

A N D R E J S O S O K I N S

# Virtuoso

L I S Z T & C H O P I N

PRIMA  
CLASSIC



*Liszt*

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# CHOPIN AND LISZT: VIRTUOSO

Chopin and Liszt. Liszt and Chopin. Friends. Peers. Rivals. Two child prodigies who were loved by the public since childhood. Two composers who invented the way to integrate virtuosity in piano music and transformed musical heritage into new sounds.

Both were world and soul travellers who spent their entire lives on the road, but deep in their hearts longed for their homeland. All the music was dedicated to the love of women, Motherland and God. Their works were filled with tears, joy and suffering. Chopin and Liszt were true romantic souls, pouring their hearts and souls into their compositions, creating timeless masterpieces that resonate with audiences to this day - a golden era of piano music.

"This album celebrates the extraordinary friendship and artistic influence shared between two of the greatest composers and pianists of the Romantic era, Frederic Chopin and Ferenc Liszt," says Andrejs Osokins. "Every note in this programme is full of emotion, style and dignity, but combined with extreme virtuosity and colorful imagery in piano writing."

Frederic Chopin and Ferenc Liszt both were Central Europeans. Chopin was born in 1810 in a small town Żelazowa Wola outside of Warsaw (Poland), but Liszt - in 1811 in the village of Doborján (Kingdom of Hungary). Both children grew up in supportive circumstances. Their parents quickly realized their sons' extraordinary talents. In search of the best teachers Chopin was sent to Warsaw, but Liszt - to Vienna. Since a young age they started performing live and they soon caught the attention of the international press that started comparing them as young prodigies.

## CHOPIN AND LISZT: VIRTUOSO

They first met in 1832, when they both had moved to Paris. Chopin and Liszt immediately started worshipping each other's talent in music and developed an intense, uneasy, but immensely important friendship. They often appeared together in concerts and as part of events organized for charity, with their performances always the center of attention. Reviews refer to them as the two greatest virtuosos of the day.

Even though Chopin and Liszt have had very similar lives, they had very different personalities and temperaments. Chopin was extremely shy and constantly afraid of performing on stage, while Liszt was extrovert and magnificent in front of an audience. Later Chopin envied the glory that Liszt had achieved thanks to its extrovert nature, while Liszt envied the greater success that Chopin's compositions had achieved.

Despite their differences in personality and style, Chopin and Liszt shared a deep bond as friends, peers, and occasional rivals, constantly pushing the boundaries of musical expression. Through their innovative use of melody, harmony, and virtuosity, they invented new sounds and techniques that revolutionized piano music, leaving an indelible mark on the art form. Their concerts together were the stuff of legend, showcasing not only their individual brilliance but also the magical synergy that emerged when they performed side by side.

Chopin dedicated Etudes, Op. 10, a collection of twelve masterpieces, to Liszt, because he was deeply inspired by Liszt's virtuosic performances of his Etudes and greatly admired his interpretation and technique. Whereas it was Liszt who famously coined the name "Revolutionary" for Chopin's Etude No. 12, capturing the spirit of defiance and passion that infuses the piece.



## CHOPIN AND LISZT: VIRTUOSO

"This collaboration between composer and interpreter is a testament to the symbiotic relationship between Chopin and Liszt, where each artist's genius enriched the other's work," says Andrejs Osokins. "Through their music, they continue to speak to us across the ages, reminding us of the power of friendship, creativity, and the enduring beauty of the human spirit."

The compositions on the album reveal Frederic Chopin as a visionary and a fragile dreamer, but at the same time as a highly dramatic composer. It was characteristic of him to delve deep into his subconscious and his troubled soul, which gives his compositions enormous emotion and sonoristic contrasts. They demonstrate an excellent understanding of the essence of piano playing, a stereoscopic balance of manner of execution and a nuanced sense of key touch. Chopin was a sophisticated poet, a boisterous Polish patriot, a depressive recluse and a philosopher of sound. These compositions combine symphonic scope with patriotic enthusiasm, juxtaposed with a lyrical and sometimes even very intimate conversation with oneself - with one's sometimes rejoicing, sometimes weeping soul.

Franz Liszt, on the other hand, is represented in the compositions on the album as a Renaissance personality, characterised by unbridled energy, diversity of feeling and innovation in piano sound. He attempts to combine several genres - poetry, painting, sculpture, philosophy - in one medium, as well as influences from various composers, including the mystique of Richard Wagner's symphonic opera and the singing allure of Italian opera. In this way, Liszt seeks to reinvent the role of the piano composer, proposing that he becomes an individualist, an author-creator and a guide in all the arts, a kind of prophet. Through these temperamental, sometimes chaotic eclectic explorations, he seeks to discover a new sound for the instrument, a new approach to sonoric sound creation, to connect with the source of all art, and with a passionate love, to provide future generations with important discoveries in the matter of the piano's sound.



## ANDREJS OSOKINS

Latvian classical concert pianist, a laureate of the world's most prominent piano competitions, Andrejs Osokins is described by critics as impeccably stylish, praised for his powerful intellect and charisma, wide expressive sound palette, notably convincing in many different styles of music. Mr. Osokins is an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music (ARAM), Fellow of Trinity college of music (FTCM), London, and the founder and artistic director of the annual "Osokins Freedom Festival". In 2008 Mr. Osokins was awarded with "The Great Music Award", which is the highest form of state recognition in the field of music in Latvia. In 2023 Andrejs Osokins was awarded highest Latvian state award - "The Order of the Three Stars" for the organization of charity activities and dynamic concert career.



## ANDREJS OSOKINS

Andrejs Osokins' performance diary has included recitals in many high profile recital venues including the Berlin Philharmonic, the Great Hall of Konzerthaus Berlin, Frankfurt's Alte Oper; Milan's La Verdi concert hall, National Concert Hall in Dublin, Royal Festival Hall, Wigmore Hall, the St Martin-in-the-Fields and Kings Place concert hall in London, Gasteig concert hall in Munich, La Monnaie concert hall in Brussels, Opera Comique in Paris and the Symphony Hall in Birmingham. During 2020 he gave numerous highly praised online recitals broadcasted around the world and founded his own classical music, arts and theater festival "Osokins Freedom Festival" in Riga, Latvia.

Andrejs Osokins has had the honour of performing with prestigious orchestras including the Orchestre National de Belgique, conducted by Marin Alsop, the Hallé orchestra with Sir Mark Elder, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France with Darrell Ang, the London Philharmonic orchestra with James Judd, the Sinfonietta Riga Orchestra conducted by Normunds Šnē, collaboration with Kremerata Baltica orchestra and Boian Videnoff in Frankfurt Alte Oper as a part of the Messe Frankfurt, performance with Qatar Philharmonic orchestra and Maestro Pablo Mielgo, performances with Latvian National Orchestra under the baton of Vladimir Fedoseyev, Yuri Simonov, Andris Poga and Vassily Sinaisky.

His frequent stage partners include sopranos Marina Rebeka, Inese Galante, violinists Gidons Krēmers, Vineta Sareika, Magdalena Geka and Madara Pētersone, cellist Margarita Balanas, string ensemble "Kremerata Lettonica", actors Chulpan Khamatova and Gundars Āboliņš to name a few.

Andrejs Osokins has worked with many celebrated pianists, including Paul Badura-Skoda, Christopher Elton, Michail Voskressensky, John Lill, Dominique Merlet, Arie Vardi, Bernd Goetzke, Boris Berman, Dmitri Bashkirov, Stephen Kovacevic, YohevedKaplinisky and Martino Tirimo.

## ANDREJS OSOKINS

From 2015, Mr. Osokins became a member and an organizer of the “Three Osokins” piano dynasty project, which had become one of the most significant concert events in Latvian classical music scene. In 2015, three piano virtuosi of Osokins dynasty: brothers Andrejs and Georgijs and their father professor Sergejs Osokins played together for the first time for the fully packed Dzintari concert hall in Jūrmala and the next year their concert in Latvian National Opera was broadcasted worldwide by the German internet television Klassik.TV.

Andrejs Osokins has released two solo studio albums – “Dedication” featuring music by Liszt and Schumann (DUX Recording Producers, 2017), “Two Worlds” that includes piano music by Debussy and Gershwin (Prima Classic, 2021), one live album “Osokins Andrejs | Pianist – Live” (International Piano Forum, 2016) and album “Stardiving” (2022), featuring Andrejs Osokins original piano compositions. He has also released an album with his brother Georgijs and father Sergejs Osokins – “The Three Osokins in Latvian Piano Music” and “I Berzs, i Smilgas” together with mezzo-soprano Ieva Parša (Skani, 2018 and 2022). His album “Two Worlds” was nominated for the prestigious Opus Klassik Award in four nominations, including “The Best Instrumentalist of the Year”.

Mr. Osokins is a passionate advocate of contemporary piano music, working intensively with composers to initiate the creation of new music for the piano. Alongside with solo piano compositions, Andrejs Osokins has premiered three pianos concerts that were dedicated to him: Juris Karlsons’ Symphony-Concerto (also known as Symphony No. 2, 2019), Zigmars Liepiņš’ Piano Concerto (2023) and Georgs Pelēcis “Tandem” - Concerto for Two pianos and orchestra.



# CREDITS

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