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# CLAUDIO ARRAU AT TANGLEWOOD

from the 1964  
Tanglewood Festival



—previously unreleased

# ALL-MOZART RECITAL

## Arrau Plays Mozart at Tanglewood

Disc 1 TT: 66:15

### Piano Sonata No. 5 in G Major, K.283

- |                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| 1) I. <i>Allegro</i>  | 04:32:40 |
| 2) II. <i>Andante</i> | 05:23:55 |
| 3) III. <i>Presto</i> | 05:50:40 |

### Piano Sonata No. 18 in A Minor, K.310

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| 4) I. <i>Allegro maestoso</i>                   | 05:33:74 |
| 5) II. <i>Andante cantabile con espressione</i> | 08:00:35 |
| 6) III. <i>Presto</i>                           | 02:49:71 |

7) **Fantasia No. 4 in C Minor, K.475** 13:38:26

### Piano Sonata No. 14 in C Minor, K.457

- |                               |          |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| 8) I. <i>Molto allegro</i>    | 06:54:16 |
| 9) II. <i>Adagio</i>          | 08:43:15 |
| 10) III. <i>Allegro assai</i> | 04:46:03 |

Disc 2 TT: 33:49

### Piano Sonata No. 17 in B Flat Major, K.570

- |                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| 1) I. <i>Allegro</i>      | 05:53:23 |
| 2) II. <i>Adagio</i>      | 08:17:44 |
| 3) III. <i>Allegretto</i> | 03:38:66 |

### Piano Sonata No. 18 in D Major, K.576

- |                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| 4) I. <i>Allegro</i>      | 05:07:60 |
| 5) II. <i>Adagio</i>      | 06:43:67 |
| 6) III. <i>Allegretto</i> | 04:05:23 |

based to a degree on his notably classical restraint, you will find in these performances any number of moments when the wit of his timing creates a delightfully mischievous effect. Some of these moments occur at the final cadences of certain movements, where he can surprise by turning what looks on the page like an uncompromisingly emphatic closure into something more thoughtful, almost open-ended.



Music, let us remember, is an art in time.

It is in his handling of time that Arrau is at his most characteristic. One of the things I have always admired about his playing is his ability to find room for the graceful execution of embellishments while seeming not to subvert the music's underlying pulse; and his delicate approach to the beginnings of recapitulations in these sonatas is further evidence of his sensitivity to the effect of time on our perception. The Russian pedagogue Heinrich Neuhaus observed of one of his favorite students—Sviatoslav Richter—that “his rhythm is at the same time perfectly strict and perfectly free.” You can say the same thing of Arrau, who surely deserves to be ranked on the same stellar plane as his famous younger contemporary.

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London-born, Jacobson worked for Riccardo Muti during the eight years he spent as program annotator and musicologist for the Philadelphia Orchestra, whose chamber-music series and extensive program of pre-concert lectures he started. A former contributing editor of *Fanfare* Magazine, he has also spent periods as music critic of the *Chicago Daily News*, visiting professor of music at Roosevelt University in Chicago, artistic director of the Residentie Orkest in The Hague, and artistic adviser to the North Netherlands Orchestra, and has written program notes for Carnegie Hall and for the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia.

In addition to books on Brahms and on conducting, his publications include *A Polish Renaissance*, a study of the music of Panufnik, Lutoslawski, Penderecki, and Górecki (Phaidon Press), and translations from ten languages. He has translated operas by Hans Werner Henze and Siegfried Matthus, and his poetry has been set to music by the American composer Richard Wernick and the Englishman Wilfred Josephs. He lives in Bremerton, Washington.

Front cover photo, Courtesy Baldwin

movement, this passage is now not merely altered but entirely omitted; in consequence, the *dolce* melody that originally functioned as a mere codetta is now established as a thematic second subject in its own right. After a sumptuously expressive A-major central Adagio, the concluding Allegretto grazioso, having propounded a sinuous and deceptively simple main theme, goes on to superimpose it repeatedly, and to constantly refreshing effect, on its own mirror inversion.



Claudio Arrau, photo by Allen Warren

### Arrau's Mozart

There was a time—specifically, the middle years of the 20th century—when the music in this recital used commonly to be played in a somewhat prettified, Dresden-china fashion. Nothing could be more different than Claudio Arrau's approach to Mozart even in the relatively early stages of his career (and he was sixty-one when these live performances were given). Certainly, some other pianists in those days gave full value to the dramatic power of the minor-key sonatas, K. 310 and K. 457, though very few approached the sheer volcanic force he brought to those bass octaves in the A-minor's finale. But you encounter Arrau's no-holds-barred style even in seemingly less serious works: the finale of K. 283, for example, already sounds, under his hands, more unpredictably

Beethovenish than in the interpretations of some of his contemporaries; and in the relatively relaxed finale of

K. 570, he punches out the insistent staccato repeated notes of the contrasting central episode with positively demonic relish.

This, then, is in an important sense “bigger” Mozart playing than was the norm 50 years ago. At the same time, the clarity of Arrau's texture and the often airy lightness of his pedaling keeps his view of the music from transgressing 18th-century stylistic norms. And while his reputation is

## Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) Piano Sonatas and a Fantasy

Mozart's brief lifetime witnessed two far-reaching changes in musical life, one material, the other essentially spiritual: the harpsichord was supplanted by the piano; and the composer's role as functionary in an established social order was eclipsed by his new character as an individualist, creating for himself and posterity rather than for contemporaries, peers, or employers. Both transformations, especially the latter, were long-drawn-out processes that had begun before 1756, but by the time Mozart died in 1791 they were well on the way toward consummation.

When we listen to the varied and often profound works recorded here, we should not forget that they were written for an instrument in its earliest maturity. Only in the 1770s did the piano even begin to approach technical perfection. Mozart's lively interest in this development is borne out by a letter he wrote to his father in October 1777:

This time I shall begin at once with Stein's pianos. Before I had seen any of his make, Späth's claviers had always been my favorites. But now I much prefer Stein's, for they damp very much better than the Regensburg instruments. When I strike hard, I can keep my finger on the note or raise it, but the sound ceases the moment I have finished producing it. In whatever way I touch the keys, the tone is always even. It never jars, it is never stronger or weaker or entirely absent; in a word, it is always even. It is true that he does not sell a piano of this kind for less than three hundred gulden, but the trouble and labor Stein puts into the making of it cannot be paid for. His



Mozart, 1789: drawing by Doris Stock, 1979

instruments have this special advantage over others, that they are made with escapement mechanism. Only one maker in a hundred bothers about this. But without an escapement it is impossible to avoid jangling and vibration after the note is struck. Now, when you touch the keys, the hammers fall back again the moment they have struck the strings, whether you hold the keys down or release them.

On this instrument, with its wealth of yet unexplored possibilities, Mozart was widely acknowledged the greatest performer of his day. Including eighteen sonatas, seventeen sets of variations, and other individual pieces, his surviving works for solo piano number around a hundred. This may at first thought seem like a huge output. Yet, for a musician whose career depended in large degree on his popularity as a performer at the keyboard, the surprise is rather that the medium does not bulk even larger in a total production of more than 600 compositions. And so far as

sonatas are concerned, Mozart's work in the field did not even start particularly early: the first six are believed to have been written in Munich in 1775, when he was nineteen—their numbers in the Köchel catalog, 279 through 284, showing that they occupy a place almost halfway through his eventual output—and the last, K. 576 in D major, dates from July 1789, two years and a half before his death.

The reason for this relatively restrained production of piano works has to do with style and the course of music history. Since the solo piano, as a complete conduit for musical thought, is the most intimately personal means of communication, and since in Mozart's day the cult of the individual personality was not yet fully enshrined in music, it was not to solo piano music that he felt most strongly drawn. His was a social muse. He was above all a musical dramatist, excelling in the comedy of manners. That is the genre into which most of his operas and concertos fall, concerned as they are with the



Mozart's fortepiano, built in 1780 by Anton Walter in Vienna

which key the work (as Sir Donald Tovey, in his *Essays in Musical Analysis*, said about the rather similar ending of Brahms's Fourth Symphony) "storms to its tragic close."

This finale, by the way, is one of only three rondos that Mozart both began and ended in a minor key; the others are the finales of the A-minor Piano Sonata and of the Violin Sonata in E minor, K. 304. (The rondo finale of the D-minor Piano Concerto, K. 466, ends in the major, and the inexorably minor-key finale of the C-minor Concerto, K. 491, is not a rondo but a set of variations.) The outer movements of the C-minor Sonata are separated by a beautiful E-flat-major Adagio, its main theme an asymmetrical yet perfectly balanced period of seven bars, its form a fruitful blend of variations with sonata-rondo. It is really a rondo with varied returns of the principal section, but the dominant-key codetta of the first episode returns in the home key at the end to round the piece off in the manner of a sonata movement.

Perhaps intended as teaching material (like the C-major Sonata, K. 545, described in Mozart's own catalog as "for beginners"), the **B-flat-major Sonata, K. 570**, was composed in Vienna in February 1789, and first published with an accompanying violin part that was probably not written by Mozart. The magisterial quietude of this work should not lead anyone to underestimate its quality. The mature Mozart, though operating on a small scale by comparison with that of some of the earlier sonatas, shows his mastery throughout. Having moved first to the subdominant (E-flat major) by way of a sudden coup, the opening Allegro goes on to establish F with entirely classical thoroughness—no tricks are used here. The A-flat-major section of the smoothly balanced Adagio—the most spacious slow movement in any of the sonatas—harks back to a phrase in the opening aria of the cantata *Die Maurerfreude*, composed four years earlier.

From such nostalgic concerns the rondo finale turns with inimitable Mozartean wit, which is also a leading characteristic of the last sonata of all. This is the **Sonata in D major, K. 576**, completed in July 1789, and a work fully worthy of the composer of the *Jupiter* Symphony in its blend of contrapuntal complexity with seemingly effortless melodic charm. The first movement has some dizzying thematic imitations, one hand following no more than an eighth-note behind the other. Its recapitulation makes telling changes in the distribution of tonal and thematic material: where, in the exposition, the main theme had been restated in the dominant like the "second subject" of a monothematic

most striking feature of his sonata style is precisely the way seemingly unrelated phrases coalesce in a long, self-extending, and unrepeating line.

Essentially, the characteristic mode of this Fantasy is contemplation, that of the Sonata is action, and only a performance that makes this distinction can succeed. In tonal terms, the difference is clear-cut. The Sonata works by purposeful movement toward the relative major key (E flat); the Fantasy, far more exploratory, bases its static subsidiary sections on C minor's immediate but less closely related diatonic neighbors: D major, a whole-tone above, and B flat major, a whole-tone below. The tonal procedures of the central Allegro section are indeed the reverse of purposeful: with fatalistic irony, every key touched upon turns out, quicksand-like, to be merely a dominant approach to the key a fifth below. E falls to A, A to D, D to G, G momentarily to C, and C to F. Aided by a new theme, F major manages to sustain itself for a few measures, but it is soon clouded by a change to the minor, and after a further series of more chromatic falls, F is in turn revealed as the dominant of B flat. This is the key of the Andantino section, which is built on a little descending scale of four notes picked up from the 22nd measure of the initial Adagio (four bars before the modulation to D major). After proceeding tranquilly for a while, the Andantino begins to turn in on itself and lose tonal definition. The music attempts to escape by way of a *Più allegro*, but even here nothing can be achieved beyond a series of drops by a fifth, and so there is nothing left to do but return to the opening Adagio, which is restated in modified and compressed form.

Thus the Fantasy, for all its hints at movement, has succeeded in going nowhere at all—and this is precisely its point. For in contrast the vigorous mobility of the Sonata's *Molto allegro* is substantially heightened. The construction of the Fantasy has been described here in some detail to bring out a particular dramatic point, but the more regular methods of this sonata movement, with its dynamic main theme and the lithe irregularity of its phrase-lengths, may be left to speak for themselves. It is worth pointing out, however, that the progress of the short development section, which moves rapidly through F minor to G minor and from there back to C minor for the recapitulation, finds an exact parallel in the second episode of the rondo finale. Later on in the finale this tiny phrase—it can hardly be called a theme—is brought back with even more pathetic effect: for this time it cannot even raise the energy to pass through G minor. Instead it pretends as if its initial F minor had never been, and melts back without a struggle into the all-engulfing C minor, in

interplay of individuals and of the individual with the group. He found an almost equally natural outlet in the dialectical interplay of the string quartet.

Less innately congenial were the symphony and its close relation, the sonata, in both of which the arch-individualist of the next generation, Beethoven, was to find his *métier*. Yet when tonality—the source from which all the classical forms draw their activating force—seizes Mozart's imagination with particular vividness, the result can be a dramatic effect as remarkable in symphony or sonata as in the greatest of his operas or concertos.

This tends to happen most strikingly with the rather small number of works in the minor mode. Out of Mozart's 18 surviving piano sonatas, only two (both included in this recorded recital) are set overall in minor keys. They are the sonatas in A minor, K. 310, and C minor, K. 457, and they stand out from their companion works by virtue of their sheer vehemence and emotional intensity. But it would be facile to conclude that the major-mode sonatas are not—no pun intended—major Mozart. For in their undemonstrative manner even the earliest of the sonatas are rich in melodic and rhythmic invention, textural subtlety, and felicities of expression.

They exploit, moreover, an aspect of tonality that before the romantic period was just as important as drama: namely, wit. The best way to approach an early Mozart piano sonata is to think of it, not as a feeble foreshadowing of Beethovenish heroics or Schubertian poetic lyricism, but as a consummate essay in the genre of the comedy of manners. The fifth of the sonatas, **K. 283 in G major**, plays one of Mozart's favorite tricks of tonal wit at the earliest opportunity, which is at the point of transition to the subordinate theme of the first movement. Traditionally, the subordinate theme is presented in the dominant of the home key, in this case D major. The way to establish a key in classical tonal practice was by emphasizing its dominant. Thus the normal way to establish the key of D major here would be by emphasizing in turn *its* dominant note, A. Instead, Mozart, following a practice also used by Haydn and Beethoven but one that he made particularly his own, goes no farther than stressing the note D, so that up to this point the music still feels as if it is in G, and then pretends that D major is already an established key by calmly locating the subordinate theme there. Part of the joke's point is not made clear until much later: in the recapitulation, the transition follows the same course, again emphasizing D, but this time the note is treated

with absolute classical propriety as merely a dominant note, not a key, and the subordinate theme can make its reappearance in the tonic (G major) traditional at this juncture of sonata form.

Described in such detail, the process may sound dry, but its effect is great fun. Anyone who takes the trouble to listen carefully and hear how it works will be richly rewarded. And in case you think “fun” is an undignified term to apply to Great Music, let me emphasize that this is fun of a very high order. Listening to one of these early sonatas in a worthy performance, it is easy to be seduced for a moment into the seditious view that all the expressive thrashings-about of later, more self-dramatizing composers are worth little in comparison with such poised perfection—if it were not that such a view, unbalanced in itself, would also devalue the more overtly emotional stance of some of Mozart’s own later music, notably the sonatas in A minor and C minor already referred to.

In one regard—the number and relationship of movements in a sonata—Mozart may be termed less enterprising than some of his colleagues. Each of his sonatas comprises three movements—there are none of the two-movement structures common among Haydn’s and Beethoven’s sonatas, or of the large-scale four-movement works that Beethoven also produced—and in most cases Mozart’s three movements consist of a sonata allegro, a slower middle movement, and a quick finale in sonata, rondo, or hybrid form. This G-major Sonata, irresistibly humorous in the jerky offbeat accents and careening cadences of its Presto finale, is fairly straightforward in formal respects, though the first-movement’s development section does display another Mozartean trait by beginning with a few measures of new material, and indeed avoids any reference to the movement’s main themes through its short 18 measures.

After the first six piano sonatas, more than two years passed before Mozart broached the medium again, this time with a pair of works—K. 309 in C major and K. 311 in D major—composed in Mannheim in October and November 1777. These two were followed by **K. 310 in A minor**, numbered out of sequence in Köchel’s catalog, and now believed to have been composed in Paris in the summer of 1778.

This is the only important multi-movement work for which Mozart chose the key of A minor. Its composition date puts it just a few months after he had made his delighted discoveries about the

potential of the latest pianos. One fruit of technical advance is perhaps to be found in the new emphasis he places on the left hand, which carries the melody with impressive effect at cardinal points in both the outer movements—in the latter, moreover, in resounding octaves. Marked again to be played “con espressione,” the central Andante cantabile provides welcome repose after the storm and stress of the first movement. The impassioned despondency of the final Presto comes, then, with all the more tragic power. Dante said there was no greater sorrow than to recall happy times in the midst of misery, but Mozart in effect refines Dante’s thought. We can foresee from the start, if we are experienced listeners, that there is likely to be a contrasting passage of A-major emotional relief in this doom-laden movement—but we are aware at the same time that it will be rapidly engulfed again in the dark tides of despair. Thus even the *anticipation* of that idyllic moment already carries with it the grief of evanescence.

Another gap, this time of five years, was to follow before the next group of piano sonatas, K. 330-333, and another year passed before the **Sonata in C minor, K. 457**, was completed in Vienna on 14 October 1784, just 14 days after the B-flat-major Piano Concerto, K. 456. Significantly, as with many Beethoven “pairs,” it contrasts violently with that gracious and often playful work. This is one of Mozart’s most prophetically Beethovenish works, and the family resemblance between the die-away ending of its first movement and that in Beethoven’s last sonata in the same key, Opus 111, can hardly be accidental.

An indication of the special position the C-minor Sonata occupied in Mozart’s own mind is his decision, more than six months after its composition, to preface it with an exceptionally spacious and elaborate **Fantasy in C minor, K. 475**. He wrote this on 20 May 1785, and the two works were published together as a coordinate whole. The title “Fantasy” should not be misunderstood. In the light of later practice, we tend to think of a fantasy as an unusually free, almost a formless, composition. Comparison of the first page of this extraordinary piece with that of its companion Sonata will show that the word had a very different connotation for Mozart. This is the kind of music his listeners must have heard when he exercised his formidable powers of improvisation, and to compensate for any tendency toward formal looseness implied by the improvisatory method, the writing is not less but *more* strictly thematic than in the Sonata. Or it might be more accurate to say that in the Fantasy Mozart works by a process of varied repetition, whereas the