

# Anja German

piano

Haydn  
Schubert  
Chopin



Winner of the 2007 Manchester International  
Concerto Competition for Young Pianists

# Piano Music by Haydn, Schubert and Chopin

Franz Josef HAYDN (1732-1809)

Keyboard Sonata (L. 33) in C minor, Hob XVI.20 (1771)

1	<i>Allegro moderato</i>	[ 5.19]
2	<i>Andante con moto</i>	[4.27]
3	<i>Menuetto (Allegro)</i>	[3.18]

Franz SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

Piano Sonata no. 19 in C minor, D. 958 (1828)

4	<i>Allegro</i>	[7.56]
5	<i>Adagio</i>	[7.54]
6	<i>Menuetto &amp; Trio (Allegro)</i>	[2.39]
7	<i>Allegro</i>	[9.24]

Fryderyk Franciszek CHOPIN (1810-1849)

8	Scherzo no. 2 in B flat minor, op. 31 (1837)	[10.08]
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Total playing time	[51.07]
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**Anja German**, piano

**Sonata in C minor, L.33 Hob.XVI/20**

Haydn's C minor Sonata was composed in 1771 but published much later (in 1780) as part of a collection of six sonatas by Artaria of Vienna. The other five sonatas in the set were L.48-52 inclusive. An intense, radical work in many ways, L.33 captures a spirit of melancholy and lyricism that is unusual in Haydn's instrumental music. This is evident from the beginning of the opening *Allegro moderato*, where an elegiac descending theme is presented in parallel thirds and sixths. However the main secondary material of the movement is much more dynamic, with energetic rhythms and an ascending melodic contour. The exposition closes with triplet figurations that are developed extensively in the development. Virtuosity and harmonic innovations are evident here in music that contrasts dramatically with the outer sections of the movement.

The second movement, *Andante con moto*, is in A flat major, and makes extensive use of ornamentation and sparse textures. The introspective character of the outer sections of the first movement is also evident here, though it is interesting to note that the second movement's intensely expressive aesthetic primarily comes from the beautiful ornaments that adorn the right hand melody line, rather than from the melody itself. The closing *Allegro* finale of L33 is in many ways the most energised and straightforward section of the sonata. Its opening theme is assertive, almost challenging, and defiant in character. Episodes and contrasting motifs add contrasting colours and moods, and pianistically the cross-hand sections are particularly interesting. This is Haydn at his most concentrated, and the economical means adopted make for strong, expressive drama in relation to the first two movements of the sonata.

**Sonata in C minor, D. 958**

Schubert's final year produced an unparalleled series of masterworks, including his final three sonatas for piano, the sonatas in C minor (D958) A major (D 959) and B flat (D960). Schubert evidently worked on all at approximately the same time, and it is recorded that they reached completion in September 1828. For many years they were totally misunderstood by musicians and the general public, simply because they were measured against Beethovenian values and aesthetics. Indeed it is recorded that Rachmaninov in the 1920s was unaware that Schubert composed any piano sonatas! But attitudes and opinions changed radically following the outstanding evangelical promotion of these masterpieces by Artur Schnabel. It should also be mentioned that Donald Francis Tovey's pioneering essay on 'Tonality in Schubert' did much to alter perceptions amongst musical scholars, so that today, more than seventy years after Schnabel's first performances of the sonatas, we can regard the music as essential, extraordinary works in the literature of music.

The ceremonial, almost orchestral opening *Allegro* of the C minor sonata shows very clearly the huge differences that exist between Beethoven's approach to composition and Schubert's. Whereas Schubert's first eight bars appear exceptionally close in terms of character, motif and rhythmic organisation to the theme of Beethoven's tightly corseted 32 Variations in C minor, Schubert extends his initial phrase by alienating Beethovenian pedants with a remarkable shift in perspective: the music reaches out towards A flat, the flattened sixth, complete with quasi rhapsodic flourishes that yield to broken octave scales, taking into a whole new orbit of pitch centre. Indeed the music stays in this 'alien' territory for much longer than one might expect at the opening of a sonatas, only returning to the tonic key from bar 21.

The whole of this first movement follows a similar pattern, with Schubert creating structure and symmetry in his own terms, rather than by a theoretical 'road map'. It was Alfred Brendel who wrote that Schubert composes like a 'sleep walker', contrasting his extraordinary daring and revolutionary approach with the tightly concentrated



techniques of Beethoven that can be analysed in terms of 'motivic variation' and 'foreshortening' (ideals that were to be further extended by Brahms and analysed by Schoenberg in treatises such as 'Fundamentals of Composition'). But over and above the extraordinary harmonic progressions of the C minor Sonata one remembers the beautiful vocal quality of the melodic material. The initial melody of the secondary group in the first movement's exposition is especially simple, folk-like and reminiscent of Lieder. It is followed by textures that are beautifully coloured by darker chromatic notes before semiquavers evoke the sonorities, figurations and lines of string instruments, and of a string quartet in particular.

By the end of the first movement's exposition the contrasting colours of orchestra, lieder and string quartet have been dramatically presented and contrasted, and elements from all three influences permeate the remainder of this most tragic, epic work. Like so many Schubert slow movements, the second movement, *Adagio*, is in rondo form. The intense serenity of its initial theme seems almost religious in style, and is subjected to a remarkable range of colouristic metamorphosis in its varied recurrences. The movement's episodes are in complete contrast to the main theme, bringing darkness, fear and a sense of death and tragedy to the musical drama that Schubert so skilfully unfolds.

Spartan textures and modest dimensions makes the *Menuetto and Trio* (movement three) appear ghostly and distant. This is a homage to the 18th century in terms of structure, but a prophecy of the 20th in terms of musical psychology: One senses a burnt out, tragic spirit behind the short phrases, the sudden silences, not to mention the hushed dynamics. There is only one four bar fortissimo outburst here. This leads into the moto perpetuo 6/8 metre finale, a movement that may evoke reminiscences of the tarantella and Beethoven's 'Kreutzer' sonata, but which reaches new, tragic and fearful compositional heights, both in Schubert's own piano works as well as in the history of western music. The structural canvass used here is ambitiously scaled, with wonderful, memorable flashes of all emotions (including joy and fun). But over all of this comes a mood of tragedy. In this sense it is a close relation and companion piece to Schubert's 'Death and the Maiden' string quartet.

**Chopin: Scherzo no. 2 in B flat minor, Op.31**

It was Beethoven who first created outstanding scherzos in western music. He used the word 'scherzo', which literally translates from the Italian as a 'joke', to indicate a faster upgrade from the 18th century menuet, and usually in contrast to a 'trio' section. This can be seen in many of Beethoven's early piano sonatas in particular, notable the three op. 2 works, the E flat op. 7 and the C minor and D major Sonatas from his op.10 set.

Following on from Beethoven, Chopin radically altered both the perspective and the concept of the Scherzo form in his four large scale bravura works for solo piano that are given that name. Though the contrasting middle sections of each Chopin scherzo certainly has a relationship in terms of dramatic contrast to the trios from Beethoven's era, they are all much more extended and substantial than anything that could have been conceived as a 'trio' in the early 19th century- even by a composer as revolutionary and expansive as Schubert. And nothing could be further from a 'joke' than the volcanic, volatile mood of the outer sections in Chopin's first, B minor Scherzo, op.20. The third, C sharp minor Scherzo is intensely tragic and virtuosic, whilst the spring-like quixotic fourth, E major Scherzo extends filigree virtuosity in a way that few, if any, earlier works for piano attempted.

Scherzo no. 2 in B flat minor is in A-B-A form with an extended development in the 'B' section and a victorious coda. It is the most effervescent, sparkling, optimistic and dance-like of the four Chopin Scherzos. One is immediately reminded of central European soirees, Parisian salons...'85.even Viennese ballrooms as the memorable flourishes ascend and descend the keyboard in joyful triple metre. The central 'trio' initially finds welcome repose and wistfulness of mood before virtuosity and bravura reach new and extended heights in a remarkable development of motifs. It is easy to understand why this work has remained the most popular of the four scherzos. Indeed it is one of the whole repertoire's most frequently performed piano works.

Anja is from Slovenia; she is 22 years old and is currently studying at the Mozarteum University in Salzburg. Her teachers include Prof. Dubrava Tomsic-Srebotnjak, Prof. Eugen Undjic and Prof. Karl Heinz Kammerling. In addition to her success in the first Manchester International Concerto Competition she has recently won prizes at the National Competition in Slovenia, the European Piano Teachers Association International Competition and the ZF Musikpreis International Competition in Germany.



Anja has given recitals in Slovenia, Germany, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands and has played with the Slovenia Radio Orchestra, Orchestra di Padova e del Veneto and the Slovenian Philharmonic.

Her future plans include the completion of her Masters degree and continuing to perform in recitals and competitions. Her hobbies include salsa dancing, psychology and travelling.

The First Manchester International Concerto Competition for Young Pianists was held in August 2007 in Manchester Cathedral, offering young pianists the rare and exciting opportunity to perform a concerto with an outstanding professional orchestra. Each applicant had to prepare and submit on DVD a complete performance of one of the standard romantic or classical piano concertos. From an initial number of pianists who entered from twenty countries, twenty-four young semifinalists were invited to come to Manchester to perform (twelve pianists in the 16 and under section and twelve in the 22 and under). After performing their concertos with piano accompaniment in Whiteley Hall, Chetham's School of Music, four finalists were chosen to perform their concertos with Manchester Camerata under Stephen Threlfall. The winners were then announced as 22 year old Anja German, from Slovenia (22 and under category) who performed Beethoven's third concerto, and 13 year old Eligiusz Skocylas from Poland, (16 and under) who performed Mozart's C major Concerto, K413.

The competition was an unusual event in that every member of the jury was a well established concert pianist. In this respect it looked back to an earlier era of musical history, when the majority of jurors in piano competitions were players rather than teachers or critics. But the emphasis of the competition, which will be held again in August 2009 and which received a tremendous amount of encouragement and positive feedback from audiences, professional musicians, the media, teachers and participants themselves, is forward looking. It emphasises the positive for every young pianist who chooses to enter.

Positive feedback and encouragement for all participants is at the forefront of the event, where the emphasis will always be on inspiration, motivation and educational stimulus. It almost goes without saying that the discipline involved in preparing a complete piano concerto to a high standard for recording purposes is invaluable in itself. Therefore those pianists who submit a recording for the competition, but 'fail' to be selected for the semi final need not feel too disappointed.

As part of the encouraging policy of the competition, free tickets for all of the

masterclasses, semi-final and final performances are given to every applicant who enters but is not selected for the semi-finals. In this way it is hoped that as many young musicians as possible will be motivated and energised by the competition.

The Manchester International Concerto Competition for Young Pianists gratefully acknowledges sponsorship and advertising from Steinway & Sons, Manchester Evening News, Muso, International Piano and Mr Michael E Corby. We are also enormously grateful for all the support and encouragement of so many in helping this first competition to evolve including:

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The 2nd Manchester International Concerto Competition for Young Pianists will take place in August 2009.

Jury members:

Murray McLachlan, Chair (UK) Radoslav Kvapil (Czech Republic) Noriko Ogawa (Japan) Dina Parakhina (Russia) Bernard Roberts (UK) Howard Shelley (UK) and Martino Tirimo (Cyprus)

**[www.pianoconcertocompetition.com](http://www.pianoconcertocompetition.com)**

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2007 winners:

left: 16-and-under age group: Eligiusz Skocylas  
right: 22-and-under age group: Anja German