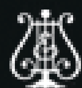
ARTUR SCHNABEL

COMPLETE WORKS FOR SOLO PIANO

JENNY LIN



STEINWAY & SONS

ARTUR SCHNABEL

1882 - 1951

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COMPLETE WORKS FOR SOLO PIANO

JENNY LIN

DISC 1

THREE FANTASY PIECES

(1898)

1 I. Diabolique (Capriccio) 3:21
2 II. Douce Tristesse (Rêverie) 5:17
3 III. Valse mignonne 2:44
(Kleiner Walzer/Little Waltz)

THREE PIECES, OP. 15

(1906)

4 I. Rhapsodie 6:52
5 II. Nachtbild 8:48
6 III. Walzer – i. Sehr lebhaft 0:43
7 III. Walzer – ii. Nicht zu rasch 1:42
8 III. Walzer – iii. Nicht rasch 1:22
9 III. Walzer – iv. Mit grösstem Schwung, sehr flottes Walzertempo 3:50

DANCE SUITE

(1920–1921)

10 I. Fox-trot (Begegnung) 3:11
11 II. Erste Rast (Werbung) 3:57
12 III. Walzer (Fühlung) 14:36
13 IV. Zweite Rast (Schwebung) 5:09
14 V. Auf Morgen (Bekräftigung) 4:43

Publishing Editions: Disc 1 Tracks 1-14: Peermusic III, Ltd.

Playing Time: 66:23

DISC 2

SONATA
(1923)

1	1st movement	2:47
2	2nd movement	3:34
3	3rd movement	3:25
4	4th movement	8:56
5	5th movement	10:21

PIECE IN SEVEN MOVEMENTS
(1936–1937)

6	I.	Moderato e semplice	1:01
7	II.	Vivace un poco resoluto &	3:44
	III.	Allegretto piacevole	
8	IV.	Allegretto agitato	9:09
9	V.	Vivacissimo	3:05
10	VI.	Adagio	8:30
11	VII.	Moderato e semplice	1:36

SEVEN PIANO PIECES
(1947)

12	I.	Largo	1:40
13	II.	Allegretto	0:54
14	III.	Andantino	1:54
15	IV.	Agitato	1:16
16	V.	Lento	2:32
17	VI.	Vivace	1:11
18	VII.	Epilogue (Comodo sereno)	2:39

JOSEF STRAUSS
FOUR WALTZES FROM OLD VIENNA
ARRANGED BY ARTUR SCHNABEL

19	I.	1:07
20	II.	1:36
21	III.	1:25
22	IV.	1:50

Publishing Editions: Disc 2 Tracks 1-18: Peermusic III, Ltd.

Playing Time: 74:22

THE MYSTERY

Artur Schnabel (April 17, 1882; Lipnik, Austria [now Moravia] – August 15, 1951; Axenstein, Switzerland) achieved world renown as a pianist who played Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert with penetrating vision, sympathy, spirituality, and unrivalled spontaneity (a spontaneity that was the result of long and meticulous planning).

Schnabel had composed music since his early youth, as had those pianists who flourished long before him. In fact virtually every performing pianist born before the early twentieth century was also a composer – at the very least a transcriber. His earliest published composition, a product of his early teen years, was composed with remarkable skill for one so young, exhibiting a Mozart-Chopin level of pure inborn talent.

As Schnabel matured, he began to realize that he could travel further along the road to musical perfection, and self-definition, as a composer rather than as a pianist. In fact, music for solo piano represents a relatively small part of his output, which includes a wide variety of chamber music including five string quartets, songs (mainly written for his wife, contralto Therese Behr-Schnabel), and three symphonies.

As Schnabel's power and fame as an interpreter grew, his own music slowly moved toward an idiom his public did not understand, methodically shedding itself of traditional diatonic harmony. This made him no different from other twentieth century composers who were blazing their own paths. But – and here is the "Mystery" – how could a musician who communed so closely with the spirits of Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert compose music that those very composers would have surely rejected as utter noise?

The real mystery is how anyone living in the mid-twentieth century could have seen as a mystery Artur Schnabel's tremendous musical breadth. How could they have been unable to accept that

Schnabel was a man of his time, just like Beethoven, whose own music, particularly his most mature, had received plenty of shockingly bad reviews? Schnabel's advanced compositions had called into question what was thought to be his sacred faith.

Schnabel did not compose so that others would be pleased with his music. Pure artist that he was, the process itself was the reward, not the dissemination or acceptance by the public of the results. He wrote to his wife, Therese Behr-Schnabel, concerning his acknowledged tendency to compose long movements:

Mühlheim, Feb 12, 1921 [...] *I'm working on the last third of the first movement of my quartet* [String Quartet no. 2]. *Why should I keep it short? For the others? I say as much as I wish to say and believe I have to say; and I think I'm sufficiently critical. Detours and digressions are only vices for those who (more or less voluntarily) are not free. Manuscript paper is the only place where I am completely free. My space. With me as the master. I decide where to expand or set boundaries. I alone reap the fruits. I can't help it if they seem stale, bitterly deformed, wilted, or parasitic like weeds. I don't take them to the market and don't expect anyone to eat them.* [...]

After Schnabel's wife wrote to her husband concerning what she judged to be a disastrous Berlin performance by Eduard Erdmann of Artur's *Dance Suite*, and its critical rejection, Schnabel replied:

New York, Feb 1, 1922 [...] *I don't "vie" for recognition, I want to compose, and I shall never, ever allow myself to be talked into believing that something is worthless if I alone derive pleasure from it, let alone of minor value because it makes "others" happy. People! Sheep! The reviews, which are incompetent but know everything better, entertained me. Oh, if only I had the opportunity to sit down in front of blank music paper again. My only freedom! A companion you can't disappoint.* – – [...]

Beethoven has been long vindicated, and so has Schnabel. We can now place his music in the context of history as a valuable and significant body of work, while our individual tastes remain, of course, unique and personal.

Schnabel's piano works conveniently represent the major stages of his composing life, and are written for the instrument whose possibilities he knew best. Pianist Jenny Lin's traversal of this music, composed between 1898 and 1947, affords a "view from the keyboard" of a strikingly unique composer, who operated at the very highest level of his art.

THREE FANTASY PIECES (1898)

The *Three Fantasy Pieces*, Artur Schnabel's first published work, was conceived when he was a sixteen year old piano student of Theodor Leschetizky, to whom the work is dedicated. Schnabel entered the composition in a contest arranged for his pupils by Leschetizky, who had sought thereby to broaden the musical horizons of his class, to expand their gaze beyond the necessary but constricted boundaries of the keyboard.

Schnabel had entered each of his *Three Fantasy Pieces* as separate works, and proceeded to win all three prizes, though he possessed the *bonhomie* to relinquish the second and third places to the runners-up.

When Schnabel visited Berlin in 1898, he brought along the manuscript of his prize-winning pieces to publisher Fritz Simrock, to whom Schnabel had been given a letter of introduction. Simrock agreed to publish them, but only after the pieces were given descriptive titles, which he conveniently invented himself. They were issued in 1900, after Schnabel had settled in that city.

I. *Diabolique (Capriccio)* There is nothing terribly infernal in this piece. Any deviltry may well be blamed on "diablotins" – mischievous, hyperactive imps. Young Schnabel exhibits a talent for

retaining the listeners' attention through clever, whimsical figuration.

During the slower Trio section the exhausted imps seem to lay down for a nap, while lulled in a sleepy triple meter. They awaken with a group yawn, retrieve their little pitchforks, and in the sprightly 2/4 of the opening, resume the merry frolicking. Yes, Herr Simrock knew what he was doing!

II. *Douce Tristesse (Rêverie)* The second piece might be described as "all-purpose salon angst," a style that filled the air from every direction at the turn of the century. Schnabel adds interest to the opening melody by extending phrases and altering the metric divisions, tiny seeds of momentous developments in his future as a composer.

The piece soon takes a turn toward the popular *pathétique* style in which his master Leschetizky composed. Schnabel balances an insistently repeated genre motif with a florid broken chord accompaniment taken straight from the "Salon Composer's Playbook." A middle section follows featuring meandering *faux bourdon*, a device Schnabel would again turn to in his later works. *Rêverie* is spun out in an arch form: ABCBA, another premonition of Schnabel's future tactics.

While revealing no new worlds, this is very suave writing for a sixteen year old boy.

III. *Valse Mignonne (Kleiner Walzer/Little Waltz)* By the time the final number begins to roll out we can say, "Yes, it sounds like early Schnabel". Overall, the *Valse Mignonne* is diverting, and proceeds effortlessly from the composer. The middle section is in a Viennese Waltz style, composed by one who had learned to love such music at close hand.

Artur Schnabel recalled his early composition in a 1945 lecture to music students at the University of Chicago. Schnabel recalled Simrock's insistence on colorful titles:

"I did not protest. After all, what's in a name? If you are interested, perhaps you can find these

pieces in some library or the basement of a music store. They would surely be more popular than most of the works I produced later on, for they have a certain similarity to one successful type of contemporary music."

THREE PIANO PIECES, OP.15 (1906)

Schnabel did not compose a substantial work for piano solo until almost eight years after his 1898 prize-winning set. That work was the *Three Piano Pieces*, Op.15, a significant advance in his craft as a composer. Op. 15 comprises three movements: *Rhapsody, Night Piece*, and a four part sequence of *Waltzes*. We can now sense the confidence of impending maturity as Schnabel introduces techniques that will grow and begin to crystallize with the passing years.

I. *Rhapsodie* *Rhapsodie* begins with a Brahmsian flavor in both the piano textures and the expansive melody. We hear a nobility of purpose, a proclamation, continued with a long, spun-out line showing the metric freedom already hinted at in his early *Rêverie*.

The *Rhapsodie* begins rather conventionally, but soon Schnabel introduces new effects (e.g. a whole tone scale in thirds), assuring us that he is not merely a Brahms imitator – far from it!

Schnabel arrives at a sharply defined new theme in a tight triple meter that provides the contrast he has shown in his music from the beginning. The section also features his favored *faux bourdon*. Schnabel never forgets his motivic material, always reinforcing it on every page of the *Rhapsodie* until the final cadence.

While he continues to apply techniques he used to advantage in the 1898 set, such as the ABA form, and his use of *faux bourdon*, we perceive that Schnabel is on a journey, and has not yet reached his destination. However there is an earnestness in this music, and we willingly come along for the ride.

II. *Nachtbild (Night Picture)* Schnabel's friend, composer Ernst Krenek, criticized *Nachtbild* on the grounds of "turgid sentimentality." Written in F sharp minor, the opening textures are thick, bleak, and Brahmsian, with a dash of Scriabin. The hopeless disquietude is eventually broken by improvisatory "wistful memories" in F sharp major. During this section, Krenek's observation may intrude on our concentration.

The piece ultimately sinks down quietly to the lowest F sharp on the piano – it's been a long night.

[Possibly the most remarkable aspect of *Nachtbild* is one that listeners would never suspect unless they examined the printed score. Here Schnabel begins to show his penchant for micromanagement of the performer. Only one single measure (m. 87) out of *Nachtbild's* 147 measures has no indication for dynamic change, though in that measure Schnabel does instruct "noch forte und singend" (still loud and singing) lest the player be momentarily tempted to rely on his own devices. 83 of the 147 measures have specific verbal indications regarding time, tempo, mood, pedal, or touch. Another hint of things to come.]

III. *Walzer (Waltzes)* These four waltzes are a delight. Cleverly written via a direct line from Schnabel's Vienna youth, they are positively life-affirming after the dark night that precedes them.

Each waltz features one or another of Schnabel's special touches, whether unexpected tonal effects, extended phrases, or unorthodox melodic leaps, as in the theme of number three. But Schnabel saves his best for last, number four, with its playful use of canonic imitation. Audience members will surely exit a performance of Schnabel's *Three Piano Pieces, Op. 15* with the melody of the final number reverberating in their heads.

DANCE SUITE (1920–21)

The *Dance Suite* was completed fifteen years after Artur Schnabel's previous work for piano, and marks the first piano work of his mature period, wherein Schnabel speaks completely in his own voice, but not yet in his "final" voice. Schnabel's composing life was very much a non-stop journey, whose progress may be detected even during the course of the *Dance Suite*. The dedication reads "*For Walter Kauffmann and Vera Schapira on the occasion of their wedding.*" Walter Kauffmann was a Schnabel student whose playing was particularly admired by Artur's wife, Therese.

The *Dance Suite* charts the course of the dedicatees' relationship.

I. Fox-trot (Encounter) The music opens with rhythmic double octaves desperately in search of a key to settle into, eventually reaching the dance floor in C major. After a pause to catch its breath, all is well. The elegant dancing begins, more tango than fox-trot, with a melody derived from the opening octave passage. Schnabel delights in short flights of harmonic fancy, somehow always making it back home to C major, giving the piece an irresistible freshness, derring-do, and polite good humor – a very fine balance between exuberance and control, as befits a first encounter.

II. First Pause (Wooing) *"Comfortable, snug and rather slow waltz tempo, the rapturous sentiment at first concealed behind the choice conversational chatter. Always very free and eloquent."*

Schnabel's introductory words read more like a scene setting in a play than a musical instruction. We can imagine this wonderfully descriptive music accompanying a silent film (from, say, 1920–21) of two wooers engrossed in "choice conversation," suppressing their excitement, unsure of their footing as they coyly, playfully, awkwardly get to know each other. Does the piece

not conclude with mutual surrender? A tender *Kuss*, highlighted on the movie screen in a circular frame that closes to black.

III. Waltz (Contact) A waltz of extravagant dimensions, this is the central movement of the *Dance Suite*, in which is recounted the most intense episode yet experienced by the pair. Seemingly disconnected waltz gestures spill out, one after the other. What will fling itself out next? And in what key will it appear?! The choice conversation has ended. The mood is no longer comfortable nor snug, for "contact" has been made – two human beings exult in their feelings for each other.

Everything has changed for them. They dance, they hop, they skip, they twirl... and they ponder the marvel that has happened to them, and what it means for their lives.

"But why," you might ask, "must it go on for 36 pages, fully half the length of the entire Suite?"

But have you never fallen in love?

IV. Second Pause (Floating) *"Relaxed, dreaming about dance and love"*

To clear the transition from exuberant terrestrial waltzing to floating through inner space, Schnabel indicates a thorough freshening of the palate with a John Cage-like indication after the double bar of the previous dance:

"Between this and the following piece a substantial pause (of about 30 to 40 seconds). In public performances – lest applause by clapping may begin - I recommend the tested device of holding, after the last (sounded) third, the right forearm aloft until the player is ready to begin the next piece."

Floating is the first piano piece Schnabel notated without bar lines, which contributes to its

unencumbered, atmospheric impression. The music seems to have been snipped free of gravity, with our two protagonists experiencing a new kind of contact, at once sensual and spiritual. Two becomes one.

The two hands of the pianist show unique identity and personality, each engaging in a free interplay with the other, guided by instinct and attraction. The left hand enters first, opening the interaction in a weightless quadruple piano, a dynamic which is constantly reiterated throughout the five pages of *Floating*, to avert a premature Earth landing.

The middle section features a chordal melody in the right hand, as the left plays a traditional Romantic widely-spaced accompaniment that appears to the eye as the work of a Henselt or Scriabin, but is nevertheless perceived as melody. This is music of wordless allusions and feelings. *Floating* demonstrates a significant leap forward by Artur Schnabel the composer.

V. *Towards Tomorrow (Affirmation)* *"Full of vitality and zest for life (never rough or raw)"*

The final dance is an exuberant, highly compressed rondo-like piece. This music hasn't a care in the world. The pair has made it through the first intensities and wonders, each has acclimated to the other, and are now prepared to live their lives together, wrapped in connubial contentment. The harmonies and gestures in *Affirmation* are advancing to new Schnabelian landscapes – atonal landscapes – while still largely built on diatonic references. It is the classical metric scheme that allows this music to sound so innocently jaunty, an effect Schnabel may have derived from his friend Arnold Schoenberg, whose strict twelve-tone music often went down more easily when it was wrapped in homespun rhythms.

The *Dance Suite's* dedicatory marriage was apparently the bride's second. Her first husband was the well-known writer on music Richard Specht. Unfortunately the union with Kauffmann was not to last: pianist Vera Schapira died in 1930, age 42. She made ten rolls for the Welte Company.

PIANO SONATA (1923)

"You will never be a pianist; you are a musician." (Theodor Leschetizky)

"Tell me, are you really the same Schnabel who wrote that horrible music I heard ten years ago in Venice?" (Arturo Toscanini)

The decade of the 1920's was a time of radical musical development throughout Europe, and Artur Schnabel was riding the wave. The early years of the decade were a time of particularly concentrated effort in composition for Artur Schnabel. He made the greatest strides toward forming his unique style via the medium of the string quartet, but turned again to the piano in the summer of 1923. After only one month's work Artur Schnabel composed five movements for piano solo. His friend Eduard Erdmann, who gave the work its premiere, suggested that Schnabel group the movements together under the heading "Piano Sonata," and so he did. Erdmann went on to premiere the Piano Sonata in 1925.

Though Schnabel has put some considerable distance between the Dance Suite and the Piano Sonata, he retains certain characteristics that continued to define his music. While he still utilized harmonic structures that retain diatonic associations, at least on paper, his harmonic palette has become much more advanced. The music still drives ahead with great concentration and direction, but now, eschewing bar lines through the entire sonata, a free, irregular pulse is created through non-metrical musical breathing. Expression indications, as well as minute changes in tempo and dynamics, are extraordinarily precise throughout.

I. *"Passionate, intense and very resolute; very free, not fast at all, always rather restrained, but still melodious"*

The *Piano Sonata* begins in a monumental style, with masses of thickly-textured sonorities. So

vertical and spikey is the effect that it could almost be called "anti-melody". But still there is a propulsion, an inexorable progress that drives the music forward. It is a new kind of melody that many composers have since utilized in their music; Schnabel was one of the first to do so.

II. *"Extremely tender and simple; very quiet, soft, sweetly lost in thought, altogether free"*

The second movement has a suspended-in-air lullaby feel to it, this impression enhanced by the quartal harmonies that set the scene. Though the music is played freely ("freely" according to strict indications, that is) the movement is essentially a slow stream of quiet eighth notes, with a short, contrasting secondary motif that sounds several times above a rocking accompaniment.

The precisely graded dynamics reflect Artur Schnabel the pianist's mastery of sonic levels, and imply that those who wish to perform this work must be as sensitive to such variances as he. Each voice, or more accurately, "level," is given its own dynamics throughout, as if Schnabel is treating the piano as a chamber group. This is not surprising when we consider that Schnabel's 1923 *Piano Sonata* was surrounded, between the years 1921 and 1925, by two string quartets and a string trio.

III. *"Cheerful, impish, cheeky, somewhat obstinate"*

This restless movement, which runs its course in short bursts, recalls in concept the "diablotins" of the 1898 *Three Fantasy Pieces*. But they are now all grown up, transported to another, more sophisticated world, and maybe a hundred times more mischievous – perhaps dangerously so, like the Gremlins of 1980's Hollywood fame.

After three introductory notes in thirds the movement begins with a twelve-tone row in the left hand, accompanied note-for-note in the right hand by its Inversion at the major seventh. While the movement is not a twelve-tone piece per se, Schnabel derives motives from sections of the row,

e.g. the last four notes. It may or may not be coincidental that in that same year of 1923 Arnold Schoenberg completed his first entirely twelve-tone composition, the *Suite for Piano, Op.25*.

IV. *"Very slow. Dreamily, immersed in contemplation, unearthly"*

Once again, the movement begins with a twelve-tone row, now in submerged, very slow octaves in the bass, triple piano. And again, Schnabel does not compose a strict twelve-tone movement, but as in the previous movement mines his row for motivic material, most audibly the first four notes.

V. *"Fiery, bold, unrelenting, but also without haste or excitement, very robust"*

We can almost read the minds of the audience members who were in attendance for Eduard Erdmann's premiere performance of the *Piano Sonata* in September 1925 at Venice's Teatro La Fenice. They had been listening for twenty minutes to a piano sonata that had begun with what must have seemed to many in the audience like two open, gloved hands randomly and forcefully slapping at the keyboard. Now in the final movement the music, while still thoroughly atonal, showed some snappy humor, a bit of galumphing, even a Waltz parody:

"Ahhh, Schnabel is closing his sonata with a delightful 'Scherzo and Valse' to conclude on a lighter note!"

But it was not to be... little did they realize that Schnabel was saving the most massive for last. As the composer recalled in a 1945 lecture in Chicago:

"This piece was not very popular with the greater part of the audience, and there were two musicians who seemed particularly annoyed, so that when the piece went on – endlessly, as it seemed to them – one of them shouted very loudly, '*Allora basta*!' ('That's enough!') But Erdmann continued playing."

The irate musician who felt compelled to "tap out" was identified by Cesar Saerchinger, Schnabel's first biographer, as a certain well-known Spanish cellist. The second musician may have been Arturo Toscanini, who in 1935 asked Schnabel,

"Are you really the same Schnabel who wrote that horrible music I heard ten years ago in Venice?"

Today, after so much music has passed under the bridge, we can appreciate the stunning workmanship, scope and beauty of Artur Schnabel's *Piano Sonata*, the crowning achievement of his late Middle Period. Artur Schnabel completed no new piano works for the next fourteen years.

PIECE IN SEVEN MOVEMENTS (1936-37)

Artur Schnabel seems to have enjoyed composing these seven pieces (as he referred to them), buoyed as he was by his new friendship and correspondence with Mary Virginia Foreman. Schnabel chronicled the creation of his latest piano composition in letters to the young American woman. [In quoting Schnabel's letters to Mary Virginia Foreman (MVF) I have retained Artur Schnabel's English in the "urtext".]

I. *Moderato e semplice* The first movement is a short and austere work of only 17 measures. In its very first "breath" (as marked out by the composer using a new notational device) comprising five beats and fifteen notes, Schnabel uses eleven of the twelve available pitches (the "missing" pitch, B flat, occurs during the next beat). This opening movement has a Baroque imitative sensibility.

II. *Vivace un poco resoluto* Schnabel is composing with a classical linearity, as if his musical language is gradually shedding what is not absolutely essential to the message. His lines are flowing and unencumbered.

Letter to MVF – Sep. 12, 1936 [...] *On the free mornings, I started with the little piano piece with which I felt to be pregnant since long. Two are already born, I think quite nice creatures (creations?).*

III. Allegretto piacevole A shimmering, watery piece, with both hands written in the treble clef, the harmonies sustained with ample pedal. Hints of a Stockhausen *Klavierstück* in music's near future...

IV. Allegretto agitato If there were any question that Schnabel was not keenly aware of structure in his *Piece in Seven Movements, the Allegro agitato* movement may be offered as evidence that his overriding concern was to create a balanced and unified work, while rich in variety. The ear is ever aware that this movement is made from the same cloth as the preceding music. This is the central block in the grand arch of the *Piece in Seven Movements*.

Letter to MVF – July 4, 1937 [...] *I began to write a rather expressive, hot, glowing, agitated piece; in any case, again a pleasure to have this refuge open– –* [...]

Letter to MVF – Aug 8, 1937 [...] *I finished my fourth, started with the fifth of the piano-pieces. The fourth is, I think, expressive. It is the only long one of the set of seven* [...]

V. Vivacissimo A sparkling Waltz, fluently written and proceeding smoothly along classical lines. Nothing is fluff or embellishment, only buoyant, propulsive music spilling out from a composer who is master of his domain.

VI. Adagio [con variazioni, Cadenza] VII. [Moderato e semplice]

Letter to MVF – Aug. 15, 1937 [...] *I have much time and concentration for writing music. I have written - in a very blessed mood as far as I myself can judge - the fifth and sixth of the piano-pieces. Number five is a fast waltz of much elan, number six an Adagio (variations), a solemn, noble, pure*

and convincing shape with tense substance. I think it, perhaps, the best I ever did. I succeeded to write in one swing and current. Now follows only a kind of Cadenza, composed of all the motives of all the pieces, and then, terminating, the first is repeated, the circle indicated which actually has no end. [...]

SEVEN PIANO PIECES (1947)

This words "distillation, rarification, sublimation" all compete for the term that would most aptly describe Artur Schnabel's *Seven Piano Pieces* relative to the piano music he composed before 1947. The qualities that stand out most are their variety, appeal, strong impetus, and the great compositional skill that went into their creation. The elements of their construction have been suavely and masterfully manipulated to get the most from sparse building material. The musical results are succinct and richly expressive.

Letter to MVF – London, June 13, 1947 [...] *And in less than three weeks I shall be in the mountains and have a few weeks for composition. Too few! I thought to try to write a good number of very short pieces, an old ambition of mine.* [...]

I. *Largo* This drily ethereal twelve measure piece sets the flavor. All twelve tones are stated, in four whispered clusters, during the first three beats of measure one. We recall the tone rows, announced melodically, with which Schnabel opened the third and fourth movements of his Piano Sonata twenty-four years earlier. These new tones are used much more subtly, stated impressionistically as cloudlets of sound, which merge naturally into the free flow of the music. Not a row, *per se*, but an interval group. The opening device of generally, not strictly (as that would be boring) spacing the two clusters a semitone apart determines many of the thematic structures and harmonic relations throughout the *Seven Piano Pieces*. Bar lines are present in all the pieces, while time signatures change very frequently.

II. *Allegretto* A jaunty piece wherein Schnabel demonstrates his ability to keep the music moving forward while at the same time varying the rhythmic groupings to give unexpected bite and interest to the motion. The two hands are mostly quite independent, but occasionally imitate each other to wonderful effect. Schnabel continues to further his use of the upper register of the keyboard, particularly to produce piquant accents.

III. *Andantino* Another lovely success, beginning with a simple, touching dialogue between the hands which is soon intensified, always well-controlled, showing classical clarity. The only departures from a single line are accompanimental thirds and sixths, and a few E flat chords.

While the notes of the E flat chords are sounding in the left hand, Schnabel takes pains to avoid them in the right hand, perhaps again illustrating the influence of Arnold Schoenberg. He may not have espoused Schoenberg's (or any other) system of composition, but he clearly approved of the results.

IV. *Agitato, vivace* An impassioned outburst that relentlessly charges forward, reaching the high emotional summit of all the seven pieces. Schnabel creates a great variety of rhythm and expression in this short movement. The left hand is the steed upon which the right hand rides.

V. *Lento* A mysterious, profound and magnificently conceived thirty measures. Minute descriptions are futile. An exploration of the subconscious, perhaps? We will never know. What we do know is that Artur Schnabel shows the greatest skill and most profound inspiration in this Lento. He has become a very fine composer, indeed.

Letter to MVF – Sils Maria, July 16, 1947 [...] *I have, last week, written every day another small piece for piano. Composed and copied with ink. Five are ready. Quite good.* [...]

VI. *Vivace* Really a kind of scherzo, almost perpetual motion. The lines are tightly constructed and feature repetitions and variations of its opening motive. Despite the excitement (including a very brief and humorous diversion to a waltz) the piece almost conveys the impression of "staticity in motion".

VII. *Epilogue.* Comodo *(allegretto)* sereno The last movement opens with a Hindemithian melody that is given a two-voice contrapuntal treatment. The piece goes on to make references to what came before, but very subtly, and with no direct repetition of any of the previous material, save for a rhythmic motive here, and a melodic fragment there, with Schnabel always working with his basic elements as set out in the first bars of the opening Largo. In any case, we are certain that the composer brought more elements of earlier material into the last piece than we can easily perceive as listeners. The proof is that the Epilogue gives the impression of a perfect summing-up, the perfect conclusion. The important consideration for Artur Schnabel was that HE knew why this was so.

JOSEF STRAUSS: FOUR WALTZES FROM OLD VIENNA

Artur Schnabel selected, arranged and organized in "mix 'n' match" fashion music from five waltzes by Josef Strauss, brother of Johann Strauss II and Eduard Strauss. Schnabel's selections were first published in the journal *Velhagen & Klasings Monatshefte*, vol. 22 (1907–1908) no.6, February 1908.

Schnabel improved on the published versions of the piano arrangements made by the composer, which were meant for the average home pianist, and came in handy at parties where the guests may have wished to dance. Schnabel did not change much, but made the piano writing a bit more colorful, and of course added many indications for dynamics and expression.

The typical Strauss Viennese "Walzer" begins with an introduction, followed by five distinct numbers, one flowing into the next, with each number composed of two sections. The whole generally concludes with a *coda*. Schnabel's choices comprise selections from:

Waltz I: *Aquarellen* (Watercolors), Op. 258; *Fünf Kleeblad'ln*, Op. 44

Waltz II: *Frauenwürde* (Women's Dignity), Op. 277

Waltz III: *Sternschnuppen* (Shooting Stars), Op. 96

Waltz IV: *Frauenwürde* Op. 277; *Schwert und Leier* (Sword and Lyre), Op. 71

Clearly Artur Schnabel, who spent his early youth in Vienna, loved this music, as shown by the fine Waltzes he composed for his *Three Piano Pieces*, Op.15. We lament the fact that there are no recordings of Schnabel playing any music in this style.

— *James Irsay*

(Thank you to Britta Matterne for additional research)

Steinway artist **JENNY LIN** is one of the most respected young pianists today, admired for her adventurous programming and charismatic stage presence. She has been acclaimed for her "remarkable technical command" and "a gift for melodic flow" by *The New York Times*. *The Washington Post* praises "Lin's confident fingers... spectacular technique...", "...surely one of the most interesting pianists in America right now..." and *Gramophone Magazine* has hailed her as "an exceptionally sensitive pianist". Her orchestral engagements have included the American Symphony Orchestra, NDR and SWR German Radio orchestras, and Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI. Her concerts have taken her to Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center's Great Performers, SF Jazz, MoMA, Stanford LIVE, and National Gallery of Art, appearing at Festivals such as Mostly Mozart, BAM's Next Wave, Spoleto USA, Kings Place London, Chopin Festival Austria, and Schleswig-Holstein Festival Germany.

Since 2000, Jenny's discography includes more than 30 recordings on Steinway & Sons, Hänssler Classic, eOne, BIS, New World and Albany Records. She is also the central figure in "Cooking for Jenny" by Elemental Films, a musical documentary portraying her journey to Spain. Other media appearances include CBS Sunday Morning, NPR Performance Today, and "Speaking for Myself", a film about Manhattan as seen through the eyes of eight contemporary artists by filmmaker Bert Shapiro. Born in Taiwan and raised in Austria, Jenny studied at the Hochschule für Musik in Vienna, the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore and the Fondazione Internazionale per il pianoforte in Como, Italy. She holds a bachelor's degree in German literature from The Johns Hopkins University.

ARTUR SCHNABEL

COMPLETE WORKS FOR SOLO PIANO

JENNY LIN

Recorded 2017 – 2018 at Steinway Hall, New York City.

Producer: Jon Feidner
Engineer: Lauren Sclafani
Assistant Engineer: Melody Nieun Hwang
Editing: Kazumi Umeda
Production Assistant: Renée Oakford
Mixing and Mastering: Daniel Shores
Equipment: Pyramix using Merging Technologies Horus Converters; mixed and mastered through Merging Technologies Horus Converter
Microphones: DPA 4006A, Schoeps MC6/MK2
Piano Technician: Lauren Sclafani
Piano: Steinway Model D # 597590 (New York)

Executive Producers: Eric Feidner and Jon Feidner
Art Direction: Jackie Fugere
Design: Cover to Cover Design, Anilda Carrasquillo

This recording has been co-sponsored by the Schnabel Music Foundation, LLC

ARTUR SCHNABEL
COMPLETE WORKS FOR SOLO PIANO
JENNY LIN

Artur Schnabel's piano works represent the major stages of his composing life, and are written for the instrument whose possibilities he knew best. Pianist Jenny Lin's traversal of this music, composed between 1898 and 1947, affords a view from the keyboard of a strikingly unique composer, who operated at the very highest level of his art.

DISC 1

1-3 Three Fantasy Pieces 11:22

4-9 Three Pieces, Op. 15 23:17

10-14 Dance Suite 31:36

Playing Time: 66:23

DISC 2

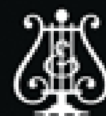
1-5 Sonata 29:03

6-11 Piece in Seven Movements 27:05

12-18 Seven Piano Pieces 12:06

19-22 Josef Strauss: 5:58
Four Waltzes from Old Vienna
Arranged by Artur Schnabel

Playing Time: 74:22



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