

NAXOS

2CDs

# EASY-LISTENING PIANO CLASSICS

*Brahms*



## CD 1

- Intermezzi op 117**
- 1 No 1 in E flat major, Andante moderato 5:16
- 2 No 2 in B flat minor, Andante non troppo e con molta espressione 4:51
- Hungarian Dances**
- 3 No 3 in F major 2:38
- 4 No 5 in F sharp minor 2:23
- 5 **Piano Piece op 118 no 2 Intermezzo in A major, Andante teneramente** 5:16
- 6 **Hungarian Dance no 6 in D flat major** 4:03
- Waltzes op 39**
- 7 No 6 in C sharp major 0:59
- 8 No 8 in B flat major 1:41
- 9 No 9 in D minor 1:25
- 10 No 10 in G major 0:32
- 11 **Piano Piece op 118 no 5 Romanze in F major, Andante** 4:00
- Piano Pieces op 76**
- 12 No 2 Capriccio in B minor, Allegretto non troppo 3:22
- 13 No 3 Intermezzo in A flat major, Grazioso 3:14
- Waltzes op 39**
- 14 No 1 in B major 0:45
- 15 No 2 in E major 1:28
- 16 No 3 in G sharp minor 0:53
- 17 No 5 in E major 1:39
- Fantasies op 116**
- 18 No 2 Intermezzo in A minor, Andante 3:18
- 19 No 4 Intermezzo in E major, Adagio 4:24
- Waltzes op 39**
- 20 No 11 in B minor 1:31
- 21 No 12 in E major 2:17
- 22 No 15 in A flat major 1:34
- 23 No 16 in C sharp minor 1:17

All tracks performed by Idil Biret

Disc 1 playing time 59 minutes

## CD 2

### **Piano Pieces op 119**

- |   |   |      |
|---|---|------|
| 1 | No 1 Intermezzo in B minor, Adagio                    | 4:09 |
| 2 | No 2 Intermezzo in E minor, Andantino un poco agitato | 4:31 |
| 3 | No 3 Intermezzo in C major, Grazioso e giocoso        | 1:39 |

### **Liebeslieder Walzer (Love Song Waltzes) op 52a**

- |   |  |      |
|---|--|------|
| 4 | No 1 Rede, Mädchen (Speak, maiden)                               | 1:19 |
| 5 | No 4 Wie des Abends schöne Röte (Like evening's beautiful amber) | 0:58 |
| 6 | No 5 Die grüne Hopfenranke (The green hops-tendrils)             | 1:32 |
| 7 | No 6 Ein kleiner, hübscher Vogel (A little, pretty bird)         | 2:37 |
| 8 | No 8 Wenn so lind dein Auge (When your eye so gently gazes)      | 1:31 |

### **Piano Pieces op 76**

- |    |   |      |
|----|---|------|
| 9  | No 6 Intermezzo in A major, Andante con moto  | 4:23 |
| 10 | No 7 Intermezzo in A minor, Moderato semplice | 3:05 |

### **Liebeslieder Walzer op 52a**

- |    |  |      |
|----|--|------|
| 11 | No 10 O wie sanft die Quelle (Oh how gentle the well)                            | 1:05 |
| 12 | No 13 Vögelein durchrauscht die Luft (Little bird flies quickly through the air) | 0:40 |
| 13 | No 14 Sieh, wie ist die Welle klar (Look, how clear the wave)                    | 1:01 |
| 14 | No 15 Nachtigall, sie singt so schön (Nightingale, she sings so beautifully)     | 1:24 |
| 15 | No 17 Nicht wandle, mein Licht (Don't leave me, my light)                        | 2:20 |

### **Fantasies op 116**

- |    |  |      |
|----|--|------|
| 16 | No 5 Intermezzo in E minor, Andante con grazia ed intimissimo sentimento | 3:00 |
| 17 | No 6 Intermezzo in E major, Andantino teneramente                        | 3:23 |

### **Variations on a Theme by Joseph Haydn op 56b 'St Anthony Variations'**

- |    |  |       |
|----|--|-------|
| 18 | Chorale St Antoni, Andante                                       | 2:17  |
| 19 | Variation 3 Con moto   | 1:21  |
| 20 | Variation 4 Andante  | 2:17  |
| 21 | Variation 7 Grazioso   | 2:58  |
| 22 | <b>Piano Sonata no 3 in F minor op 5 – II Andante espressivo</b> | 10:15 |

Tracks 1-3, 9-10, 16-17 & 22 Idil Biret

Tracks 4-8, 11-15 & 18-21 Christian Köhn and Silke-Thora Matthies

**Disc 2 playing time 58 minutes**  
**Total playing time 1 hour and 57 minutes**

Naxos' Easy-Listening Piano Classics presents a delightful range of music from Baroque masterpieces to beautiful works of the Classic and Romantic eras, specially selected for discerning listeners to enjoy at home or work, while relaxing, entertaining or travelling.

## BRAHMS

Although Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) has a reputation as a composer of serious, large-scale, complex music, many of his best known and most commercially successful works are actually small in scale and were written for the booming contemporary market of domestic music-makers. Among these latter compositions many of his piano works may be numbered, although many pose formidable challenges for the amateur pianist. Between his powerful *Piano Sonata No 1 in C major, Op 1* (1852) and the *Eleven Chorale Preludes for organ, Op 122* (1896), Brahms wrote many keyboard pieces, the earliest of which on this selection is the *Piano Sonata No 3 in F minor, Op 5* (1865)—from which the *Andante espressivo* is drawn—the latest his *Piano Pieces, Op 119* (1893)—from which the first, second and third *Intermezzos* are taken.

Brahms' abilities as a pianist were evident from his youth, and his approach to music was quite practical. In his teens, he investigated both serious and popular musical styles, making arrangements for his father's orchestra and playing piano in local dance halls. (The frequently told story that he was forced to play in brothels, although apparently originating with the composer himself, seems to have no foundation in fact.) Aged twenty he started touring as an accompanist and made important contacts in the musical world, meeting Robert and Clara Schumann, both of whom were highly influential on his life and career. His love for and devotion to Clara, herself an accomplished pianist, would last throughout his life.

From the early 1860s, Brahms based himself in Vienna, so it's hardly surprising that the city's emblematic dance form, the waltz, should inspire him to compose several of his own. The delightful *Sixteen Waltzes, Op 39* (1865) and the popular *Liebeslieder [Love Song] Waltzes, Op 52* (1870)—later arranged for piano four-hands as Op 52a—rank among his most open-hearted contributions. Unlike some of his supporters, Brahms was certainly no musical snob, as his lifelong friendship with Johann Strauss II attests. Brahms once remarked that he would have given anything to have written *The Blue Danube*, and when Strauss' wife Adele asked Brahms to autograph her fan, he wrote a few notes from the iconic waltz with the words 'Alas, not by Brahms!' 1869 saw the publication of his hugely popular *Hungarian Dances*, for which Brahms, regarding them as arrangements rather than original compositions, did not assign an opus number.

The year 1878 saw the publication of Brahms' *Eight Pieces for piano, Op 76*, a collection of capriccios and intermezzos that marks his increasing concentration on shorter, highly characterful works. The *Seven Fantasias for piano, Op 116* (1892) were the first fruits of an amazing late flowering that continued with the *Three Intermezzi for piano, Op 117* (1892), the *Six Pieces for piano, Op 118* (1893) and the *Four Pieces for piano, Op 119* (1893). With these remarkable miniatures, Brahms seems to summarise his entire compositional career, recalling both the muscular virtuosity of his earlier piano music, paying tribute to the character pieces of Couperin and Schumann, and perhaps even taking note of the 'Impressionist' piano music of Debussy though heard through a thoroughly Brahmsian filter.

If you've enjoyed this album, why not try these titles as well?

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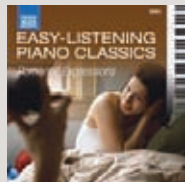
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## EASY-LISTENING PIANO CLASSICS

*Brahms*

## CD 1

1-2	Intermezzi op 117 nos 1 & 2	10:07
3-4	Hungarian Dances nos 3 & 5	5:01
5	Piano Piece op 118 no 2	5:16
6	Hungarian Dance no 6	4:03
7-10	Waltzes op 39 nos 6, 8, 9 & 10	4:37
11	Piano Piece op 118 no 5	4:00
12-13	Piano Pieces op 76 nos 2 & 3	6:36
14-17	Waltzes op 39 nos 1, 2, 3 & 5	4:45
18-19	Fantasies op 116 nos 2 & 4	7:42
20-23	Waltzes op 39 nos 11, 12, 15 & 16	6:39

## CD 2

1-3	Piano Pieces op 119 nos 1-3	10:19
4-8	Liebeslieder Walzer (Love Song Waltzes) op 52a nos 1, 4, 5, 6 & 8	7:57
9-10	Piano Pieces op 76 nos 6 & 7	7:28
11-15	Liebeslieder Walzer op 52a nos 10, 13, 14, 15 & 17	6:30
16-17	Fantasies op 116 nos 5 & 6	6:23
18-21	Variations on a Theme by Haydn op 56b 'St Anthony Variations' (excerpts)	8:53
22	Piano Sonata no 3 – II Andante espressivo	10:15

Disc 1 playing time 59 minutes

Disc 2 playing time 58 minutes

Total playing time 1 hour and 57 minutes

Please see booklet for performer details