



# SCHUBERT

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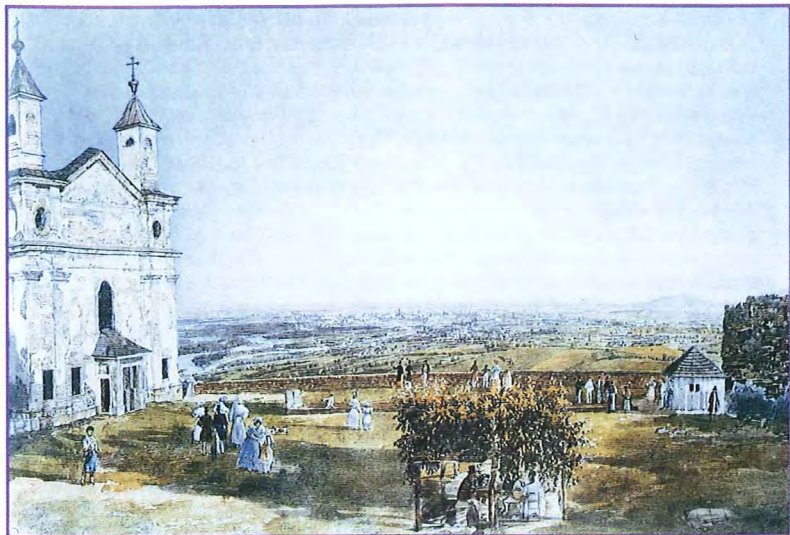
Sonatas (Sonatinas) for Violin and Piano

D. 384 • D. 385 • D. 408

Fantasy D. 934

Dong-Suk Kang, Violin

Pascal Devoyon, Piano



1990 Recording

Playing Time : 73'52"

## **Franz Schubert (1797 - 1828)**

**Sonata ("Sonatina") for Violin and Piano in D Major, D. 384**

**Sonata ("Sonatina") for Violin and Piano in A Minor, D. 385**

**Sonata ("Sonatina") for Violin and Piano in G Minor, D. 408**

**Fantasy for Violin and Piano in C Major, D. 934**

There are one or two small mysteries about the straightforward and unproblematic set of three sonatas for violin and piano that Schubert composed in the spring of 1816. First, are they properly sonatas or sonatinas? Although until quite lately they were always listed and printed as "sonatinas", this is no true mystery at all; Schubert never called them anything but "sonatas", but like so much of his music they did not reach printed form until several years after his death, when the firm of Anton Diabelli (whose name has been immortalized by the monumental set of variations composed by Beethoven on his trivial waltz theme) put them out as "sonatinas" in 1836 in order to entice amateurs who might have felt dubious about their technical skill. And for more than a hundred years sonatinas they remained. (Nevertheless, if we should chance to feel that Diabelli was in some way belittling the wonderful composer by his use of the diminutive, we should remind ourselves that he had also published, in 1821, the first two of Schubert's compositions to reach printed form: namely, the two songs, *Der Erlkönig*, which appeared as Opus 1, and *Gretchen am Spinnrade*, which was Opus 2.)

A more significant puzzle concerns the decidedly simple - at times, almost naïve - style of these three works; it is hard to realise that they are exact contemporaries of the Fourth Symphony, in C minor, which the composer himself named the "Tragic". We know that Schubert, in his veneration for Beethoven's genius, was strongly influenced by the older composer's example and to some extent by his style and manner of writing - at all events in his

instrumental music (for he can hardly have felt himself to be a disciple of anybody in the sphere of song). For example, in 1800 Beethoven had written his hugely successful Septet, to which, 24 years later when the opportunity arose, Schubert responded with an Octet that in all respects outstripped its evident model. By 1805, however, Beethoven had written and published nine of his ten Violin Sonatas; and the last of the series, the serenely beautiful and deeply original G major, Opus 96, though written a few years earlier, reached print in 1816 - the very year of Schubert's first three. Yet in these three works - and in their few successors - Schubert writes as though Beethoven did not exist; to all intents and purposes these are violin sonatas of the older, Mozartian type, with the violin still playing a somewhat subordinate role to that of the pianoforte.

This observation applies most to the first, D major, sonata, which for all its simple attractions makes a somewhat artless effect. In the two following sonatas, the A minor, D. 385 and the G minor, D. 408, the choice of the minor key seems to have more evidently stimulated the young composer's imagination: the A minor piece is especially strong and interesting in its material and structure.

The last two of the series of violin-and-piano pieces, the Rondeau brilliant in B minor, D. 895 and the Fantasy in C major, D. 934, belong to quite a different tradition, having been written in the last year of the composer's life for the young Czech violinist, Josef Slavík, who was described by Chopin as a second Paganini. The Fantasy is a long and elaborate composition in seven sections, the third of which is a theme and variations on a slightly modified form of the melody of the 1821 song, *Sei mir gegrüsst*. The song is popular, and its melody both voluptuous and striking; its inclusion seems to have lifted the whole composition on to quite another plane from that of its predecessors. The faint atmosphere of the schoolroom perceptible in the three early sonatas is here entirely dispelled; the general effect is warm, romantic, brilliant.

In the course of its seven movements, the Fantasy oscillates in a curious

way between C major (in which it begins and ends), A minor and major, and the softly glowing A flat major, in which key Schubert writes the variations on his song-theme. The piece as a whole has been criticised for containing "a good share of that virtuoso element with which, since Hummel and Moscheles had settled in Vienna, all piano composers in the capital were practically bound to identify themselves." Nevertheless, it seems to have fallen somewhat flat with its earliest audience. When it was first performed by Slavik and Karl Maria von Bocklet in January 1828, a Viennese critic wrote:

The Fantasy occupied rather too much of the time a Viennese is prepared to devote to pleasures of the mind. The hall emptied gradually, and the writer confesses that he too is unable to say anything about the conclusion of this piece of music.

"This must be almost the only occasion", drily comments the late Professor Westrup, "on which a music critic has admitted that he left before a piece was finished."

### **Dong-Suk Kang**

Hailed for his artistry, virtuosity and charismatic presence on stage, the Korean violinist Dong-Suk Kang enjoys an international career spanning performances with major orchestras, at festivals and in solo recital. He first came to the attention of the concert-going public when he won both the San Francisco Symphony Competition and the Merriweather Post Competition in Washington, D.C., and subsequently went on to win top prizes in several international competitions, among them the Montreal, the Carl Flesch in London and the Queen Elizabeth in Brussels.

## **Pascal Devoyon**

Since winning third prize in the Leeds International Piano Competition and the Silver Medal in the Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition in Moscow, Pascal Devoyon has developed his career by playing in Europe, the Far East and America. He is a regular visitor to Japan where he has given many recitals and he has also worked on both sides of the Atlantic appearing with, among others, the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Montreal Symphony Orchestra under Charles Dutoit.

## Franz Schubert (1797 - 1828)

Sonaten (Sonatinen) für Violine und Klavier D. 384, 385 und 408,

Fantasie D. 934

Franz Schubert ist der erste große Komponist, der das Lied in den Mittelpunkt seines Schaffens stellte - Hundertschaften vertonter Poesie bezeugen es. So griff er auch in seiner Instrumentalmusik häufig auf Einfälle seiner Liedkompositionen zurück - wie im berühmten Streichquartett "Der Tod und das Mädchen". Aber auch die Fantasie in C-Dur Deutsch-Verzeichnis 934 für Violine und Klavier von 1927 greift an ihrem Ende die Vertonung des Gedichtes "Sei mir gegrüßt" von Friedrich Rückert auf. Die Fantasie beginnt mit einem zarten Tremolo (italienisch: Zittern), aus dem sich ein zunächst recht unscheinbares Thema entwickelt. Das aber gewinnt durch drei ausgedehnte Variationen an Tiefe, bevor dann die scheinbar vierte Variation sich als das oben erwähnte Zitat entpuppt. Die Fantasie scheint auszuklingen, doch aus dem erneuten Tremolo entwächst ein kräftiges Geigenthema, und im Finale nehmen die Geigen an einer Stelle berückend schön noch einmal das Motiv auf bevor ein rascher Kehraus das Werk abschließt. Gegenüber der reizvollen Fantasie verblasen die deutlich früher (1816 und 1817) geschriebenen drei Sonaten D-Dur (D. 384), a-moll (D. 385) und g-moll (D. 408) etwas. Den Titel "Sonatinen" legte den Werken Antonio Diabelli bei, der sie erst lange nach Schuberts Tod, 1836 als Opus 137 veröffentlichte. Dennoch tragen auch die "kleinen Sonaten" schon einige Züge des Spätwerks. So wird im Kopfsatz von D. 384 der Hauptgedanke: ein schlichtes Dreiklangsmotiv und eine chromatische Figur sehr weitschweifig und phantasievoll abgewandelt, ohne daß das Thema nach den strengen Regeln etwa einer Beethoven-Sonate "entwickelt" wird. Schubert spielt eher mit Klangfarben, wie bei dem plötzlichen Lautstärkesprung im 33ten Takt oder den raschen Akkordwechselln kurz vor Schluß des ersten Satzes. Der zweite Satz mit einem knappen Mittelteil in Moll sowie der heitere, flotte Schlußsatz mit Anklängen an den barocken



Gigue-Tanzrhythmus wirken platter. Die beiden Moll-Sonaten stellen mit einem Menuett einen vierten Satz in ihre Reihen. In D. 385 erweist Schubert seinem - teilweisen - Vorbild Beethoven seine Referenz: Formal lehnt er sich an dessen Klaviersonate Opus 14 Nr. 1 von 1799 an; beim zweiten, dem wundervoll süßen Seitenthema erinnert der Rhythmus stark an Beethovens "Frühlings"-Sonate für Violine und Klavier. Das weiche Andante und das recht zarte Menuett strotzen nicht gerade vor kompositorischer Anstrengung und thematischer Arbeit, während das Finale bei aller Rausschmeißer-Vitalität doch einige geschickt eingebaute kompositorische Feinheiten zeigt. Recht machtvoll dank des punktierten Rhythmus kommt der Anfang des a-moll-Werks D. 408 auf den Hörer; während des Kopfsatzes und des Andante erlaubt sich Schubert eigenwillige harmonische Ausflüge. Deutlich schlichter gewirkt ist das sehr konventionelle Menuett, doch das schwungvolle Finale mit seinen "ungarischen" Anklängen versöhnt vollauf.

Hartmut Walter







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STEREO

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DDD

Playing  
Time :  
73'52"

Sonatas (Sonatinas) for Violin and Piano  
D. 384 • D. 385 • D. 408  
Fantasy D. 934

Dong-Suk Kang, Violin • Pascal Devoyon, Piano

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| <p><b>1</b> Fantasy for Violin and Piano<br/>in C Major, D. 934 (24:01)</p> <p>Sonata (Sonatina) for Violin<br/>and Piano in D Major, D. 384</p> <p><b>2</b> Allegro molto (4:08)</p> <p><b>3</b> Andante (4:12)</p> <p><b>4</b> Allegro vivace (4:01)</p> <p>Sonata (Sonatina) for Violin and<br/>Piano in A Minor, D. 385</p> <p><b>5</b> Allegro moderato (6:37)</p> <p><b>6</b> Andante (6:24)</p> | <p><b>7</b> Menuetto: Allegro (2:25)</p> <p><b>8</b> Allegro (4:56)</p> <p>Sonata (Sonatina) for Violin<br/>and Piano in G Minor, D. 408</p> <p><b>9</b> Allegro giusto (5:05)</p> <p><b>10</b> Andante (4:45)</p> <p><b>11</b> Menuetto (2:32)</p> <p><b>12</b> Allegro moderato (3:59)</p> |
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Recorded at Tonstudio van Geest in Heidelberg,  
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Producer: Günter Appenheimer  
Music Notes: Desmond Shawe-Taylor

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