

BARBER

Sonata in c minor, Op. 6

SCHUMANN


Fantasiestücke, Op. 73

CHOPIN

Sonata in g minor, Op. 65

Marcy Rosen, cello

Diane Walsh, piano

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Samuel Barber

(1910-1981)

Sonata in c minor, Op. 6 (17:53)

- 1) I. Allegro ma non troppo (7:59)
- 2) II. Adagio - Presto - Adagio (4:03)
- 3) III. Allegro appassionato (5:51)

Robert Schumann

(1810-1856)

Fantasiestücke, Op. 73 (10:56)

- 4) I. Zart und mit Ausdruck (2:55)
- 5) II. Lebhaft, leicht (3:27)
- 6) III. Rasch und mit Feuer (4:34)

Frédéric Chopin

(1810-1849)

Sonata in g minor, Op. 65 (26:39)

- 7) I. Allegro moderato (11:02)
- 8) II. Scherzo. Allegro con brio (5:06)
- 9) III. Largo (3:50)
- 10) IV. Finale. Allegro (6:41)

Marcy Rosen, cello • Diane Walsh, piano

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)
Cello Sonata in c minor, Op. 6

Samuel Barber was an American composer, pianist and baritone who lived from March 9, 1910 to January 23, 1981. He was a child prodigy who began his studies at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia at the age of 14. He graduated from Curtis in 1934. In 1932, Barber wrote his Cello Sonata in c minor, Op. 6.

While at Curtis, Samuel Barber developed a close friendship with the cellist Orlando Cole who later became my teacher at the Curtis Institute. The composer worked closely together with Mr. Cole reading each page of the Sonata as it was written and offering his thoughts. Although the piece is dedicated to Barber's composition teacher Rosario Scalero, Barber later added the inscription "to Orlando/physician at the birth of this Sonata/ in appreciation of his help and interest/Samuel Barber/New York seven years late." Together, Barber and Cole premiered the work in New York at Town Hall in 1933.

I studied the Sonata with Mr. Cole and still hear his voice telling me to play with passion and direction through the lines. I have always had a great affinity for this work and find it to be soulful and deeply revealing into Barber's emotional complexity. The colors that one needs to create when playing his music and understanding the conclusion of his phrases are deeply rooted and

influenced by his training as a singer. I think to truly embrace his color palette one must listen to Barber's recording of his own *Dover Beach* with the Curtis String Quartet. His voice is beautiful with a narrow vibrato and the performance is memorable.

It is my honor to record this piece with Diane Walsh as a tribute to Orlando Cole.

The first movement of the Sonata opens dramatically with a fiery burst of upward leaps in the cello line. Barber's long phrases are often interrupted by rests which force the performer to take in air, as if they were gasping. The truly magical second theme is a gorgeous melody, played in turn by both instruments. After agitated development of the opening leaps, the serene second theme takes us to the conclusion—the leaps now reversed as descending steps—and a peaceful resolution.

The second movement plays two roles. It is both the slow movement and the scherzo. The outer Adagio sections are mournful and emotionally draining while the scherzo is witty and light.

The very dramatic third movement begins with an impassioned piano solo highlighted by churning waves in the left hand that create a momentum for the soulful melody in the right hand. The cello enters, sustaining the emo-

tional surge. The movement continues, almost in scenes. There are reflections from previous movements and light hearted moments culminating in a tumultuous and bold climax that is followed by an almost bittersweet cadenza in the piano. The Sonata concludes with a Coda that starts slowly and builds to a declamatory and very final close in c minor. — *Marcy Rosen*

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)
Fantasiestücke, Op. 73

In early 1849, Robert Schumann was coping with a period of revolutionary tumult and violence in Germany, which had forced him and his wife Clara to temporarily flee their home in Dresden and take refuge in a neighboring town. During this stressful time Schumann retreated to his inner world. As he described his surge of creativity that year “[it is] as if the outer storms have driven me more into myself. Thus, I’ve found a counterweight against the terrible things which broke in from the outside.”

That February Schumann wrote the *Three Fantasy Pieces*, Op. 73 in just two days, and Clara premiered it a few days later in Dresden with the clarinetist Johann Gottlieb Kotte. The original title was *Soirée Pieces*, but when the work was published later that year, Schumann decided that *Fantasy Pieces* would give its interpreters a freer range for imagination. He then indicated

that it could also be played on the violin or the cello, and today it is most often heard on the cello.

The pieces were conceived as three movements of a single work. The ending of each piece is marked *attacca* (attach), and they are played without pause. The slowest movement comes first, then one with a more moderate tempo, and finally a fiery and quick finale. The effect is of a gradually brightening mood: a gentle wistfulness in the first piece; a more optimistic and active character in the second, and joyous rambunctiousness in the last. The progression from A minor to A major contributes to this effect, as does the changing rhythmic motion: flowing triplets give way to jumpier dotted rhythms and finally to spiky upward surges and downward cascades. In the final pages there are two more indications that the tempo should go even faster, and the music rushes to the end, all melancholy forgotten. — *Diane Walsh*

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

Sonata in g minor, Op. 65

The last years of Chopin's life were physically and emotionally difficult. Chronic tuberculosis compounded by bouts of influenza made him cough and gasp for breath; his nine-year relationship with George Sand had ended abruptly, after Chopin had innocently taken her daughter's side in a rift between mother and daughter; and he was in financial difficulties. His

Letters to friends and family from this period seem stoic and philosophical, but he was deeply hurt by the breakup, and working was an effort for him. He was still revising the Sonata for Cello and Piano in G minor, which he had been struggling with for several years, but finally offered it to his German publisher in June of 1847. The following winter, a few friends came to his support and urged him to give a public concert at the Salle Pleyel, his first appearance in Paris in six years. Just two weeks later, on February 17, 1848, the pale and fragile Chopin gave the first performance of the sonata (omitting its first movement) with the French cellist Auguste Franchomme, in a demanding program which also included several of his solo piano works. All were received rapturously by the sold-out audience.

The sonata has four movements, of which the first is the longest and most elaborate. The music seems to sigh with regret, interrupted by agitated outbursts of passion and anger. The opening theme has a similarity to the first song of Schubert's *Winterreise*, whose text speaks of the end of love and the loneliness of continuing on through the darkness: "A stranger I arrived here, a stranger I go hence." The remaining movements—a scherzo with trio, a poignant nocturne, and a rondo—are more compact, and the contrasts of character are beautifully drawn. Sunnier, more energetic interludes finally prevail, and the piece ends with, if not triumph, at least fortitude and hope. Chopin lived another year and a half, dying at 39. — *Diane Walsh*

Marcy Rosen is recognized as one of today’s most respected cellists. Hailed as “one of the intimate art’s abiding treasures” by *Los Angeles Times* music critic Herbert Glass and described as “a New York legend of the cello” by the *New Yorker*, she has performed in recital and with orchestras throughout the world.

She made her concerto debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra at the age of eighteen and has since appeared with the Dallas Symphony, Phoenix Symphony, Caramoor Festival Orchestra, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Jupiter Symphony, Concordia Chamber Orchestra and the Tokyo Symphony. In New York she has performed at prestigious venues like Carnegie Hall, the 92nd Street “Y” and Merkin Concert Hall, and in Washington D.C., at the Kennedy Center, Dumbarton Oaks and the Phillips Collection.

Sought after for her riveting and informative Master Classes, she has been a guest of the Curtis Institute of Music, the New England Conservatory, the Juilliard School, the San Francisco Conservatory, the Central Conservatory in Beijing, China, the Seoul Arts Center in Korea and the Cartagena International Music Festival in Colombia. In 2024 she was named Artistic Director of the Evnin Rising Stars program at the Caramoor Center for the Arts.

Ms. Rosen has collaborated with the world’s finest musicians, including Leon Fleisher, Richard Goode, Andras Schiff, Mitsuko Uchida, Jonathan Biss,

Marc-Andre Hamelin, Isaac Stern and Jessye Norman, among others, and with the Aizuri, Catalyst, Daedelus, Emerson, Juilliard and Orion Quartets. She is a founding member of La Fenice as well as the Mendelssohn String Quartet. With the Mendelssohn she was Artist-in-Residence at the North Carolina School of the Arts and for nine years served as Blodgett-Artist-in-Residence at Harvard University. Since first attending the Marlboro Festival in 1975, she has taken part in 25 “Musicians from Marlboro” tours and has performed in concerts celebrating the 40th, 50th, and 60th anniversaries of the festival.

Since 1986 Ms. Rosen has been Artistic Director of Chesapeake Chamber Music in Maryland and she is an artist member of Music for Food, a musician led initiative to fight hunger in our local communities.

A graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, Ms. Rosen is currently professor of cello at the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College and the CUNY Graduate Center also serving as Artistic Director of the Chamber Music Live concert series.

An esteemed artist of distinction, the American pianist **Diane Walsh** is regularly heard on disc and in recital, chamber music and concerto performances throughout the world. She has been guest soloist with the American Symphony Orchestra, the orchestras of Austin, Delaware, Indianapolis, Portland, San Francisco, and St. Louis, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and the Orchestra of St. Luke's. Abroad, she appeared with the radio symphony orchestras of Berlin, Frankfurt, Munich and Stuttgart, as well as orchestras in Brazil, China, The Czech Republic, The Netherlands, and Russia.

In recital, Ms. Walsh has been presented in many of the country's most distinguished venues, among them New York City's 92nd Street Y, Merkin Concert Hall, Metropolitan Museum of Art and Miller Theatre, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, and Chicago's Orchestra Hall, while international sites include Wigmore Hall (London), the Concertgebouw (Amsterdam), Philharmonic Hall (St. Petersburg), Dvorák Hall (Prague) and the Mozarteum (Salzburg).

She is a frequent guest at music festivals including Bard, Cape Cod, Chesapeake, Marlboro, and Santa Fe, and she has collaborated with the Brentano, DaPonte, Fine Arts, Jupiter, Lydian, Mendelssohn, Terra, and New Zealand string quartets. She served as Artistic Director of the Skaneateles Festival in upstate New York.

Diane Walsh was the music director and on-stage solo pianist of 33 Variations, Moisés Kaufman's award-winning play about Beethoven's last years and his writing of the Diabelli Variations. Ms. Walsh gave 113 performances of the Diabelli during the play's Broadway production at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre in New York, which starred Jane Fonda.

An active recording artist, Diane Walsh has released 20 discs of diverse repertoire for Biddulph, Bridge, Composers Recordings, Inc., Jonathan Digital Recordings, KOCH International, Navona, Naxos, Newport Classic, None-such, Sony, and Stereophile.

Ms. Walsh has won top prizes in the Concert Artists Guild, Young Concert Artists, Munich ARD, Salzburg Mozart, William Kapell, and Ferruccio Busoni international competitions. She also was honored with the Walter W. Naumburg Chamber Music Award and the Chamber Music Prize of the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. She is a graduate of the Juilliard School and Mannes College of Music, and is a Steinway Artist.

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