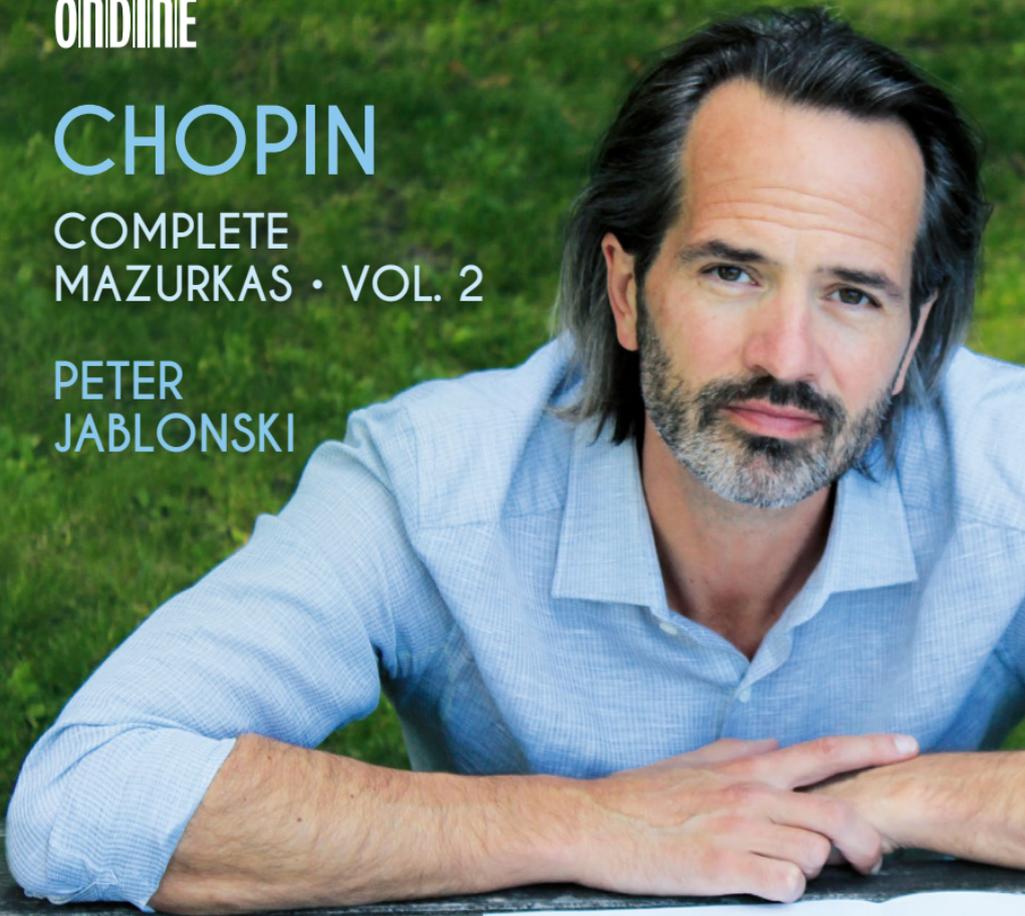


ONDINE

CHOPIN

COMPLETE
MAZURKAS • VOL. 2

PETER
JABLONSKI





FRÉDÉRIC (FRYDERYK) CHOPIN

Photographed by Louis-Auguste Bisson in 1849

FRÉDÉRIC (FRYDERYK) CHOPIN (1810–1849)
Complete Mazurkas, Vol. 2

Six Mazurkas, Op. posth. **10:30**

- | | | |
|---|---|------|
| 1 | Mazurka in B-flat major, B. 16 (1826) | 1:38 |
| 2 | Mazurka in G major, B. 16 (1826) | 1:43 |
| 3 | Mazurka in D major, B. 31 (1829) | 1:20 |
| 4 | Mazurka in B-flat major, B. 73, 'Wolowska' (1832) | 1:18 |
| 5 | Mazurka in C major, B. 82 (1833) | 2:59 |
| 6 | Mazurka in A-flat major, B. 85 (1834) | 1:32 |

Two Mazurkas, Op. posth. (c. 1840) **7:02**

- | | | |
|---|---|------|
| 7 | Mazurka No. 51 in A minor, B. 140, 'À Émile Gaillard' | 3:24 |
| 8 | Mazurka No. 50 in A minor, B. 134, 'Notre temps' | 3:38 |

Three Mazurkas, Op. 50 (1841–42) **10:36**

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|------|
| 9 | Mazurka No. 30 in G major | 2:22 |
| 10 | Mazurka No. 31 in A-flat major | 3:14 |
| 11 | Mazurka No. 32 in C-sharp minor | 5:00 |

Three Mazurkas, Op. 56 (1843) **12:29**

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------|------|
| 12 | Mazurka No. 33 in B major | 4:56 |
| 13 | Mazurka No. 34 in C major | 1:40 |
| 14 | Mazurka No. 35 in C minor | 5:53 |

	Three Mazurkas, Op. 59 (1845)	9:57
15	Mazurka No. 36 in A minor	3:57
16	Mazurka No. 37 in A-flat major	2:39
17	Mazurka No. 38 in F-sharp minor	3:21

	Three Mazurkas, Op. 63 (1846)	6:28
18	Mazurka No. 39 in B major	2:12
19	Mazurka No. 40 in F minor	1:48
20	Mazurka No. 41 in C-sharp minor	2:28

	Four Mazurkas, Op. 67 (1835–49)	7:43
21	Mazurka No. 42 in G major (1835)	1:17
22	Mazurka No. 43 in G minor (1849)	1:47
23	Mazurka No. 44 in C major (1835)	1:38
24	Mazurka No. 45 in A minor (1846)	3:01

	Four Mazurkas, Op. 68 (1827–49)	8:36
25	Mazurka No. 46 in C major (1830)	1:42
26	Mazurka No. 47 in A minor (1827)	2:55
27	Mazurka No. 48 in F major (1830)	1:47
28	Mazurka No. 49 in F minor (1849)	2:12

PETER JABLONSKI, piano

Chopin: Complete Mazurkas, Vol. 2

The mazurka, which dates back to as early as the sixteenth century, was a Polish country dance from the plains of Mazovia, around Warsaw, danced by the people of the province, the *Mazurs*. There were three basic forms of their dance: a quick, lively *mazurek*, with distinct and varied articulation, and the most popular of the three; a fast and playful *oberek*, and a melodious, melancholy *kujawiak*. All three stem from the ancient *Polska*, a dance in triple time with strong accents (often accompanied by a tap of the heel) on the second or third beat of the bar. In performance, a pride of bearing and a certain wildness made its mood different from the more sedate waltz. From its folk origins, it spread to ballrooms across Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, even reaching America in the nineteenth century. Throughout the vastness of nineteenth-century Russia, the mazurka was a very popular dance, not least in glittering ballrooms in the estates and palaces of the nobility.

It might have remained a passing dance fashion had it not been adopted by Frédéric (Fryderyk) Chopin (1810–1849), for whom it became a deeply personal, intimate statement of his feelings as an émigré Polish composer living in Paris. From some of his very first compositions to his last (Op. 68, No. 4, written a few weeks before his death), it is the only form that Chopin composed regularly throughout his life, with nocturnes coming a close second. Although Polish composers before him wrote mazurkas too, such as Maria Szymanowska, Karol Krupiński, and Józef Elsner, it is Chopin's musical genius that elevated this country dance into an art form. His mazurkas inspired various composers from Glinka and Balakirev, through Debussy and Scriabin, and is still cherished in Poland, in the works of Szymanowski, Maciejewski, Gradstein and others.

Chopin composed mazurkas regularly between 1829 and 1849, the year of his death. The mazurka appears not only in these pieces from Opp. 6 to 63 and those published posthumously, but it can also be found in various guises in concerti, polonaises, rondos, songs, and other works, being thus present more than eighty times within the body of his music. Quite clearly, at a time when his native Poland was wiped from the political map, Chopin identified himself spiritually and emotionally with the form, although his creative genius subtly adapted its lilting character into his own personal style.

Together with this volume (volume 1 released in 2022), the recording of the complete mazurkas contains 57 works: 55 that are to be found in the authoritative National Edition, edited by Jan Ekier, plus two others believed to be by Chopin at least in part. These are posthumously published mazurkas in D major and C major. The D major mazurka exists in two versions, presented in the Paderewski edition (1953), of which the first version is recorded here.

What can be observed in Chopin's mazurka opuses (which Chopin himself assembled for publication from Op. 6 until Op. 63), are intentional close tonal and motivic relationships between the mazurkas and their contrasting moods. Indeed, he even changed the initial key of G minor in his Op. 59 No. 3 to F-sharp minor in order to strengthen tonal links between the three mazurkas in the cycle. From Op. 17 onwards, the first mazurka sets the stage for the following pieces, with the second or third usually an ebullient, lively *oberek*, and the last mazurka becoming more complex and extended, and always in a minor key.

Chopin almost never used authentic folk material, but created folk-like themes of his own, because the spirit of a country dance was more important to him than a direct quotation. The only exceptions are thought to be Op. 24 No. 4 and Op. 68 Nos. 2 and 3.

Although Chopin gave very clear indications in his scores, we know from his pupils that he never played his own works in the same way twice, and that he often remarked that music must be allowed to live and breathe. His legendary sense of *rubato* was often remembered: his student Karol Mikuli recalled that while the accompanying hand played in strict tempo, the other, the singing, hand, was liberated from metric control and conveyed the true musical expression, a kind of impatient vehemence, as in passionate speech.¹ Ignaz Moscheles wrote that 'Chopin's manner of playing *ad libitum*, a phrase which to so many signifies deficiency in time and rhythm, was with him only a charming originality of execution.'²

The mazurkas demand not only tasteful *rubato* and the elusive mazurka lilt, but also elegance, spirit, careful attention to tempi, colours, dynamics, and pedalling. Chopin's use of

¹ *Chopin as Pianist and Teacher*, forward to Mikuli's edition of Chopin's works, F. Kistner, 1879.

² Jean Kleczynski, *How to Play Chopin. The Works of Frederic Chopin and their Proper Interpretation* (translated by Alfred Whittingham), London, 1880, p. 58.

the pedal was incredibly sensitive, and relatively sparse, as we know from the accounts of his students. He was very fond of *una corda*, but on his Pleyel piano it would have given him a very different colour and effect than a modern instrument gives us today.

Chopin loved the human voice and singing, and so this quality cannot be underestimated and overlooked in his works. Many mazurkas often demand long lines that would be easier to achieve with a voice or a bow and Chopin often warned his students not to make their phrases too short, too disjointed. In fact, the long phrases often present in his mazurkas lent themselves to be sung: Pauline Viardot selected 12 mazurkas from various opuses, arranged them for voice and piano, and performed them with considerable success. Among these 12 were Op. 50 Nos. 1 and 2, Op. 67 No. 1, and Op. 68 No. 2.

In his mazurkas Chopin found a way to be at his most personal, vulnerable, and intimate, as one would express their innermost thoughts in a diary. It is perhaps not an exaggeration to say that in Chopin's mazurkas we can hear the musical essence of a Poland that he loved, (a kind of 'dream Poland', as he was never to return there), his longing for and 'romanticisation' of his feelings and memories, which only grew throughout his life. But he also was a truly universal composer, of whom Karol Szymanowski said: 'Chopin was an eternal example of what Polish music was capable of achieving—a symbol of Europeanised Poland, losing nothing of his national features but standing on the highest pinnacle of European culture.'³

The six mazurkas B-flat major (1826), G major (1826), D major (1829), B -flat major (1832), C major (1833), and A-flat major (1834) were all published posthumously. The D-major mazurka exists in two versions, the first of which could have been composed in 1828 or 1829, and the second existing as a copy sent to Chopin's sister in 1832 by Oskar Kolberg.

Mazurka in C major is the one raising most doubts as to its authenticity, because it was not included in the list of Chopin's works, made after his death by his sister Ludwika. Musically, the mazurka is also somewhat problematic in combining sections with awkward pianistic writing and heavy accompaniment in the first eight bars with passages of a refined melodic and harmonic language.⁴

³Karol Szymanowski, *Z pism*, edited by Teresa Chylińska, Kraków, 1958, p. 185.

⁴For detailed information on Chopin mazurkas see the Supplement to the Chopin National Edition (*Wydanie Narodowe Dziel Fryderyka Chopina*), an urtext edition of Chopin's complete works, published by PWM between 1967 and 2010.

The Mazurka in A minor *À Émile Gaillard* was mostly likely composed between 1839 and 40, and mazurka in A minor *Notre Temps* in 1839-41, but there are no surviving autographs for either of these works. Émile Gaillard was Chopin's pupil, and later a friend, for whom this mazurka was composed. Gaillard was a member of a wealthy banking family, who had a passion for 15th and 16th century art and amassed a collection of medieval and Renaissance art and objects. It is quite possible that Chopin played a musical homage to his friend's passion: the name Gaillard is very close to the name of a 16th-century European court dance galliard, which was danced to six counts, or two bars in $\frac{3}{4}$ time, and was characterised by athletic high leaps. The work is rather unusual for Chopin, as it contains parallel octave passages that do not easily fit into the language found in his mazurkas. But perhaps this was a reflection on one of the galliard's features: from the very first bar, there is an air of musical Renaissance in melodic and harmonic language, with obligatory high leaps in the last bar.

The mazurka in A minor, *Notre Temps*, was published in a collection of six works by different authors, in the magazine *La France Musicale* in July 1841. The collection was titled 'Notre Temps', from which the title of this mazurka is derived.

Chopin's growing interest in counterpoint in the early 1840s led him to study a counterpoint treatise by Cherubini, published in Paris in 1837. It is not a coincidence that the mazurkas from Op. 50 onwards became more substantial and complex, although, of course, Chopin's own language was developing independently towards even greater harmonic complexity and richness. With Op. 50 mazurkas, Chopin entered a period of artistic creativity which was to see the composition of such masterpieces as *Ballade No. 4*, *Scherzo No. 4*, *Polonaise-Fantasy*, *Barcarolle*, and the *Piano Sonata No. 3*. With Opp. 50, 56, and 59 Chopin's mazurkas undergo an obvious evolution, heralding a new, even more complex melodic and harmonic language and rhythmic dexterity, broader expressive range and an even greater mastery of form.⁵ Indeed, the mature mazurkas, especially Op. 50 No. 3 and Op. 56 No. 3, can almost be seen as tone poems, or 'mazurka fantasies' with intricate sound worlds that look to the future. The melodically rich and sophisticated Op. 56. No. 1 is, with its chromaticism and harmonic delicacy would later so obviously inspire the young Scriabin, who imbued his own mazurkas with his unique sense of harmonic freedom and invention.

⁵ Read more about these mazurkas in Jim Samson, *The Music of Chopin*, London, 1895, pp 117–119.

George Sand wrote to her friend, the painter Delacroix, who was coming to visit at *Nobant*, that Chopin composed two mazurkas (which would become part of Op. 50), and that they are 'worth more than forty novels and say more than the whole literature of this century'.⁶ The three *Mazurkas* Opus 50, in G major, A flat major and C sharp minor, appeared in 1842, with a dedication to Léon Szmitkowski, who was an officer in the rebel Polish army in the 1830 during the uprising against Russia.

The three *Mazurkas* of Opus 56, in B major, a lively C major and a more sombre C minor, are dedicated to Catherine Maberly, a foreign pupil of the composer. Catherine Maberly came from an aristocratic Irish family, and was a novelist who wrote historical fiction.

Op. 59 was composed in June 1845, during a stay at Sand's country estate *Nobant*, which was fraught with family tensions. This set was published in Berlin in the same year, but without dedication.

The three *Mazurkas* Op. 63 were composed in the autumn of 1846, during a difficult period when not only Chopin's health was deteriorating fast, but also his relationship with George Sand coming to an end. This set of mazurkas was the last published during Chopin's lifetime. He dedicated the opus to Countess Laura Czossowska, an old family friend, considered to be one of the Warsaw socialites at the beginning of the 1830s, with an eventful life full of dramatic and painful events. Sand invited her to visit at *Nobant*, but it seems that her behaviour irritated Sand, who thought her frivolous and shallow. During her visit, Czossowska and Chopin spoke Polish, something that seemed to further displease Sand, who tolerated her only because she brought some solace to Chopin by talking to him about Poland and his family.

Opp. 67 and 68 were published several years after Chopin's death, in 1855, edited by Julian Fontana.⁷ Chopin composed these works in a period spanning twenty years, with the

⁶ Letter from Sand to Delacroix dated 28 May 1842, quoted in Adam Zamoyski, *Chopin: Prince of the Romantics*, London, 2011, p. 213.

⁷ Julian Fontana (1810–1869) and Chopin were school friends, when they both studied composition with Józef Elsner. Fontana took part in the Warsaw uprising in November 1830 and after its suppression had to flee Poland. Their friendship continued, and Chopin entrusted Fontana with copying many of his autographs, negotiating with publishers, and helping him with all sorts of things, both professional and even domestic. He dedicated his *Polonaises* op. 40 to Fontana.

earliest being the mazurka in A minor, Op. 68 No. 2, and Op. 68 Nos. 1 and No. 3 two years later, just before he left Warsaw. Op. 67 Nos. 1 and 3, G major and C major respectively, were written in 1835, with Op. 67 No. 4 composed in 1846, and No. 2 becoming the G minor mazurka composed in spring 1849. Op. 68 No. 4 is thought to be the last work he ever composed during the summer of 1849. By then, he was so weak that he could not play it on the piano himself, and all that remained of it was a one-page autograph that later had to be reconstructed for publication. It bears the inscription *Dernière mazurka de Chopin composée à Chaillot*.

Chopin's death was marked by lengthy obituaries worldwide, written by eminent names in music and literature, which include Berlioz and Théophile Gautier. The Polish poet Cyprian Norwid's obituary, poetic and mournful, wrote: 'He knew how to divine the greatest mysteries of art with astonishing ease [...]. In the crystal of his own harmony he gathered the tears of the Polish people strewn over the fields, and places them as the diamond of beauty on the diadem of humanity.'⁸

So immortal Chopin and his music for piano had become, that Anton Rubinstein wrote four decades later: 'Composition, to speak frankly, has come to an end. Its parting knell was rung when the last incomparable notes of Chopin died away.'⁹

Anastasia Belina & Peter Jablonski

⁸ *Dzennik Polski*, 25 October 1849.

⁹ *Autobiography*, 1890, p.119.



Manuscript page of Mazurka in F minor Op. 68 No. 4,
written few weeks before the composer's death

Described by the Gramophone as 'a pianist in full flower of his mature, imaginative artistry' in 2022, **Peter Jablonski** is an award-winning internationally acclaimed Swedish artist. He is among the leading pianists of his generation, and during the last thirty years on international stages has performed with over 150 orchestras, given over 2000 concerts, and has been on 30 tours of Japan. Discovered by Abbado and Ashkenazy and signed by Decca in his seventeenth year, he went on to perform, collaborate, and record with many of the world's leading orchestras and conductors, which include the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Kirov (now Mariinsky), La Scala Philharmonic, Tonhalle Zurich, Orchestre National France, NHK Tokyo, DSO Berlin, Warsaw Philharmonic, Philadelphia, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Cleveland Orchestra, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Valery Gergiev, Andris Nelsons, Daniel Harding, Kurt Sanderling, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Riccardo Chailly, Daniele Gatti, and Myung-Whun Chung.

He has appeared in concert and recitals in famous venues around the world, which include the Royal Festival Hall and the Barbican in London, Philharmonie Berlin, Suntory Hall Tokyo, Hollywood Bowl Los Angeles, Salle Pleyel Paris, Musikverein Vienna, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, among many others.

He has performed and recorded the complete piano concertos by Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, and Bartók, and all piano sonatas by Prokofiev. During his three-decade-long career he developed a diverse repertoire that includes works by Barber, Gershwin, Szymanowski, Lutosławski, Copland, Stenhammar, with most recent additions of such composers as Alexey Stanchinsky, Ronald Stevenson, and Grażyna Bacewicz.

He has worked with composers Witold Lutosławski and Arvo Pärt, and had a number of works composed for, and dedicated to him, including Wojciech Kilar's Piano Concerto, for which he won the Orpheus award for the world premiere performance at the Warsaw Autumn Festival. He remains a supporter of today's composers and regularly gives world premieres of new works.

Jablonski's extensive discography includes recordings he has made for Decca, Deutsche Grammophon, Philips, Altara, Octavia, and Ondine labels. He has received numerous

awards for his recordings, which include the Edison award for best concerto recording of Shostakovich's First Piano Concerto, Rachmaninov's Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, and Lutoslawski's Paganini Rhapsody with Ashkenazy and RPO for Decca. He was presented with the Gramophone Classical Music Award for his Deutsche Grammophone recording of works by Cécile Chaminade with Anne Sofie von Otter and Bengt Forsberg.

He maintains a busy recording schedule, and his collaboration with Ondine has produced a number of well-received recordings. His recording of solo piano works by Grażyna Bacewicz was awarded the French Académie Charles Cros Award in December 2022, and it has been listed among best classical music and best solo piano recordings of 2022 in the Gramophone.

Peter Jablonski is the recipient of the Litteris et Artibus medal for his services to culture, granted to him by the King of Sweden, Carl XVI Gustaf. He is also the winner of the prestigious prize Årets Svensk i Världen (International Swedish Personality of the Year), receiving it before ABBA and Astrid Lindgren. In May 2022 he was elected into the Royal Swedish Academy of Music.

www.peterjablonski.com

Recordings: Malmö Palladium, Malmö, Sweden, June, 2023
Executive Producer: Reijo Kiilunen
Recording Producer: Anastasia Belina
Recording Engineer: Tomas Borgström
Piano technician: Joacim Eriksson
Editing, post-production and mastering: Federico Furlanetto (HvF Studio)
Piano: Steinway D model

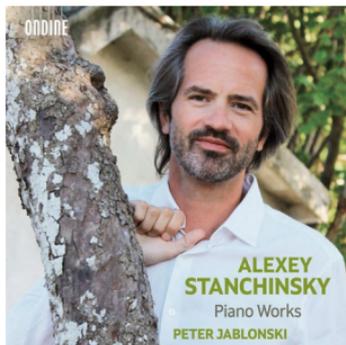
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Booklet Editor: Joel Valkila
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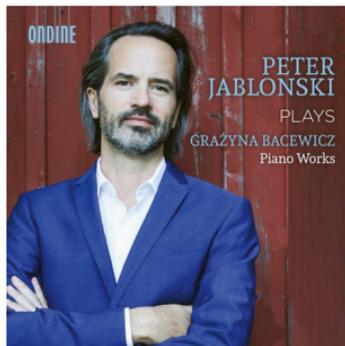
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PETER JABLONSKI

FRÉDÉRIC (FRYDERYK)

CHOPIN

(1810-1849)

Complete Mazurkas, Vol. 2

Mazurkas Nos. 30-51 &
Posthumous Mazurkas

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7-8 Mazurkas Nos. 50-51, Op. posth.

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PETER JABLONSKI, piano



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[73:49] • English notes enclosed

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