
Prima
CLASSIC
David Khrikuli
plays Chopin
24 PRELUDES & 4 SCHERZI

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Fryderyk Chopin (1810–1849)

24 Preludes, Op. 28

1 No. 1 in C major Agitato
2 No. 2 in A minor Lento
3 No. 3 in G major Vivace
4 No. 4 in E minor Largo
5 No. 5 in D major Molto allegro
6 No. 6 in B minor Lento assai
7 No. 7 in A major Andantino
8 No. 8 in F sharp minor Molto agitato
9 No. 9 in E major Largo
10 No. 10 in C sharp minor Molto allegro
11 No. 11 in B major Vivace
12 No. 12 in G sharp minor Presto
13 No. 13 in F sharp major Lento
14 No. 14 in E flat minor Allegro
15 No. 15 in D flat major Sostenuto
16 No. 16 in B flat minor Presto con fuoco
17 No. 17 in A flat major Allegretto
18 No. 18 in F minor Molto allegro
19 No. 19 in E flat major Vivace
20 No. 20 in C minor Largo
21 No. 21 in B flat major Cantabile
22 No. 22 in G minor Molto agitato
23 No. 23 in F major Moderato
24 No. 24 in D minor Allegro appassionato

Scherzi

25 Scherzo No. 1 in B minor, Op. 20
26 Scherzo No. 2 in B flat minor, Op. 31
27 Scherzo No. 3 in C sharp minor, Op. 39
28 Scherzo No. 4 in E major, Op. 54



A word about my friend

I have spent more time with Chopin over these last years than with almost anyone else. He has been remarkably patient about it.

People sometimes ask why a Georgian pianist ends up devoting so much of his life to a Pole who wrote most of his music in Paris. I do not have a good answer. What I do know is that at some point he stopped being a composer I studied and became something closer to a friend—the kind you argue with, return to, misunderstand for a while, and then understand slightly better than before.

He is also, in the most literal sense, the reason I am here. Whatever I am as a musician today was shaped in rooms where I was alone with his music, trying to work out what he meant, and usually getting it wrong for a long time before getting it slightly less wrong. Everything that has happened in my career since has come through him. I am aware of the debt.

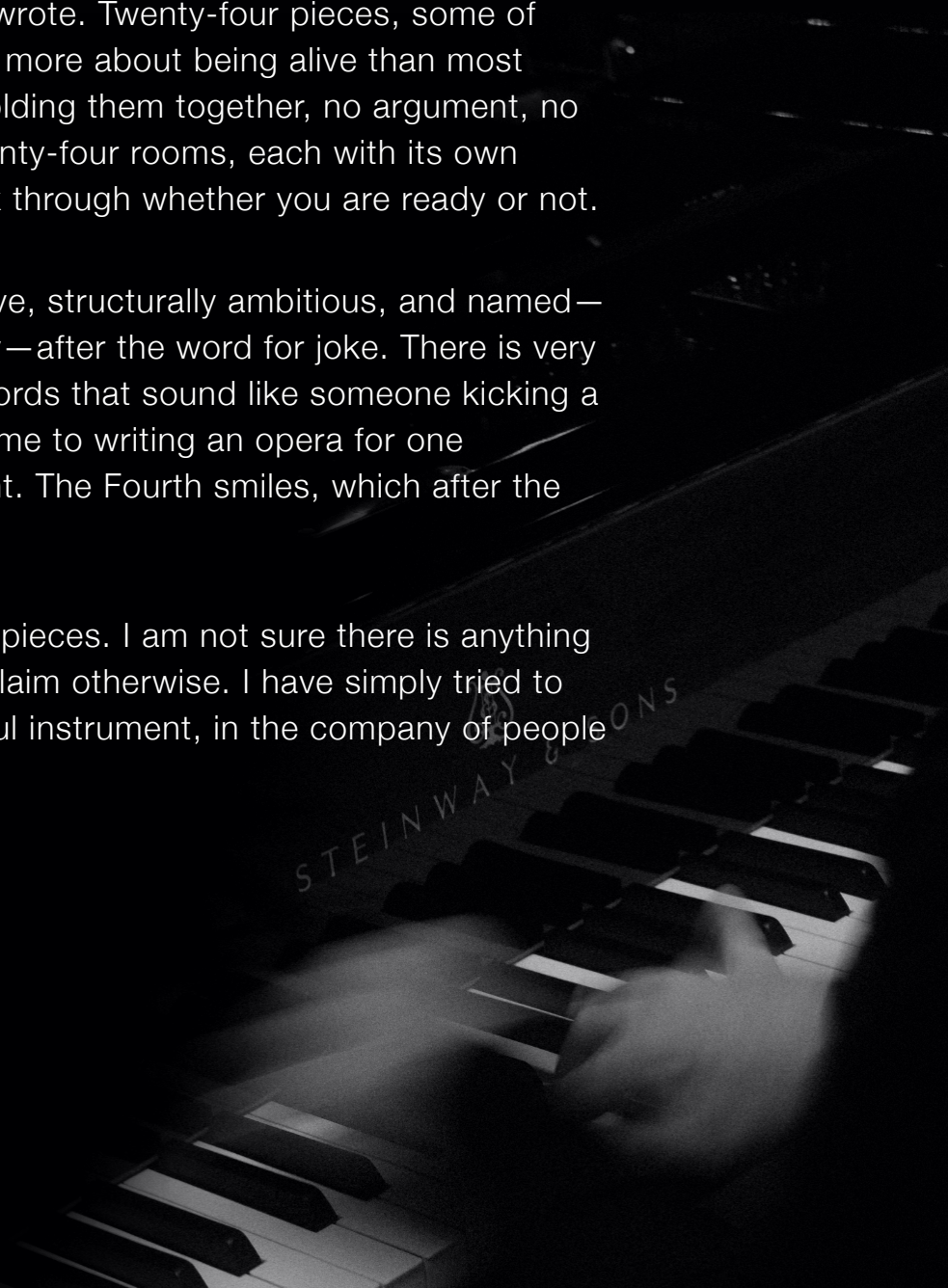


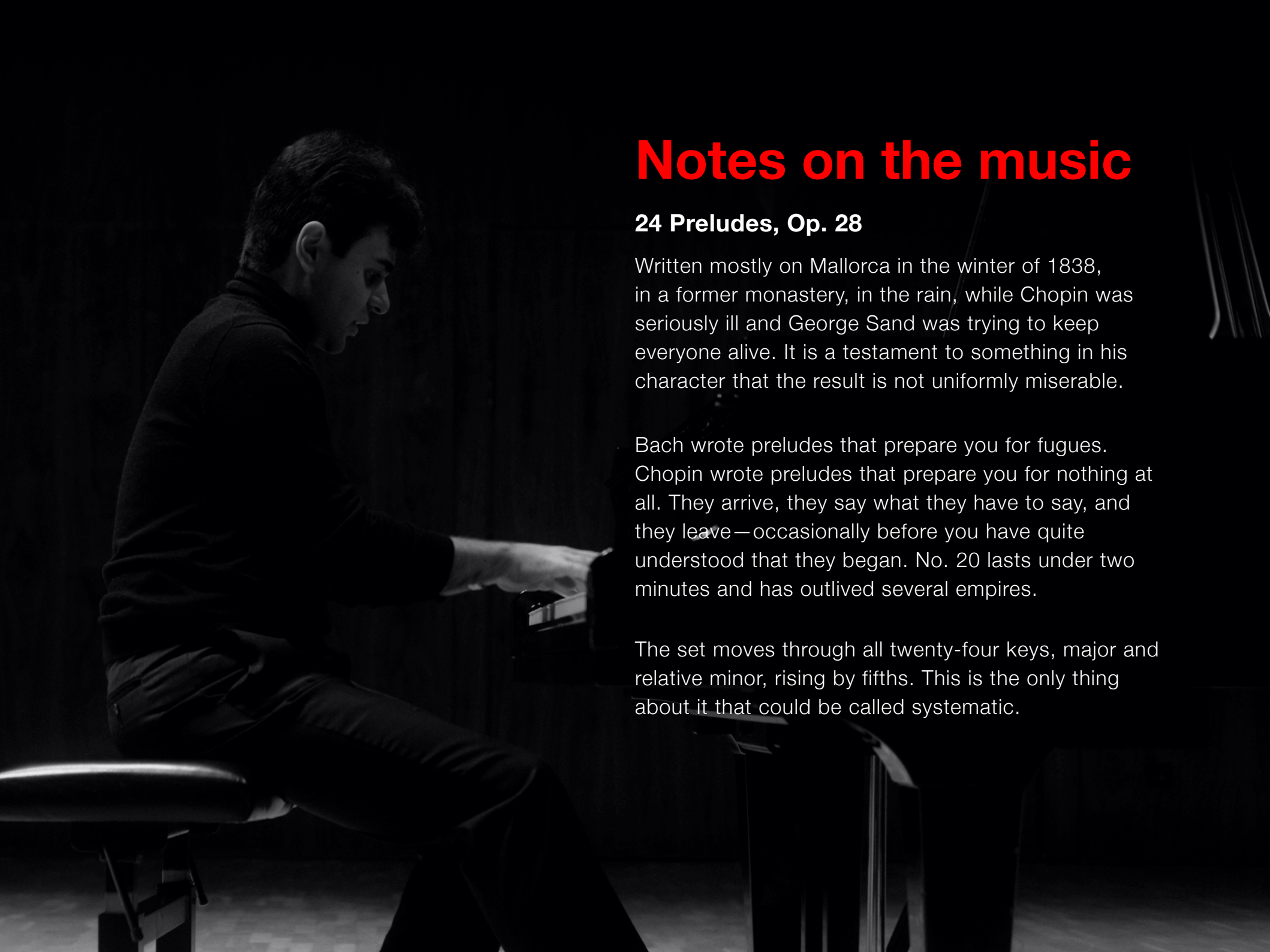
The Preludes are, I think, the strangest thing he wrote. Twenty-four pieces, some of them barely half a minute long, that together say more about being alive than most works ten times their length. There is no story holding them together, no argument, no development in the conventional sense. Just twenty-four rooms, each with its own weather, and a door between them that you walk through whether you are ready or not.

The Scherzi are the opposite: large, argumentative, structurally ambitious, and named—with what I can only assume was deliberate irony—after the word for joke. There is very little joking in them. The First begins with two chords that sound like someone kicking a door open. The Second is the closest Chopin came to writing an opera for one instrument. The Third is all granite and falling light. The Fourth smiles, which after the other three feels almost like a provocation.

I have not tried to say anything new about these pieces. I am not sure there is anything new to say, and I am suspicious of people who claim otherwise. I have simply tried to play them as honestly as I can, on a very beautiful instrument, in the company of people I trust.

Thank you for listening.
David Khrikuli





Notes on the music

24 Preludes, Op. 28

Written mostly on Mallorca in the winter of 1838, in a former monastery, in the rain, while Chopin was seriously ill and George Sand was trying to keep everyone alive. It is a testament to something in his character that the result is not uniformly miserable.

Bach wrote preludes that prepare you for fugues. Chopin wrote preludes that prepare you for nothing at all. They arrive, they say what they have to say, and they leave—occasionally before you have quite understood that they began. No. 20 lasts under two minutes and has outlived several empires.

The set moves through all twenty-four keys, major and relative minor, rising by fifths. This is the only thing about it that could be called systematic.

Scherzo No. 1 in B minor, Op. 20

Schumann asked how gravity should clothe itself if a joke goes about in dark veils. He meant it as a compliment, more or less. Two shouted chords, a storm, and then—without warning—a Polish Christmas carol appears in the middle, quietly, as though someone had left a window open.

Scherzo No. 2 in B flat minor, Op. 31

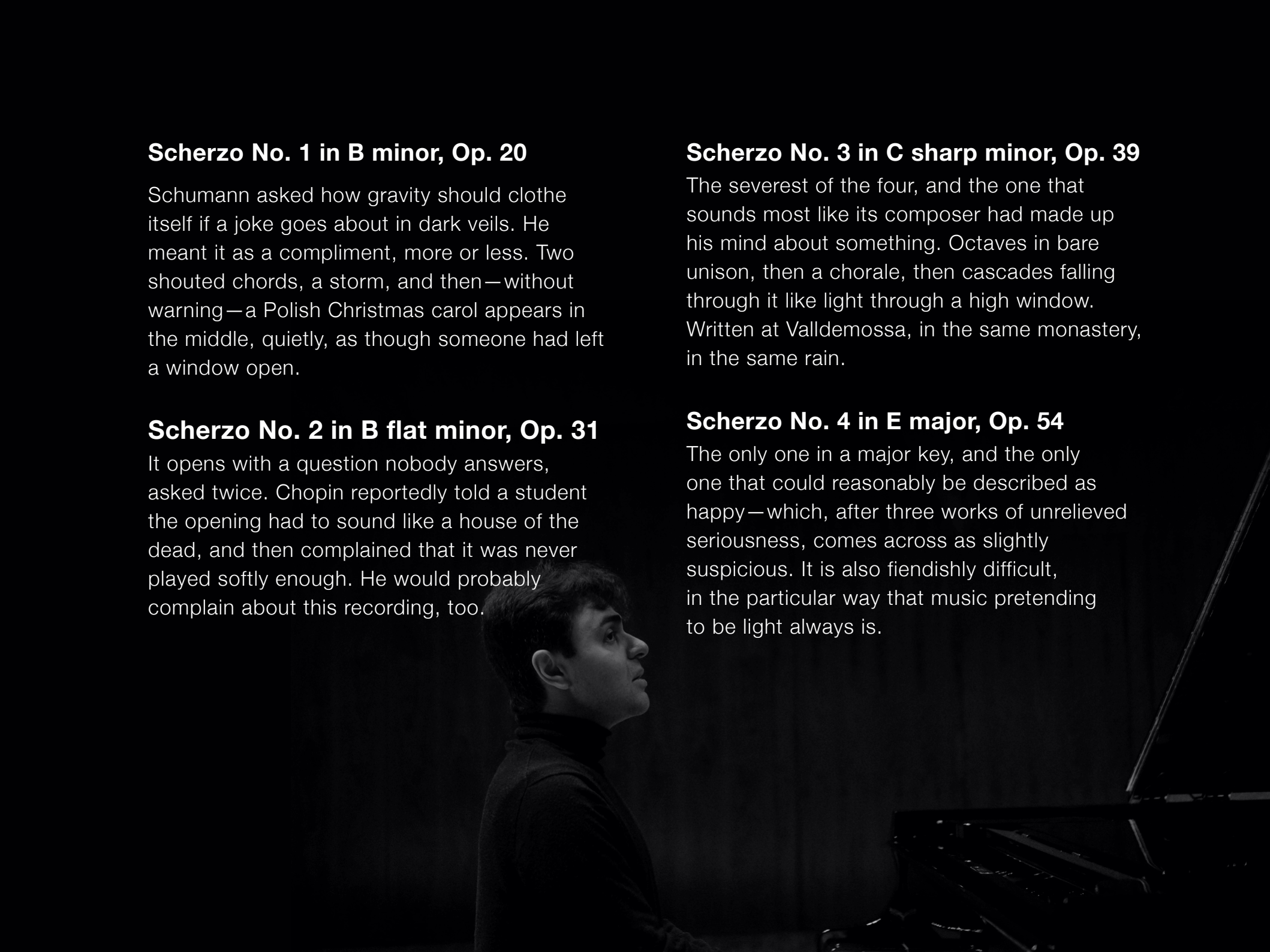
It opens with a question nobody answers, asked twice. Chopin reportedly told a student the opening had to sound like a house of the dead, and then complained that it was never played softly enough. He would probably complain about this recording, too.

Scherzo No. 3 in C sharp minor, Op. 39

The severest of the four, and the one that sounds most like its composer had made up his mind about something. Octaves in bare unison, then a chorale, then cascades falling through it like light through a high window. Written at Valldemossa, in the same monastery, in the same rain.

Scherzo No. 4 in E major, Op. 54

The only one in a major key, and the only one that could reasonably be described as happy—which, after three works of unrelieved seriousness, comes across as slightly suspicious. It is also fiendishly difficult, in the particular way that music pretending to be light always is.



David Khrikuli

Born in Georgia in 2001, David Khrikuli has become one of the most sought-after pianists of his generation. The 2026/27 season takes him to some eighty concerts in more than thirty countries, a trajectory that gives the measure of the interest his playing arouses: technical brilliance in the service of an uncommon interpretative depth, and a sense of sound that is immediately recognizable.

He was a finalist at the 2025 International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition, where his performances captivated the jury and public alike and drew praise that went well beyond the results themselves. He also won First Prize at the Cantù International Piano and Orchestra Competition (Italy, 2024) and First Prize together with the Audience Prize at the Vigo International Piano Competition, as well as First Prize and the Special Prize at Aarhus.





Khrikuli trained in Tbilisi with Revaz Tavadze and then, over a decade, with Galina Eguiazarova and Stanislav Ioudenitch at the Reina Sofía School of Music in Madrid, where he held the Fundación Banco Santander Piano Chair and received from Her Majesty Queen Sofía the Diploma for the Most Outstanding Student of his chair.

Forthcoming engagements include his debut at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris and with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, concerts with the Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona at L'Auditori, with the Transylvania State Philharmonic in Cluj, and with the Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra, alongside recitals at the Chopin Festivals of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. To these are added an extensive fifteen-concert tour of China with the Georgian Philharmonic and his Tokyo debut, among many other stages across Europe, Asia, and the Americas. *David Khrikuli Plays Chopin: 24 Preludes & 4 Scherzi* comprises his first album.

With an expressive sound, a technique of exceptional refinement, and an artistic maturity beyond his years, David Khrikuli is establishing himself as one of the most singular voices in piano playing today.

Thanks

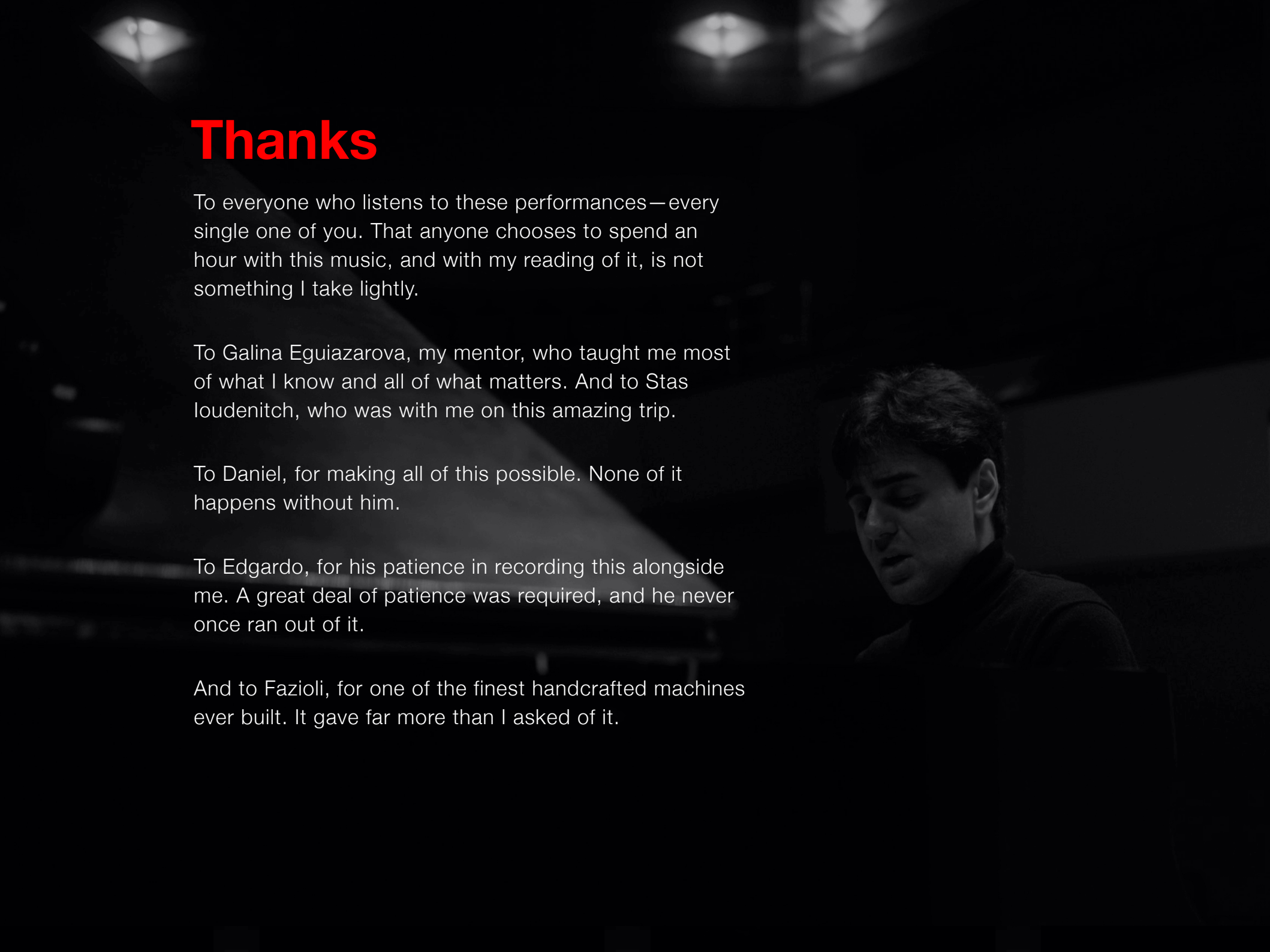
To everyone who listens to these performances—every single one of you. That anyone chooses to spend an hour with this music, and with my reading of it, is not something I take lightly.

To Galina Eguiazarova, my mentor, who taught me most of what I know and all of what matters. And to Stas Ioudenitch, who was with me on this amazing trip.

To Daniel, for making all of this possible. None of it happens without him.

To Edgardo, for his patience in recording this alongside me. A great deal of patience was required, and he never once ran out of it.

And to Fazioli, for one of the finest handcrafted machines ever built. It gave far more than I asked of it.





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