



ANNA TSYBULEVA: FANTASIEN

ANNA TSYBULEVA *piano*

CPE BACH | BEETHOVEN | SCHUBERT | BRAHMS

Ever since my childhood I have loved to fantasise, the absence of borders in our dreams has always appealed to me. In our mind's eye we can cover the whole world in the snap of a finger. I think everyone, regardless of age or profession, can at least once in a lifetime imagine themselves philosophers, able to find answers to life's most difficult questions.

Schubert was 25 years old when his "Der Wanderer" Fantasy was written; in this music he thought about happiness and genuine love. No wonder that at the same young age the fantasy and the song were so real to me that it was almost as if I had created them myself. My professor Ludmila Roschina noticed this, making the process of learning both highly interesting and inspiring. Together with Schubert we dreamed and pondered over that beautiful world described in this music.

A bit later I decided to seek Brahms's advice on how to examine and face up to life's challenges. His intermezzo and capriccio had always attracted me but I felt the need to prepare more, to wait until his musical language became intelligible to me. Once after a lesson in Moscow my professor suddenly said, "It is time to meet Brahms." Our musical meeting was a thrill to me. While reading the scores I felt that those long-awaited keys, which seemed to me so difficult to find, would appear now. I spent all day long practising Brahms. It was like a fascinating conversation in my mother-tongue. Meanwhile I was also reading a book in which Brahms's letters and memories of his friends and contemporaries were published. When the author described the day of Brahms's death, I had a feeling that my relative, my mentor was dying. When I closed the book, I smiled, thankfully realizing that hundreds of years lay between us.



A couple of months later the Fantasy Op.77 by Beethoven came into my repertoire. It was a real pleasure to work on this piece. I was amazed at his unpredictability, sense of humour and courage. If during the performance you can fully trust

Beethoven's fantasy, this piece becomes a breathtaking musical journey. Working on it my other professor, Claudio Martinez Mehner, and we talked about which of Beethoven's predecessors had influenced periods of his creative work. CPE Bach was one of those composers. We also often discussed the genre of Fantasy. Then Claudio offered to take the Fantasy in F-sharp minor by CPE Bach to understand better this unusual genre which is beyond ordinary analysis. This conversation sparked my idea to bring together all these fantasies into one programme. In the fantasy by CPE Bach I saw those musical devices which had very often been used by Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms and other composers. It became clear to me why Mozart had said of CPE Bach, "He is the father. We are the children!" What impressed me the most was that he predicted the advent not only of the classical style but also the romantic style. The incredible expression and sensibility of his works opened a new path in Western European music. To a greater or lesser extent CPE Bach inspired all nineteenth-century composers.

This CD is the beginning of my musical and real-life journeys. These composers taught me to be honest and brave. Their works influenced my world outlook for which I am very grateful, and my work with them will continue. No doubt my interpretations of these pieces will change over time, but that is only natural. I trust my musical mentors. With their scores in my hands I am not afraid to keep fantasising!

TRACK LISTING

	CARL PHILIPP EMANUEL BACH (1714–1788)	
1	FANTASIE IN F SHARP MINOR H.300	12'03
	LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)	
2	PHANTASIE Op.77	10'42
	FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797–1828)	
	FANTASY IN C MAJOR 'WANDERER-FANTASIE' D.760	
3	<i>i</i> Allegro con fuoco ma non troppo	05'50
4	<i>ii</i> Adagio	07'04
5	<i>iii</i> Presto	04'56
6	<i>iv</i> Allegro	03'54
	JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897)	
	FANTASIEN Op.116	
7	<i>i</i> Capriccio	02'20
8	<i>ii</i> Intermezzo	04'04
9	<i>iii</i> Capriccio	03'07
10	<i>iv</i> Intermezzo	05'14
11	<i>v</i> Intermezzo	03'03
12	<i>vi</i> Intermezzo	03'15
13	<i>vii</i> Capriccio	02'24

Total playing time: **68'03**

Produced and edited by Matthew Bennett
 Engineered by Philip Hobbs
 Mastered by Dave Rowell
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 Photographs of Anna Tsybuleva by Vera Greiner
 Executive Producer for Champs Hill Records: Alexander Van Ingen
 Label Manager for Champs Hill Records: Joanna Wilson

PROGRAMME NOTE

On 26 July 1809, in the midst of the Napoleonic wars, Beethoven wrote to his publisher Breitkopf & Härtel, requesting scores of works not only by his immediate predecessors Mozart and Haydn, but also works by Johann Sebastian Bach – by then dead for well over half a century – and by Bach's most celebrated son, Carl Philipp Emanuel: "I have only a few samples of Emanuel Bach's compositions for the clavier; and yet some of them should certainly be in the possession of every true artist, not only for the sake of real enjoyment but also for the purpose of study." For Beethoven, this interest in music from several past generations of composers was entirely new; hitherto he had been content to study the most current trends in music, including French revolutionary music. This change of focus, coming as it did in the turmoil of war, may suggest that he desired to retreat into past certainties; certainly he now rejected his former fascination with revolutionary France and absorbed himself in German culture, including not only music but literary works by Goethe, Schiller and Wieland.

Yet Beethoven's particular interest in CPE Bach involved something far more profound than mere nationalistic chauvinism: his interest, rather, was in a composer whose music works on the principle of surprise and unpredictability – qualities which strongly chimed with Beethoven's own creative spirit. Beethoven, thus, appears to have become profoundly aware of that extraordinary communion which musicians today – with their deep historical perspective – almost take for granted: that of a composer through his music, which speaks vitally to new musicians even long after his death. This was a quality also to be much appreciated by Brahms at the latter end of the nineteenth century.

Characteristic qualities in CPE Bach's music include daringly innovative use of abrupt key changes and expressive use of harmonies. One of his most intriguing

works for clavier is the F sharp minor fantasia, written in 1787, the penultimate year of his life, which he named *CPE Bachs Empfindungen* (“CPE Bach’s Perceptions”). Though not the first of Bach’s fantasias, it is certainly the longest; marked “Sehr traurig und ganz langsam” (Very sorrowful and quite slow), its sombre and melancholic tone appears all the more disturbing since none of the music is ever quite repeated the same, as if no one idea can be reliably recalled. The title Bach assigned the work strongly suggests it represents his own state of mind as he advanced through his early seventies, dwelling as it does on qualities of uncertainty and the impermanence of things.

Beethoven composed his own Fantasia in G minor, Op.77, in the same year in which he requested more of CPE Bach’s work. Several commentators, including Beethoven’s pupil Carl Czerny, have suggested that the Fantasia reflects the composer’s own style of improvisation, such as Beethoven performed just the previous year as part of a grand concert involving the premiere of his Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, as well as being in that same concert the soloist in the Choral Fantasia and the G major Piano Concerto! Yet there is an apparent spiritual kinship between Beethoven’s G minor Fantasia and CPE Bach’s in F sharp minor. The downward cascading scale with which Beethoven’s Fantasia starts, rather than merely a finger-warming gesture, plays a major and unpredictable role in the work, reappearing sometimes just as punctuation for the music’s rumination, or sometimes as a more disruptive element, nudging the music into keys far from the “home” tonality. Yet Beethoven, typically, reaches a more positive – albeit somewhat ambivalent if playful – conclusion.

Schubert revered Beethoven, and paid close attention to that great composer’s work; one may suspect that the B major passage about mid-way through

Beethoven’s fantasia may have been in Schubert’s mind when in 1828, the last year of his life, he composed his final Piano Sonata (the B flat major, D960). Another work Schubert certainly had in mind when composing that sonata was one of his own earliest songs, “Der Wanderer” – its opening is quoted in the first movement’s development section. Schubert again quoted that song some six years earlier, in 1822, in his Fantasia in C for solo piano, widely known since as the “Wanderer” Fantasy: an eight-bar passage from the middle of that song is the basis of the slow second section of that work. The C major Fantasia was written specifically for “a certain wealthy gentleman” – that being Emmanuel Karl Edler v. Liebenberg, a former pupil of Hummel’s. Schubert therefore created a work appropriate for a pianist of such distinguished training, one clearly intended to impress from the outset – extrovertly grandiose at its start, and ending with a fugue that certainly stretched Schubert’s own piano technique beyond its limit: on one occasion, when trying to play it, Schubert suddenly leapt from the piano stool crying, “Let the devil play this!”.

The quasi-orchestral textures of Schubert’s C major Fantasy subsequently inspired the piano works of Liszt and Brahms. Indeed, Brahms’s early piano sonatas were described in 1853 by his early champion, Robert Schumann, as “veiled symphonies”. It was almost forty years later that Brahms wrote his final series of piano works which he had published in several volumes, starting with his seven Fantasies, Op.116. Brahms appears to have composed those pieces mostly in the summer of 1892, after a considerable break from writing piano music – the last published having been the Two Rhapsodies, Op.79, in 1879; in the meantime he had composed the last of his orchestral works, including the Second Piano Concerto, his Third and Fourth symphonies, and the Double Concerto for violin and

cello. More in the spirit of his late piano pieces is his Clarinet Quintet, composed in 1891 – gentle, wistful and melancholic. Brahms then composed a good deal of piano music of a similar nature – technically intricate, emotionally deep, poignant yet complex – from which he finally published twenty pieces, withholding several others which he either thought unworthy of public attention, or of which, possibly, he couldn't conceive a suitable grouping. Certainly he appears to have put some thought into the sequence of seven pieces that constitute the Op.116 Fantasien, which begins and ends with vigorous pieces he named "Capriccio"; these frame a sequence of reflective "Intermezzos", punctuated by a further "Capriccio" which serves as the third piece. While one can hear in those capriccios a good deal of the fieriness of Brahms's early sonatas, there is a new quality of reflectiveness – wistful and sometimes nostalgic, without ever becoming sentimental – in the remaining pieces designated "Intermezzo". Like CPE Bach's F sharp minor Fantasy, Brahms's intermezzos appear to represent the reflections of a composer near the end of his career.

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Winner of the Leeds International Piano Competition 2015, Anna Tsybuleva was born in 1990 and grew up in Russia. She started piano studies at the age of six with her mother, Svetlana Tsybuleva, later continuing her studies at the Moscow Conservatory with Ludmila Roschina, and at the Basel Music Academy with Claudio Martínez Mehner.

Recent concerto appearances include with the Hallé Orchestra under Sir Mark Elder, the St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Basel Symphony Orchestra and the Mariinsky Orchestra.

Anna Tsybuleva's success at the Leeds International Piano Competition has led to many important engagements both in the UK and internationally, including recitals at the Salle Cortot Paris, Tonhalle Zurich, Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, Klavier Festival Ruhr and Philharmonie Luxembourg and in Hong Kong. She also appeared at the Chipping Campden Festival in 2016, stepping in for Paul Lewis. Future engagements include the Hallé and Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestras, and at various festivals throughout the UK and internationally. In January 2017 she made her debut at the Wigmore Hall in London.





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