeling of tenderness and repose. This is contrasted effectively with the second section which is taken at double the pace. This suddenly increased movement here is made all the more noticeable by the inclusion of highly novel and original figures in quintuplets beginning sotto voce with both pedals, and climaxing with a brief but powerful crescendo over a dominant pedal which subsequently dies away to be followed by a recurrence of the first theme. Noteworthy in the contrasting section is the composer's ability to draw a great deal of material from the melodic constituents, which consist in this case of the first six diatonic scale degrees in a four bar conjunct melody.

The recapitulation of the first theme shows the consummate skill in handling material which the composer had already mastered even at this young age. There is a delayed cadence of considerable length which preceeds the final return to tonic, and which makes that return all the more satisfying for the listener. Lennox Berkeley states that, "there is much more here than the solution of a technical problem, for though the device of prolonging a final cadence is a common one, it rarely adds such intensity, and one feels that what started in the composer's mind as a mere technical expedient became a matter of great emotional significance."<sup>14</sup> A quiet but intense coda closes the work.

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<sup>14</sup>Lennox Berkeley, "Nocturnes, Berceuse, Barcarolle," in The Chopin Companion, ed. Alan Walker (London: Barrie & Rockliff, 1966), p. 175.

The etudes were another form cultivated by Chopin, and his essays in this form are among the finest in all the repertoire. While not strictly character pieces in the sense that the nocturnes are, the etude nevertheless evinces and expounds upon a single musical-emotional idea, and in this context they can be thought of as virtuoso character pieces.

The golden age of the etude or study piece was initiated in 1817 with the Gradus ad Parnassum by Muzio Clementi. Shortly thereafter came the etudes by Clementi's disciple J.B. Cramer and the prodigious collections of Karl Czerny, some of which appeared at the time Chopin began composing his own works. These earlier etudes were usually based on classical late eighteenth-century techniques--a certain type of figuration, octave playing, arpeggios, scale passages, and similar technical hurdles. Worthwhile as those works were, they remained for the most part studies in technique. Chopin's etudes, on the other hand, go beyond this. While they are unquestionably technical studies, they are also musical statements of great magnitude, and present problems dealing with artistry and interpretation. "The difference appears in Chopin's combining of the technical problem with a much more sophisticated harmonic and formal intensity than was the case in Czerny's or even Cramer's studies. Czerny's D Minor Study, from Op. 740, or Cramer's B<sup>b</sup> Minor Study deal adequately, and indeed on their own terms beautifully, with the problem that is set. Chopin goes much further in combining the problem with balancing and contrasting structural tensions in a way which had hitherto been regarded as the province of larger, weightier works. Each of his studies has the impact of a short sonata movement."<sup>15</sup>

The etudes generally embodied a particular technical problem in a

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<sup>15</sup>John Ogdon, "The Romantic Tradition," in Keyboard Music, ed. Denis Matthews (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972), p. 218.

single motive or pattern which was persistently worked out all through the piece. And this basing of the whole composition on one motive, which has always been a trait of the etude solved for Chopin the real problem of miniature form: contrast and variety within a small unity. Most of the etudes are cast in the simple, slightly modified A B A form, with or without coda. The middle section is usually marked not by new material but by contrast of key, so that, when the theme is restated in its original key, one has the feeling of a recapitulation even though other variations often take place. Most of the etudes, then, are of a unified character throughout.

All of the etudes were written between 1829 and 1839. Chopin lived for another ten years, but he wrote no further works designed to illustrate particular aspects of piano technique. The earlier studies (Opus 10, Nos. 8, 9, 10, and 11) were written in 1829. The rest of the set were written over the next three years; often, they were written in pairs--a study in a major key followed by another in the relative minor.

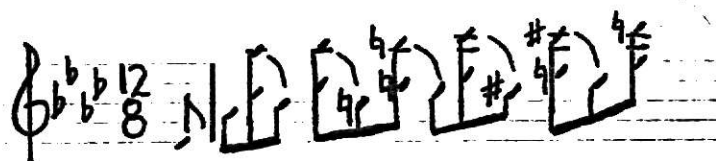
The twelve Etudes, Opus 10, (dedicated "A son ami," Franz Liszt), composed between his eighteenth and twenty-third years and published in 1833, are excellent examples of Chopin's extraordinarily early maturity. "They are amongst the most original and mature works ever written by a very young man; one can think of few parallels apart from the 'Midsummer's Night Dream' Overture and some of the earliest Schubert songs."<sup>16</sup> This set and its successor, the Twelve Etudes, Opus 25, dedicated to Marie d'Agoult and published in 1837, along with three Nouvelles Etudes, composed in 1839 for the Moscheles-Fetis Methode des methodes and published in 1840, represent Chopin's complete output in this genre.

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<sup>16</sup>Robert Collet, "Studies, Preludes, and Impromptus," in Walker, p. 128.

The Study in A<sup>b</sup> Major, Op. 10, No. 10 is fairly standard in its structural conception, and follows very closely the outline given above. The work is basically a study in cross-rhythms. Metrically the 12/8 time signature sets up an ambiguous rhythmic scheme, i.e., each measure can be articulated as two groups of six beats, three groups of four, four groups of three, or six groups of two. The composer, cognizant of this fact, switches the metrical pulse constantly throughout the work. The piece is a veritable mobilum perpetuum in which the listener is always kept somewhat off balance, owing to the contrasted accentuation of the melodic line. The piece has a spirited feeling of grace and spontaneity, similar in style to a caprice.

A symmetrical arch-like chromatic melody is stated in the first four measures of the work in the right hand, and is coupled with the distinctive figure which is present throughout the composition: a melodic note followed by two simultaneous chord tones which are a sixth apart.



The entire first section of the piece consists of the statement of this theme followed by three restatements of it, each given its own metrical pulse and articulation. The accompaniment in the left hand consists once again of arpeggiated chordal passages over an A<sup>b</sup> pedal which is repeated every six beats. The harmonic progression outlined by the left hand figure is a standard (if not an imaginative) I-I-V-I-V-I-V<sup>V</sup>-V-I.

Using an enharmonic spelling of A<sup>b</sup> (G#) as a pivot pitch, Chopin suddenly modulates into a new section and to a foreign key (E Major) after sixteen measures, preserving the figuration given at the outset of the piece. And, after a brief return to the home key, and a cadence to D<sup>b</sup> Major, the same process is repeated, the D<sup>b</sup> becoming C#, and the piece

moving into A Major. The previous section in E Major is transposed note for note here. Following this, the piece quickly moves to a climax, as the right hand figurations are expanded to two octaves, and the left hand eighth note pattern is broken to allow a chordal passage over a dominant pedal. The forceful passage quickly subsides and leads to a leggiere section which employs bold harmonic movement to wind its way back to A<sup>b</sup> Major for a recapitulation of the opening material.

The Ballade in G Minor, Op. 23, was composed by Chopin between the years of 1831-1835, and subsequently published in 1836. Chopin also composed three other works with this same title, the Ballade in F (Op. 38, composed 1838-39), Ballade in A<sup>b</sup> (Op. 47, composed 1840-41), and the Ballade in F Minor (Op. 52, composed 1842).

Though the four works are distinctive in their conception, they do not particularly resemble one another, and the works were clearly not conceived as an opus. Patterns which are discernible in other, more conventional formal structures are in these works considerably more difficult to observe.

It may be appropriate at this point to briefly examine the ballade's literary counterpart. The ballad as a literary genre may be described as a narrative of legendary or historical events. Frequently violence and the supernatural have some part in the unfolding of the plot; generally, the story has a tragic conclusion, and it is told in simple "popular" verse. This style of poetry enjoyed great favor in the late eighteenth century, and many European poets employed it, including Friedrich Schiller, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and, in particular, the Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz, whose narrative poems deal with legendary or

fantastic subjects. It has been noted by many historians that Chopin was well acquainted with Mickiewicz, who lived in Paris in exile and who had made a great reputation with his early ballads (1822). And Robert Schumann thought that Chopin was inspired by the poems of Mickiewicz when composing the Ballade in G Minor. "Such literary and pictorial associations, or even origins, were, of course, very much in vogue at the time. They were an almost essential feature of the Romantic climate which Schumann himself had done much to bring about."<sup>17</sup> Some writers have gone so far as to infer a connection between this Ballade and Mickiewicz's poem Konrad Valenrod, which describes battles between Lithuanian pagans and Christian knights. This theory appears to be tenuous at best, since Chopin never thought out his inspiration in specifically detailed relationships. As Frank Kirby states the case, "it must be emphasized that there is no evidence that any of Chopin's ballades correspond to particular literary works, whether by Mickiewicz or anyone else. It is simply that he envisioned a musical form that he saw as corresponding to the literary form of the ballad. Thus, any specific association of Chopin's ballades with poems of Mickiewicz has no basis."<sup>18</sup>

The musical form to which Kirby makes reference is of considerable interest, since the ballades do not fall into any specific structural molds. While it might be overstating the point to say that Chopin "invented" a new form with the ballades, the works nevertheless exhibit a novel (but compelling and satisfying) means to expand the dimensions of what is basically a character piece. One author, in assessing the structure of the G Minor Ballade, asserts that the composer has created

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<sup>17</sup>Alan Rawsthorne, "Ballades, Fantasy and Scherzos," in Walker, p. 49.

<sup>18</sup>Kirby, p. 278.



an "...altogether new and largely successful hybrid form, half lyrical and akin to the short pieces, half epic and related to the principle of sonata form--new and entirely individual form which contains some superficial features of the classical 'first movement' form but ignores most of its underlying principles."<sup>19</sup> Indeed, the sonata "Principle" is implicit in the G Minor Ballade, insofar as the piece concerns itself with two musical ideas, and the relation of these ideas to one another. But, in spite of some superficial resemblances, it would be misleading to consider the piece in this context. It would appear, then, that Chopin has composed the form of the piece simultaneously with the music of the piece. Form, after all, is to a great extent determined by the style of the music; they are inextricably connected. And the heroic and noble style of the musical ideas in the G Minor Ballade has dictated and brought about a freer type of form not bound by the usual conventions of sonata-allegro or any other form.

The underlying principle behind this work is the basic Classical concept of thematic contrast. It pervades the entire work throughout, and paradoxically, it helps to produce an overall effect of unity. For example, the subordinate theme of the ballade is first presented as a quiet and lyric one, but is soon restated in fiery and heroic terms. Chopin here is, in fact, very close to the idea of thematic transformation as exemplified in Schubert's Wanderer Fantasy or Liszt's monumental Sonata in B Minor, though Chopin's transformation relies heavily on ornamentation. Other examples of this principle of contrast will be made clear as the work is examined in detail.

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<sup>19</sup>Gerald Abraham, Chopin's Musical Style (London: Oxford University Press, 1939, reprinted 1941), p. 149.



A largo introduction of seven measures opens the piece. It is written in the Neapolitan key of the piece,  $A^b$ , and indicates by its somberness and severity that which is to come in the work. This short introduction closes with a suspended chord with a dissonant  $E^b$  in a middle voice (the subject of historical dispute), and leads directly to the first statement of the opening theme in the tonic key. An interlude follows at measure 36 which becomes increasingly agitato in character, and closes with a series of arpeggiated passages. The F major chord which follows sounds like a dominant tonality in preparation for the orthodox relative major key which would follow at this point in a textbook sonata example. But the chord is, instead, serving as a supertonic of the new key, and the modulation is to  $E^b$  major instead of  $B^b$ . The second theme which follows is quite lyric at this point, and contrasts well with the opening theme. Alan Rawsthorne points out that both themes consist basically of a dominant thirteenth resolving upon the tonic, and both proceed melodically from the mediant to the tonic pitch, so that, in fact, the themes are actually complimentary.<sup>20</sup> A restatement of the first theme in the remote key of A Minor over its dominant pedal leads to a grand and virtuosic reshaping of the second theme in the still more remote key of A Major. An animato transitional passage then follows (it hovers about the dominant of  $E^b$  minor from mm. 126-137), to be subsequently followed by an unexpectedly light scherzo full of ornamented scale passages, in an improvisatory style. At measure 166 the second theme is again restated, this time in the key of  $E^b$ , and in a style only somewhat less heroic than its previous setting. What follows is a drastically shortened version of the main theme, again in the tonic minor key,

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<sup>20</sup>Rawsthorne, p. 47.

and again, over a dominant pedal point, which gives way to a passionate passage followed by a large a powerful coda to end the work.

A number of observations are in order. The formal structure of the piece can be considered as a large arch form, in the following manner: Introduction--first subject--second subject--quasi-development (mm. 94-165)--second subject--first subject--coda. "The recapitulation immediately draws attention to a tonality awareness far beyond his years which became such a striking feature of his later work and which was to have a substantial and cumulative effect upon the history of tonality."<sup>21</sup> It is irregular in that the second theme returns before the first subject reappears following the development, and it is still in the contrasting key. Furthermore, the development section consists of variation and improvisation rather than true development in the classical sense. Such treatment is probably inevitable with such lyric themes, but the same structural function is fulfilled nonetheless.

Working essentially with only two lyric themes, the composer has gone about his task of expanding his material in a unique fashion. Chopin "develops" his themes in this work not in the sense the Beethoven, for example, develops his, but rather by ornamenting them. Specifically, cadential points are highly ornamented in the traditional operatic sense, and the clearly defined transitional passages are handled in much the same way.

Chopin's use of the coda in this work is very characteristic of his treatment of the section in other pieces. This coda has no thematic connection with the previous material, although the sensation of a "reprise" is present without the finality of a formal restatement. The coda in

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<sup>21</sup>Peter Gould, "Concertos and Sonatas," in Walker, p. 145.

this particular instance rounds off the main thematic material, provides a symmetrical (if unbalanced) complement to the opening introduction, and provides an unusually dramatic and violent concluding statement, reinforcing the composer's probable intention in this work: "the establishment of a large and difficult genre of the character piece taking its inspiration from the literary ballad, a kind of character piece that would be regarded as, in some way, the equivalent of the sonata."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Kirby, p. 281.

Donald Keats is a twentieth-century American composer who has made worthy contributions in nearly all performance media. Born on May 27, 1929 in New York City, he received his preliminary musical training in high school at the Manhattan School of the Arts. He subsequently took his Bachelor of Music degree at Yale, and continued his studies at Columbia University and at the University of Minnesota, where he earned his Master's degree and doctorate, respectively. During World War II he served in the United States Navy, where he was a Music Theory Instructor. In 1957, he became an Associate Professor of Music at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, and is presently teaching at the Lamont School of Music at the University of Denver. Keats has been a member of the American Society of Composers, Arrangers, and Publishers (ASCAP) since 1963.

Keats has studied under a number of major twentieth century musical figures, including Henry Cowell, Douglas Moore, Quincy Porter, and Paul Hindemith. His works have shown an eclectic approach to the problems of twentieth century composition, and among his most notable compositions are his First Symphony (Elegiac), two String Quartets, a song cycle, "The Naming of the Cats" for soprano with verses by Yates, Diptych for cello and piano, and the Piano Sonata. His works have had international performances in such diverse locations as Germany, France, England, Israel, and Australia. He has received numerous professional awards throughout his career, including a Fulbright Scholarship and a scholarship from the Rockefeller Foundation; in addition, he is one of a very few individuals who have received two Guggenheim fellowships. Keats was recently granted a commission from the Rockefeller Foundation for an American Bicentennial orchestral work.

The Piano Sonata, written in 1960 and published in 1971 by Boosey & Hawkes, has enjoyed numerous performances both here and abroad by noted performers since its composition. In 1976 the work had two major New York performances (in Tulley Hall, by Dickran Atamian, the Naumburg winner, and Town Hall, by Mark Wescott, a competitor in the Van Cliburn competition). The New York Times, in reviewing the piece very favorably, remarked how unusual it was to hear a contemporary piece twice (in non-esoteric concerts) in one New York season.

The sonata itself is a four-movement work written in a relatively sparse textural idiom but containing vital rhythmic movement throughout. It is a basically conservative work, confining itself for the most part to conventional compositional techniques in such factors as articulation (performance is completely on the keyboard, and not inside the instrument), notation (totally conventional throughout), and avoidance of any aleatory procedures in the work. The composer himself had these comments to make about each of the individual movements which comprise the piece:

Its first movement has two main thematic ideas which are presented in opposition, worked over, and then reconciled. Contrasts of tonal levels, and the use of three-tiered sound (high, middle, and low) exceeding the normal two-hand range mark this movement. Its mood is lyric.

The second movement is a sparse, driving but controlled scherzo; its middle section--its foil, meant to set the scherzo off (and in which BACH makes an appearance)--leads to a return, in intensified form, of the scherzo.

The third movement--the slow movement--is once again lyric; there is much use of trills, and some use of serial technique, freely treated.

The last movement is fast and driving, the writing at times even virtuoso in style. It is a sort of perpetual motion, meant to press forward and end (the movement, the Sonata) forcefully.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Donald Keats, letter to the author, 1977.

The composer also stressed the fact that his brevity in dealing with program notes underscores his contention that the music has to stand on its own.

While it is obviously dangerous and oftentimes misleading to attempt to classify a composer's musical style on the basis of a single composition, especially in an era where great divergence of styles is the rule rather than the exception, some stylistic elements of this piece seem to point to a neoclassic conception. In particular, the occasional use of contrapuntal techniques, the clarity of texture, and overall objectivity of the piece, coupled with its conventional structural layout tend to associate this work with the neoclassic procedures employed by a great many contemporary composers.

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A MASTER'S PIANO RECITAL  
AND PROGRAM NOTES

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

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The Master's Report is divided into two broad sections: the first is a tape recording of a graduate recital performed on 24 March 1977, and the second portion consists of detailed program notes for each of the works performed in the recital. The study includes a brief analysis of each of the works, a discussion of specific compositional techniques, a historical survey of each of the genres represented by Chopin, and in the case of Donald Keats, a biography of the composer.

The first section of the paper deals with the Piano Sonata, Op. 53 in C Major, by Ludwig van Beethoven. Specifically, the historical context in which this work was composed is described. A number of stylistic tendencies apparent in the work are then pointed out. And special consideration is given to the various compositional devices and figural elements employed by the composer in this work.

Next, three works by Frederic Chopin are discussed: the Nocturne, Op. 15, No. 2 in F# Major, Etude, Op. 10, No. 10 in A<sup>b</sup> Major, and the Ballade, Op. 23 in G Minor. A brief historical outline and explanation of each of these types of composition is included. In addition, analytical comments for each piece regarding thematic material, key relationships, and structural design are presented.

Finally, the third segment of the report consists of a discussion of a contemporary work, the Piano Sonata, composed in 1960 by the American Donald Keats. A biographical sketch of the composer is included, as well as a partial listing of the numerous performances which the work has received. The composer's personal comments regarding the piece are presented, and an attempt is made, on the basis of certain stylistic features, to accurately place the work into one of the compositional schools of the twentieth century.