

Frederic Chopin's Chamber Music and Polish Songs

LAHTI UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Faculty of Music

Performance Studies

Bachelor's Thesis

Spring 2010

Ramin Rezaei

Lahti University of Applied Sciences

Faculty of Music

REZAEI, RAMIN: *Frederic Chopin's Chamber Music and Polish Songs*

Bachelor's Thesis in Music Performance, 34 pages, 13 appendices

Spring 2010

ABSTRACT

My purpose in writing this thesis is to represent Chopin and his music in a different light than usual. Most people are only familiar with Chopin's works for piano solo and the few works for piano and orchestra. I know many music students and even some professional musicians and teachers who consider Chopin only as a piano composer. Chopin's chamber works and Polish songs are seldom performed, though in my opinion they are extremely beautiful and deserve much more attention. Through writing this thesis, I am trying to introduce Chopin's chamber music and songs and demonstrate that, although Chopin was one of the most prolific piano composers in the history, he had also a great ability to write valuable music for other instruments as well. Chopin's chamber music and songs are able to present the musical character of Chopin very well. Even the Cello Sonata is the most significant duet sonata between those of Beethoven and Brahms.

I also played a concert with the name of "Chopin-ilta" (Chopin-night) regarding to the subject of my thesis. The concert took place on the 29th of May, 2009 in the Chamber Music Hall of the Faculty of Music of Lahti University of Applied Sciences, with the cooperation of Milla Mäkinen (soprano) and Anne Ylikoski (cello).

The written part of the thesis includes a biography of Frederic Chopin, an introduction to his chamber music and songs, explanation of each of the chamber works and the interpretation and English translation of the poems of the songs. It also includes an explanation of the preparation and performing of the concert. Along with the description of the pieces, I also have a view on the influence of the events of Chopin's life on his works.

Key words: Frederic Chopin, Chamber Music, Polish Songs, Cello Sonata, Concert

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	FREDERIC CHOPIN	4
3	CHOPIN'S CHAMBER MUSIC	10
3.1	An Introduction to Chopin's Chamber Music	10
3.2	<i>Introduction and Polonaise Brillante, Op. 3</i>	11
3.3	<i>Grand Duo Concertant</i>	12
3.4	Piano Trio, Op. 8	13
3.5	Cello Sonata, Op. 65	17
4	POLISH SONGS	23
4.1	An Introduction to Chopin's Polish Songs	23
4.2	Explanation of the songs	25
5	PREPARING THE CONCERT PROGRAM	31
6	CONCLUSION	33
	REFERENCES	35
	APPENDICES	37

1 INTRODUCTION

Frederic Chopin is one of my most favourite composers and his music has always been a large part of my life. Because I think that Chopin's music has a passionate character and special kind of purity which I feel very close to my own soul.

However because of my interest in Chopin's music, I have been listening to and looking for almost all of his works and that was how I got to know and became interested in his chamber works and songs as well as his piano solo compositions. I feel a sense of pity because they are not as well-known as they deserve to be.

While playing some of the chamber works of Chopin, I had this subject in mind as an option to write my thesis about. In the spring of 2009, I thought more seriously about it and finally decided to write my thesis about Chopin's chamber works and songs.

My first acquaintance with Chopin's chamber works was in the spring of 2006, when I found a recording containing those works in the Lahti city library. The Piano Trio in G minor Op. 8 was the first one which I listened to. I really enjoyed it and immediately decided to play it. During my studies in the academic year 2006-7, I had a piano trio group along with violinist Milka Laine and cellist Anniina Saarikko. During that time, we played the first movement of the work and had a successful performance in a special concert on the 23rd of January, 2007 where almost all teachers of the faculty of music were present, as well as some people from other faculties.

It is usually the piano which has the leading role in piano trios, but this is even more obvious in Chopin's Piano Trio compared to many other ones. Actually during rehearsal of the work with Milka and Anniina, many places in the piece seemed to us more like a concerto for piano with violin and cello accompaniment, than an equal chamber work for all three instruments. That is why it takes much more time for the pianist to learn the piece, compared to the violinist and the cellist and it is not surprising that especially the violinist would sometimes complain about the work in the process of rehearsals, though she also confirmed that the piece is very beautiful.

The Cello Sonata Op. 65 is a very deep work and was composed much later than the Piano Trio. Thus it is among those works which might need to be heard more

than only once to be understood very well. The more I listened to the Cello Sonata, the more I loved it, and while playing it I found even more interesting things in it. In spring 2009, I played the first and the third movements of Chopin's Cello Sonata with cellist Anne Ylikoski and we performed them on the 29th of May, 2009 in the concert connected to my thesis.

But about the Polish Songs, my first acquaintance was with the arrangement of some of them for piano solo by Franz Liszt, and I think that those are among the most valuable piano transcriptions of Liszt. Just a few years later, I found the recording of their original version for voice and piano in the Lahti city library and that was how I got to know all the Polish Songs in their original version.

Unfortunately not so many singers show the tendency to include Chopin's songs in their repertoire, apparently because of the simplicity of the songs or supposing them as minor works. Although, in my opinion, they show the great ability of the composer who is able to write simple and at the same time such wonderful and marvellous songs. I played four of the songs: "*Sliczny Chlopiec*" and "*Moja Pieszczotka*" with singer Milla Mäkinen and "*Smutna rzeka*" and "*Dwojaki koniec*" with singer Laura Riihimäki. I performed the two songs with Milla in a Lied-concert as well as in the concert connected to my thesis.

Through the concert for this thesis, I wanted to present Chopin's chamber works and songs to students and teachers of the music faculty and also to other interested people who would come to listen to the concert. The concert also included one of the most important piano solo works of Chopin: Ballade No. 4 in F minor, Op. 52. My reason for including this solo work at the end of the concert's program was to declare that Chopin was, in the final analysis, a fantastic piano solo composer, which is the picture that we usually have of Chopin. I also wanted to demonstrate that this Ballade is one of the greatest romantic works for piano solo and reflects some important aspects of Chopin's life as well.

In the second chapter of my thesis I will include a biography of Frederic Chopin, in the third chapter I will focus on his chamber compositions and describe each of them in detail. The fourth chapter contains a description of Polish Songs (The English translation of the poems are included in the appendices). The fifth chapter

deals with the preparation and performance of the concert part of the thesis and the sixth chapter, which is the last part of the thesis, contains my conclusion.

2 FREDERIC CHOPIN

The following text is taken from the source: Harris 1991, 213-221.

Frederic Francois Chopin was born in Zelazowa Wola, near Warsaw, on either 1 March 1810 (as Chopin himself believed) or, as his certificate of baptism states, probably erroneously, 22 February 1810. The 1 March date is now generally accepted. His father Nicolas Chopin was French and his mother, Justyna Krzyzanowska, Polish. From his earliest years Chopin showed a precocious gift for music. When he was six, Frederic began taking lessons from Wojciech Zywny, who channelled Frederic's outstanding natural ability, both physical and interpretative, into the German classical repertoire – Bach, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven – as well as guiding him through pieces by popular contemporary composers such as Hummel and the great virtuoso Kalkbrenner.

Chopin constantly improvised pieces of his own. Hailed as a second Mozart, he gave his first public performance in 1818, aged eight, playing a piano concerto by Growetz at the Radziwill Palace. In 1821 Frederic composed a farewell Polonaise for Zywny. Soon Chopin began taking composition lessons from Jozef Elsner, director of the new Warsaw Conservatoire.

In the summer holidays Chopin, always physically frail, was sent to the village of Szafarnia for country air, food and exercise. Here he heard traditional Polish folk music – a lifelong influence – and sketched some of his first mazurkas. After three years at the Lyceum (1823-26), he enrolled at the Conservatoire. His Opus 1, a Rondo in C minor, was published in June 1825.

Chopin attended as many musical evenings, concerts and operas as he could. He admired Rossini's *Barber of Seville* and Weber's *Der Freischütz*, but even though he had never heard a first-rate company he realized that performances by the Polish National Opera left much to be desired. It would not be long before he felt the need to go abroad in search of wider, more enriching musical experience. Meanwhile, under Elsner's sympathetic eye, he continued to compose. Works such as the flamboyant *La ci darem* variations, op. 2 which exploited his own gifts

as a pianist, revealed how fast Chopin was moving towards his mature style. His distinctively fluent and flexible treatment of melody, and his elegant use of keyboard configurations, were already much in evidence.

An opportunity to visit Berlin arose, giving Chopin a chance to widen his musical horizons. Yet although he found himself present at the same function as Zelter, Spontini and Mendelssohn, he lacked the courage to speak to them. A year later, in 1829, he managed to get to Vienna to supervise the publication of some of his early works, and on 11 August he made his true professional debut at the Kärntnertortheater, where his performance of his *Krakowiak*, op. 14, and op. 2 Variations, both with orchestra, had a tumultuous reception. A second concert followed a week later, and then, fired with his success, he returned to Warsaw determined to find a way of establishing his reputation outside Poland. What turned out to be Chopin's last year in his native land was marked by a series of largely abortive plans to tour abroad, and by his love for a young mezzo-soprano, Konstancia Gladkowska, a student at the Conservatoire. During this period he composed his two piano concertos, the first of which (no. 2 in F minor) had a slow movement inspired by his passion for Konstancia.

On 11 November 1830, Chopin left Poland – initially for Vienna, but stopping en route at Dresden, where he improvised for the court. This time, Vienna was less interested in the young Polish genius; during eight frustrating months there he gave only two performances (4 April, 11 June). He spent his time hearing as much music as possible, including opera, and in completing an impressive body of work: mazurkas, waltzes (including the *Grande Valse Brillante*, op. 18 in E flat), his B minor Scherzo and his last orchestrated work, the *Grande Polonaise* in E flat. He also sketched out his first ballade (G minor).

When Chopin left Vienna, it was for “London, via Paris”. En route in Stuttgart heard that a Polish revolt had been bloodily suppressed by the Russians, and that Warsaw was in Russian hands. His grief for his homeland overwhelmed him, and it has often been suggested that the news inspired his turbulent (“Revolutionary”) Etude op. 10 no. 12.

In September 1831, Chopin took lodgings in Paris. The city had become the refuge for half the political exiles of Europe, as well as a mecca for artists of all types and nationalities. Through his compatriots Chopin came to meet leading figures of the Romantic movement, while Liszt, Mendelssohn, Osborne and Hiller (all pianists) and the cellist Franchomme became his closest musical associates.

Chopin made his Paris debut on 26 February 1832. There he played, without orchestra, the F minor Concerto and *La ci darem* variations, as well as taking part in a six-piano extravaganza by Kalkbrenner.

Chopin described himself at this time as suffering from “consumption of the purse”. Soon, however, with his appearance at a Rothschild soiree, matters improved dramatically; and now that his reputation as a brilliant musician was acknowledged in fashionable society, he became the most sought-after piano teacher in Paris. Mme de Rothschild herself was one of his pupils.

By 1832 Chopin was said to be the lover of the rich and musically talented Countess Delfina Potocka. The composer dedicated to her F minor Concerto that Konstancia Gladkowska (now married) had partly inspired two years earlier. (Much later he would also dedicate to Delfina his Waltz op. 64 no. 1 “Minute Waltz”.) During this period the Etudes op. 25 were Chopin’s main concern, but he was also composing nocturnes and mazurkas, completing work on his G minor Ballade, and sketching out some preludes. Liszt had been playing some of his etudes, with Chopin’s wholehearted approval.

In April 1835 Chopin performed two times: the first, which included the Paris premiere of his E minor Concerto and *Andante spianato and Grand Polonaise* in E flat (op. 22).

In the summer Chopin travelled – first to Carlsbad to meet his parents, for the last time, then to Dresden, where he fell in love with the 16-year-old Maria Wodzinska. He wanted to marry her, but the match was not encouraged by her parents and the romance was eventually to peter out. From Dresden he went to Leipzig to meet Mendelssohn, who introduced him to the young Clara Wieck, at 15 already established as a concert pianist. It was at her home that Chopin first met Robert Schumann, the man who had honoured him in 1830 with the famous exclamation: “Hats off, gentlemen, a genius!”

In October 1836, at the home of Liszt and his mistress, Countess Marie d'Agoult, Chopin was introduced to the prolific novelist George Sand (Aurore Dudevant). She invited Chopin often to meet her circle of friends – Alfred de Musset, Heinrich Heine, the Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz and the artist Eugene Delacroix among many others.

In the summer of 1838 Chopin at last yielded to George Sand's love. They decided to spend their first winter together in Majorca. At first, when they arrived on 8 November, the Mediterranean landscape, the day-long sunshine and the relaxed atmosphere combined to give Chopin a feeling of well-being, and he embarked upon several new compositions. But with the arrival of the damp and windy weather his tubercular symptoms reappeared. He had been very ill in 1835. In mid-December, evicted from their first lodgings, they moved to an isolated monastery at Valldemosa, to which a Pleyel piano was at length delivered from Paris. There, while Sand coped with the domestic chores, Chopin worked on his C sharp minor Scherzo, C minor Polonaise and F sharp Impromptu, as well as completing his 24 Preludes. In February 1839 they left for Marseilles, then spent the summer at Nohant.

When not giving lessons or composing, Chopin spent much of his time with George Sand and her children. Beside Polish emigres, the guests included the novelist Balzac, the composers Meyerbeer and Berlioz, and the great Romantic painter Delacroix.

Chopin's relationship with George Sand now began to break down, partly because, as her children became young adults, the composer became caught in the cross-fire of parent-offspring quarrels, and partly because of an extraordinary novel by George Sand which plainly mirrored their own relationship as she saw it. In her story the actress Lucrezia Floriani – a virtuous lady, devoted to her children – is destroyed by the jealousy of Prince Karol, the lover whom she has nursed through near-fatal sickness. The implication of this tactless literary venture was obvious to all: George Sand had enough of her Polish lover. Yet, if anything, it was Maurice, George Sand's son, who could most fairly have been accused of

jealousy: now an adolescent, he violently resented Chopin's relationship with his mother, and had tried to break it up.

Eventually, after a bitter row in which Chopin tried to arbitrate between Solange, her new husband Clesinger, and George Sand, the nine-year relationship ended. Having sent Chopin a letter of farewell on 28 July 1847, George Sand was never to seek a reconciliation.

In 1848 in London, Chopin embarked upon a punishing schedule of social engagements and even went to the opera. He played before Queen Victoria and Prince Albert at a glittering evening at Stafford House, home of the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland.

Chopin left London for Edinburgh on 5 August 1848, with Jane Stirling (a former pupil who willingly offered herself in the hope that Chopin would eventually make her his wife.) But neither the 12-hour train journey nor the raw Scottish air did him any good. Yet he survived to give a concert in Manchester and to play in Glasgow and Edinburgh. His other performances were confined to the genteel drawing rooms of Scottish. Jane Stirling both bored and irritated him, and at last, with the utmost diplomacy, Chopin was able to convey to her, via a relative, that there could be no marriage. Soon afterwards providence gave him an excuse to return to London: a charity concert in aid of Polish exiles, held at the Guildhall on 16 November.

Chopin arrived home in Paris, after a seven month absence, on 24 November. Some of the inspiration which had deserted him on his break with George Sand briefly returned, and he produced two mazurkas, which were published posthumously (op. 67 no. 2, op. 68 no. 4).

Then came the inevitable relapse. His friends moved him for the summer to Chaillot, from where he wrote asking his sister Ludwika to visit him. She was with him when, at 12 Place Vendome, Paris, he died on the morning of 17 October 1849. An elaborate funeral took place at the Madeleine on 30 October, with a full performance of Mozart's Requiem, as Chopin had requested.

When he had been buried at Paris's Pere Lachaise cemetery, Ludwika took his heart back to Poland with her, in accordance with his final wish, and, carefully wrapped, all the letters he had received from George Sand.

3 CHOPIN'S CHAMBER MUSIC

3.1 An Introduction to Chopin's Chamber Music

Each of the compositions of Frederic Chopin includes the piano. For him there is no clear distinction between piano playing, improvisation and composition. Yet that does not mean that Chopin's forays into chamber music did not leave us with some beautiful and significant works. The works, which Chopin has composed for other instruments than the piano, are: the Cello Sonata Op. 65, Piano Trio Op. 8, the *Introduction and Polonaise Brillante* for cello and piano Op. 3, the *Grand Duo Concertant* on themes from "*Robert le Diable*" and Variations for flute and piano on a theme by Rossini. However in all of Chopin's chamber compositions the piano is assigned the principal role. With the exception of the late Cello Sonata, all Chopin's chamber music dates from his student years in Warsaw. (Kaisinger 1996, 3, Bielecki 2009, Brandenburg 1996, 2, Wieronski, 2009, Siepmann 1994, 12.)

In chamber music, Chopin showed real interest in only one instrument other than the piano: the cello, an instrument for which Chopin had a special fondness and to which he insistently returned at different periods in his life. He was closely acquainted with a number of cellists, two of whom are particularly worth mentioning as figures important to the composer: Prince Anton Radziwill, governor of the Grand Duchy of Poznan, a passionate cellist and gifted composer and a sympathetic protector of the young Chopin, and Auguste Franchomme, the most outstanding French cellist of his day and professor at the Conservatoire in Paris. Chopin dedicated his Cello Sonata to Franchomme. In 1833 they collaborated on the *Grand Duo Concertant* and Franchomme revised the cello part of the *Introduction and Polonaise Brillante*. (Kaisinger 1996, 3, Wieronski 2009, Bielecki 2009, Brandenburg 1996, 4.)

3.2 *Introduction and Polonaise Brillante, Op. 3*

The *Introduction and Polonaise Brillante* in C major, Op. 3, written for Prince Anton Radziwill during a visit to the Radziwill family's estate at Antonin in October 1829, is a slight but attractive work, and was never intended to be anything more. Chopin himself wrote, in a letter to his family, that "there is nothing in it but shining trinkets for the salon and for the ladies."; but it is a high class of trinket nevertheless, with some very effective writing for both instruments. Chopin chose a large cantilena comparable in style to Italian opera melodies for the central cello theme. The overall piece is considered to be a circumstantial composition of good quality, a valuable piece of house music which expresses Chopin's patriotic proudness ("Polonaise") as well as his devotion to women: as we know from himself, he very much enjoyed teaching this piece to the Prince Radziwill's charming daughter, Wanda. Chopin was giving Wanda piano lessons and she was his favourite pupil. (Siepmann 1994, 13, Weber 1999, 88, Brandenburg 1996, 4.)

The prince and his family were most amiable, but no financial help was forthcoming. Nevertheless, Chopin spent a delightful week with this cultivated and musical family. The two young princesses Wanda and Elise diverted his thoughts from Constantia, and for Wanda and her father he composed his Polonaise for cello and piano (the slow Introduction being added later). Chopin mentioned to a friend that he was guided here by ulterior motives and he wrote the piece with the younger princess, Wanda Radziwill (1808-1845), in mind, so that she could learn this piece: "You see, I wanted Princess Wanda to learn something. She is a beautiful girl of 17, and God knows how pleasant it was to guide her little fingers on the keys." Wanda did indeed learn it, and with her father gave a creditable performance of it (those little fingers were evidently nimble), but Chopin actually dedicated the work to the Austrian cellist and composer Joseph Merk, whose playing he greatly admired. (Hedley 1966, 26, Siepmann 1994, 13.)

No more than an effective piece, perhaps, but it is well laid out for the cello, and the piano writing is characteristically brilliant. In the Polonaise, the cello and

piano share the statements of the principal theme in high good humour, before the piano withdraws a little, content to offer a discreet but sympathetic accompaniment to the lyrical second theme in the cello. (Siepmann 1994, 13.)

3.3 *Grand Duo Concertant*

The *Grand Duo Concertant* was written in either 1832 (Kaisinger 1996, 5, Brandenburg 1996, 4, Bielecki 2009.) or 1831 (Siepmann 1994, 13.), however shortly after Chopin settled in Paris.

The work is composed on the best-known themes from Giacomo Meyerbeer's popular opera "*Robert le Diable*" in collaboration with Chopin's esteemed friend, the cellist Auguste Francomme, whom we might even call its co-composer (he was chiefly involved, of course, in the cello part). (Kaisinger 1996, 5, Siepmann 1994, 13, Bielecki 2009.)

Chopin was extravagantly impressed by Meyerbeer's opera when he saw it staged in 1831, though his enthusiasm for the composer soon waned. Francomme was a cellist in the Paris Opera Orchestra and later in that of the Theatre-Italien. It seems likely that his contribution to this work was restricted to technical advice, since the style of the writing is exactly the same as in Chopin's other salon pieces of the period. The critics were most enthusiastic about this arrangement, which they attributed exclusively to the genius of Chopin, because of the unmistakable "elegance" of this piece. (Siepmann 1994, 13, Brandenburg 1996, 4.)

The Duo consists of a slow introduction in C sharp minor, featuring the elaborate piano writing characteristic of Chopin's more facile salon music, an Andantino in E major and an Allegretto in A major, briefly interrupted by a slower Andante. In an effective coda, both instruments give a display of virtuosity. Like the C major Polonaise, the *Grand Duo Concertant* is an example of the style brilliant, in this case filled with occasional and quite superficial music. (Siepmann 1994, 13, Bielecki 2009.)

Chopin composed the introduction and elaborated the three melodies quoted from Meyerbeer's opera: the Romanza and one of the Choruses from Act I and finale Trio from Act V. (Bielecki 2009, Siepmann 1994, 13)

The structure of the piece maintains the formal conventions of the genre. The broad, virtuoso piano introduction, serving as a curtain, as it were, is followed by a slow, a quick, and again a slow section, wrapped up by a spirited stretta finale. (Kaisinger 1996, 5.)

The requirements of duo concertante are radically different from larger scale compositions of sonata-structure. Its antecedents can be traced back to the "symphonie concertante" of the late 18th century, extremely popular in Paris at that time. The Romanticism filled the symphonie concertante with a completely new content, mainly by dismissing the orchestral accompaniment, and emphasizing virtuosity. When the piece combines a keyboard and a stringed instrument, the term marks the solistic role of one of them – mostly of the stringed instrument – , but just as characteristic are the dialogue-like compositions, where the two instruments take turns to play solo parts. They are usually one-movement pieces, using fashionable, borrowed or foreign themes in a series of contrasting episodes succeeding on one another in a rapid narrative. (Kaisinger 1996, 4.)

3.4 Piano Trio, Op. 8

After visiting Austria a few times during the 1820's, Chopin achieved some new musical ideas and experiences which brought him boundless inspiration and excitement on creating music. Because of these influences, he attempted to compose some chamber music and piano concertos. At the same time, Chopin followed his professor Joseph Elsner to study music theory of 18th century. The Piano Trio Op. 8 was created under this situation. Through this work, Chopin shows a great deal of Romantic spirit and personal idea in his music. (Yang 2003.)

The Piano Trio in G minor Op. 8 for piano, violin and cello, dedicated to Prince Anton Radziwill, was published in March, 1833. It was begun early in 1828, was not yet finished on September 9, and “not yet quite finished” on December 27 of that year. Chopin tried the first movement in the summer of 1828, and we may assume that, a few details and improvements excepted, the whole was completed at the beginning of 1829. A considerable time, however, elapsed before the composer declared it ready for the press. On August 31, 1830, he writes: “I tried the Trio last Sunday and was satisfied with it, perhaps because I had not heard it for a long time. I suppose you will say, “What a happy man!” (Niecks 1888, 102.)

From the above dates we see that the composer bestowed much time, care, and thought upon the work. Indeed, there can be no doubt that as regards conventional handling of the sonata-form Chopin has in no instance been more successful. Were we to look upon this work as an exercise, we should have to pronounce it a most excellent one. But the ideal content, which is always estimable and often truly beautiful as well as original, raises it high above the status of an exercise. (Niecks 1888, 102.)

Of the strings, the cello is the only one for which Chopin had a clear predilection. His writing for the violin here testifies to his relative indifference to that instrument, and a year or after completing the trio he was having serious second thoughts, considering that he might have been wiser to use a viola in its place: “Sometimes occurred to me on hearing it, namely, that it would be better to employ a viola instead of the violin, for with the violin the E string dominates most, whilst in my Trio it is hardly ever used. The viola would stand in a more proper relation to the cello. Then the Trio will be ready for the press.” However, the composer did not make the intended alteration. Yet the overall colouring of the work is already on the dark side. How it might have been lightened by using the viola is hard to imagine. (Siepmann 1994, 12, Niecks 1888, 102.)

The Trio is cast in the usual four movements, with the scherzo coming second. As usual in Chopin, the piano writing is far more elaborate and resourceful than that

for the strings, posing certain problems of discretion for the pianist if the work is to sound like anything more than an accompanied solo. The first movement, *Allegro con fuoco*, is strong and dramatic, and is written in the normal sonata form. But it has an unconventional structure: the exposition ends definitely in the tonic, but to counterbalance this, the second subject is recapitulated in the dominant key, right before the coda closing the movement. In Chopin's composition, the climax of the sonata structure is usually not the development but the reprise, which culminates dramatically coming nearer the end, than it would normally in strict sonata form. Nevertheless in his mature works Chopin does not play it out completely, but leads directly into a coda based largely on new and more virtuoso material. The scherzo, however, marked "Con moto ma non troppo", is more lyrical than most scherzos of the period and contains an unusual structural feature which looks ahead to the more mature Chopin, particularly to the first movement of the great B minor Piano Sonata, composed some 15 years later in 1844: the central development section begins with the opening Scherzo theme, which, however, does not appear where we might expect it, namely at the start of the recapitulation. That begins, surprisingly, with the restatement of the second theme. The slow movement is again structurally interesting, particularly for the subsequent importance of the opening phrase, whose tension with the main theme, which it introduces, casts a dramatic shadow over much of the music. The central section is dominated by this opening idea, and the insistent interjections of it effectively sabotage the expected quiet restatement of the main theme. The finale is in Chopin's more familiar Polish vein, much of it based on the *krakowiak*, a dance that is featured in several of his early works. (Siepmann 1994, 12, Kaisinger 1996, 3.)

The comparatively ineffective treatment of the violin and cello also lays the composer open to censure. Notwithstanding its weaknesses the work was received with favour by the critics, the most pronounced conservatives not excepted. That the latter gave more praise to it than to Chopin's previously published compositions is a significant fact, and may be easily accounted for by the less vigorous originality and less exclusive individuality of the Trio, which, although superior in these respects to the Sonata, Op. 4, does not equal the composer's works written in simpler forms. Even the most hostile of Chopin's critics.

Rellstab, the editor of the Berlin musical journal *Iris*, admits – After censuring the composer’s excessive striving after originality, and the unnecessarily difficult piano passages with their progressions of intervals alike repellent to hand and ear – that this is “on the whole a praiseworthy work, which, in spite of some excursions into deviating bye-paths, strikes out in a better direction than the usual productions of the modern composers” (1833, No. 21). The editor of the Leipzig “*Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*”, a journal which Schumann characterises as “a sleepy place” is as eulogistic as the most rabid Chopin admirer could wish. Having spoken of the “talented young man” as being on the one hand under the influence of Field, and on the other under that of Beethoven, he remarks: (Niecks 1888, 102-103.)

“ In the Trio everything is new: the school, which is the neo-romantic; the art of pianoforte-playing, the individuality, the originality, or rather the genius – which, in the expression of a passion, unites, mingles, and alternates so strangely with that amiable tenderness that the shifting image of the passion hardly leaves the draughtsman time to seize it firmly and securely, as he would fain do; even the position of the phrases is unusual. All this, however, would be ambiguous praise did not the spirit, which is both old and new, breathe through the new form and give it a soul.” (Niecks 1888, 103.)

Schumann, the Chopin champion par excellence, saw clearer, and in 1836, wrote that the Trio belonged to Chopin’s earlier period when the composer still allowed the virtuoso some privileges.

On the whole, this Trio has enough of nobility, enthusiasm, originality, music, and life, to deserve more attention than it has hitherto obtained. (Niecks 1888, 103.)

3.5 Cello Sonata, Op. 65

The Sonata for Cello and Piano in G minor, Op.65, dedicated to Auguste Franchomme, comes from near the end of Chopin's life and it is his last major composition. (Morreau 2006, 4-5, Palmer 2009.)

Chopin struggled longer than with any other of his compositions with the Cello Sonata. The task of completing the Sonata took more than a year. He worked on it through 1845 and well into 1846, when he was still spending his summers at Nohant. (Hasselgren 2001, 3, Palmer 2009, Lindgren 1990, 3.)

This was in many ways a difficult time for Chopin: his long relationship with George Sand was under strain and his health was failing. He had suffered from tuberculosis many years previously, and he had never been able to shake it off fully. Composing produced difficulties for him; during the winters in Paris his time was taken up in the less than restful company of his piano students and artist friends, and it was only in the summer that Chopin found the peace to compose. (Hasselgren 2001, 3, Lindgren 1990, 3)

Extant sketches show that Chopin did indeed discard an incredible amount of material and redrafted most of his ideas before deciding on the final form of the work. At one point complaining to his sister: "I write a little and cross out a lot." In December 1845 he wrote to his family that he was trying to finish it. But more than ten months later, in October 1846, he was still working on it, reporting that: "Sometimes I am satisfied with my sonata with cello and at other times I am not. I throw it into a corner only to gather it up again later." (Hasselgren 2001, 3, Palmer 2009.)

However, as proven by the great number of sketches left of the Cello Sonata, the main reason for this slow progress probably lay in the difficulties he encountered in his attempt to break new musical ground. (Hasselgren 2001, 3-4.)

Although Chopin had written successfully for the combination of cello and piano before, this sonata is more introspective, with a romanticism notably more

whimsical than Rachmaninov's Cello Sonata from more than fifty years later. (Morreau 2006, 5.)

The Cello Sonata is, in fact, the only major work in which Chopin gives equal prominence to an instrument other than the piano. It is also one of the few works where Chopin makes us of a larger form. Indeed Chopin has been much criticized on the grounds that he was unable to create coherence in large-scale work. Although he was a great admirer of masters such as Bach and Mozart, the influences that most immediately spring to mind when hearing a "typical" Chopin piece are John Field and other exponents of the *style brillant* on the one hand and opera composers such as Bellini on the other. In a way it is perhaps significant that in the present sonata Chopin leans more towards a Germanic tradition than elsewhere in his music. (Hasselgren 2001, 3.)

The contemporary critic underlined when talking of this sonata a certain "taste for the harmonic strangeness", as well as "a lack of precise melodic thoughts" due to the fact that the themes "are so much conditioned by the harmony", that "the cantabile is all lost". The longing of Chopin to overcome rigid forms, to enlarge the harmonic field and to tread new paths could not have been described better. His work expresses a brand new personal style of modern chamber music which far too often is underestimated due to the fragile health of Chopin, as being an "atrophy" and a "painful effort". (Brandenburg 1996, 4.)

The Cello Sonata was brought into the world with great effort due not so much to lack of "inspiration" as to the composer's search for new means of expression, such as are also foreshadowed in the *Polonaise-Fantaisie*. Zdzislas Jachimecki considers that the first and last movements represent an absolutely modern type of chamber music. Without going so far, one may agree that Chopin was clearly moving away from the accepted "romantic" style, which explains why Niecks found in these two parts nothing but "immense wildernesses, with only here and there a small flower," and why Chopin did not venture to inflict the whole work on the fashionable audience at his last Paris concert. It is interesting to speculate on what Chopin's development would have been had he lived another twenty years. As it is, this sonata should be regarded not as an example of his sad decline,

but as an experiment which might have led him to rich new fields. (Hedley 1966, 159.)

The work is filled with interesting ideas and thematic ingenuity. It is in this work, more than any of its flawed companions, that Chopin comes closest to answering the criticisms levelled at his earlier essays in the form. In overall design it repeats a number of their most controversial “idiosyncrasies” (notably the omission of the first group in the recapitulation of the first movement), although the organic integration and development of thematic kernels is markedly more disciplined and inventive. But in many ways, it is not the work’s formal procedures but its determinedly anti-Romantic character, especially in its outer movements, that sets it apart from the rest of Chopin’s output. That, and another feature which is unique in the products of his maturity: as Leikin has persuasively demonstrated, the piece shows every sign of having a hidden agenda, based on a work by another composer, with whom Chopin has many affinities but who rates not a mention in his entire correspondence. Just as Schumann had used a song of Beethoven’s as a kind of secret motto in his great C major Fantasy for the piano – a motto expressing his longing for union with his wife-to-be – so Chopin, in the first movement of this sonata, seems to have taken and developed not one motive but two from Schubert’s greatest song cycle, *Die Winterreise* (a work depicting the sorrows of a man parting from his loved one in despair). The parallel with Chopin’s agonized separation from George Sand seems almost too obvious to mention, and Leikin suggests that it may have been for this reason, rather than from any musical considerations, that Chopin chose to omit the first movement from the only performance he gave of the work, with Franchomme in 1848. Had the sophisticated Parisian audience spotted the *Winterreise* reference and drawn the obvious conclusion, it would have been a matter of the greatest embarrassment to Chopin. (Siepmann 1995, 157-158.)

The first performance of the sonata was given by the composer and Franchomme in April 1847. Some ten months later (on 16 February 1848) they played it once more, during what turned out to be Chopin’s last concert in Paris. The concert before an invited audience was a success, although Chopin was in bad shape: after playing an encore he staggered off to his dressing-room and promptly fainted.

Sir Charles Halle gives a vivid account of hearing Chopin play the work with Auguste Franchomme shortly after its completion:

“On our arrival we found him (Chopin) hardly able to move, bent like a half-opened penknife, and evidently in great pain. We entreated him to postpone the performance, but he would not hear of it; soon he sat down to the piano, and as he warmed to his work, his body gradually resumed its normal position, the spirit having mastered the flesh.” (Hasselgren 2001, 4, Lindgren 1990, 3-4, Morreau 2006, 5.)

Shortly afterwards, in February, the Revolution of 1848 broke out and the wealthy society on whom Chopin depended for his income deserted Paris. He himself left for England. Returning to Paris in the winter of the same year he was too weak to continue his composing and teaching and within less than a year, in October 1849, he died. (Hasselgren 2001, 4.)

The Cello Sonata was apparently the last music Chopin heard before his death: On the 16th of October 1849, the day before Chopin’s death, he was often in an agony of pain and was slipping in and out of consciousness. He begged for death, but would not die. He asked for music. Franchomme and Princess Marcelina played some Mozart. Chopin asked to hear his own Cello Sonata, but it was not far advanced when he began to choke and the music stopped. As Charles Gavard reported:

“The whole evening of the 16th was spent reciting litanies; we gave the responses, but Chopin remained silent. Only by his strained breathing could one tell that he was still alive. That evening two doctors examined him. One of them, Cruveillher, took a candle, and holding it before Chopin’s face, which had become quite dark with suffocation, remarked to us that his senses had ceased to function. But when he asked Chopin whether he was still in pain, we quite distinctly heard the answer: “No more.” These were the last words heard from his lips. (Siepmann 1995, 226.)

The four-movement structure of the piece follows the Viennese traditions. The first as long in duration as the other three put together. This Allegro moderato in abbreviated sonata form teems with ideas, although mainly preserving a state of

melancholy. In the opening movement of the Cello Sonata, the composer applies the same formal solution as in his two vintage piano sonatas, the Op. 35 in B flat major and the Op. 58 in B minor by not recapitulating the first subject in the tonic. A delicate Scherzo follows with a contrasting lush, lyrical middle section, allowing the cello to do what it does the best: sing.

The third movement, the Largo in B flat major has a warm atmosphere of intimacy. The subject of the simple, two-part structure based on the recapitulation principle reminds us of Chopin's most characteristic nocturne themes. The cello plays a melody of dark, rich colour, similar to the singing bass melodies of the piano works. The piano picks up the melody over a "traditional" nocturne-accompaniment with broken chords. In this movement, the two instruments share a lazy balm before being hurled back into the urgency of the Allegro finale. (Kaisinger 1996, 3, Morreau 2006, 5.)

Chopin takes great care to distribute the material equally between the cello and piano, and he accomplishes this goal in a variety of ways. For instance, in the first group of themes in the first movement we hear passages of piano solo, piano with cello accompaniment, cello with a substantial piano counter-subject, cello with only light piano accompaniment, and counterpoint in which the two partners are equal. After the second group opens with rounded phrases for each instrument, a three-part invention involving both instruments ensues. The Germanic aspect of the movement becomes clear in Chopin's development of an integrated sonata form from a few related motives. Inversion and other transformations of motives from the first few measures occur even in the exposition. One of the cello's most important motives, a rising and falling half-step, comes not from the main theme but from prefatory material, and what seem like mere connective gestures evolve into parts of themes. It is not surprising that Chopin moves to the relative major (B flat), but what is striking is his path, a string of dominant-seventh harmonies, toward this goal. Throughout, Chopin diminishes the punctuating potential of his cadences by writing continuous melody over them, giving a sense of constant growth. (Palmer 2009.)

Chopin creates relationship among the four movements of the sonata through melodic references. The primary cello motive of the first movement, a rising and

falling half-step, opens the lush second movement, the folksy scherzo, and the tarantella finale—further evidence that Chopin was consciously experimenting with German compositional methods. The clear divisions between cello and piano in the second movement contrast with the more integrated use of the instruments in the first movement, while the final sounds, at times, like Mendelssohn. The end result is a unique, un-Chopinesque work. (Palmer 2009.)

4 POLISH SONGS

4.1 An Introduction to Chopin's Polish Songs

Few great composers have been more deeply influenced by the human voice than Chopin. Whether in the long, flat fields of Mazovia, where he heard the Polish peasants and noted down many of their songs, or in the opera house and concert halls of Warsaw, which he frequented as a student, he was consumed throughout his childhood and youth by a fascination with song that never left him. And when he arrived in Paris, at what turned out to be almost exactly the midpoint of his life, that fascination only deepened. (Siepmann 1999, 3.)

One of the glories of Paris in the 1830s was the abundance of opera, staged, sung and composed by the best in the business. Rossini, Bellini, Meyerbeer, Cherubini: Chopin knew them all. Still more importantly, in terms of his own music, he knew the great singers – and it was in the quality and characteristic of the human voice, especially as used in the great *bel canto* tradition of Italian opera, that he found the principal model for his own unique style of lyricism. Well before leaving Warsaw, he realized that if melodies on the piano were to have the flexibility and expressivity of vocal lines they would have to “breathe” according to similar principles. In putting this perception into practice, aided by the pedals and a highly individual use of harmony, he created an entirely new kind of melody based on vocal styles, but thoroughly pianistic. Ironically, not one of Chopin's greatest melodies, some of the most songful ever written, gains anything when entrusted to the voice, or to any other “sustaining” instrument. Which brings us to one of the several great ironies of his creative life: of all those genres to which he contributed more than one or two examples, none has been more neglected than his songs. Nor is this entirely surprising. For there are subtle and significant differences between “the song” and “song” itself, in the wider, deeper sense of the word. (Siepmann 1999, 3.)

The writing of song as Chopin understood it in his youth (and indeed as his great idol Mozart largely practiced it) was aimed at producing a lightweight form of musical entertainment, not a vehicle for plumbing the depths of human experience. Of the great Romantic song composers, only Schubert was born before Chopin, and his lieder were entirely unknown in Warsaw. If we compare Chopin's songs with Schubert's, let alone those of Schumann, Brahms and Wolf, there is no denying that most of them are clearly inferior. But the comparison itself is misguided. With very few exceptions, they belong to a quite different genre. A more apt comparison would be with the Victorian after-dinner ballad. (Siepmann 1999, 4.)

Generally strophic in style, many of them are conspicuously dance-songs, usually of distinctly national character. All of them are set to Polish words, and several, unsurprisingly, are of intensely patriotic colour.

The majority of the texts, however, are undistinguished. Chopin ignored almost entirely the literary fervor that gripped many of his generation in Warsaw, not to mention the class of poetry that inspired the great German lied composers. With only a few exceptions, he by-passed the most important Polish poets of the day, favouring for ten songs the lackluster verse of his friend Stefan Witwicki (1802-47). (Siepmann 1999, 4.)

Although we know that Chopin improvised songs to Polish texts throughout his life, and that he wrote a good many of them down, only 19 have survived. Written at various times, from 1829 (prior to his departure from Poland) to 1847 (two years before his death), none, by his own choice, appeared in his lifetime. In 1859, 17 were published by his friend Fontana as Op. 74, while the others, *Czary* ("Enchantment") and *Dumka* ("Reverie"), gathered dust for more than half a century before their publication in 1910. Strange to say, from the most idiomatic piano composer in history, the accompanist in quite a number of the songs is reduced to little better than a servile, if elegant, strummer – an unexpected circumstance, later put right by Liszt, who transcribed six of them for piano solo. Chopin himself arranged (several times) the second song of the Op. 74 group, *Wiosna* ("Spring"), for piano solo, and he also used a motif from the first,

Zyczenie (“*The Wish*”), in the posthumous Nocturne in C sharp minor. (Siepmann 1999, 4.)

Chopin’s songs brought to the European Romantic song repertoire a character, a tone it had lacked before. They brought a simplicity of a first-hand folkloric inspiration, an almost native, youthful tenderness, a boisterous aplomb, a nostalgic reflection, and finally a deep feeling for one’s country. Read with an understanding of tone and style, sung and played in a natural yet intimate way, they can charm and transform, move and disturb. (Tomaszewski 1999, 3.)

4.2 Explanation of the songs

This part is collected from the source: Tomaszewski 1999, 3-6.

Wiosna “*Spring*” Op. 74 No. 2 (1838)

A bucolic landscape is evoked by nostalgic memory. The constant oscillation between the minor and the major (G minor/B flat major) creates a mood of anticipation *senza fine*. This dumka, a melancholy counterpart of the idyll, “*piosnka sielska*”, should perhaps be hummed rather than sung.

Gdzie lubi “*There where she loves; What she likes*” Op. 74 No. 5 (1829/30)

The tone of this sentimentally lyrical miniature is part naive, part ironic: a young girl, very much like one in Greuze’s painting *The Broken Pitcher*, is the one “powerless to say where her heart will stray”.

Both the metre 6/8 and the arabesque of the melody are inherited from a romanza. Dancing strains of a mazurka leap into the very middle of the song.

Hulanka "Drinking Song", also known as *"Merrymaking"* and *"Bacchanale"* Op. 74 No. 4 (1830)

The song of a young man, carried away by his temperament and addressing a pretty servant girl, is conducted in the rhythm of a mazurka. It is a boisterous, risoluto, wine drinking song, said to have been improvised by Chopin at his farewell party with friends before leaving Warsaw.

Piosnka Litewska "Lithuanian Song" Op. 74 No. 16 (1831)

A charming lyrical-epic scene, neatly sketched and with a witty ending. Such a dialogue of a mother with her daughter, who "wet her pretty garland" at a tryst with her lover, can be found in many folklores. Chopin used a Lithuanian song in a Polish translation. The piano part discreetly recreates the scene's bucolic, rural background.

Czary "Witchcraft"; also known as *"Charms"* and *"Enchantment"* (1829/30)

A little song of a young man hopelessly in love, with an optimistic ending. It has the shape and character of a Ukrainian dumka, very much like the ones sung by protagonists of Polish vaudevilles in Chopin's time. Deemed too plain by Fontana, it was removed from the posthumous edition.

Sliczny Chlopiec "The Handsome Lad" or *"Charming Lad"* Op. 74 No. 8 (1841)

A young girl's delight with her lover's beauty is heralded to the world at large with unrestrained enthusiasm in a joyful dance. The poet picked up the lyrics from Ukrainian folklore; the composer has them sung to the melody of a Polish mazurka.

Zyczenie “*The Maiden’s Wish*” or “*My Wish*” Op. 74 No. 1 (1829/30)

The wish of a young girl is expressed sentimentally yet with such grace, naivety and simplicity that the audience cannot but smile in acquiescence. Chopin imparted to “*The Maiden’s Wish*” a shape typical for the idyll, “*piosnka sielska*”. With a folk-like dancing mode, the song has the rhythm of a mazurka; its internal refrain (“neither on lakes nor forests”) rocks as a *kujawiak*; the piano’s ritornellos is an *oberek*. Two slightly differing versions of the song exist; that of the autograph is now increasingly used.

Moja Pieszczotka “*My Darling*” or “*My Joys*” Op. 74 No. 12 (1832/37)

This is the poet’s subtle love poem, turned by the composer into a lyrical song in a great concerto style. The two-phase narration is conducted in the rhythm of a ballroom waltz, flavoured with a mazurka. It revolves with aplomb and charm towards its ecstatic final climax: “I only want to kiss, kiss, kiss her!” There is much to suggest that the song was written for Delfina Potocka.

Precz z moich oczu “*Out of my sight!*” Op. 74 No. 6 (1829) or (possibly 1827)

A lyrical song inspired by the poet’s early love poem. If the date for the first sketch of the work is correct, this is Chopin’s earliest song. The first of its two parts (“*Larghetto appassionato*”, F minor), expressing the moment of an angry parting, has been composed in an elevated style. The second, reflective part (“*Andante espressivo*”, A flat major) is closer in its character to a *romanza*.

Wojak "The Warrior" Op. 74 No. 10 (1831)

This song, composed in Vienna, was the composer's spontaneous reaction to the events of the November Uprising of 1830 in which he was unable to take part ("Why can't I at least beat the drum!"). The dramatic scene of a young man going to war has been expressed by two associated idioms: the heroic tone of the piece ("So onward into the fray!") has been adapted from rebel songs. At the same time, the closeness of the song-ballad genre is evident in the agitato of the musical narration, the rhetorical gestures, and the *a cheval* rhythm.

Spiew z mogily ("Leci liscie z drzewa") "Leaves are falling", also known as "The Orphan" and "Hymn from the Tomb" Op. 74 No. 17 (1836)

The only preserved song of the ten or twelve improvised in Paris among émigré friends to the rebel poet's works. Indeed, it still seems much like a recorded improvisation. Rhapsodic in character, the song mourns the fate of a nation and of a generation rather than individual events. An "expressive" yet internalized interpretation takes away all of the threatening pathos, replaced with a subdued lament in an elevated mood.

Posel "The Messenger" or "The Envoy" (1831).

A dumka more suited to be hummed than to be sung in full voice. This "aftermath" of a battle" landscape is sketched with but a few lines and expressed by the naïve simplicity of folk style. The narration is conducted in a *cracovienn*e-like rhythm, with modal phrases describing the situation. Chopin wanted this song to be sung in peasant fashion, yet not merrily.

Pierscien “The Ring” Op. 74 No. 14 (1831)

A romanza-like song. It tells the story of a ring given to a girl in vain, for she married another. The narration rocks with a melancholy rhythm (G minor) of a *kujawiak*. The piano ritornellos brings – ironically – a merry (wedding?) tune, expressed with the easy gestures of an *oberek* (E flat major). Chopin wrote this song into the album of Maria Wodzinska, to whom he had just become betrothed, on 8 September 1836.

Narzeczony “The Bridegroom” also known as “The Betrothed” or “The Return Home” Op. 74 No. 15 (1831)

One of the three songs in the tone of a folk ballad – disquieting, poignant, surreal. The text tells of returning from the war and finding the beloved on her deathbed. And of the faith that when she hears the cries and the calling of her sweetheart she might yet rise from her coffin, and start to live anew. The singing is in the simplest rhythms of a Ukrainian kolomyika; the function of creating the mood and of onomatopoeia is entrusted by the composer to the piano.

Smutna rzeka “The Sad River” also known as “The Sad Stream” or “Troubled Waters” Op. 74 No. 3 (1831)

The tragic and mysterious plot slowly emerges from the dialogue of a wanderer with a river. One can only guess that it alludes to echoes of war in the world of the Southern Slavs. The gloomy, modally-archaised melody of this lament seems to anticipate songs by Brahms in its depth and quality.

Dumka “Reverie” (1840)

This is an earlier, simpler version of “*Nie ma czego trzeba*” (*I want what I have not*).

Dwojaki koniec “*Death’s Divisions*”; also known as “*The Double End*”, “*The Twofold End*” or “*The Two Corpses*” (1845)

Another ballad from folk tradition, this time from the Ukraine. The saddest imaginable story of two lovers, a Cossack and his girl – or, more correctly, of their different deaths – was entrusted by Chopin to a melody reminiscent of Slavic religious laments. No frills: an absolute simplicity and purity of style.

Nie ma czego trzeba “*I want what I have not*” or “*Faded and vanished*”; also known as “*Melancholy*” or “*lack of light*” Op. 74 No. 13 (1845)

The melody of this modally archaized dumka goes on “*lento con gran espressione*”, reminding one of a bard’s songs, accompanied by strokes of the lyre or lute. This is a lyrical lament of a wanderer far from his homeland: “All that I long for is faded and gone. There is no one to love, there is no one to sing”. Chopin had already tried to give the same words a melody – much more simple and common – five years earlier. It was published as “*Dumka*” in 1910.

Melodia “*Elegy*” or “*Lamento*” Op. 74 no. 9

Chopin’s final song. He wrote it into the now-lost album of Delfina Potocka, signing it, in a quote from Dante, “*nella miseria*”: “Nothing is sadder (than to reminisce happy moments in an unhappy one).” The poet’s text itself carried a tragic message. It used images and language of the Bible to render doubt in the possibility of the rebels’ generation to live to see their country free. Chopin followed the poet’s text, broadening it with meaningful repetitions.

5 Preparing the concert program

I started to play Chopin's Cello Sonata in Spring 2009. I practised the first and third movements with Anne Ylikoski. We had several rehearsals of it under the tutelage of Rauno Jussila, my piano teacher. Actually our performance of Chopin's Cello Sonata in the concert connected to my thesis, was our first official performance of this piece.

I was really interested in playing many more of the Polish Songs. Therefore, I searched and looked around for singers who would help me with that. I asked many of the soprano and mezzo-soprano students of the faculty of Music to practise and perform the songs with me at my thesis concert in Spring 2009. Since Chopin's songs are not that popular and well-known among the singers and because most of the students are usually very busy in the spring, especially in May, I found only two singing students at the end of my search who agreed to sing, and each of them only two of the songs, and even then, only the songs partly by their own choice. So, I only got the chance to play four of the songs and not all of those which I was planning to include in the program of my concert. At one time I thought about choosing the name of one of the songs ("I want what I have not") as the title of my concert, but I would do it only if this song was included in the concert's repertoire. This did not happen, for the above reasons, and finally the concert was held under the title of "Chopin-ilta" (Chopin-night). Indeed, I was not unhappy with that chosen name either.

Milla Mäkinen showed a great desire to sing the two songs which were her choices, namely (*Sliczny Chlopiec* "The Handsome Lad" and *Moja Pieszczotka* "My Darling"). She also was so motivated to sing them in their original language, Polish, that she took some Polish language lessons from Jerzy Zywaszczak, a Polish accordion teacher at the Lahti Conservatory who also teaches Polish language, to increase her ability to pronounce the Polish texts of the songs. One day Milla invited Jerzy and some of his the students of the Polish language to the faculty of music and we held a private performance for them in the chamber music hall, where Anne Ylikoski and I also played a part of the first movement of the Cello Sonata, which was not yet completely ready. Also a Lied-concert was

held a week before my thesis concert, which Milla and I found to be a good opportunity to perform those two pieces. During these performances, we could feel the process of our improvement very well.

Beside these works, Laura Riihimäki also agreed to sing two other songs (*Smutna rzeka* “*The Sad River*” and *Moja Pieszczotka* “*My Darling*”).

We rehearsed them several times and I think that the result of our work was quite fine. But Laura’s throat started to get ill just a few days before the thesis concert. Although we were hopeful that it would improve in time for the concert, it unfortunately did not, and she was not able to sing there. Even though her name and the name of those two pieces appeared in the program, they were not performed.

I tried to choose the best time for the concert of this thesis. However, Friday, the 29 of May, 2009 (the last day of the academic year) was the only day that both the chamber music hall and all the musicians were all available for this concert. Although it was not the best time for a concert, we were fortunate that quite a lot of people came to listen, including Rauno Jussila, Jerczy Zywuszczak and some of his students of Polish language, some friends and students from the music faculty and other people.

6 CONCLUSION

Writing this thesis was an interesting experience for me because it helped me review one of my own favourite subjects more deeply than before. Sometimes after doing this kind of project, you realize that it is possible to learn and research even more about a subject which you have been interested in for a long time, and yet discover that you have still not investigated it enough. Writing this thesis made me investigate more and increase my knowledge and information about this subject.

One of my aims in writing this thesis was to introduce Chopin's chamber compositions and songs to the people who read this thesis. I am very hopeful that the thesis will help students, musicians and other people to discover these works. My wish is that by reading this thesis people would form a deeper impression of Chopin's chamber works and songs and that they would become more interested in these works.

Through writing the thesis, I have tried to create a stronger motivation in musicians and players to pay more attention to these works because I would really want those pieces to be played more often and that pianists and string players feel more passion about the works; and that singers find more interest in the songs and include them more often in their repertoire. I would like those works to achieve their rightful place in the programs of classical music, especially in the repertoire of chamber music and lied. I hope that my work has had a positive influence on the achievement of this goal.

I started to play Chopin's chamber works and songs in autumn 2006. Though at the moment of finishing this thesis, there are still many of them left to be played by me, I am planning to increase my repertoire of Chopin's chamber music and songs in the hope that someday in future I will have played them all. I also recommend to other pianists and string players and singers to increase the beautiful times of their lives by more often playing these fantastic compositions.

I think that this thesis increases the reader's knowledge of Chopin's life, his chamber pieces and songs and that it will have a positive influence on musicians

who are playing or intend to play the works. After reading the thesis, they may achieve a much higher view and greater imagination about the pieces which will definitely help them while playing.

Reading this thesis also encourages music students (particularly piano students), who do not show so much tendency to play chamber music, to play chamber music more often. I think that Chopin's music is a very good way to increase interest and motivation in students for playing chamber music. It is also especially important for piano students to play chamber music. Many of them usually play alone and are therefore not able to share and exchange their musical thoughts with anybody when playing and this is not very good. Playing chamber music improves both your musical and technical knowledge!

Through the concert part of thesis, I awoke the audience's interest in Chopin's chamber works and songs. After the concert, some of the audience told me that they were really excited by hearing a different kind of work from a composer who was considered by them as "only a piano composer". Some of them said that they had no idea that Chopin had composed for voice and cello! One told me that he had heard somewhere that Chopin had composed a few works for cello, but that his conception of them had been that they were much smaller works than he heard in the concert!

On the whole, this thesis introduces Chopin more clearly than before and expresses an even more universal figure of Chopin.

REFERENCES

Harris, N. (ed.) 1991. *Romantics*. London: W. H. Smith (Marshall Tavendish).

Hedley, A. 1966. *Chopin*. London: J. M. Dent and Sons.

Niecks, F. 1888. *Frederick Chopin as a Man and Musician*. London, New York: Novello, Ewer & Co.

Siepmann, J. 1995. *Chopin The Reluctant Romantic*. London: Victor Gollancz.

Weber, B. Z. 1999. *Chopin The Women in his life*. Paris: Opus 111.

Bielecki, A. 2009. *Chamber Music*. The Fryderyk Chopin Institute. [referred 18.3.2009]. Available: <http://www.en.chopin.nifc.pl/chopin/genre/detail/id/7>

Palmer, J. 2009. *Sonata for Cello and Piano in G minor, Op. 65, CT. 204*. [referred 17.10.2009]. Available: <http://www.answers.com/topic/sonata-for-cello-piano-in-g-minor-op-65-ct-204>

Wieronski, M. 2009. *Chopin Chamber Music*. [referred 21.4.2009]. Available: http://www.bearon.pl/chamber_chopin.htm

Yang, N. J. 2003. *Chopin Piano Trio, Op. 8*. [referred 23.3.2007]. Available: http://etd.lib.nsysu.edu.tw/ETD-db/ETD-search/view_etd?URN=etd-0726104-142226

Brandenburg, D. 1996. *Chopin Works for cello and piano. Booklet, 3-4*. Translated by Petra de Castro. Arte Nova Records.

- Hasselgren, L. 2001. Chopin Cello Sonata Schumann Works for Cello & Piano. Booklet, 3-4. BIS.
- Kaisinger, R. 1996. Chopin Chamber Music. Booklet, 3-5. Translated by Judit Racz. Hungaroton Classic.
- Lindgren, M. 1990. Chopin/Rachmaninov Sonatas for Cello and Piano. Booklet, 3-4. Translated by William Moor. Ondine.
- Morreau, A. 2006. Chopin & Rachmaninov Cello Sonatas. Booklet, 4-5. Warner Classics.
- Siepmann, J. 1994. Chamber Music. Booklet, 12-14. Chopin Complete Edition VIII. Deutsche Grammophon.
- Siepmann, J. 1999. Songs. Booklet, 3-5. Chopin Complete Edition IX. Deutsche Grammophon.
- Tomaszewski, M. 1999. Chopin Polish Songs. Booklet, 3-6 & 8-19. Hyperion Records.

LAHDEN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU
MUSIIKIN LAITOS

Ramin Rezaein opinnäytetyökonsertti

Chopin-ilta

Perjantaina 29.5.2009 klo 19.00
Musiikin laitoksen kamarimusiikkisalissa
(Svinhufvudinkatu 6 F-G)

Ramin Rezaei, piano
Anne Ylikoski, sello
Milla Mäkinen, laulu
Laura Riihimäki, laulu

Sliczny Chłopiec (Handsome lad) op. 74 no. 8
Moja Pieszczotka (My Darling) op. 74 no. 12

Milla Mäkinen, laulu
Ramin Rezaei, piano

Smutna rzeka (The Sad river) op. 74 no. 3
Dwojakj koniec (The Twofold End) op. 74 no. 11

Laura Riihimäki, laulu
Ramin Rezaei, piano

Sonaatti sellolle ja pianolle op. 65 g-molli
I Allegro moderato
III Largo

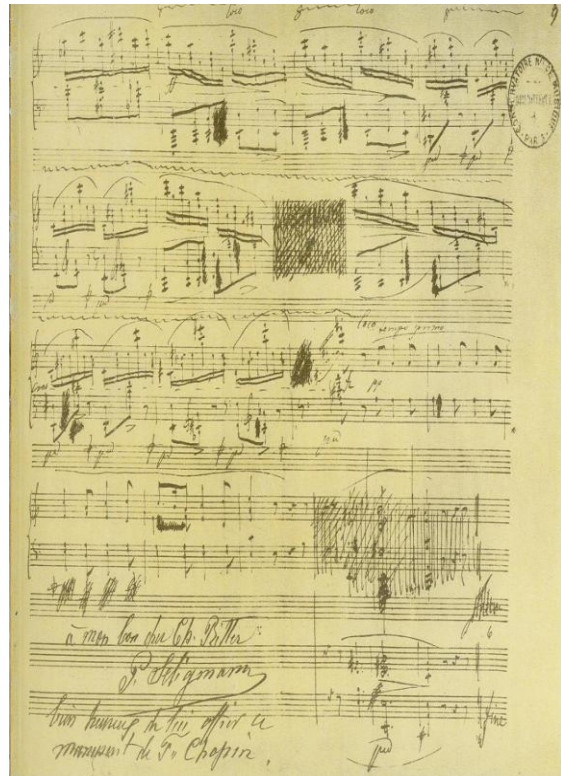
Anne Ylikoski, sello
Ramin Rezaei, piano

Balladi no. 4 op. 52 f-molli

Ramin Rezaei, piano



Chopin in 1849 (the last year of his life)



Chopin's manuscript



Chopin's death



Auguste Franck

Spring

*The dew sparkles; A spring whispers in the meadow
Somewhere a cowbell rings, Hidden in the heather.
Open fields, flower-scented, Make a pretty picture;
All around the flowers blossom And the bushes bloom.*

*Wander and graze, my little flock, While I sit and think,
Singing to myself Sweet songs in the breeze.
What a peaceful haven; Yet something troubles my mind
Something pains my heart, And tears gather in my eyes.*

*The tears drop down my cheeks Like dew in the morning.
A lark begins to sing, And his song mingles with my weeping.
He spreads his wings, And flies higher and higher into the sky
Until, lost in the misty azure, He vanishes, gone!
Still his music descends On to the open meadows;
So the earth's song of life Ascends to heaven's gates!*

Stefan Witwicki

There where she loves

*Streams gurgle through the valley; Birds are nesting under the eaves;
Deer hide in the forest, But where can a girl's heart find its home?
Perhaps where there are bright blue eyes, Or dark, deep, mysterious ones;
But to songs of love or pain Her heart may or may not fly
She herself is powerless As to where her heart will alight.
She is powerless As to where her heart will stray.*

Stefan Witwicki

Drinking Song

Take care, pretty girl; Be careful!
You are laughing so much You're spilling wine all down my coat!
I'll not forgive you! I'll make you pay; I'll kiss you till I'm exhausted!
Ah, those shining eyes, and those divine lips Set my blood afire!
Drink down or feel my fist. Hey, lass, over here!
Just serve us. Don't entice us. Pour us some beer!

Stefan Witwicki

Lithuanian Song

Early one morning the sun was rising;
My mother was waiting by the window.
"Tell me, my daughter, where have you been?
How did you wet your pretty garland?"
"I rose early and the morning dew was heavy.
It's no wonder
that I wet my garland."
"You're telling a lie, child!
You've been out to see that boy!"
"It's true, mother, true;
I went to meet my lover.
I only went to see him for a moment,
And in that time dew settled on my wreath."

Popular poem from Lithuania (Polish translation: Ludwik Osinski)

Witchcraft

*It must be witchcraft; It must truly be magic.
 My father told me the truth. I just don't know what I'm doing.
 When the wind shakes the trees, Or when the air is still
 Her gentle voice is everywhere. Surely, this is witchcraft!*

*When we sing I start and tremble; When she's gone I long for her.
 My happiness is a pretence, For I am under her spell!*

*But I have a cunning plan! I'll gather herbs by moonlight to make a potion;
 I'll cast my own spell upon her And she will become my wife!*

Stefan Witwicki

The Handsome Lad

*Young and tall and handsome, Oh, he's my choice and my liking!
 What more handsome would you seek? Raven hair and golden cheek!
 Should he be late in coming My heart grows faint and numb in me.
 Just an eyelid's flicker Will make my heart beat quicker
 Every fond word he whispers In my ear, my heart remembers.
 When we're dancing together All eyes turn to us.
 He's already told me That I am all the world to him.*

Bohdan Zaleski

The Maiden's Wish

*If I were the sun in the sky I wouldn't shine just on you.
 Neither on lakes nor in forests But on everything;
 Oh the times under your window And only for you were I but the sun.
 If I were a bird from the forest I wouldn't sing in any foreign country,
 Neither on lakes nor in forests But on everything;
 Oh the times under your window And only for you were I but a bird.*

Stefan Witwicki

My Darling

*When my sweetheart, in happy mood, Sings, trills and chirps like a bird,
 I savour each sweet moment, And dwell on each happy note.
 I have no wish to interrupt; I only want to listen, listen, listen.*

*When her eyes flash merry and bright, And her cheeks are red as berries,
 Her pearly teeth flashing white, Then boldly I gaze deep into her eyes,
 And her mouth, wanting to kiss her; I only want to kiss, kiss, kiss her!*

Adam Mickiewicz

Out of my sight

Out of my sight! Leave me I beg you!
Out of my heart! I cannot go against you.
Out of my thoughts! No, that ultimate surrender
Our memories could ever render.

As evening shadows lengthen
And stretch their sad imploring arms,
My face will shine brighter in your mind
The further you are from me.

In every season in places close to our hearts,
Where we have shared laughter, tears and glances
Always and everywhere shall I be with you,
For everywhere I have left a part of my soul.

Stefan Witwicki

The Warrior

Hark! My steed stamps the dust; He has heard the call!
Farewell father, mother, Sisters; farewell to you all!
We'll ride into battle As the gale roars through the trees!
We will return victorious With our hearts aflame!

But if fate has chosen for me Death's unfading crown,
You, my steed, without a rider Shall return alone!
Still I hear my sisters' voices Begging my horse to stay.
Would'st thou? No, the die is cast, So onward into the fray!

Stefan Witwicki

Leaves are falling

*Leaves are falling thickly; Where once the tree grew free
 Now there sits a wild bird Calling by a grave.
 O, for ever and ever, Poland's fate is clouded;
 Endeavours fade like dreams, And the land is shrouded in sorrow.*

*Cottages are burned; Villages destroyed;
 Women lament; Homeless in the fields.
 Men have fled, From family and friends;
 Crops shrivel and die, Untended.*

*Young men gather to defend The walls of Warsaw;
 Poland begins to rise From darkness.
 Fighting on through blizzard, And summer heat,
 Then came autumn To thin our ranks.*

*Now the war is over, Our toil expended in vain.
 The fields we once tilled Remain empty.
 Some lie buried; Some languish in prison;
 Some wander in exile, Homeless and hungry.*

*Heaven has not helped us; Mens' heads hang down.
 The unsown fields turn to waste, And nature's gifts are as nothing.
 Leaves are falling thickly; And more leaves, thick and dark.
 Dear cherished land, See how your sons,
 Driven for your sake, Now suffer and die for you.
 With but a handful of Polish soil, We can create a new land.*

*Freedom through force now seems impossible.
 Traitors flourish and the people too good-hearted.*

The Messenger

*Dew lies on the meadows; The winter days are waning,
 And you, faithful swallow, Are with us once more.
 Now the days are longer, thou of spring the bringer,
 We welcome you from distant lands, Joyful singer!*

*Stay and make your home here; Make our roof your nest.
 Take the grain I strew for you; A long journey needs a long rest.
 Say, what you look for, with your dark shining eyes.
 And do not look so merry; My loved one has gone for ever.*

*She has left the village left me for another.
 At the roadside shrine stood her weeping mother.
 Tell me, tell me, swallow, If you've seen her.
 Is she happy and laughing, Or is she sad and weeping?*

Stefan Witwicki

The Ring

*When nurses sang sadly to you, I was already in love,
 And on the little finger of your left hand I placed a silver ring.
 Others took girls, I loved patiently.
 Then a young stranger came along, Although I had given you a ring.*

*But now I am far away, Wishing I was near you.
 And now you have married another man, Forgetting me and my ring.
 But you will never be Separated from my love.
 You, and that dear ring, Will be cherished in my thoughts for ever.*

Stefan Witwicki

The Bridegroom

*The wind howls in the forest, And you gallop wildly on.
Your black hair streams behind you. But, strange horseman, you ride in vain.*

*“ Can you not see above the forest How the ravens gather,
Soaring, crying, flying, swooping, Down upon the heather?”*

*“ Won't you come to greet me, my darling? I am here to greet you.
How can she come? She is dead. She lies cold in her grave.”*

*“ On must I ride to her. Sorrowing heart - come, away!
Did she, as she lay dying, Look for me?”*

*When she hears me calling, My tears falling to the earth,
May she wake from death, And rise once more.*

Stefan Witwicki

The Sad River

*River, flowing from the mountains, Tell me why your waters are swollen.
Is the snow thawing And flooding your banks?
The snow lies unmelted in the hills, And flowers hold my banks firm.
At my source sits a mother, Sorrowful and weeping.*

*Seven daughters she bore and loved; And seven now lie buried.
In death they know not night nor day; They lie, facing east.
Waiting in pain by their grave, She tells her sorrow to their spirits.
And her unceasing tears flow, Swelling my waters to a flood.*

Stefan Witwicki

The Twofold End

For a year they loved, for eternity they parted.

Now, at death, they lie broken-hearted.

She lies on her couch in her little chamber;

He at the crossroads under the oak-leaves' murmur.

Around her still form her loved ones stand grieving;

Over his outstretched limbs a raven circles.

Unhappy lovers! In them the flame fiercely burned;

Pain was theirs till death came in mercy.

Now for her passing the village bell is tolling;

Over the soldier's body only the wolves howl.

Under the soft turf her bones are laid to rest;

His whiten in the cruel light.

Bohdan Zaleski

I want what I have not

My heart is heavy, my eyes full of sorrow, Darkness creeps over me.

I can no longer sing of tomorrow, For I am dumb with grief and weeping.

All that I long for is faded and gone. I wander here in anguish, lonely and sad.

The sun has gone from my heaven. And I must languish here in this loveless place.

Oh, could I love again I'd sing with gladness. Here, far from home, I long to dream.

I want what I have not - to love; And there is no one to love, nor to sing to.

Sometimes I look to heaven, imploring, And the howling storm hears my grief.

The rain is cold, and its roar is loud. "Sing," cries my heart, "for we shall soon be leaving."

Bohdan Zaleski

Elegy

*Under their crosses' cruel weight they stand
To see from the mountain top the promised land.
Their eyes shine with transcendent light
To see their people descending.
They see the regions they will never enter,
The horn of plenty they will never taste!
And here their bones will lie unremembered,
Perhaps for ever.*

Zygmunt Krasinski

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to Marja Vuori, Rochelle Stein-Salmi, Rauno Jussila,
Anne Ylikoski, Milla Mäkinen, Juho Laitinen,
and to my parents Reza Rezaei and Mahnaz Khazaeli