



BOUNDLESS



SCHUBERT SONATINAS

Performed on historical instruments

ZACHARY CARRETTÍN and MINA GAJIĆ

Sonatinas, Op. 137

No. 1 in D major, D. 384

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|--------------------|--------|
| 1). Allegro molto | [4:18] |
| 2). Andante | [4:31] |
| 3). Allegro vivace | [3:59] |

No. 2 in A minor, D. 385

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|-----------------------|--------|
| 4). Allegro moderato | [8:41] |
| 5). Andante | [6:00] |
| 6). Menuetto: Allegro | [2:36] |
| 7). Allegro | [3:54] |

No. 3 in G minor, D. 408

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|-----------------------|--------|
| 8). Allegro giusto | [7:10] |
| 9). Andante | [6:50] |
| 10). Menuetto | [2:48] |
| 11). Allegro moderato | [5:30] |

Total Time: [56:24]

In recording these, the earliest revelations of Schubert's boundless lyricism in his early romantic compositional voice as applied to instrumental chamber music, we sought to pay homage to the original intent as well as the authentic sounds. The Sonatinas, (a posthumous title), were written for music of the chamber, a time of gathering, sharing, and delighting in the discoveries, creations, and talents of others.

The Sonatinas are a revealing view into the birth of Schubert's romantic voice. Whether the *sturm und drang* of the G Minor and its Haydn-esque representation of drama, the early

Beethovenian poise, manner, and delight in the D Major, or the unabashed dramatic and unapologetic severity in the A Minor, (Lord Byron's *Manfred* was written the same year!), these works show us young Schubert's boundless expressive spirit.

The piano is an Érard concert grand, built in Paris circa 1835. It is in immaculate condition, superbly conditioned by Frits Janmaat at Maison Érard in Amsterdam. Parallel-strung, and with dampers beneath the strings, the registers have clear distinction; the action is agile; the rich tonal depth is special.

The violin is a rare find, built by Franz Kinberg after the Second World War and set up for late Classical and early Romantic historical instrument performance. The gut-strung violin is paired with an extraordinary bow made by John Dodd, London, circa 1800. This pre-modern, transitional bow is a perfect example of the bows still in favor in Vienna at the time the Sonatinas were composed.

We recorded in a 75-seat recital hall with a two-story glass wall, wooden floor and side walls, and the remaining wall of stone. The ceiling ascends at a diagonal up to the highest light, looking up to the mountains. Deer and foxes roam in full view, and there's an occasional sighting of a mountain lion or a black bear—boundless inspiration for the music!





Mina Gajić performs and records on historic and modern pianos, including exquisite concert grands by Pleyel and Érard. She has appeared as concerto soloist, recitalist, and chamber music collaborator across Europe, Asia, South America, and the United States. She is featured on the award-winning audio book “The Escapement” by author Kristen Wolf, playing music of Brahms and Schumann on an Érard piano from 1895.

Notable performances have included period instrument renditions of works by Chopin, Brahms, Britten, Ives, Berg, Antheil, and Bartók. Her doctoral dissertation and subsequent research on the work of Yugoslav composer Josip Slavenski connect Balkan folkloric traditions and approaches to twentieth-century music between the two World Wars. Mina Gajić is the Artistic Director of Boulder Bach Festival, and is the founder and Artistic Director of Boulder International Chamber Music Competition, BICMC-Art of Duo.

Zachary Carrettin performs as violinist, violist, cellist da spalla, and orchestral and choral conductor. He has served as guest concertmaster with numerous baroque orchestras including Musica Angelica (Los Angeles), Ars Lyrica (Houston), and American Bach Soloists (San Francisco), and appeared as concertmaster on the GRAMMY-nominated Sono Luminus recording of Ars Lyrica performing Hasse’s *Marc Antonio e Cleopatra*. A musician with diverse interests, he has served as Director of Orchestras at Sam Houston State University, guest Music Director at Eklund Opera, performed as violist in collaborations with the Tokyo String Quartet, Chanticleer, and the Assad Brothers, toured one hundred cities with Yanni and four continents with Project Bandaloop, and embarked on extensive manuscripts research periods in Italian archives, uncovering dozens of works by Giuseppe Antonio Capuzzi (1755-1818). Zachary is the Music Director of Boulder Bach Festival and **COmpass Resonance Ensemble**.

D Major, D. 384

Sonatina in D Major, D. 384 (Op. 137 No. 1) begins with a vigorous *Allegro molto* featuring unison passages as dramatic declarations and structural pillars, motor-driven accompaniment propelling the music forward, and an introspective development that is brief but rich, quickly exploring harmonic twists and turns in a repeated rhythmic motive, reminiscent of Haydn.

The *Andante* begins with the piano in a lilting, simple theme, soon to be joined by the violin in dialogue. Schubert then enters a minor mode with lyricism that conjures aural images of his art songs. A brief piano interlude seems to look back to a forgotten time before the violin enters again, taking us to an unresolved, half-cadence. The first theme returns in the piano, gently accompanied by the violin. A succinct coda allows the violin to soar from below up to the higher tessitura, bringing us to a simple cadence.

The *Allegro vivace* is a delightful, playful, and virtuosic dance, similar to the final movement of Beethoven's Sonata #1 in D Major for violin and piano. The operatic character shifts are Mozartian, as is the entire sonata, such that it serves as a tipping of the hat to the classical style—a perfect introduction to a set of three works that explore increasingly interesting musical material and the birth of romanticism in Schubert's instrumental chamber music writing.



A Minor, D. 385

Sonatina in A Minor, D. 385 (Op. 137 No. 2) is a grand departure from the expected. Its *Allegro moderato* opening theme is heartfelt and yet unsettled, and when passed on to the violin, features extreme jumps in register—then resolving with delicate eloquence. While the classical gesture and rhetorical statements continue throughout the Op. 137 set (composed 1816 – 1817), in this sonata Schubert takes a leap, frequently expressing the unrest of a thoughtful and emotionally complex persona, such as *Manfred*, (Lord Byron, 1816 – 1817). Romantic and literary interjections include a brief dialogue in triplets, reminiscent of Schubert's 1815 *Erlkönig* (Elf King), inspired by Goethe's work of 1782. The coda unwinds with the violin's

descent to a minor cadence that seems somewhat unsettled, leaving the tonic pitch "A" out of the violin's final chord.

The *Andante* begins with the piano in a grand, majestic chorale featuring rich chord voicing. The violin enters in song, and the dialogue begins, exploring chorale, song, and "spoken" gestures. This material is twice interrupted by agitated musical scales as descending steps, telling the listener a turbulent tale that—almost as quickly as it arrives—each time departs into the original material, calming the mind and spirit. The short coda features a soaring violin in high tessitura, followed by a miniature melodic duet in the piano alone, and a final graceful resolution.

Menuetto: Allegro inherently looks back to the Baroque and to the subsequent popular use of minuets in Classical

Era sonatas, prior to the shift toward *scherzi* in the Romantic Period. This stormy and spirited dance movement is in D Minor, contrasted with delightful "incidental music" in the submediant major key of B-flat, in the trio section.

The final movement *Allegro*, like the first movement, goes beyond what we'd call a *sonatina* (a diminutive title given to these works posthumously, as they are indeed shorter and more Mozartian than Schubert's later works for violin and piano). In fact, Schubert wrote the three works as "Sonatas for piano with violin accompaniment." The finale to the Sonata in A Minor begins with a lyrical theme in the violin that disintegrates into shorter gestures, accompanied by the "little motor" in the piano left hand, pushing the energy forward with anticipation. The second theme is stately

and almost regal in the piano. When the violin enters in unison with the piano, the rhythms seem playful—until a radical turn toward the foreboding: wild flourishes, a brief harmonic exploration, and *stretto* dialogue in triplets—then a nonchalant return to the first theme. Later, following the reprise of second theme material, the wild ride of triplets returns, and the dialogue takes us to a shocking stopping point, without preparation. The lyrical first theme introduces a coda that has a momentary pleading quality, finishing with two unapologetic chords. The remarkable shift in content, from the poised Sonata in D Major to the unpredictable qualities of the Sonata in A Minor, represents the early Romantic boundless spirit found in literature and the music it inspired.

G Minor, D. 408

Sonatina in G Minor, D. 408 (Op. 137 No. 3) begins with an *Allegro giusto* statement in dotted rhythm unisons, a *sturm und drang* introduction or wake up call telling us that, even though the first theme will present itself in a subdued manner, there is a roller coaster ahead, (or rather, a bumpy and steep carriage ride with many twists and turns!) When the violin enters, Schubert achieves forward motion with his *motorino* sixteenths in the piano left hand accompaniment, but not for long. In a shift to major mode, the music tells of mannered delight with a cascading melody that, when played in octaves in the piano right hand, is truly exquisite. In the development section the violin introduces a passionate drama that just as quickly turns

to charm, and then again to a disturbed *agitato* that swiftly takes us to a sense of arriving home pleasantly, but in D-flat Major—a remarkable distance from the tonic key. Little gestures passed back and forth, a crescendo, and a miniature piano cadenza bring us back to the introductory unison material. This dynamic recapitulation again explores the turbulent, the cascading reflection, and then the delight of mannered rhetoric. The coda wraps it all up in a diminuendo, finally surprising us with one last iteration of the inherent aggressive tension of the opening statement—and then two final chords, as if slamming the book shut.

This *Andante* is like a great *romanza canabile* in Boccherini, Giuseppe Antonio Capuzzi, Michael Haydn, or Beethoven—a musical gem.

Written out ornamentation gives us insight into Schubert's own playing style, and the seamless exchange of melodic material is effortless. The short but detailed legato markings in the passionate second section are revealing—implying a sense of music as speech, even within a longer, vocal line. The simplicity of the resolution to this artful song leaves us suspended, but pleasantly so.

This *Menuetto* is gallant and forward driven, contrasted by a lovely trio, which, like the previous movement, tells us much about the execution of line in Schubert. That is, the precise legato indications are Mozartian, articulating very short, inflected statements that express the nuance of the harmonic changes, together sculpting a longer line but not as a *sostenuto*.

Finally, the concluding *Allegro moderato* begins with Schubert as a master of *cantilena*, writing for the instruments as he would the voice. A wistful melody resolves with gaiety, and the second theme begins with surprising and uplifting chords in *marcato*. The exposition concludes with a dance in the relative major, conjuring images of a fiddler in the street, juxtaposed with royal and full-voiced rhythmic pillars in the piano. The development begins with the quick shifts in character found in several movements of the Op. 137 set, followed by the return of the aria in a more uplifting register. Following the reprise of all the expository ingredients there is a fiddler's coda. The piano responds with octaves and the two go out in a flourish with three large and rustic G Major chords, offering a true conclusion to the three Sonatinas.

A Note From The Artists:

Throughout these works the dance rhythm underpinnings offer musical characters that have their origins in the Baroque. The operatic and unpredictable turns are often Mozartian, while the brief and dense development sections tend to be Haydn-esque. *Romanza* qualities are Beethovenian, and yet, Schubert's boundless original romantic voice is undeniable. We particularly love the distinctive quality of each sonata, in that the set opens with a classical Sonata in D Major, followed by an exploratory and fantastical Sonata in A Minor, and then, as if bringing the two to terms with one another, the Sonata in G Minor frequently looks back to late eighteenth-century pre-Romantic *sturm und drang*. The use of unisons throughout the set seems to offer palate cleansing for the listener, such that following a unison passage, the counterpoint is ever more apparent.

A note about playing these works on these instruments: As a duo we play a multitude of original instruments, including Érard grand pianos from 1835 and 1895, a Pleyel concert grand from 1870, ancient Italian and contemporary violins and violas in historical set ups, and original bows from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—French, English, and Italian.

In playing Schubert's early Romantic duo sonatas on instruments of the period, pedaling, chord voicing, balance between the instruments, legato marking, articulation, and the relationship between gesture and line become a fascinating exploration into what's idiomatic for the instruments, and what the score tells us.

The French piano built just after Schubert passed is an example of the richer sounding instruments of the Érard firm, as compared to the Viennese action pianos of the time, which had a quicker decay in the sound and overall played more as fortepianos. Numerous discerning Viennese musicians were already playing pianos from the Érard firm in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, including Franz Joseph Haydn and Ludwig van Beethoven.

The John Dodd bow is a classical or transitional design, rather than the Tourte model bow design we use today and refer to as "modern." The Dodd favors dips and surges over sustain—smaller shapes within a larger line. While the violin virtuoso Viotti already had a new model Tourte in the 1790's, those bows weren't yet the standard in Schubert's Vienna of 1816.

The gut strings also offer a significant contribution to the reading of these works. Just as the parallel-strung piano has tonal distinctions between the registers, so do the gut strings on the violin. When employed, vibrato "activates" the strings in a different manner than on today's synthetic strings, and the relationship of bow weight, speed, and point of contact change the resulting character of sound. Having played these works on both modern and historical instruments, we find the Sonatinas tend to be more playful on the original instruments, and yet, the contrasting dramatic tensions in the music are evident and sometimes shocking.

We chose historical set ups that, like Schubert's Opus 137, are rooted in the Classical Era forms, while venturing boldly forward into the early Romantic Era ideals.

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legacyaudio.com



Producer: Erica Brenner
Recording, Mixing & Mastering Engineer: Daniel Shores
Editing Engineer: Erica Brenner
Piano Technician: Trevor T. Nelson
Photography: Cary Jobe
Graphic Design: Joshua Frey (Layout), Semnitz (Front Cover)
Executive Producer: Collin J. Rae

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