

COMPACT  
disc  
DIGITAL AUDIO  
PAKM032

PRISTINE  
AUDIO  
XR

COMPACT  
disc  
DIGITAL AUDIO  
PAKM032

PRISTINE  
AUDIO  
XR

# CHOPIN

## SIX OEUVRES POUR PIANO

PAUL VON SCHILHAWSKY  
PLEVEL PIANO

- 1 Ballade No. 1 in G minor, Op.23 (9:03)
- 2 Polonaise No. 1 in C sharp minor, Op. 26, No. 1 (8:19)
- 3 Nocturne No. 1 in B-flat minor, Op. 9, No. 1 (6:12)
- 4 Nocturne No. 4 in F major, Op. 15, No. 1 (4:41)
- 5 Waltz No. 14 in E minor, Op. Post. (3:29)
- 6 Waltz No. 7 in C-sharp minor, Op. 64, No. 2 (3:19)

Recorded c. 1953.  
Issued as Le Club Français du Disque 10" LP Cat. No. 71.  
Transfer and XR remastering by Andrew Rose at Pristine Audio, January 2009  
Cover artwork based on a Photograph of Paul von Schilhawsky  
Total duration: 35:03 © 2009 Pristine Audio.

SARL Pristine Audio, Le Bourg, 24610 St. Méard de Gurçon, France - Tel +33 (0)5 53 82 18 57 - Internet: [www.pristineclassical.com](http://www.pristineclassical.com)



# CHOPIN: SIX OEUVRES POUR PIANO

## PAUL VON SCHILHAWSKY

Chopin, according to Arthur Hedley, "had the rare gift of a very personal melody, expressive of heart-felt emotion, and his music is penetrated by a poetic feeling that has an almost universal appeal.... Present-day evaluation places him among the immortals of music by reason of his insight into the secret places of the heart and because of his awareness of the magical new sonorities to be drawn from the piano."

It is very difficult to briefly characterise Chopin's œuvre. Robert Schumann, speaking of Chopin's Sonata in b-flat minor, wrote that "he alone begins and ends a work like this: with dissonances, through dissonances, and in dissonances," and in Chopin's music he discerned "cannon concealed amid blossoms." Franz Liszt, in the opening of his biography about Chopin (Life of Chopin), termed him a "gentle, harmonious genius." Thus disparate have been the views on Chopin's music. The first systematic, if imperfect, study of Chopin's style came in F.P. Laurencin's 1861 Die Harmonik der Neuzeit. Laurencin concluded that "Chopin is one of the most brilliant exceptional natures that have ever stridden onto the stage of history and life, he is one who can never be exhausted nor stand before a void. Chopin is the musical progone of all progones until now."

Chopin's music for the piano combined a unique rhythmic sense (particularly his use of rubato), frequent use of chromaticism, and counterpoint. This mixture produces a particularly fragile sound in the melody and the harmony, which are nonetheless underpinned by solid and interesting harmonic techniques. He took the new salon genre of the nocturne, invented by Irish composer John Field, to a deeper level of sophistication. Three of Chopin's twenty-one Nocturnes were only published after his death in 1849, contrary to his wishes. He also endowed popular dance forms, such as the Polish mazurek and the Viennese waltz, with a greater range of melody and expression. Chopin was the first to write ballades and scherzi as individual pieces. He also took the example of Bach's preludes and fugues, transforming the genre in his own Preludes.

Chopin reinvented the étude, expanding on the idea and making it into a gorgeous, eloquent and emotional showpiece. He also used his Études to teach his own revolutionary style, for instance playing with the weak fingers (3, 4, and 5) in fast figures (op. 10, n° 2) and playing black keys with the thumb (op. 10, n° 5).

Several of Chopin's pieces have become very well known—for instance the Revolutionary Étude (op. 10, No. 12), the Minute Waltz (Op. 64, No. 1), and the third movement of his Funeral March Sonata n° 2 (op. 35), which is often used as an iconic representation of grief. Chopin himself never named an instrumental work beyond genre and number, leaving all potential extra-musical associations to the listener; the names by which we know many of the pieces were invented by others. The Revolutionary Étude was not written with the failed Polish uprising against Russia in mind; it merely appeared at that time. The Funeral March was written before the rest of the sonata within which it is contained, but the exact occasion is not known; it appears not to have been inspired by any specific personal bereavement. Other melodies have been used as the basis of popular songs, such as the slow section of the Fantaisie-Impromptu (op. posth. 66) and the first section of the Étude op. 10 No. 3. These pieces often rely on an intense and personalised chromaticism, as well as a melodic curve that resembles the operas of Gioachino Rossini, Gaetano Donizetti, and especially Vincenzo Bellini. Chopin used the piano to re-create the gracefulness of the singing voice, and talked and wrote constantly about singers.

Chopin's style and gifts became increasingly influential. Robert Schumann was a huge admirer of Chopin's music, and he used melodies from Chopin and even named a piece from his suite Carnaval after Chopin. This admiration was not reciprocated.

Franz Liszt was another admirer and personal friend of the composer, and he transcribed for piano six of Chopin's Polish songs. However, Liszt denied that he wrote Funérailles (subtitled "October 1849", the seventh movement of his piano suite Harmonies Poétiques et Religieuses of 1853) in memory of Chopin. Though the middle section seems to be modeled on the famous octave trio section of Chopin's Polonaise in A flat major, op. 53, Liszt said the piece had been inspired by the deaths of three of his Hungarian compatriots in the same month.

Brahms and the younger Russian composers, too, found inspiration in Chopin's examples.

Chopin's technical innovations also became influential. His Préludes (op. 28) and Études (op. 10 and op. 25) rapidly became standard works, and inspired both Liszt's Transcendental Études and Schumann's Symphonic Études. Alexander Scriabin was also strongly influenced by Chopin; for example, his 24 Preludes, op. 11, are inspired by Chopin's op. 28.

Jeremy Siepmann, in his biography of the composer, lists pianists whose recordings of Chopin are generally acknowledged to be among the greatest Chopin performances ever preserved: Vladimir de Pachmann, Raoul Pugno, Ignacy Jan Paderewski, Moritz Rosenthal, Sergei Rachmanninoff, Alfred Cortot, Ignaz Friedman, Raoul Koczalski, Arthur Rubinstein, Mieczysław Horszowski, Claudio Arrau, Vlado Perlemuter, Vladimir Horowitz, Dinu Lipatti, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Martha Argerich, Maurizio Pollini, Murray Perahia, Krystian Zimerman, Evgeny Kissin.

Arthur Rubinstein said the following about Chopin's music and its universality:

*Chopin was a genius of universal appeal. His music conquers the most diverse audiences. When the first notes of Chopin sound through the concert hall there is a happy sigh of recognition. All over the world men and women know his music. They love it. They are moved by it. Yet it is not "Romantic music" in the Byronic sense. It does not tell stories or paint pictures. It is expressive and personal, but still a pure art. Even in this abstract atomic age, where emotion is not fashionable, Chopin endures. His music is the universal language of human communication. When I play Chopin I know I speak directly to the hearts of people!*

NOTES FROM WIKIDPEDIA - FULL NOTES ON THIS RECORDING CAN BE FOUND AT [WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM](http://WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM)