

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-91)

PIANO SONATAS Volume 3

Sonata No.10 in C major, K330 · Sonata No.18 in D major, K576

Sonata No.11 in A major, K331

Gigue in G major, K574 · Adagio in B minor, K540

PETER DONOHOE piano

	Sonata No.10 in C major, K330	[17:49]
1	I Allegro moderato	6:00
2	II Andante cantabile	6:18
3	III Allegretto	5:30
4	Gigue in G major, K574	1:28
	Sonata No.18 in D major, K576	[13:30]
5	I Allegro	4:58
6	II Adagio	4:32
7	III Allegretto	3:59
8	Adagio in B minor, K540	9:24
	Sonata No.11 in A major, K331	[22:04]
9	I Andante grazioso	13:00
10	II Menuetto & Trio	5:38
11	III Alla Turca: Allegretto	3:26

Total duration: 64:38

Recorded at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire on July 9-12, 2018

Producer: Siva Oke Recording Engineer: Paul Arden-Taylor

Piano: C. Bechstein D282 Grand Piano

Front cover: Posthumous portrait of Mozart by Barbara Krafft (1764-1825)

© Bridgeman Images

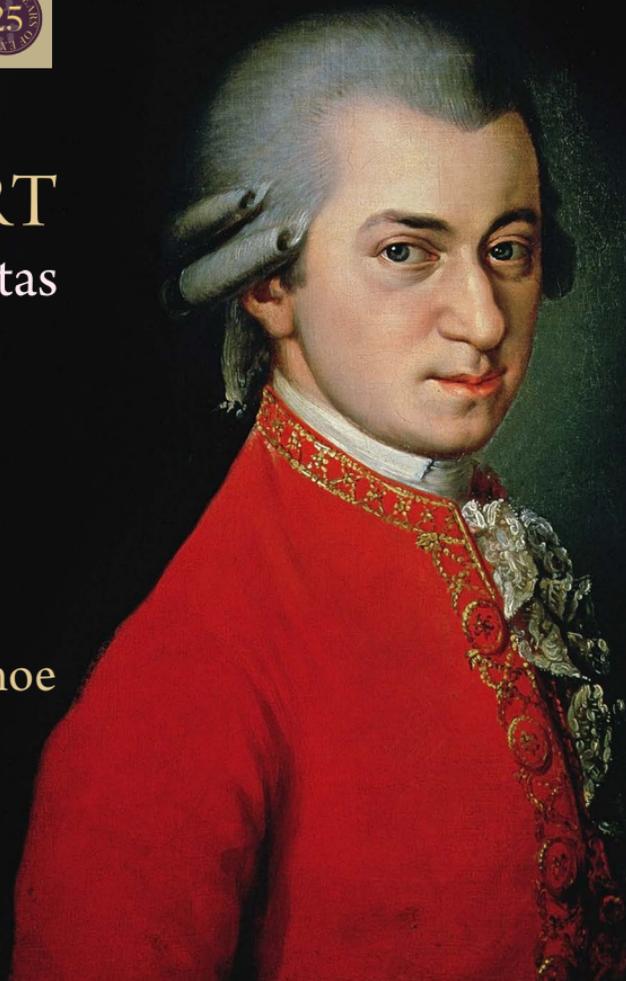
Design: Andrew Giles Booklet Editor: Michael Quinn

© & © 2020 SOMM RECORDINGS · THAMES DITTON · SURREY · ENGLAND
Made in the EU

MOZART
Piano Sonatas

Volume 3

Peter Donohoe
piano



ROYAL
BIRMINGHAM
CONSERVATOIRE



MOZART'S Piano sonatas

Volume 3

During the months between March and September 1778, Mozart was living in Paris, seeking unsuccessfully to find himself a lucrative permanent situation there. It was during this frustrating period that the composer's mother, who had made the lengthy trip from Salzburg to the French capital with him, passed away, sad news which the 22-year-old Mozart transmitted back home to his father and sister with a wisdom and sensitivity perhaps unexpected in him.

"Monsieur mon Très cher Père!", he wrote to Leopold Mozart from Paris on July 9, before continuing:

"I hope you are now ready to receive this Saddest and most painful news with fortitude – my last letter to you, from the 3rd of the month, will have prepared you to expect the worst – that very same day, on the 3rd, at 21 Minutes after 10 o'clock at night my Mother passed on peacefully to the Lord. When I wrote to you she was already partaking of the Heavenly joys – it was all over by then – I wrote to you late that night – and I hope that you and my dear sister will forgive me for this small but necessary deception – when I thought about my own pain and sadness in relation to how it might affect you, I simply could not bring myself to overwhelm you with this distressing news" (Robert Spaethling's translation).

Among the compositions Mozart produced during these months were the Concerto for Flute and Harp (K299) and the *Paris* Symphony (No.31, K297), as well

as several piano sonatas, two of which bookend this release, probably created as teaching material for the Parisian pupils who came to him for lessons.

The opening movement of the **Sonata No.10 in C major, K330** seems proud to announce itself in didactic mode, with repetitive left-hand broken-chord patterns accompanying a right hand which combines scales, trills demanding neatness and precision, and arpeggio flourishes, but spiced with chromatic inflections to the melodic line almost like vocal decoration.

Mozart allows the left hand to come to rest on a fat five-note chord in the bar before the entry of the second subject, thematically linked to the first, before the busy activity resumes but now interspersed with several passages in which both hands are in unison, an octave apart. The development section is less severe in its technical demands but correspondingly richer in emotional content, chromaticism and syncopations creating an almost operatic atmosphere before the busy recapitulation.

Textures are totally different in the central *Andante cantabile* slow movement, a beautifully reflective aria thematically linked throughout its tripartite structure, and with an almost Schubertian coda which appears in all printed editions, even the earliest, but not in Mozart's original manuscript. It is possible that, when revisiting the sonata for publication, Mozart realised the possibilities for a soothing end to the movement.

The technical exercises return for the *Allegretto* finale with much flashy brilliance for the right hand, often exploiting the highest note of the particular piano on

which Mozart was composing. The movement ends with a satisfyingly rich chord in both hands, a resource used very sparingly throughout this sonata.

Early in 1789 Mozart was invited to accompany Prince Karl Alois Lichnowsky (later to become a patron of Beethoven) to Berlin. Stopping off in Leipzig, Mozart was overwhelmed to find himself in the city where Johann Sebastian Bach had spent the last quarter-century of his life (and who had come to influence his own music—the Mass in C minor and K456 Adagio and Fugue among many other examples), and was thrilled to be allowed to improvise on the organ of Bach's own St Thomas' Church in the presence of JF Doles, the then Kantor and a former Bach pupil.

The miniature **Gigue, K574**, replete with homages to the techniques of Bach, and with an 11-note tone-row in the manner of the finale of the G minor Symphony (No.40, K550) of a year earlier, was composed on May 16, 1789 and written directly into the family notebook of Karl Immanuel Engel, Leipzig's Court Organist.

One result of Mozart's visit to Berlin in the spring of 1789 was a commission from Friedrich Wilhelm II, King of Prussia (a keen cellist) to compose a series of six "easy" piano sonatas for his daughter Frederica Charlotte Ulrica Katherine. In the event, the **Sonata No.18 in D major, K576** was the only one of the six to be composed, and reflects the transparency of the three Prussian String Quartets he wrote alongside it on his return to Vienna in June, as well as the presence of Bachian techniques which had remained with Mozart following his sojourn in Leipzig.

The opening *Allegro* movement has the 'hunting' 6/8 time-signature, and begins with a rousing octave-unison fanfare on a D major arpeggio, which has led some

commentators in the past to describe this as the Trumpet Sonata. After a couple of bars of complementary asides, the fanfare is repeated, this time a tone higher, before its very simple thematic outline begins to reveal how it can offer itself as the basis for contrapuntal imitation, the spirit of Bach still influencing Mozart.

The fanfare remains present even in the dominant-key second subject: what served as the germ for an exploration of Bachian techniques also looking ahead to the monothematicism of many sonata-form movements by Mozart's great friend and respected colleague, Franz Josef Haydn. During the development section we are constantly reminded of this simple fanfare motif, underpinning as it does searching explorations of tonalities until a mysterious veil, occasionally dissonant, with an inner voice rising chromatically in the right hand, eventually opens out into the recapitulation.

Beginning in the perfumed atmosphere of one of Mozart's Salzburg serenades of a decade earlier, the *Adagio* moves into a highly florid aria for piano with hands alternating in decorative runs. At other times, the left hand's subtly-coloured harmonies underpin the right hand's flights into exuberant runs of demisemiquavers, almost as though unleashed. The concluding *Allegretto* is deceptive in its gavotte-like simplicity, for its innocent little rondo theme in fact makes itself the vehicle for further adroit homages to Bach.

It is heart-warming to consider that Mozart as a child had met Johann Sebastian Bach's youngest son, Johann Christian, in London (and was to catch up with him again many years later in Milan) from whom he learned the concept of masculine-feminine phrase-structure (assertiveness followed by conciliation). Many years

later, towards the end of his own short life, Mozart was to fall under the awesome spell of Johann Sebastian himself.

By this late stage Mozart was continually overwhelmed with worry about his precarious financial situation and was forced to turn to wealthy and supportive friends for help. Someone who frequently came to his rescue, making him loans despite knowing that they might never be repaid, was Mozart's fellow Freemason Michael Puchberg.

There were a whole clutch of distressing appeals made to Puchberg (who always acceded to these requests) in 1788, including during the miraculous six summer weeks which saw Mozart producing, to no commission, his final three symphonies (No.39 in E-flat, K543, No.40 in G minor, K550 and No.41 in C, Jupiter, K551). Things were no different in 1789, when again Mozart was forced to turn to Puchberg on several occasions.

A heartbreaking letter Mozart wrote to Puchberg on July 12, 1789 rather desperately over-eggs the importance of the Prussian commissions for quartets and sonatas:

"DEAREST, MOST BELOVED FRIEND AND MOST HONOURABLE B.O. ['Brother Officer'] Great God! I would not wish my worst enemy to be in my present position. And if you, most beloved friend and brother, forsake me, we are altogether lost, both my unfortunate and blameless self and my poor sick wife and child... Meanwhile I am composing six easy clavier sonatas for Princess Friederike [sic] and six quartets for the King, all of which [composer and pianist Leopold] Koželuch is engraving at my expense. At the same time the two dedications will

bring me in something. Therefore, most beloved friend, you will not be risking anything so far as I am concerned. So it all depends, my only friend, upon whether you will or can lend me another 500 gulden." (Emily Anderson's translation).

Written during the spring of 1788 when financial storm clouds were gathering around him, the **Adagio, K540** is one of the most inwardly personal of Mozart's compositions. B minor is a key far removed from his normal ambit of tonalities, and the chromaticism and contrapuntal texture of the piece, plus the detailed figuration, point to a profundity of thought and depth of feeling which was probably not intended for public consumption. Mozart's sister Nannerl, an accomplished pianist herself, was possibly the recipient of the manuscript.

Composed some few weeks later in early summer, the **Sonata No.11 in A major, K331** in fact makes no obeisance to sonata form, nor to conventional placement of movements, which themselves are all cast here in the same key-centre (two major and then one minor) making it seem more like a suite than a conventional sonata.

One of the sonatas Mozart composed during his residency in Paris – a city whose artificiality he longed to escape, begging his father to arrange a return to Italy to refresh him – it breathes a multicultural approach which perhaps indicates his restlessness at the time.

The slow movement – marked *Andante grazioso* – comes first; a set of variations on Rechte Lebensart ('The right way of living'), a song from southern Germany where Mozart's father Leopold had his roots. The melody was later to become the basis for Max Reger's Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Mozart. A lilting Siciliano rhythm soon disappears under a panoply of rhythmic and textural incident. There

are technically demanding octave passages and almost insouciant cross-hand work from the left hand before a change to the 4/4 time-signature announces a triumphant conclusion to what has been a searching set of variations.

Beginning with an arresting treble-octave unison after all the ornate embroidery of the preceding movement, the Minuet progresses not without its moments of drama, and has a D major Trio section in which the left hand deftly asserts its authority crossing over the right hand to make its points.

The rondo finale in A minor, famously labelled *Alla Turca*, pays homage to the Parisians' fashionable passion for all things janizary (as did Gluck's comic opera *The Pilgrims of Mecca*, and Haydn's opera *L'incontro improvviso*), and its exoticism was soon to reappear in Mozart's opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, as well as in Beethoven's incidental music to the play *The Ruins of Athens* and in the finale of his Ninth Symphony (the 'Froh! Froh!' march).

The signature trademark of this taste for Turkish delight was the use of triangle, cymbals and bass drum, touristy 'Jingling Johnnies' (a percussion stick surmounted by a crescent and a coolie-shaped hat from which were suspended bells, jingles and two horsehair tails – British military bands discarded it after the Crimean War of 1856) being unavailable. But this movement by Mozart conspicuously includes none of those (though there exists a transcription for organ, spectacularly used in Lyn Larsen and Carlo Curley's *Duelling Organs* CD release on the Pro-Arte label, which indeed brings all these effects into play).

In the finale of this sonata the 'Turkish' effect is instead suggested by a strong rhythmic impetus of two-in-a-bar with emphasis upon the first beat, and one can

almost hear a piccolo grotesquely shrilling. Right-hand octaves are underpinned by crashing chords in the bass. Mozart added the spectacular and substantial coda when the work was eventually published in 1784.

As an interesting afterthought, it is worth noting that this Turkish Rondo was used as an introductory chorus in the pasticcio opera *The Siege of Belgrade* by Mozart's friend Stephen Storace (whose sister Nancy was the original Susanna in the Vienna premiere of *Le nozze di Figaro*), presented at London's Drury Lane Theatre on January 1, 1791.

Christopher Morley © 2020



MOZART: Piano Sonatas, Volume 1 SOMMCD 0191

"It was high time someone blew the cobwebs off this still under-appreciated repertoire, and Donohoe is clearly the person to do it."

BBC Music Magazine Recording of the Month

Music Web International Recording of the Year



MOZART: Piano Sonatas, Volume 2 SOMMCD 0198

"His playing is as varied as Mozart's music: now intricate, now clear, now firm and often vivid... You know you're in safe hands. More than that, Donohoe's Mozart is well considered and satisfying."

Music Web International

PETER DONOHOE

"I cannot imagine a living pianist capable of improving on
Donohoe's outstanding artistry"

Robert Matthew-Walker, *Musical Opinion*

Peter Donohoe was born in Manchester, England in 1953. He studied at Chetham's School of Music, graduated from Leeds University and went on to study at the Royal Northern College of Music with Derek Wyndham and in Paris with Olivier Messiaen and Yvonne Loriod. He is acclaimed as one of the foremost pianists of our time for his musicianship, stylistic versatility and commanding technique.

As soloist he has appeared with most major orchestras in almost every country: UK, Germany, USA, Canada, Scandinavia, Russia, Japan, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Australia and South America; for example London Symphony, Berlin Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Dresden Staatskapelle and Philharmonic, Vienna Symphony, Czech Philharmonic, Concertgebouw, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Cleveland, NHK Symphony, Orquesta Sinfónica Simón Bolívar, Buenos Aires Philharmonic, New Zealand Symphony, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Russian National and St Petersburg Philharmonia.

In demand as a jury member for international piano competitions, he has adjudicated at the International Tchaikovsky (Moscow, 2011 and 2015), Busoni International (Bolzano, Italy, 2012), the Queen Elisabeth (Brussels, 2016), Georges Enescu (Bucharest, 2016), Hong Kong International Piano (2016), Harbin (2017), Artur Rubinstein Piano Master (2017), Lev Vlassenko Piano (2017) and Ricardo

Viñas International, Spain, along with many national competitions in the UK and abroad. Recent discs include Stravinsky's Music for Solo Piano and Piano and Orchestra (Hong Kong Philharmonic), the complete Sonatas of Scriabin and the complete Sonatas of Prokofiev in three volumes for SOMM Recordings; Shostakovich's Piano Concertos and Sonatas (Orchestra of the Swan) and 24 Preludes and Fugues for Signum Records.

For Dutton Vocalion he recorded Cyril Scott's Piano Concerto (BBC Concert Orchestra) and Malcolm Arnold's *Fantasy on a Theme of John Field* (Royal Scottish National Orchestra), both conducted by Martin Yates.

He played with the Berliner Philharmoniker in Simon Rattle's opening concerts as Music Director. He made his twenty-second appearance at the BBC Proms in 2012 and has appeared at many festivals, including six consecutive visits to the Edinburgh Festival and the Ruhr and Schleswig-Holstein Festivals in Germany.

Peter Donohoe performs numerous recitals internationally and has established long-standing relationships with several chamber groups and two-piano partners.

He has worked with many of the world's greatest conductors: Christoph Eschenbach, Neeme Järvi, Lorin Maazel, Kurt Masur, Andrew Davis and Yevgeny Svetlanov. More recently he has appeared with many of the next generation of excellent conductors: for example, Gustavo Dudamel, Robin Ticciati and Daniel Harding.

An honorary doctor of music at seven UK universities, he was awarded a CBE for services to classical music in 2010.