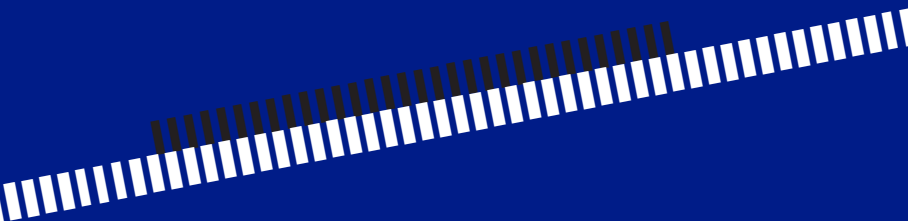




wolfgang amadeus mozart

*the complete  
piano sonatas*



siegfried mauser

celestial harmonies



## CD 1

	<b>Sonata C Major KV 279</b>	<b>15'07"</b>
1	<i>Allegro</i>	4'55"
2	<i>Andante</i>	6'55"
3	<i>Allegro</i>	3'17"
	<b>Sonata F Major KV 280</b>	<b>14'30"</b>
4	<i>Allegro assai</i>	4'43"
5	<i>Adagio</i>	6'42"
6	<i>Presto</i>	3'05"
	<b>Sonata B Flat Major KV 281</b>	<b>14'45"</b>
7	<i>Allegro</i>	4'38"
8	<i>Andante amoroso</i>	5'45"
9	<i>Rondeau. Allegro</i>	4'22"
	<b>Sonata E Flat Major KV 282</b>	<b>13'08"</b>
10	<i>Adagio</i>	6'09"
11	<i>Menuetto I &amp; II</i>	4'47"
12	<i>Allegro</i>	2'12"
	<b>Sonata G Major KV 283</b>	<b>13'11"</b>
13	<i>Allegro</i>	4'21"
14	<i>Andante</i>	4'24"
15	<i>Presto</i>	4'26"
	<b>Total time:</b>	<b>71'16"</b>

## CD 2

	<b>Sonata D Major KV 284</b>	<b>29'02"</b>
1	<i>Allegro</i>	5'11"
2	<i>Rondeau en polonaise. Andante</i>	5'41"
3	<i>Andante con Variazioni</i>	18'10"
	<b>Sonata C Major KV 309</b>	<b>19'30"</b>
4	<i>Allegro con spirito</i>	5'55"
5	<i>Andante un poco adagio</i>	7'24"
6	<i>Rondeau. Allegretto grazioso</i>	6'11"
	<b>Sonata D Major KV 311</b>	<b>17'10"</b>
7	<i>Allegro con spirito</i>	4'37"
8	<i>Andante con espressione</i>	6'24"
9	<i>Rondeau. Allegro</i>	6'09"
	<b>Total time:</b>	<b>66'00"</b>

## CD 3

	<b>Sonata A Minor KV 310</b>	<b>19'27"</b>
1	<i>Allegro maestoso</i>	5'27"
2	<i>Andante cantabile con espressione</i>	10'59"
3	<i>Presto</i>	3'01"
	<b>Sonata C Major KV 330</b>	<b>20'15"</b>
4	<i>Allegro moderato</i>	6'33"
5	<i>Andante cantabile</i>	8'00"
6	<i>Allegretto</i>	5'42"
	<b>Sonata A Major KV 331</b>	<b>24'48"</b>
7	<i>Andante grazioso con Variazioni</i>	14'31"
8	<i>Menuetto</i>	6'49"
9	<i>Alla turca. Allegretto.</i>	3'28"
	<b>Total time:</b>	<b>64'47"</b>

## CD 4

	<b>Sonata F Major KV 332</b>	<b>20'43"</b>
1	<i>Allegro</i>	7'35"
2	<i>Adagio</i>	6'00"
3	<i>Allegro assai</i>	7'08"
	<b>Sonata B Flat Major KV 333</b>	<b>23'32"</b>
4	<i>Allegro</i>	7'26"
5	<i>Andante cantabile</i>	9'36"
6	<i>Allegretto grazioso</i>	6'30"
	<b>Phantasie C Minor KV 475</b>	<b>13'43"</b>
7	<i>Adagio</i>	
	<b>Sonata C Minor KV 457</b>	<b>19'31"</b>
8	<i>Molto allegro</i>	6'20"
9	<i>Adagio</i>	8'31"
10	<i>Allegro assai agitato</i>	4'40"
	<b>Total time:</b>	<b>77'49"</b>

## CD 5

**Sonata F Major KV 533 / 494** 23'22"

- 1 *Allegro* 8'04"
- 2 *Andante* 9'21"
- 3 *Rondo. Allegretto* 5'57"

**Sonata C Major KV 545** 10'39"

- 4 *Allegro* 2'59"
- 5 *Andante* 6'00"
- 6 *Rondo. Allegretto* 1'40"

**Sonata B Flat Major KV 570** 18'48"

- 7 *Allegro* 5'36"
- 8 *Adagio* 9'33"
- 9 *Allegretto* 3'39"

**Sonata D Major KV 576** 15'26"

- 10 *Allegro* 4'58"
- 11 *Adagio* 6'07"
- 12 *Allegretto* 4'21"

**Total time:** 68'42"

## CD 6

**Rondo A Minor KV 511** 10'48"

- 1 *Andante*
- 2 **Adagio B Minor KV 540** 15'00"
- 3 **Sechs deutsche Tänze KV 509** 13'15"
- 4 **Menuett D Major KV 576b** 3'13"
- 5 **Gigue G Major KV 574** 1'38"
- 6 **Andante F Major KV 616** 8'39"  
*für eine Orgelwalze*
- 7 **Adagio C Major KV 617a** 5'02"  
*für Glasharmonika*

**Total time:** 58'20"

In recent decades the tonal representation of Mozart's music has seen significant changes. This is principally due to new insights into historical performance practice, particularly with regard to grouping, phrasing, articulation and ornamentation. The increasing use of original instruments and their modern reconstructions has also affected modern taste, whether in purely tonal terms or in the use of harmony and pedal. The *égalité* of the past was a product of 19<sup>th</sup> century musical ideals which survived far into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, blending the music into undifferentiated *legato* lines; in recent times it has been found unsuitable for the rhetorical nature of Mozart's music.

Some new observations relate to fundamental aspects of line and melody, such as the use of *non-legato* where no specific articulation is demanded. This norm of always lightly separating notes by default, giving the musical line a gentle *portato* character, is a fundamental change from the ever-present finger *legato* of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Acoustically this innovation is derived from the much faster tonal decay on

older instruments, and it can be recreated on modern pianos, both in melodic and accompanying passages such as *Alberty* basses and other harmonic or rhythmical figurations. The resulting transparency of texture permits a floating lightness in the softer range as well as increased dramatic potential in forte passages. Thus the often sentimental and romantic nature of older Mozart performances and their tendency to restrain and overdecorate in rococo playfulness is avoided, opening the door to a flexible and rhetoric enunciation in the spirit of the 18<sup>th</sup> century – a direction emphasized by the reduced use of the pedal, also derived from older instruments.

Contemporary performance manuals frequently attest the link between periodic divisions in melodic lines with those in speech, and in some cases linguistic punctuation marks such as full stop, comma, question and exclamation marks were even inserted in the score to highlight these parallels. Often such periods are clearly recognizable in Mozart's music, especially in harmonic progressions and suspension-laden cadences; in other cases

they become apparent from the context. Above all it is the process of breathing that lies at the heart of both speech and singing which must govern the musical line and its various divisions.

Within these linguistic periods lie the smaller phrases that form the detail of the musical and syntactical process. Normally these are obvious from the notation, but often they are marked by slurs; slurs indicate not only units of *legato*, but also units of phrasing and articulation. However, since Mozart did not always supply these indications, which in any case were evident to his contemporaries, we must often deduce that which is missing by use of our experience and our knowledge of the style – usually this can be done without much controversy. Within the habitual melodic units of two, four and eight bars there are frequently smaller gestures and motifs that do not conform to the regular divisions. As a result, these small irregular units often merge to form larger irregular periods – a procedure repeatedly found in Mozart's music but always clearly an intended exception to a firm rule. Indeed, Mozart's first biographer Otto Jahn—a classical

archaeologist by profession—remarked upon the “liveliness” of his music caused by the interplay between conformist regularity and deviations from it. Every interpretation of Mozart's music must explore these structural contradictions – a view and interest shared by many modern composers.

Within the general structures of sonata form, ternary form, variation sets or rondo the period groupings form the second layer of musical structure, and within these the units of articulation then form the smallest and most direct units of musical expression. There have been many attempts to better understand the various articulation signs Mozart used, but it has proved impossible to elucidate the difference between the dots, dashes and lines placed above the notes. It is however clear that these signs have a decisive impact on the detail and flexibility of Mozart's rhetorical expression. The palette he employed ranges from *legatissimo* and *legato* to *portato*—indicated by a combination of slur and dot—and various forms of *staccato*. It is the musical gesture within the phrases that is differentiated with these signs, creating an almost theatrical spontaneity and directness.

The detailed observation of periods, phrases and articulation forms the basis of the communicative and dramatic nature of Mozart's music and creates the illusion of a purely instrumental theatre; it is one of the basic components of a successful performance. The composer Hans-Werner Henze, a lifelong devotee of Mozart, coined the term "instrumental theatre" for many of his own works, but the term fits perfectly for much of Mozart, in particular his piano music. Created by technical means, the articulative gestures seem to recall living characters acting and reacting on an instrumental stage. It is even sometimes possible to follow individual characters through a range of dramatic situations from tender intimacy to dramatic confrontation. Mozart, the supreme master of the opera, thereby brought an incomparable vigour to his instrumental works; it was the achievement of research into performance practice that illuminated this aspect of his music and made it available to composers in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The spontaneous aspect of Mozart's instrumental theatre is enhanced further

by the use of improvised ornamentation, described in historical treatises as *Manieren* (embellishments). In his piano concertos these were usually restricted to substantial improvisations at points of structural importance such as cadenzas or entries; in the sonatas they are used when sections are repeated, particularly in the slow movements. Historical sources request that such ornamentation is applied sensitively and tastefully, but also make it clear that it is expected. Additionally, in the cadenzas and entries to the concertos, but also in the sonatas, we have examples of Mozart's own use of ornamentation – often supplied by the discrepancies between autograph and first edition, such as in the variations of the early Sonata in D, K 284 or the slow movement of the Sonata in F, K 332. There is a systematic overview of the possibilities in Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg's *Method of Piano Playing in the Manner of Today* of 1755, giving today's performer clear guidelines. The "tasteful" clarification and amplification given by both improvised and notated ornaments to individual gestures again serve to invigorate the presence of the

instrumental characters and their dramatic qualities.

*Tempo rubato* is another category which within the classical style belongs to embellishments and ornaments, as described by Daniel Gottlob Türk in his *Clavier Method* (1789): "The hesitating on certain notes" can normally be employed both on strong and weak beats, as long as "it is used carefully to emphasize"<sup>1</sup>. In the first case it is used to punctuate and clarify, in the second it is used as an ornament to highlight a suspension or dissonance. Such tempo modifications became increasingly popular in the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century; in 1753 C.P.E. Bach had referred to various passages "in which one should lengthen both notes and rests a little for expressive reasons"<sup>2</sup>, especially in a slow tempo. In the third edition of his book, in 1787, Bach described different types of rubato: "In this manner some figures may have more or fewer notes than the bar allows. It is possible to distort one or more bars in this way. However, it is important and difficult to keep all notes of the same type equal. If one succeeds in playing against time in one

hand whilst keeping the other strictly in time, one has done what is necessary."<sup>3</sup> This passage is strikingly reminiscent of Mozart's description of his own playing: "Playing tempo rubato in an Adagio without the left hand knowing about it, that is beyond them – their left hand always follows the right" (letter of October 24<sup>th</sup> 1777 to his father). This should make it clear that *tempo rubato* indicates a flexibility of the melody in relation to its accompaniment, as opposed to a distortion of all voices at once. Being a manner of enhancing the expression of the music it must be used with great sensitivity: "This embellishment requires prudence and care to succeed. If one has both it will be not be difficult to play with all necessary freedom."<sup>4</sup>

The practice of varying music when it is repeated is also confirmed by Mozart's own differing indications of articulation and phrasing in the recapitulations of his sonatas. Many well-meaning musicologists and performers categorically tend to assume these variants to be errors of the composer and so correct them. In some cases this may be justified, but in general

these variants seem to me to illustrate the constant change wrought by the passing of time, the fact that the same sentence, the same gesture or figure can never be replayed identically – or, as Heraclitus put it, πάντα ῥεῖ (everything flows). Mozart presumably was not thinking in such rigorous terms; the variants in phrasing and articulation seem to reflect his experience as an opera composer, composing music for real, life-like situations that are never tidy and consistent, and carrying this perspective over into his instrumental music. At the very least it can be said that both the practice of spontaneous ornamentation and variable phrasing enhance the vigour and drama of his music. Every performer, and more so every editor, should therefore be highly reluctant to intervene in a corrective way.

The present interpretation of Mozart's 18 Piano Sonatas attempts to build on these two fundamental recognitions: that the pseudo-dramatic element of his instrumental music can be best realised through research into historic performance practice, and that the resulting view is

completely compatible with contemporary perspectives. It is a view that is aesthetically not dependent on the use of historical instruments, and is therefore quite appropriate for modern pianos. A performance on a modern piano might seem to be inauthentic in comparison to Mozart's world, but the critical distance created by the modern sound, and the advantages of modern instruments, can lead to a form of additional dialogue with the music. Mozart himself was delighted by the progress in piano construction, from the early pianos and tangent pianos (a rare combination of harpsichord and fortepiano action) by Spaeth in Regensburg that formed his first departure from the harpsichord and clavichord, to those of Stein in Augsburg and finally those of Anton Walter in Vienna, one of which he purchased in 1782.

Before 1770 the principle keyboard instruments were with few exceptions the harpsichord and clavichord; between 1770 and 1780 the fortepiano gradually became an equal alternative until it became the norm between 1780 and 1795, after which the harpsichord became more or less

obsolete. The clavichord had been used mainly as a domestic instrument, intended for practice and composition rather than concerts, but in this specific use it remained common even into the 19th century. Publishers advertised their music with commercial interests in mind and titles are therefore not always reliable indicators as to the instrument the composer had written for. Even Beethoven's Sonatas Op.27 (1800/1801) were advertised for "harpsichord (or piano)" in an attempt to broaden their market, in spite of their clear suitability for the piano. General statements about intended instruments are consequently impossible, and only the details of individual works can illuminate matters.

In the case of Mozart's Sonatas the five early Sonatas, K 279 to 283, composed in Munich in 1774, contain many harpsichord specific features. It seems doubtful whether Mozart had a fortepiano at his disposal in Salzburg in the 1770s, as this letter passage from Mozart's mother to his father would suggest: "He plays much more here than in Salzburg as there are many fortepianos here

and he plays them so incomparably as no-one has heard". His family definitely owned a clavichord and a two manual harpsichord, possibly also a spinet; there was however a Stein fortepiano at the residence of the Archbishop even before Mozart's birth. Mozart must have tried the pianos of the Regensburg piano builder Franz Jacob Spaeth quite early on, and he mentions them in an important letter to his father (October 17<sup>th</sup> 1777) in which he explains his feelings on fortepianos in general; he does emphasize the clarity and precision of Stein's instruments with regard to tone and pitch. Mozart had first played one of Stein's "excellent pianos" on the same journey, in Munich in the house of a Mr Albert. Later in Vienna he continued to use a clavichord for composing, as his wife Constanze attests, but his preferred instrument was certainly the fortepiano. Some time between early 1782 and 1785 at the latest he purchased a piano from the Viennese builder Anton Walter to which he had a pedalboard added, according to a letter to his father. In his preference the larger and fuller tone of Walter's instruments

surpassed the light, silvery tone of Stein's.

Without doubt all works composed before 1772 were intended and conceived for the harpsichord; those written between 1773 and 1777 are more difficult to assign. Linguistic usage is no help either as within the family correspondence the general term "Clavier" is used; Wolfgang himself in his own catalogue uses the term "Klavier" from 1784, even when the autographs and publications suggest the harpsichord – as late as his last year he continued to use the word "harpsichord" when clearly referring to the piano. The sonata collection of K 279 to 283 is particularly difficult to assign, as it contains many harpsichord specific passages alongside a striking number of dynamic indications, including gradual changes, which suggest the fortepiano. From 1777 (the *Mannheim* Sonatas K 309 and 310) it is however highly probable, and from his Vienna time onwards absolutely certain that his keyboard works were intended for the piano.

With these considerations in mind the present recording does not attempt a rigorously realised historical authenticity—changes in listening habits since Mozart's

time and the nature of a recording make this unrealistic—rather a well-balanced marriage of past and present. The choice of modern instruments is partly based on the desire to include insights from contemporary music such as structural divisions and textural heterogeneity. It is a blend of experiences from both historical research and the avantgarde.

Additionally, the recording attempts to reflect the differing stylistic and developmental origins of the Sonatas by using different instruments and recording techniques. To this end, the harpsichord-influenced directness of the early Sonatas is recorded on a somewhat percussive Steinway, whereas the increased sonority of the later works is performed on a Bösendorfer Imperial. We have intentionally avoided giving this complete recording an acoustic and tonal consistency in order to illustrate the continuous stylistic changes in Mozart's Sonatas.

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Gottlob Türk  
*Anleitung zum Clavierspielen* (Leipzig, 1789)  
p. 338

<sup>2</sup> Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach  
*Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen*  
*Erster Theil* (3. Printing, Leipzig 1787)  
p. 98

<sup>3</sup> loc. cit. p. 99

<sup>4</sup> loc. cit. p. 100

### Volume 1 (CD 1 & 2)

The six Piano Sonatas K 279 to 284 were all composed in early 1775 and were numbered sequentially by Mozart in his autograph, indicating that they form a set. However, the Sonata in D, K 284 dedicated to Count Dürnitz of Munich in a letter of June 9<sup>th</sup> 1784, stands apart from its siblings in some respects. The almost 20 minute long variation movement that forms its finale is substantial enough to be a separate composition; including it within the scope of this Sonata makes the resulting work architecturally unique. Mozart also wrote in a letter of October 10<sup>th</sup> 1777 that this Sonata especially suited the pianos of Andreas Stein, thereby suggesting a particular suitability for performance on newer instruments. The other five Sonatas include many techniques of the harpsichord, only occasionally making use of modern styles and dynamic indications. Whilst these Sonatas therefore reveal an instrumental ambivalence in terms of touch, this concluding Sonata clearly requires the fortepiano, judging by its significant demands on tonal variety and

virtuosity. This distinction is underlined by the fact that the Sonata was published together with the Sonata K 333 and the Violin Sonata K 454 in 1784 by Torricella in Vienna, rather than with the other five 1779 by Breitkopf. Mozart also mentioned and performed K 284 several times, for instance in an academy concert in Augsburg in October 1777: "...then I played solo, the last Sonata in D, of Dürnitz..." – emphasizing its distinctive status.

There are of course many similarities with the other Sonatas, perhaps caused by the preparations for the premiere of *La finta gardiniera*, K 196 at the same time in Munich. This work was a similar breakthrough for Mozart in the realm of *opera buffa* as *Idomeneo* of 1781 (K 366) had been for *opera seria*; not only the theatrical humour of the finale in K 281, but also the generally dense and richly varied characterisations of most movements seem operatic. Presumably all six Sonatas were written as vehicles to demonstrate Mozart's skill as a practising musician during his three months in Munich: "I have already played my six Sonatas from memory several



times in Munich” (in a letter of October 10<sup>th</sup> 1777.) Performing these “difficult Sonatas” (February 4<sup>th</sup> 1778) would have given the opera composer increased publicity and was thus somewhat of an advertisement. In this context it becomes clear that each Sonata is characterized by its own specific balance of operatic theatricality and instrumental virtuosity, in the spirit of playful improvisation.

Both aspects are immediately apparent in the first movement of the Sonata in C, K 279 the only Sonata of which the manuscript is lost. It is a movement of almost constant semiquaver figurations, alternating *arpeggios*, scale passages and *Alberti* bass lines in a humorous, playful manner. In this *melée* one can distinguish numerous shapes and motives leading to a rudimentary second subject in G (bar 20, via the mediant E and the secondary dominant D from bar 16), although it is more a case of paratactic variety than of a rounded structure. This variety is held together by the continuous semiquaver movement and the frequently reappearing patterns often clearly derived

from harpsichord techniques. The 18-bar development is also dominated by sequential patterns, beginning in G Minor and changing key in each bar in a manner reminiscent of Scarlatti; a two-bar repeated melodic phrase in bar 48 briefly breaks the continuum with sudden dynamic changes. This use of abrupt theatrical changes is already a feature in the exposition (bar 12 and bar 25) in which dynamic changes also frequently occur. These moments of surprise seem like spontaneous gestures, made by characters on an instrumental stage in the same way as they might in Mozart’s operas. The recapitulation (bar 58) is slightly expanded from 38 bars to 42 and includes the expected tonic key in the second subject (bar 74); however, as in the faster movements of baroque suites, the formal recapitulation is less significant than the continuing semiquaver movement in closing the larger structure.

Corresponding to the semiquaver movement of the first movement are the continuous legato triplets of the second movement in F Major. These triplets run through both outer and middle sections,

supporting the lyrical dialogues in the upper voice in a manner typical of Mozart’s *Andante* movements – as late as in the *Andante* of the little Sonata in C, K 545 we find this feature, expounding a lyrical narrative on a mostly unchanging accompaniment. The accompaniment functions as an instrumental stage on which the narrative gradually unfolds. In the case of K 279 the narrative is characterised by abrupt dynamic changes, adding a theatrical element to the otherwise lyrical tone.

The playful and relaxed Finale returns to C Major and shares many features of the first movement, with even closer affinity to baroque harpsichord techniques. The initial clash between two minims forming a rising fourth and the subsequent descending semiquavers demonstrates a gesture typical of the early Mozart in its question and response structure.

Both the Sonata in F, K 280 and the Sonata in B Flat, K 281 employ patterns and figurations of the baroque harpsichord, although always blended with dramatic and operatic elements. The first movement of

K 281 is particularly influenced by improvised ornaments in the contemporary manner. The frequent sudden alternation between rapid figuration and more emotive passages is reminiscent of the aesthetics of the sensitive style, and of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach in particular. The second movement is headed *Andante amoroso*—a unique indication in Mozart’s oeuvre—and is thematically centred on a descending scale in *amorous* thirds, sixths and tenths, and includes examples of fortepiano-specific *crescendo* and *diminuendo*. The somewhat boisterous *Rondeau* which concludes the Sonata feels like something from an *opera buffa*, a sort of instrumental *Commedia dell’arte*.

The Sonata in F Major, K 280 includes the first expressive *Adagio*, in F Minor, full of plaintive dissonances, presaging Mozart’s late style with its floating 6/8 time. A care-free and playful *Presto* functions as an effective and pirouetting Finale, much like the Finale of the fifth Sonata K 283. The overall structure of the Sonata is tightened by the increased contrast between this *Adagio* and the subsequent *Presto*, as well as

the preceding *Allegro assai*. The divergence in tempo also leads to increased contrast in character.

After the formal polarities of the previous Sonata, the fourth Sonata in E Flat, K 284 wholly breaks the structural mould, principally by opening with an expressive *Adagio*, in two sections with concluding coda. The unusual placing of two Menuets in the centre of the work recalls the earlier practice of Haydn's youthful Partitas. However, the faintly ironic tone of the music seems to distance it from antiquated traditions – the second Menuet, functioning like a Trio, reveals a casual sedateness almost smug in tone. It is hard to avoid recognizing this as an early tendency to classicism and disassociation in Mozart; at the same time, these two Menuets offer further variations in the virtually inexhaustible fund of Menuets since Haydn – something of a competitive sport amongst composers. The concluding *Allegro* unfolds with carefree purity and rustic dialogue.

The first movement of the Sonata in G Major, K 283 is the first example in Mozart's

oeuvre of another feature typical of his later style: the singing *Allegro* – the most effective example of which is the Sonata in C, K 333. The principal movement appears in moderate tempo as a faster variant of the narrative *Andante*, such as we already found in the second movement of K 279, and also in the second movement of the present Sonata. Lyrical dialogue is combined with dramatic gestures to form a new genre, possibly modelled on the Sonatas in the *galante* style by Johann Christian Bach.

After the formal modifications of K 282, the innovations of the Sonata in D, K 284 are yet more significant. The opening of the first movement, an arpeggiated chord in the tonic followed by a unison response in octaves, clearly signals an expanded form based on symphonic dimensions. Additionally, the space allotted to each subject area is substantially larger than in previous Sonatas, and the piano writing often recalls orchestral textures (e.g. bar 13 etc). The second movement—*Andante*—is curious in its choice of form: although Mozart occasionally places

dance movements in the centre of Sonatas, such as in K 282, the choice of *Rondeau en Polonoise* is most unusual, its stately pace harkening back to the baroque Polonoise. Again, the heavily ornamented and intricate texture seems to indicate a gaze into the past, a regard from afar. This becomes more apparent when comparing the autograph and first edition – most probably corrected and modified by Mozart himself. The already heavily ornamented text becomes even denser, to the degree that in the final movement, the *Andante* with 12 Variations, the *Adagio* of Variation XI grows into a substantially new piece, usually printed alongside the autograph version in critical editions. Mozart's own habits of ornamentation suggest once again that his printed text must not always be taken at face value. Any performer of his music, above all in the slow movements, must be willing to allow a certain freedom beyond the notated text in order to play in the spirit of Mozart. The Finale of this Sonata— the dimensions of the Variations are such that they could easily stand alone— adds to the impression that Mozart

was both concluding his first group of Piano Sonatas and showing a desire to expand to a grander scale in the future.

Three years later, whilst visiting Mannheim, Mozart took up these symphonic dimensions in his next Sonata, in C Major, K 309. At the beginning of the clearly defined first movement the first subject again contrasts two bars of orchestral unison with a melodic phrase made up of smaller units. These lead into transitional figures, returning in bar 8 to the initial unison. All together it forms a seven bar phrase made of smaller units, divided irregularly into three groups (2x3x2), rather than the conventional eight bar phrases with their 4x4 division. This irregularity in phrase structure dominates the continuation with its imaginative and playful variants, but remains counter-balanced by the unmistakably defined formal units: a transitional section from bar 21 leads to a clearly established second subject (bar 33) and a coda announced by a *subito piano* in bar 54. The variety and irregularity of the first subject (bars 1 to 20) gives the movement as a whole a

certain flexible liveliness and openness, made possible by the regularity of the larger structure. The conventionally differentiated second subject (from bar 33) then returns to the more predictable phrases of two, four and eight bars.

The Finale of the Sonata, *Rondeau*, marked *Allegretto grazioso*, forms a counter-balance to the heterogeneous nature of the first movement. A simplistic, folksong-like opening leads to more and more large-scale and virtuosic figurations, a strategy Mozart often used in his final movements, in which a theme of almost childlike under-statement is developed into remarkable guises. The second movement is unusually marked *Andante un poco adagio*, presumably to indicate a *sostenuto* aspect of the main subject, rather than the more flowing *tempo andante* would normally suggest. In the course of the movement the many small note values (triple semiquavers and demisemiquavers) make a slower tempo advisable, and the frequent sharp dynamic contrasts add a strong expressive character. The movement as a whole occupies an unusual blend in terms

of emotion and character, showing that Mozart was increasingly finding his own individual angle to conventional formal requirements. He seems to have been aware of this when requesting a letter that this movement should be played “not at all fast” (letter of December 6<sup>th</sup> 1777). Concerning the practice of the Sonata, he also adds: “The Andante will trouble us most; it is full of expression and must be played just as written, with all forte and piano” (letter of November 4<sup>th</sup> 1777).

In this Sonata, often named *Cannabich Sonata*, the circumstances of its composition and its early performance practice are unusually well documented. Mozart stayed in Mannheim as a guest of the court musician Christian Cannabich for several months in 1777, and it was during this stay that he composed the Sonata for Cannabich’s daughter, “...who plays the piano quite nicely” (letter of November 4<sup>th</sup> 1777). Following this stay, Mozart kept a lively correspondence to which we owe the quoted letters, and which reveals much valuable information. Unfortunately no manuscript of the Sonata

has survived, leaving a copy by Mozart’s father Leopold, which also formed the basis of the first edition in 1781, as the only autograph. Mozart had become quite friendly with Rosa Cannabich during his stay, and it can be assumed that the character of the Sonata in some way reflects her personality, particularly in the case of the Andante: “I want to write it just to match the character of M<sup>lle</sup>. Rosa”, he wrote in a letter of December 6<sup>th</sup> 1777. He also wanted to include stylistic traits specific to Mannheim, as his father quickly detected: “One can tell that you wrote this in Mannheim” (letter of December 8<sup>th</sup> 1777), and three days later: “it has some of the Mannheim style in it, but not so much as to spoil your good taste”. Leopold may have been referring to the small eccentricities we have mentioned, the frequent ornaments and the preponderance of small units in all three movements. In any case, the Sonata reflects a consolidation of the larger scale initiated by the previous Sonata in D, as well as a widening of his musical language, soon to absorb the new influences in Paris.

The Sonata in D, K 311, was the second

work Mozart composed during his stay in Mannheim, and it equally reflects the taste of the city. The circumstances of its composition are unknown, but the original manuscript has survived. As in its sister work there are unusual features included to please the sophisticated but indulged Mannheim audiences. A good example of this occurs at the end of the exposition, where the two forte chords (bar 37) that seem to conclude the section are followed by an odd two bar phrase in *piano* (bars 38 to 39) that at first sounds superfluous, but is then used to generate the opening of the development. As in other passages, it is Mozart’s masterful command of his audience, at first irritating and deceiving them only to finally delight them – much as on stage a character can first appear irritating only to save the day later on. Like the second movement of K 309, the following *Andante* with its *con espressione* is similarly untypical, rather more adapted to suit the particular audience with its elaborate expressivity. The *Rondeau* finale again opens with apparent simplicity, only to develop into virtuosic figurations

of almost concerto like character. Indeed, the concerto qualities are confirmed by the inclusion of a notated entrance to the final section in bar 172: *Andante – Presto – Adagio*, in the manner of a compact *cadenza*.

Both *Mannheim* Sonatas, at least in their second and third movements, share stylistic qualities that are closely linked to the circumstances of their composition and their performances. The often held opinion that Mozart's creativity was largely independent of his personal life is here clearly invalidated: both the people and the places into which these works were born had significant impact on their features, although only insofar as Mozart's "good taste" allowed.

### Volume 2 (CD 3 & 4)

Mozart's Piano Sonatas can be broadly divided into three groups, of which the first, K 279 to 283, and the last, K 533/494 to 576, are fairly clearly demarcated. It is on either side of the middle period that it becomes more difficult, confirming the notion that Mozart's development was fluid and not easily divisible. The Sonata in D, K 284 stands out from the group of early Sonatas in its dimensions and symphonic scope, foreshadowing the *Mannheim Sonatas*; conversely, these *Mannheim Sonatas* can be said to share some of the qualities of the earlier works, qualities which were only fully abandoned in the *Paris Sonata* in A Minor K 310. In a similar way, the Fantasy and Sonata in C Minor, K 475/457 can be seen as a richly contrasted conclusion to the middle period or as a dramatic breakthrough to the late. Depending on one's perspective there is therefore a middle period extending either from K 309 to K 475/457—that is between 1777 in Mannheim and 1785 in Vienna—or from K 310 to K 333—that is between 1778 in Paris and 1783 in Linz.

It is a characteristic of Mozart's creativity that there are some-times clear stylistic developments in his oeuvre, but that it is often difficult to trace their origins in earlier works. More commonly, individual works of an experimental nature stand out, as in the case of the stylistically innovative Sonatas K 310 and K 475/457 that occupy the fringes of the middle period – it is surely no coincidence that both are in a minor key. The stylistic innovations are undeniable, although it is difficult to pin them down and separate them from the general musical argument – once again a feature of the multifaceted and instinctive composer.

The Sonata in A Minor, K 310 is definitely one such individual work. Composed in 1778 shortly after the two *Mannheim* Sonatas and published in Paris in 1781 it shares with these its indebtedness to a major musical city and the biographic events around its creation. Mozart had for the first time undertaken a long journey alone with his mother, for which reason we are in possession of a thorough and illuminating correspondence with his father. The unique drama of the minor key

first movement is often connected with the death of Mozart's mother on July 3<sup>rd</sup> 1778, together with the minor key melancholy of the Violin Sonata in E Minor, K 304. There is no trace of any commission for the A Minor Sonata, nor of any other possible impulse for its composition; even in the absence of any evidence to link the Sonata with his mother's death, it would be odd if such a momentous event were unconnected with the uncompromising defiance of this unprecedented and singular work. Without wishing to descend into unjustified psychologizing, it must be noted that Mozart was not in the habit of expressing his grief in words to any great extent, as can be seen in the tardiness of his letter to his father informing of his mother's death. His own more natural language, music, was a much more likely vehicle for such expression. The rebellious pounding of the chords at the opening of the first movement, almost obsessively continuing for four bars, as well as the clashing *appoggiaturas* and the dotted rhythms of the main subject reveal a direct emotionality that is most uncommon in

Mozart and which seems to foreshadow Beethoven in the same way as Mozart's other minor key Sonata, K 475/457. It is therefore evident that both the possible beginning and ending of the middle group of Sonatas is marked by revolutionary works that reach beyond the classical period well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The development of the first movement in K 310 is particularly noteworthy: whereas in past Sonatas the development could occasionally seem something of a chore, such as in K 281, the biting dissonances and sharp dynamic contrasts of fortissimo and pianissimo give the work almost symphonic dimensions (bars 50 to 79). The *Andante cantabile con espressione* also displays such a variety of dynamics and note values, from crochet movements to hemidemisemiquaver figurations with added ornaments as to open up new dimensions of expression. Here also we can find a tremendous development section (bars 32 to 53) that begins with strikingly low repeated chords in analogy to the first movement, accompanying the melody in a most unusual manner. The last movement

is equally unprecedented in character and composition: a rushing *Presto* manically spinning around like a perpetuum mobile, with a curious tendency to overlap lines and create polyphony, as if to resist the constant momentum; this strategy was already noticeable at the climax of the development in the first movement (bars 58 to 69):

*ff-pp-ff*). Even a brief more lyrical middle section (bars 143 to 174) cannot divert the almost ex-pressionist energy of this Finale with its despairing cries in bars 199 and 202. It is a new dimension of Sonata that Mozart opens up here, one that is not matched until the final movements of Beethoven's *Tempest* Sonata Op. 32 No 2 and Schubert's Sonata in C Minor, D 598. The generally low dynamics of the movement give the impression of strenuously restraining the movement as if it were being held back by demonic force. If the theatrical element in Mozart's Piano Sonatas had thus far taken the form of playful and imaginative characterisation it is now articulated in direct and spontaneous drama and expression.

The extreme nature of this Sonata

could also owe something to the Parisian taste; in the same year he composed it Mozart wrote in a letter: "...as you know, I can take on and imitate any style or manner of composing" (letter of February 7<sup>th</sup> 1778). He had already been fascinated by the Parisian style as a child; his early Piano Sonatas with violin accompaniment K 6 to 9 were based on a medium very popular in Paris, and his early *Pasticcio* Piano Concertos K 37 and 39 to 41 were based on Sonata movements by Schobert, Eckard and Honauer, all three German composers living in Paris. These German Parisian composers had been active in Paris from 1760, composing music that was highly expressive, even if much of it was somewhat crudely written for effect. Schobert's piano music was particularly successful, and Mozart is known to have bought his Piano Sonatas in 1781, presumably for use with his pupils. This Parisian expressivity can therefore be assumed to have played a part in the conception of K 310, so that Mozart's practice of adopting external influences into his own language here coincided with the biographical stimulus of

his mother's death. A further spur may have been his disappointment with a distinct lack of success during his stay in Paris and his subsequent feelings of defiance and rebellion.

The following Sonatas would each merit their own detailed analysis, as the formal variations and subtleties are too numerous to describe here. It is therefore more fitting to highlight individual traits that set each Sonata apart from the others. The three Sonatas K 330 to 332 seem to have been composed as a group by Mozart, in the manner of a cycle. They were presumably composed in quick succession in 1783 in Vienna or Salzburg, on the occasion of a visit to present Mozart's wife Constanze to his father and sister. They were subsequently published together in Vienna in 1784. The incomplete nature of the manuscripts suggests that Mozart made changes to the text late on – a further indication that composition for Mozart went on until the last possible moment. In the first edition of the *Adagio* of the Sonata in F Major, K 332, the modifications relate largely to the ornaments, i.e. the

least defined areas of the text, and are so far-reaching that the current *Neue Mozart-Ausgabe* prints two versions side by side, leaving the performer to decide which to play. The numbering of the Sonatas in the autograph and first edition confirm the stylistic analysis that the collection amounts to more than just a random selection.

Examining the three Sonatas one notices several points: the three respective tonic keys descend in thirds, beginning with C Major in the case of K 330, then A Major in K 331, then F Major in K 332; the three keys together form a triad of F Major, the key of the final Sonata. The first and third Sonatas are conventional in form, each with three movements in the usual fast-slow-fast pattern. The tempos of these movements are all moderate in the first and sharpened in the third: *Allegro moderato* (№ 1) – *Allegro* (№ 3) – *Andante cantabile* (№ 1) – *Adagio* (№ 3); *Allegretto* (№1) – *Allegro assai* (№ 3).

Whereas the Sonata in C follows the elegance and lyricism of the *galante* style, the Sonata in F Major, with its sensitive and

contrasting first movement, its expressive and frequently dissonant second movement and the concertante virtuosity of the third movement confirm the musical expansion from K 330 to K 332, between which the Sonata in A, K 331 stands as a more experimental centre piece.

Formally, the Sonata in A defies all structural conventions: opening with a set of variations on a slow theme (*Andante grazioso*), a substantial and tonally wide ranging menuet and trio is then followed by the Finale, exotically marked *Alla turca*. It was particularly this last movement, with its imitation of Turkish Janissary music in all its percussiveness (bar 116) that made this Sonata especially successful, feeding on the general popularity of Turkish music in Vienna at the time. The music conjures up a stage here, much as it had done literally with the Janissary music of the *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. In publishing this unusual triptych of Sonatas Mozart may have been attempting to generate publicity for himself as a composer of piano sonatas; though the three works in many ways form a group they are naturally also

performable as single works, inasmuch as they are thematically quite distinct. In this sense they are similar to his last three symphonies, or the final three piano sonatas by Beethoven and those by Schubert – all can be performed alone even if they clearly belong to a group.

In November 1783, the Mozart family interrupted their journey from Salzburg to Vienna in Linz, where Mozart composed the Sonata in B Flat, K 333 around the same time as the *Linz* Symphony, K 425. It was published in 1784 together with the *Dürnitz* Sonata K 284 and the great Violin Sonata in B Flat K 454. According to one theory, Mozart had planned a second triptych of Piano Sonatas to follow K 330 to 332, but only completed K 333; the publication then combined it with the older Sonata and the Violin Sonata to make three. Again there are several discrepancies between autograph and first edition, indicating how ready Mozart was to modify his text right up to the point of publication, especially regarding ornamentation, articulation and dynamics.

The first movement is a prototype of

a *singing Allegro*, in which the melodic main subject sings out above ostinato accompaniment figurations. It was Johann Christian Bach, the “Italian” Bach, whom Mozart met in London in 1764, who first conceived this type of movement, and this main subject bears an uncanny resemblance to the main subject in Bach’s Sonata in G from Op.4. The resemblance just falls short of being a quote, although Mozart had in a letter acknowledged such a quote from Bach’s Cantata *La calamità dei cuori* in his Piano Concerto in A, K 414 of 1782. The whole movement follows this lyrical strategy; the second subject (bar 23) begins with chords, but quickly reverts to the same lyricism, and even transitional and accompanimental figures follow the same nature. Not only the first movement with its expanded dimensions— an exposition of 63 bars, a development of 29 and a recapitulation of 71—but also the lyrical *Andante cantabile*, to be repeated whole, and the restrained concluding *Rondo, Allegretto grazioso*, share the same quality. The last movement confirms this expanded dimension by including a brief *Cadenza in*

*tempo* in bar 171 and then a larger cadenza-like entry in bar 197 marked *ad libitum* by Mozart, in reference to the expanded form of the concerto. As a result of being so permeated with lyricism and melody, there is much less potential for contrast within the frame of this large Sonata, which thereby acquires a more narrative, epic character. Even the occasionally concerto-like Finale is affected, with its seemingly naïve and childlike main subject. Indeed, the *naïveté* of the subject creates its own potential for contrast, straying into varied and virtuosic figurations but always returning to the simplicity of the opening; this is especially successful after the final cadenza in bar 199.

A diametrical opposite to K 333 is the Sonata and Fantasy in C Minor, K 475/457. The Fantasy is believed to have been composed in May 1785, the Sonata in October 1784. The extreme polarity of the thematic material and its uncompromising juxtaposition make this an even more radical sonata experiment than K 310. Already the parallel openings of Fantasy and Sonata with their intractable

opposition of *piano* and *forte* pave the way for much later successors such as Beethoven's C Minor Sonata Op.10 № 1. The epic tranquillity of K 333 succeeded after a short interval by the dramatic stage of K 475/457: returning to the idea of the development of Mozart's Sonatas, one could say that the triptych of K 330 to 332 is followed by the contrasted pair of K 333 and K 475/457.

It is assumed that Mozart composed the Fantasy to complement the Sonata as he prepared for its publication in 1785; this would explain the many connections between the two works that make their union seem more than just a strategy of the publisher, Artaria. It was the first time that Mozart himself instigated the publication of a separate, single work – hitherto all Sonatas had been published in groups. It is a logical step in the increasing individuality and autonomy of Mozart's works, and the four subsequent Viennese Sonatas were all published separately; Beethoven often worked in the same way, beginning with Op.7, and most of his later Sonatas were published individually. There was nothing

new about combining a Fantasy and Sonata, the Leipzig music director Georg Simon Löhlein had already published such a *Phantasia and Sonata* as his Op.2 № 4 in 1768. The idea of preceding a large Sonata with a slow introduction was also not new, Mozart himself having used a similar strategy in his recent Violin Sonata in B Flat Major K 454.

One example may be used to illustrate the many thematic and motivic connections between the two works: the chromatic descent of a fourth in the *Adagio* of the Fantasy (bars 10 to 15) is used near the beginning of the Sonata, in the middle voice after the first statement of the main subject (bars 9 to 11), as well as several times in the second movement – such as the upbeat figurations in bar 6. The fact that this figure is a well-known element of baroque rhetoric, even having its own name – *passus duriusculus* – makes the connection no less significant, it merely makes it more objective and neutral. Both works are also characterised by the same general atmosphere of lament, oscillating between drama and tragedy.

At the end of the final movement there is a notable passage introducing a new pianistic usage: the very wide range between upper and lower voice occasioned by the insistent dotted minims of the melody were hitherto unparalleled and only reappear in the late piano works of Beethoven. From bar 302 the shape of the melody increasingly recalls the opening of the Fantasy, closing the long arch between the two works. With an autograph manuscript, a first edition and an important copy, the source reading is probably the most complicated of all Mozart's piano works, and there are again many alternatives for the performer to choose from. The two works can of course also be performed separately; in fact Mozart himself played the Fantasy alone in a concert on May 12<sup>th</sup> 1785 in Leipzig. In spite of the many connections both works are quite distinct in formal terms, the Fantasy being a sequence of seven rather different sections, most with their own tempo indications, and the Sonata being written in wholly conventional sonata form, with a *sonata-rondo* as a Finale. It is

therefore a combination of a free character piece, much like the “Free Fantasies” of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, and a closed sonata structure, in which both parts retain their autonomy.

### Volume 3 (CD 5 & 6)

It may seem strange to speak of a “late style” in a composer who only lived to 35 years of age. However, his biography and creativity suggest he must have experienced life at a different pace. The overwhelming scope of incident in his life, beginning with his early long journeys, must have led to a high absorption of experience, and the sheer amount of writing he undertook was perhaps only paralleled by Schubert, who of course died even younger. With such an excess of experience Mozart’s development was quick, and it seems therefore reasonable to identify a late style in his works from 1788 onwards, i.e. his last three years, spent mostly in Vienna. However, it is difficult to pin down the exact stylistic features of this late style, in contrast to the similar cases of Bach, Beethoven or even Schubert. With his almost subconscious musicality one can often sense tendencies or developments without being able to state anything categorical.

The four remaining Sonatas certainly continue the thread from K 475/457, i.e. of increased individuality and autonomy

of each work – visible in practical terms in the separate publications that brought them to their audience. It is also clear that none of the stylistic and formal discoveries Mozart had made in his earlier works were abandoned; on the contrary, they are retained in the threefold sense of Hegel: retained, surpassed and superseded. In addition, Mozart found new inspiration in his increased knowledge of the music of Bach and Händel, brought to him by Gottfried van Swieten, and in his growing desire to concentrate and channel influences by abstraction.

This is already clear in the composite Sonata in F Major, K 533/494. The earliest germ of the Sonata is a single work of 1786, “A little Rondo for piano solo”, as Mozart put it in his own work list. This *Andante* was then expanded with small variants and a 27-bar new section to become the *Allegretto* of the new work. Once again we see how close Mozart’s *andante* can be to a *galante allegretto*, as otherwise such a replacement would be impractical. The added section from bar 152 contributes two features relevant to the character of the

Sonata as a whole but unimportant to the original *Rondo*: polyphony in the guise of a small *fugato* (bar 152 to 160) and brilliant virtuosity with a long dominant trill to add to the effect of the ending.

The first and second movements were composed in 1788, included in the work list as “an Allegro and Andante for piano solo”. The unusual opening of the first movement reveals another characteristic of this large scale work: for the first three bars the right hand plays alone, as in the opening of a fugue, only gaining an accompaniment in bar 4; the left hand then surprisingly repeats the same process (bars 9 to 11). This exposition of the main subject in quasi-polyphonic style does in fact develop into a mostly three-part texture lasting throughout the movement, with occasional imitation and *fugatos*.

The motivically and harmonically jagged *Andante* is similarly composed in sonata form; it is centred on a development section of mighty octave passages and almost obsessive sequences creating an enormous expressivity. Altogether this is perhaps Mozart’s most disturbing Sonata;



in its strange construction it seems to transcend the classical style and open new, historicizing dimensions. The departure from Mozart's own previous language creates a tangible sense of melancholy, signalling a withdrawal after all his expansions and innovations. After the direct musical drama and theatricality of K 475/457 this Sonata seems furthest away from any sort of musical theatre; in its return to strict formulae it seems to indicate a new dimension of reflection and abstraction.

In general the later Sonatas tend to eschew the direct theatricality, the multiplicity of contrasting figures of the earlier Sonatas, preferring instead rather abstract motives and themes consisting of intervallic patterns, often with structural significance. The *Sonata facile* in C, K 545, included in Mozart's work list as *Little Piano Sonata for Beginners* of June 26<sup>th</sup> 1788 and only published in 1805, is a model example of this tendency. Composed in a reduced scale, the first movement seems to aim to display in almost academic manner how to construct a sonata form

movement; the adjective *facile* may well refer to the manner of composition rather than the technical demands, as these are not inconsiderable. The symmetrically constructed subjects seem prototypical in their characters and are articulated with rests (i.e. bars 1 to 4 and bars 14 to 17), as are the larger structural elements, such as the rests between first and second subject (bar 12) and exposition and development (bar 28). One unusual feature is the recapitulation in the subdominant (bars 41/42), leading to a seamless transition to the tonic second subject (bar 59). However, this anomaly is presented so openly and obviously as to become almost educational itself, as if Mozart were pointing out that even in model situations there can be exceptions.

The source material confirms this impression of a consciously model-like Sonata: in the absence of an autograph the main sources are the three earliest editions, published between 1805 and 1809; all three editions lack dynamic indications, again suggesting an abstract text not relating to actual performance. The text

thereby becomes something of an objective notation, a structural exercise in sound. It is precisely this reductionist idea that gives this Sonata its specific unmistakable fascination: in it, composition becomes an educational presentation, another form of theatricality, acting out the construction of a Sonata. The floating *Andante* in its precisely calculated proportions and clear structural demarcations, with its preponderance of the most academic of all accompaniments, the *Alberti* bass, and the surprisingly brief Rondo in typical Mozart *Allegretto* confirm the model character of the whole Sonata and its archetypal movements. Just as in the case of K 533/494, this Sonata is an act of self-conscious reflection, if in slightly different manner.

The following Sonata in B Flat Major, K 570, also fits into this pattern. It was composed in February 1789 but only published after Mozart's death in 1796 with an added violin part of uncertain origin. As both Mozart's own work list and the partly surviving manuscript clearly indicate a solo piano work we must assume the violin part was an editorial incursion. The second and

third movements again lack any dynamic markings at all, whilst the first has but few, a type of "blank" piano sonata. The main subject of the first movement is an even more abstract example of these late works: the first four bars consist of nothing else than an at first descending, then ascending broken chord, rhythmically articulated in long-short groups; there is no effort to create further detail, variety or contrast. The following eight bars cover the tonic and dominant functions in a more melodic manner, before a transitional passage (bar 13) which is also clearly articulated in four-bar phrases.

Technically not undemanding, the Sonata again avoids the spontaneous and small-scale contrasts of the more operatic middle period works, in favour of longer stretches of clearly demarcated formal passages. Instead of direct instrumental drama it creates a more distanced view incorporating the structural elements. Expression and reflection are combined in more relaxed and reflective experience, both reduced and concentrated. The somewhat distanced view continues in

the final *Rondo*, even in the more virtuoso passages; the two rather folksong-like episodes from bar 23 and bar 45 sound a little like quotations in their indirectness. However, the finale does then follow the pattern of previous *Rondo-Finales*, where such simplistic beginnings develop into more elaborate and virtuoso conclusions.

The small scale patterns and dialogue like exchanges of earlier times seems to return in the opening of the last Sonata, in D Major, K 576 – composed in July 1789 but again only published in 1805: the rising *arpeggio* of the first two bars is answered by two one bar gestures in dramatic manner. Counterbalancing this opening, the remainder of the exposition features long stretches of polyphonic imitation with various *fugato* passages; this continues in the development (bar 63) and well into the recapitulation (bar 107). There is therefore a formal tension throughout the movement between structurally determined elements and the drama of the small scale exchanges. The conspicuous broken chords that conclude the exposition as well open the development (bars 57 to 60) are derived

from the main subject and return to the more abstract style, particularly in their polyphonic development from bar 81. The whole movement is technically highly demanding and seems to focus on the clash between dramatic theatricality and dissociated reflection, adding a kind of substructure to the primary sonata form. The small scale exchanges of previous Sonatas give way to larger architectural considerations governed by increased reflexion and structural differentiation. The fact that we know little of the circumstances around the creation of these Sonatas confirms the reflective, detached character of the music: they do not seem to have been commissioned or intended for pupils – Mozart was therefore free to write them free of external considerations.

The expressivity of the slow movement is also grounded on large-scale areas of melodic passage work. Just as in the first movement, the small exchanges of the opening are balanced by these larger structural areas, creating a tension between individual gestures and wider tonal vistas. The highly virtuoso *Finale*, once again

opening with an apparently child-like Allegretto theme, frequently features actual and implied polyphony, leading to textural contrasts. It is a worthy conclusion to Mozart's Sonatas, combining brilliant virtuosity, strict voice-leading and dramatic characterisation.

Individual pieces for piano solo became popular in the course of the 19th century with Beethoven's *Bagatelles* and Schubert's *Moments Musicaux* and *Impromptus*, but before these lyrical or poetic piano pieces there were many others, offering unaccustomed formal freedom to their composers. This is particularly true of Mozart's late character pieces, beginning with the Rondo in A Minor K 511 of March 11<sup>th</sup> 1787 and the *Six German Dances* K 509 of the same year, composed in Vienna and Prague respectively. Both works share a typical feature of character pieces in that they are hypothetical orphan movements of larger works, such as sonatas or suites. The *German Dances* K 509 are notable in two respects: firstly, they were later transcribed for orchestra, the reverse of the more common procedure; secondly,

they form a dance cycle, complete with transitions between the individual dances. Their place of origin, Prague, suggests that they may have been composed to fulfil the many social obligations that followed several successful performances of *Le Nozze di Figaro* in that city, possibly for the carnival balls of the time. Strangely, Mozart headed the trio sections *minore*, although they are all in major keys, with the exception of No 5. Perhaps this was merely meant to distinguish them from the orchestral versions, which correctly heads them *alternativo*; it is also the orchestral version that suggests performing the dances as a cycle. The Dances contain an unusually high number of different characters and performance indications for such a transient work. There are moments of rustic humour (No 5, with a more sensitive trio), theatrical character pieces such as No 2, as well as a Rossini-like *coda* complete with brilliant conclusion.

No less remarkable than the fantastic playfulness of the Dances K 509 is the *Rondo* in A Minor, K 511, which reveals a different aspect of Mozart's late style. In it

we find less of the focus on concentrated structure as a path to higher abstraction – instead it presents an increased degree of expression that refers back to the minor key works of the middle period. The autograph contains an unusually large number of performance indications, possible more than any other work by Mozart, demanding a large degree of commitment and flexibility from the performer. It is tempting to conclude that Mozart was quite aware of the unfamiliar nature of the piece, with its premonitions of Schubert and even Chopin, and wished therefore to give special care to the details of its execution. From a compositional point of view an unusual feature is the extended length of the episodes, especially bars 31 to 81 before the third entry of the *rondo* theme. This is an exceptional realisation of an extended, highly sophisticated *rondo* episode; the ornamented upbeat at the beginning refers to the main *rondo* theme, lifting the piece to a new level of complex sonata-rondo, one that Beethoven was later to employ in his own Sonatas. The following middle section in A Major (bar 89) generates a surprising

density of texture, and the C Sharp Major episode within this section presents such melodic wealth in its inner voices, such rich chromaticism as to come close to the character pieces of Schubert; in a similar way the three-in-a-bar lilt of the opening theme seems to foreshadow the melancholy of Chopin Waltzes. A clearly defined coda (bar 163) follows the last entry of the main theme and closes this first of the great romantic character pieces.

The *Adagio* in B Minor, K 540, is equally atypical of Mozart's style and of contemporary convention. It could conceivably originate as an orphaned slow movement from a Sonata, but its highly unusual character makes a solitary existence more appropriate. According to his work list, Mozart composed this piece, as peculiar as it seems in the context of the Viennese style, on March 19<sup>th</sup> 1788. The manuscript is once again full of performance indications, leading to similar conclusions as in the case of K 511. It seems much like a personal confession, in similar mould as the *Maurerische Trauermusik*, K 479a. Written in modified binary form

with repeats and a particularly moving coda in the major, it recalls forlorn moments in Schubert, with its highly expressive, chromatic dialogue between melody and motivic gestures, frequently interrupted by the archaically polyphonic main subject. Consisting of a falling fourth and ascending sixth, with an almost Wagnerian dissonance and resolution, this main subject evokes the opening of a fugue, such as the *Gesang der Geharnischten* from the *Magic Flute*.

The almost grotesque, neoclassical sounding *Little Gigue*, K 574, and the no less exotic Menuet, K 576b, could formally be orphaned movements from a Suite. The *Gigue* was written by Mozart as an album leaf for the Saxonian court organist and fellow free mason Karl Immanuel Engel on May 16<sup>th</sup> 1789, presumably reflecting their mutual interest in J.S. Bach and Händel. The Menuet was left undated, and was only published in 1801 with a trio added by Maximilian Stadler; however, it is clearly a product of Mozart's late style, possibly from 1789. It is the dense chromaticism of the main subject and the unusual

developmental character of the second section (from bar 17) that lifts this piece from the level of conventional dance to that of individual, possibly irritating character piece. The *Gigue*, mostly written in a fugal style, shares this genre-transcending nature: whilst it retains the constant quaver movement typical of a dance gigue, it features such dense chromatic harmonies, uncommonly wide figurations and sharp syncopations as to feel more like an ironic comment on a dance. As brief as both pieces are they equally demonstrate the avant-garde impulses of Mozart's late style, not merely expanding the limits of typical genres but occasionally demolishing and dissolving them.

The following pieces were not originally composed for the piano and date from Mozart's last year, 1791. The *Andante* K 616 was conceived for mechanical organ and the *Adagio* K 617a for a glass harmonica. Both works emphasize the abstract nature of Mozart's late style, not least in their choice of instruments; both works are however well suited to performance on a modern piano with its

possibilities of tone colour and articulation.

Due to the constraints of the glass harmonica, both melody and left hand accompaniment of the Adagio are written in the higher register, and contain little variation in dynamics; the result is a virtually dematerialised work with few notes and a magical atmosphere. Carefully placed ornaments in the repeats can increase the transcending nature of this small miracle of a piece even further. It was composed for the young blind glass harmonica virtuoso Marianne Kirchgessner on the occasion of an academy concert on the 19<sup>th</sup> of August 1791 in the Vienna Kärntnertor-Theatre.

The *Andante* K 616 is a more varied work, entered into Mozart's work list on May 4<sup>th</sup> 1791. In spite of the enlarged scope of the writing, the abstract nature of the music is still unmistakable, not least because of the once again high register. It was originally written for a *Flötenuhr*—a term coined by Mozart—i.e. a mechanical organ regulated by a clock, but already during Mozart's lifetime it was republished as a *Rondo* for piano solo.

The highly complex piece is tonally much like a sophisticated music box; the rondo form allows for much ornamentation and variation. The result is a fascinating blend of artificiality in mostly soft dynamics and the abstraction of automated processes. The frequent baroque-derived elements increase the effect of disassociation, inviting the listener to succumb to its pure and transcendental sensuality.

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Executive producer: Eckart Rahn  
Recorded by Christian Böhm, Sebastian Braun, Andreas Fischer & Ulrich Kraus  
Hamburg Steinway D  
Bösendorfer Imperial  
Recorded 2012/2013  
at the Concert Hall of the  
Bavarian State Music Academy, Munich  
except CD 1 recorded 1995  
at Tonstudio Ulrich Kraus  
Notes by Siegfried Mauser  
Translation: Béla Hartmann



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