

## ... Program ...

### Sonata, Op. 31—Beethoven

*Allegro*  
*Adagio*  
*Allegretto*

Beethoven is reported to have said, "I always have a picture in my mind when I write." Nevertheless, Op. 31 is not considered to be of so descriptive a nature as many of his other works. Yet, Beethoven, when questioned regarding its meaning, replied: "Read Shakespeare's 'Tempest,'" which, evidently, he looked upon as a clue to the work. The whole sonata is an unusual phase of the composer who has been called "the Shakespeare of Music."

### Rondo Capriccioso—Mendelssohn

W. H. Hadow, one of England's most authoritative writers on musical matters, in his book, "Studies of Modern Music," reminds one of the "aesthetic damsels" in Du Maurier's picture, who "never listen to Mendelssohn, because there are no wrong notes;" and goes on to say "They were unconsciously enunciating an important piece of scientific criticism. For Mendelssohn never disappoints and never surprises. \* \* \* Hence, of all composers, Mendelssohn appeals most intimately to audiences that are untrained and inexperienced." The Rondo Capriccioso is one of his most perfectly built up piano pieces. To reverse the application of the words of Charlotte Bronte, if it does not curdle your blood, it may at least stir it—a fact that is most likely in the hands of Mr. Rachmaninoff.

### Ballade in F Minor—Chopin

Chopin originated the ballade as a form of composition for the pianoforte, undoubtedly with the idea of poetic narrative. Indeed, Chopin himself told Schumann that the poems of Mickiewicz were the inspiration for his four "Ballades." "A poet, again, might easily write words to them," said Schumann. \* \* \* "they move the innermost depth of the soul." Niecks, in his authoritative work on Chopin, says, "The emotional keynote of the piece (Ballade in F Minor) is longing sadness \* \* \* preserved throughout," and describes the Coda as "palpitating and swelling with passion."

### Valse—Chopin

Schumann, writing on some of Chopin's waltzes just published, said, "They must please; they are of another stamp than the usual waltzes and in the style in which they can only be conceived by Chopin when he looks in a grandly-artistic way into the dancing crowd, which he elevates with his playing, thinking of other things than of what is being danced." The same might be said of all Chopin's waltzes, which are "salon music of the most aristocratic kind," but fragrant with poetical meanings.

### Scherzo, Op. 31—Chopin

A Scherzo, as treated by Beethoven or Mendelssohn, is primarily a playful or humorous movement, but Chopin puts a strain of sad recklessness and an almost bitter questioning into the B flat minor that makes the sweetness and plaintiveness of the first part of the second movement lose itself in a struggle for mastery over the almost sardonic and defiant "development." Schumann compared this Scherzo to a poem of Byron's as "so tender, so bold, as full of love as scorn."

### Prelude in C Sharp Minor—Rachmaninoff

This, the most widely known of the smaller pieces among the compositions of Russia's eminent composer, would have made a fortune for Mr. Rachmaninoff had he obtained a copyright on it when composed in what he considered his student days. Romances have been woven around its meaning, but Mr. Rachmaninoff himself claims no descriptive program, only that his desire was to create something beautiful and artistic. He reminds one of the fact that the psychology of a prelude is not even so much as to express a mood, merely to induce it, and that its form is that of absolute music.

### Valse—Rachmaninoff

### Barcarolle—Rachmaninoff

Two more of the smaller compositions which are evidences of Mr. Rachmaninoff's creative beauty of expression.

### Valse, "Faust"—Liszt-Gounod

Franz Liszt threw a rope to the drowning Wagner that put him on the first lap of his operatic fame—one of the many instances of Liszt's generous admiration for his colleagues. Without such appreciation for others his piano transcriptions would doubtless never have been written. In some cases they are greater proofs of Liszt's genius than a number of his original compositions. The treatment of the waltz themes from Gounod's opera "Faust" show the Abbé in one of his many-sided phases.

Program Notes by Mary Lindsay-Oliver

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