



Chopin

Mazurkas, Vol. 1

INGRID FLITER



Mazurkas, Vol. 1

Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849)

INGRID FLITER piano

1. **Mazurka in B flat major, WN 7** 1:35
2. **Mazurka in C major, WN 24** 1:52
3. **Mazurka in A minor, WN 14** 2:54
4. **Mazurka in F major, WN 25** 1:51
5. **Mazurka in B flat major, WN 41** 1:15
6. **Mazurka in A minor, WN 60** 3:09
7. **Mazurka in F sharp minor, Op. 6 No. 1** 3:09
8. **Mazurka in C sharp minor, Op. 6 No. 2** 2:34
9. **Mazurka in E major, Op. 6 No. 3** 2:03
10. **Mazurka in E flat minor, Op. 6 No. 4** 1:00
11. **Mazurka in C major, Op. 6 No. 5** 1:01
12. **Mazurka in B flat major, Op. 7 No. 1** 2:45
13. **Mazurka in A minor, Op. 7 No. 2** 4:20
14. **Mazurka in F minor, Op. 7 No. 3** 2:46
15. **Mazurka in A flat major, Op. 7 No. 4** 1:25

16. **Mazurka in G minor, Op. 24 No. 1** 3:13
17. **Mazurka in C major, Op. 24 No. 2** 2:28
18. **Mazurka in A flat major, Op. 24 No. 3** 2:35
19. **Mazurka in B flat minor, Op. 24 No. 4** 5:15
20. **Mazurka in G major, Op. 50 No. 1** 2:38
21. **Mazurka in A flat major, Op. 50 No. 2** 3:15
22. **Mazurka in C sharp minor, Op. 50 No. 3** 5:31
23. **Mazurka in A minor, Op. 59 No. 1** 4:25
24. **Mazurka in A flat major, Op. 59 No. 2** 2:45
25. **Mazurka in F sharp minor, Op. 59 No. 3** 3:43
26. **Mazurka in F minor, Op. 63 No. 2** 2:02
27. **Mazurka in C sharp minor, Op. 63 No. 3** 2:12
28. **Mazurka in F minor, WN 65** 2:39

Total Running Time 76:58

Chopin

Mazurkas, Vol. 1

‘My piano has heard only mazury’, Chopin wrote to his family from Vienna, shortly after he left Poland for good in November 1830. This suggests that there may have been a ‘mazurka workshop’ just prior to the composition of Opp. 6 and 7, the first mazurkas he sent to a publisher. While still in Warsaw he had committed to paper at least five, and possibly six, mazurkas, and he had no doubt improvised many more. But with Opp. 6 and 7, he signalled a new-found ambition for the genre. By presenting these pieces in sets of four and five respectively, he consolidated the genre, and in a sense defined it for art music. He even spelt out in another letter to his family that the Op. 6 pieces were ‘not for dancing’. The nine pieces of Opp. 6 and 7 are remarkable above all for their harmonic sophistication, sometimes resulting from stylizations of traditional folk dances, but often indicative of the highly personal, even intimate, relationship Chopin developed with this genre. It is not far-fetched to view Opp. 6 and 7 as the first canonical repertory of European nationalism, predating the relevant works of Glinka by several years, and inaugurating a century of romantic nationalism in art music.

Op. 24, comprising four mazurkas, was completed in the autumn of 1835. Regional dance models are still foregrounded in this cycle – a *kujawiak* in the G minor and B flat minor, for example, and an *oberek* in the C major – and the interpenetration of these models is also apparent, with a *mazur* invading the *oberek* in the second section of No. 2, and the *kujawiak* of No. 4 transformed into an *oberek* at the *con anima* section. However, Op. 24 is more obviously an artistically integrated cycle than either Op. 6 or Op. 7, with tonal and motivic interrelationships, complementary moods, and a deliberate structural weight assigned to the first and especially to the last of the mazurkas. This last mazurka in B flat minor was by far the most ambitious yet attempted by Chopin, with a complex, multi-

sectional form that incorporates a haunting Lydian-mode episode in octaves and a lengthy coda that transforms the main theme into an extended epilogue to the set as a whole.

In Opp. 50 and 59 (each containing three rather than four mazurkas), Chopin's ambition for this genre reached new heights. These later pieces, composed in 1842 and 1845 respectively, are dance poems on the grandest scale, displaying (or rather concealing) a wealth of harmonic and contrapuntal subtlety. They register in many ways a more general, and often noted, change of direction in Chopin's music in the early 1840s, and in particular a growing interest in contrapuntal methods. There can even be an apparent incongruity in the appearance of strict imitative counterpoint, as at the opening of Op. 50 No. 3, in the context of a dance piece. The complex, often symmetrically-based, harmonies of these later mazurkas are also part and parcel of Chopin's late style. Op. 50 No. 3 is again a case in point, especially in its impassioned development section, where the intensity is built up by means of a model and sequence technique whose chromatic part movement seems to foreshadow Wagner.

Like much of Chopin's later music, the mazurkas of Op. 50 and Op. 59 were composed during the long summers he spent at George Sand's manor house in Berry, where conditions were conducive to the creation of works of remarkable enterprise and ambition. The later of the two cycles was a product of his penultimate summer there in 1845, and for many it represents the peak of Chopin's achievement in the genre. The opening of the first piece, in A minor, radically transforms the normal phrase structure of a mazurka (12- rather than 8-bar phrases), while its middle section in the tonic major can only be described as a kind of fantasy, notable for its hidden repetitions and discreet motivic variations. The second piece, in A flat major, is no less adventurous, notably in the unorthodox part movement of its middle section, and in the dissolution of the reprise into one of the composer's most tonally elusive chains of chromatic harmonies. There is evidence in his correspondence that Chopin became increasingly self-critical in these later years, and the manuscript sources for

the second mazurka of Op. 59 certainly bear this out. We learn from these sources that the extended multi-sectional coda cost him much effort.

Following Op. 59, a change of direction is discernible in the evolution of Chopin's mazurkas. The last complete set, the three of Op. 63, was composed in 1846, and here Chopin returned to simpler outlines and more modest dimensions, with the folk model now brought a little closer to centre stage. This is not the only sign in Chopin's last music of a reflective glance back to his Polish roots. In some ways Op. 63 marks a return to the style of those mazurkas he had composed in Warsaw, later to be published posthumously by his amanuensis Julian Fontana. And in connection with this posthumous edition, it is worth pointing out that the high opus numbers (everything above Op. 65) can be a source of some confusion. It is partly for this reason that the posthumous pieces are now often classified (as here) by the WN numbers of the Polish National Edition. This also serves as a helpful reminder that the posthumously published mazurkas were not conceived as cycles.

Thus, the mazurkas designated WN 7, WN 14, WN 24 and WN 25 were all composed in Warsaw at some point before 1830. There is no obvious caesura between these youthful mazurkas and Opp. 6 and 7, but on the whole they are simpler in design and closer to the type of mazurka composed by many other Polish composers in the early nineteenth century. Unhappily, classification is further complicated by the fact that not all the pieces published posthumously date from the Warsaw period. Throughout his life Chopin wrote pieces which he chose not to send to a publisher. Some were designed as private gifts, as is the case with WN 41 in B flat major, one of several pieces Chopin presented to young ladies during his early years in Paris (from 1832 onwards). And others date from the final stages of his life, including WN 60 in A minor, of which one manuscript is dated 1846 and another 1847, and WN 65 in F minor, which several authorities date to the winter of 1848 or the spring of 1849, just a few months before the composer died.

INGRID FLITER piano

Argentine pianist Ingrid Fliter has won the admiration and hearts of audiences around the world for her passionate yet thoughtful and sensitive music making, played with an effortless technique. Winner of the 2006 Gilmore Artist Award, one of only a handful of pianists and the only woman to have received this honour, Fliter divides her time between North America and Europe.

In Europe, Fliter has performed in recital in Amsterdam, London at both Wigmore Hall and Queen Elizabeth Hall, Paris, Barcelona, Milan, Prague, Salzburg, Cologne and Stockholm, and participated in festivals such as La Roque-d'Anthéron, Prague Autumn and the BBC Proms. Orchestral engagements include appearances with the Helsinki and Royal Stockholm philharmonics, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Ulster Orchestra, Orchestre National de Lyon and Nörrköping Symphony Orchestra. In Asia she has performed in recital in Singapore and at The World Pianist Series in Tokyo and with orchestras including the Israel, Hong Kong and Osaka philharmonics and Sydney and West Australian symphonies.

Fliter made her American orchestral debut with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra just days after the announcement of her Gilmore award. Since then, she has appeared with most of the major North American orchestras including the Cleveland and Minnesota orchestras, the Boston, San Francisco, St. Louis, Toronto, Detroit, National, Dallas, Houston, Cincinnati, New World, San Diego and New Jersey symphonies among others, as well as at the Mostly Mozart, Tanglewood, Grant Park, Aspen, Ravinia, Blossom, Tippet Rise and Brevard summer festivals. She made her debut at the Grand Teton Festival in summer 2022. Equally busy as a recitalist, Fliter has performed in New York at Carnegie's Zankel Hall, the Metropolitan Museum and the 92nd Street Y, at Chicago's Orchestra Hall, and in Boston, San Francisco, Vancouver and Detroit, as well as for the Van Cliburn Foundation in Fort Worth.

A Linn recording artist, Fliter has recorded both Chopin concertos and the Mendelssohn and Schumann concertos with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra as well as the complete Chopin Preludes and Chopin Nocturnes. Her two all-Chopin recordings for EMI earned her the reputation as one of the pre-eminent interpreters of that composer while her most recent EMI recording is an all-Beethoven album featuring the 'Pathétique' and 'Appassionata' sonatas. Live recordings of Fliter performing works by Beethoven and Chopin at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam are available on VAI Music.

Born in Buenos Aires in 1973, Fliter began her piano studies in Argentina with Elizabeth Westerkamp. In 1992 she moved to Europe where she continued her studies in Freiburg with Vitaly Margulis, in Rome with Carlos Bruno, and with Franco Scala and Boris Petrushansky at the Academy 'Incontri col Maestro' in Imola, Italy, where she has been teaching since 2015. Fliter began playing public recitals at the age of eleven and made her professional orchestra debut at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires at the age of 16. Already the winner of several competitions in Argentina, she went on to win prizes at the Cantu International Competition and the Ferruccio Busoni Competition in Italy and in 2000 was awarded the silver medal at the Chopin Competition in Warsaw.

Recorded at the Fazioli Concert Hall, Sacile, Italy,
on 11-13 June 2024

Recording Producer & Engineer
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Post-production
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Label Manager
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Design
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Piano
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