

**Fantasia in F minor  
Sonata in C major**

**Simon Callaghan**

**Adrian Farmer**

**SCHUBERT**

# FRANZ SCHUBERT

## Music for Four Hands

**Simon Callaghan - *primo***

**Adrian Farmer - *secondo***

	<b>Fantasie in F minor D.940 (1828)</b>	
1	Allegro molto moderato	4.41
2	- Largo	2.36
3	- Allegro vivace - Trio	7.00
4	- Tempo I	4.19
	<b>Sonata in C major D.812 (1824)</b>	
5	I Allegro moderato	14.47
6	II Andante	10.04
7	III Scherzo & Trio. Allegro vivace	6.22
8	IV Finale. Allegro vivace	13.39
		Total playing time 63.27

Produced by Adrian Farmer & Simon Callaghan

Recorded by Nimbus Records at Wyastone, Monmouth, UK

Fantasie 24 February 2021, Sonata 12 March 2021

This recording was made under social distancing guidance relating to COVID-19

Photo of Simon Callaghan © Kaupo Kikkas

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The late eighteenth century witnessed an explosion in the number of works written for multiple pianists, most of them for two players using one instrument. The majority were predestined for the domestic market, social gatherings or for pedagogical purposes, but some, including the two works featured on this disc, were intended for performance beyond the salon and ventured into the realms of virtuosity. The genre was to blossom further as a pedagogical tool by which generations of pianists became acquainted with the larger-scale, mainstream repertoire via transcriptions and arrangements of symphonies and other orchestral works, operas and chamber music.

Schubert did much to elevate the stature of four-hand piano music. His compositions for the medium embrace the whole of his creative career from 1810 to 1828, that tragic, yet strikingly productive final year of his short life. They encompass a wide range of forms and genres, including fantasias, sonatas, divertissements, overtures, theme and variations, polonaises, marches, Deutscher, Ländler, rondos and other single-movement works as well as some arrangements of his own overtures and operas. In addition to artistic and commercial aspects, Schubert's special affection for the four-hand medium was encouraged by various environmental and cultural factors, notably the Biedermeier salons, the *Schubertiaden* of the 1820s and the *Hausmusik* cultivated by dilettantes, women and amateurs. Many of his duets were written for such social music-making as an outcome of his piano/singing teaching role as tutor to Mária Terezia and Karoline Esterházy, the daughters of Count János Károly Esterházy de Galántha, both in Vienna and during two extended sojourns (in 1818 and 1824) at that family's Hungarian summer residence in Zselíz (now Želiezovce, Slovakia).

Schubert composed his Sonata in C major (D.812) in June 1824 during his second sojourn at the Esterházy estate in Zselíz. Published posthumously by Anton Diabelli in 1838 as 'Grand Duo' Op.140, it marked a watershed in his development of the piano duet medium. Its thick, quasi-orchestral texture (involving numerous tremolos, figuration suggestive of wind parts, brass fanfares *et al.*) took the piano duet well beyond any domestic setting and caused Robert Schumann, a renowned and

respected advocate of Schubert's music who played a decisive role in its revival from c1839, to suspect the work of being the piano arrangement of a symphony. In the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (1838), Schumann described it as a more feminine version of a Beethovenian symphony and further remarked:

...familiar as I am with...[Schubert's]...style and with his particular treatment of the piano, and comparing this work with his other sonatas, in which the true characteristics of the piano are expressed in their purest form, I can only explain this work as an orchestral piece. We can hear string and wind instruments, tuttis, solo passages, drum rolls; the broad symphonic form, even the echoes of Beethoven's symphonies – as, for example, the Andante of Beethoven's Second in the second movement, and the A major Symphony [no.7] in the Finale – these, together with some rather more colourless passages which seem to me to have lost something in their transcription for piano, all support my view.

Schumann's notion that Schubert had really intended this extensive four-movement piece as a symphony received support from, among others, Joseph Joachim, who, on Brahms' instigation, orchestrated the work in 1855 and conducted a performance of his version in Hanover in February of the following year, well in advance of the first public audition of the piano duet version (1859). Alternative orchestrations were made by, among others, Felix Weingartner (c1934), Anthony Collins (1939), Marius Flothius (1940–42), Karl Salomon (1946), Fritz Oeser (1948), René Leibowitz (c1965) and Raymond Leppard (c1990), and Karl Ulrich Schnabel published an arrangement of the work for solo piano (1949). From the late nineteenth century to the second half of the twentieth century it was even thought possible that the C major Sonata was a piano version of the so-called 'Gmunden-Gastein' Symphony. However, any assertion of the Sonata's orchestral rather than purely keyboard origin is speculation.

The Sonata's *Allegro moderato* (C major, *alla breve*), in sonata form, begins in typical Schubertian style with a quiet theme in octaves, shared by both pianists and punctuated at the cadence with soft chords. A more emphatic counter-statement in the bass leads by way of a fanfare-like transitional episode and the remote key of C-sharp minor to the second subject, which is derived from the opening theme and announced by the *secondo* in the dark key of A-flat major before yielding to the orthodox dominant key (G major). The development is brief and to the point, focusing on transporting the main theme and its constituent parts through an extensive tonal range, and the recapitulation holds few surprises, save for the initial appearance of the second subject in the tonic minor. The expansive coda builds the main theme to a thunderous climax before winding down calmly for a reflective conclusion.

The slow movement of Beethoven's Second Symphony and, to a lesser extent, the equivalent movement of his Fifth Symphony are believed to have served as models for the long, lyrical *Andante* (A-flat major, 3/8). Each section of this loose-knit, tripartite structure (ABCABC + coda) is dominated by its own thematic material – first the opening *cantilena* which remains faithful for the most part to the tonic key, then a more powerful, energetic theme, which initially appears in E major and later recurs in C major, and finally a lazy melody, which, treated imitatively by the two protagonists, is heard first in E-flat major (*secondo*) and later in A-flat major. Economy of material is especially noteworthy in this movement; even the accompanying lines seem to have melodic significance.

Donald Tovey describes the scherzo (*Allegro vivace*, C major, 3/4), as 'one of Schubert's grandest grotesques'. A four-bar introduction, which assumes greater importance later, precedes the main scherzo theme (*secondo*), characterised by its driving power and unexpected rhythmic stresses. The *cantabile* melody of the trio (F minor, 3/4) provides contrasts of mode, key, rhythm and mood, although its syncopated accompaniment always threatens menacingly in the background. A brief modulating coda links the trio with the scherzo's reprise.

After a call-to-order in stark octaves, the main theme of the exuberant, sonata-form finale (*Allegro vivace*, C major, 2/4) commences as if in a foreign key but the tonic is eventually established with a martial figure, freely exchanged between *primo* and *secondo*. Some Zselíz-inspired Hungarian gypsy seasoning is also clearly in evidence. The tongue-in-cheek second subject adopts the conventional dominant key (G major) and its second half is treated canonically, at one crotchet beat's distance, before the stuttering coda, based largely on the opening theme, rounds off the exposition (marked to be repeated). The development is extensive, adopting truly symphonic proportions and character and exploiting an extremely wide range of keys. The modified recapitulation and the large coda never fail to surprise, the latter incorporating a *più lento* passage, in which the tonality wavers indecisively between C-sharp minor and D-flat major; however, C minor/major is eventually established at the *tempo primo* and the major mode appears triumphant in the *più mosso* final flourish.

Schubert engaged with the Fantasie throughout his career, from the three early four-hand works in G major D.1 (1810), G minor D.9 (1811) and C minor D.48 (1813), which explore the typically solo piano fantasia via the piano duet, through to his seminal Fantasie in F minor D.940, composed between January and April 1828. The F minor Fantasie was dedicated to his pupil Countess Karoline Esterházy, with whom he was in (unrequited) love, premiered with his friend Franz Lachner in a private salon (for Eduard von Bauernfeld) on 9 May 1828 and published posthumously by Anton Diabelli as Op.103 in March of the following year. Scholars are divided as to Schubert's inspiration for the composition. Some propose that it was influenced by the piano duet arrangement, first published by Johann Traeg (Vienna, 1798), of Mozart's F minor Fantasia K.608, originally composed for the mechanical organ; they pinpoint various tonal, formal and thematic correlations between the two works while emphasising Schubert's distinctive treatment of the genre. Others have argued that Schubert's Fantasie is indebted to Johann Nepomuk Hummel's Grand Sonata in A-flat major Op.92 for piano duet, identifying similarities in rhythmical, melodic patterns and ornamentation between the two compositions.

Although the title 'Fantasie' suggests a certain formal freedom, Schubert's F minor Fantasie is striking for its structural conciseness, sharing with his Fantasie in C major D.760 for solo piano (popularly known as the 'Wanderer' Fantasy) a through-composed, four-section design that invites comparison with a sonata; both works also incorporate a fugue in the 'finale', as well as reprising the first 'movement's' themes therein. The music's sense of foreboding and doom is evident from the outset, the hushed murmuring accompanying figure introducing a haunting first theme (*Allegro molto moderato*, F minor, 4/4), which bears similarities with the first violin's interjectory idea in the *Adagio* of Schubert's String Quintet D.956, completed later in the same year. After various repetitions of this theme, the mode characteristically oscillating between major and minor, a contrasting, more assertive, martial melody is introduced, founded on dotted rhythms and similarly treated at length. Imitation between the two protagonists is rife and the tonalities explored are wide-ranging. The opening melody is reprised to complete the section's fundamental ternary design.

The transition to the powerful ternary *Largo* (F-sharp minor, 4/4) is abrupt. Thought to have been inspired in part by the central slow movement of Nicolò Paganini's Second Violin Concerto Op.7, this section contrasts a turbulent *fortissimo* idea featuring quasi-Baroque double-dotted rhythms and trills with a quiet, more lyrical Italianate central melody, incorporating a Paganinian *portamento* effect over an accompaniment in triplets. The opening theme returns to close the movement, pausing on the dominant in preparation for the fleet, energetic Scherzo (*Allegro vivace*, F-sharp minor, 3/4). Resembling a fast waltz, this Scherzo section incorporates much contrapuntal interest, including passages in canon, much imitation and even some invertible counterpoint. Its *con delicatezza* trio ripples along happily in D major, but the Scherzo is reprised, wavering between F sharp minor and A major and ultimately ending on C-sharp octaves that drive into an abrupt transition toward F minor for the final section.

In cyclical fashion, this final section (*Tempo I*, 4/4) brings us full circle to revisit, with minor modifications, the wistful theme of the opening 'movement' (F minor and major),

only to be interrupted by a vigorous four-part double fugue, the first subject of which is derived from the opening section's second theme. After much contrapuntal complexity, the fugue builds to a climax, the momentum persisting until an abrupt halt on the dominant and, after a bar of silence, the brief final recall of the poignant opening idea (as if an apparition), followed by heart-rending chords that eloquently veil the second theme before subsiding to a hushed, resigned close.

The seeds of Schubert's development of cyclical form and his fascination with motivic links, sown in his early Fantasies, came to full fruition in his F minor Fantasie. In addition to the work's various thematic recurrences, its four sections are interrelated by, for example, the recurrence of dotted rhythms, the striking prevalence of the rising fourth interval, the characteristic Schubertian oscillations between major and minor modes, the prominence of ornamental trills and deliberate tonal connections both within and between sections. The structural significance of the semitone shift, commonly employed by Schubert, was also elevated to new heights in his final Fantasie. Like the Sonata in C major, the F minor Fantasie appeared in an arrangement with orchestra, undertaken by composer-conductor Felix Mottl for the 1897 Schubert centennial. While its structural framework and components are highlighted in its orchestral guise, much of its intimacy is inevitably lost in translation. Much the same applies to Dmitry Kabalevsky's arrangement (1961) of the work for a solo pianist and orchestra.

Schubert's extensive and diverse *oeuvre* for piano four hands represents a significant quantitative and qualitative accomplishment. It places him in his own unique category as the principal composer who transformed the artistic merits of the medium in the early nineteenth century; his achievement has never been surpassed.

ROBIN STOWELL 2022

## Simon Callaghan

“Clearly a musician of curiosity and discernment, Callaghan’s robust piano-playing is also thoughtful, subtle and refined.” *Gramophone*

A favourite artist at the internationally-renowned Husum Festival of Piano Rarities in Germany, Steinway Artist **Simon Callaghan’s** recent sell-out recital drew praise from audience and critics, with the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* describing his “cleverly curated recital full of discoveries” (VAN Magazine) as “technically brilliant”.

Callaghan’s current repertoire includes over fifty concertos, highlights of the standard solo and chamber works of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and much that is rare and unexplored. One cornerstone of Callaghan’s work is his commitment to British music, and he has recently begun a projected series with Lyrita, presenting world premiere recordings of British concertos with Martyn Brabbins and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. By the end of 2022 he will have recorded four albums for Hyperion’s celebrated *The Romantic Piano Concerto* series. Callaghan’s first disc for Hyperion, with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, formed part of his successful PhD project at the Royal Northern College of Music.

Callaghan’s recital partners include Raphael Wallfisch, Adrian Brendel, Sheku Kanneh-Mason, Nicholas Daniel, Feng Ning, Samuel West, Prunella Scales and Timothy West. His three-year Poulenc project for Nimbus Records launched in 2019, recording *L’histoire du Babar* with Harry Potter actor Miriam Margolyes (*The Independent*, Five Stars). BBC Young Musician of the Year String Finalist Coco Tomita and Callaghan have begun a duo partnership which will see their first record released in 2022 on Orchid Classics.

Callaghan has also recorded for Somm, Resonus and EM Records, and has expanded his role to encompass performing and producing in an exciting association with Nimbus Records and The Lyrita Recorded Edition Trust. His reputation and experience in chamber music led to his accepting the role of Director of Music at

London's celebrated Conway Hall, curating the longest-running series of its kind in Europe.

Recent tours have included recitals and concerti in Japan, Malaysia, Thailand, Hong Kong, Canada and throughout Europe. He counts among his most important teachers a trio of British masters: Bernard Roberts, Yonty Solomon and Frank Wibaut.

[www.simoncallaghan.com](http://www.simoncallaghan.com)

## Adrian Farmer

Adrian Farmer trained as an accompanist at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester from 1977, following a music degree at Birmingham University. He first encountered Nimbus Records in 1979, when he was invited to record for them, but quickly made the decision to join the founders as a record producer. In the mid 1980s he became Nimbus's Music Director, joining the Board of Directors. He became a co-owner of the company in 1992.

Through the 1990s Adrian spanned both sides of Nimbus's varied business interests; maintaining the creative focus for Nimbus Records and coordinating the international marketing activity of the company's optical disc technology division 'Nimbus Technology & Engineering'.

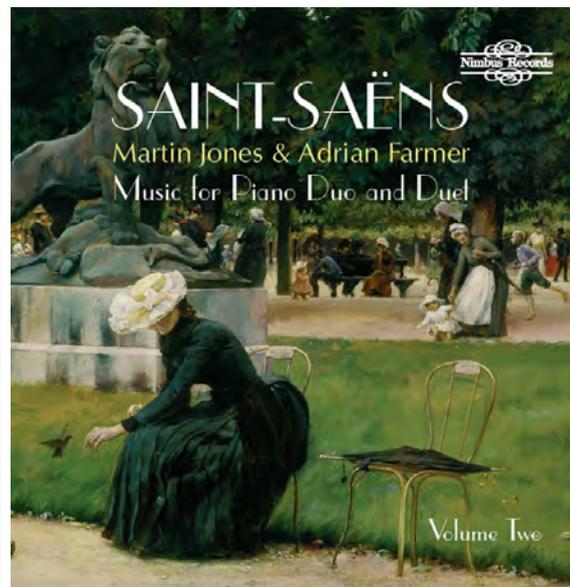
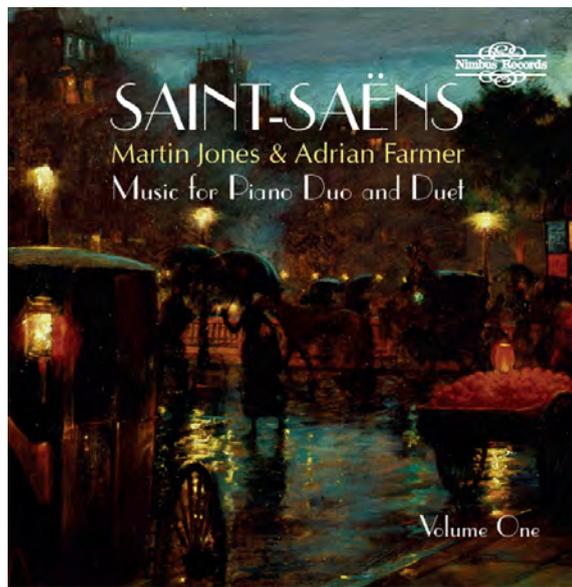
Adrian has made several recordings for Nimbus with other artists: Nimbus's founder the bass Shura Gehrman in Vaughan Williams, Butterworth, Fauré and Duparc, tenor Dennis O'Neill in songs by Liszt, pianists Nina Walker in Schubert and Martin Jones at one and two pianos in works by Halffter, Françaix, Reizenstein and Roger Ducasse. In the 1980s he recorded Ravel's *Ma mère l'oye* with legendary pianist Vlado Perlemuter, which he describes as a treasured memory.

It is with soprano Charlotte de Rothschild that he has found his most enduring and productive partnership beginning with the premiere recording of the French and German songs of her ancestor, Mathilde de Rotschild in 2012. Since then they have recorded albums of Schumann, Fauré, english composers Cyril Scott, Norman Peterkin, Armstrong Gibbs, and the Australian Miriam Hyde. They completed a three-album project of Roger Quilter's songs together with tenor Nathan Vale in 2021. Charlotte is a specialist in the songs of 20<sup>th</sup> Japanese composers. Together they have made several albums of these beautiful songs, and are regularly invited to perform them in Japan.

Adrian has enjoyed his career spent on the control-room side of the microphone: working closely with some of today's finest artists has brought many rewards, the opportunity for continuous learning and constant musical refreshment.

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