



REFLECTIONS

Ronald Farren-Price

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Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-91)

1 Alla Turca
from Sonata in A K331

The Turkish style became a favourite idiom in the late 18th century. This movement is one of Mozart's most popular and brilliant from the sonatas, combining vivid colours and clashing cymbals in the context of a Turkish march.

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

2 Impromptu
Opus 90 No.3 in G flat

This is one of the most loved piano works in Schubert's enormous output. The mellowness of the key of G flat is combined with a melody of pure beauty. This calm is temporarily disturbed by a more passionate section commencing in E flat minor. 1825, the year of publication, heralded an increase in Schubert's creative activity until his untimely death three years later.

Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757)

3 Sonata in b minor K27 L449
4 Sonata in C K159 L104

The two Scarlatti sonatas display different elements. The B minor is contrapuntal and serene whilst the C major is a delightfully brilliant small toccata. Written most likely for the harpsichord rather than the clavichord, the sonatas adapt very easily to the sonorities of the piano.

Franz Schubert

5 Moments Musicaux
Opus 94 No.6 in A flat

Although the six Moments Musicaux were published in Vienna four months before Schubert died, the last of the set represented here was probably composed ten years earlier when Schubert was 21 (1818). The work is mainly quiet and introspective but occasionally gives way to an element of anger and frustration.

Frédéric Chopin (1810-49)

6 Polonaise in C sharp minor
Opus 26 No.1

From the opening statement the heroic aspect of the polonaise is evident, whereas the middle section in D flat major concentrates more on serenity and expressiveness. Although this is the first of the mature polonaises by Chopin, we are immediately confronted by the absolute master of this form.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

7 Klavierstück für Elise Wo O 59

This is one of the charming Klavierstücke from the many miscellaneous works written by Beethoven. Its simplicity is deceptive. Curiosity has been aroused as to the identity of 'Elise'. Beethoven was very much in love with a pupil, Therese Malfatti, at the time this piece was written and it is often assumed that it was originally known as *Fur*

Therese in honour of this pupil.

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-47)

8 from **Songs without Words**
Opus 19 No.4 in A major

The title *Songs without Words* is inventive and was introduced by Mendelssohn. Generally, the pattern consisted of a song-like melody with an accompanying figure. In the case of this particular piece the emphasis is on harmonic progressions, more akin to a chorale.

Franz Liszt (1811-86)

9 Consolation No.3 in D flat

Of the six consolations, this is the one that speaks immediately to audiences. Liszt's obsession with blending harmonies over a pedal note (in this case D flat) is illustrated in the early bars of the piece. Its single melodic motif is accompanied by a Chopin-like arpeggiated figure creating the effect of a beautiful and personal nocturne.

Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909)

10 Malagueña Opus 165 No. 3
from España (Six feuilles d' album)

This dance takes its name from the city of Malaga and is a swift three in a measure work. The first and third sections are clear cut and brilliant, whilst the middle section is reminiscent of the recitative-like vocal lines found in Spanish singing.

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

11 Clair de Lune
from Suite Bergamasque

The year 1890 witnessed the arrival of a number of striking works for piano by Claude Debussy. The charming *Suite Bergamasque* looks back to the former glories of French keyboard music as well as exploring keyboard impressionism, which it does so effectively in *Clair de Lune*. This work remains one of the most favoured of all Debussy's compositions.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

12 Fantasie in D minor K397

Composed in 1782 when Mozart was 26 years old, this *Fantasie* contains dark and tragic elements. The mood of foreboding is established immediately in the introduction and continued in both the first and second themes of the work. Two brilliant cadenzas allow some relief from the world-weariness of the first and the relentlessness of the second, and perhaps assist in emphasizing the fantasy nature of the piece. The final section in the tonic major key is akin to smiling through tears and helps to dispel the earlier oppressiveness.

Frédéric Chopin

13 Nocturne in A flat Opus 31 No.2

Of all the nocturnes this is perhaps the best known and most loved. Its inclusion in the ballet 'Les Sylphides' has probably

helped its popularity. Nevertheless the work combines the essential elements of the nocturnal style – the serenity of the melodic section is interrupted by a most passionate middle section in the keys of F minor and F sharp minor.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

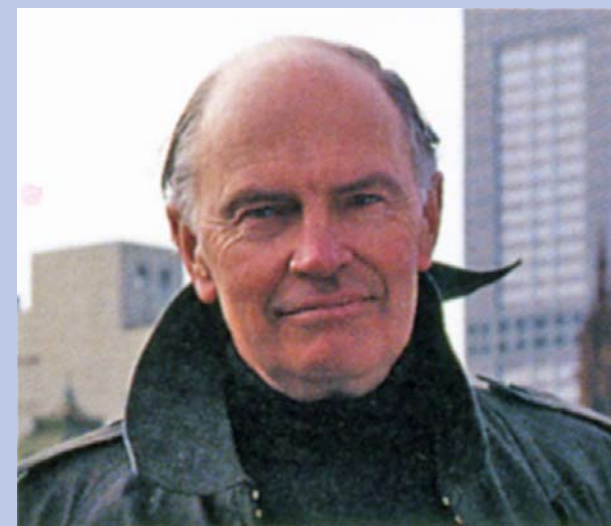
14 Prelude and Fugue in C
Book 1, BWV 846

This is the first of the mighty '48' of Bach's preludes and fugues. The sheer simplicity of this prelude is coupled with a quite complex four-voiced fugue. It is a Stretto fugue which occupies itself entirely with entries of the theme.

Isaac Albéniz

15 Sevilla
from Suite Española, Opus 47 No.3

A highpoint in Spanish piano music occurred in the late 19th century and early 20th century with the prodigious output of Isaac Albéniz. So many of his works depict various Spanish cities and localities. This present piece is a brilliant portrayal of Seville. The middle section is evocative of a warm evening in that city, with much of the melodic line in unison in the higher register with the hands two octaves apart.



RONALD FARRÉN-PRICE: "...a sensitive artist and a virtuoso of top rank... he demonstrated a perfect balance between the sound and the expression of the music... definitely a pianist of great distinction."

Concert reviews, such as this one from Copenhagen attest to the rare artistry, sensitivity and virtuosity that is the hallmark of the Australian pianist Ronald Farren-Price. His international career began with his recognition by the legendary pianist Claudio Arrau under whose guidance his distinctive style matured. It is a style where clarity of expression and firmness of touch are paramount, where a bold nobility is brought to each performance.

In addition to performing throughout Australia, Ronald Farren-Price has made annual concert tours overseas for the last two decades. He has appeared both in recital and as concerto soloist in the major

concert halls of over forty countries. Among his most noted appearances are those at Queen Elizabeth Hall London, Carnegie Recital Hall New York, Tchaikovsky Hall Moscow, Philharmonic Hall St. Petersburg, Musikhalle Hamburg, Brahmsaal Vienna, Teatro Colon Buenos Aires and the Melbourne Concert Hall.

As soloist, he has appeared with renowned conductors including Antal Dorati, Ferdinand Leitner, Sir Eugene Goossens, Hubert Soudant, Sir Charles Groves, Willem van Otterloo, Hiroyuki Iwaki and many others.

Ronald Farren-Price has the honour of being the first Australian pianist invited to play in the former USSR. He has played to capacity houses in St. Petersburg and has even been mobbed by enthusiastic audiences. His last tour there, just prior to the breaking apart of the Soviet Union, was his eleventh and most extensive tour beginning on the eastern coast and culminating with a concert in Moscow's Bolshoisalle.

He has also been a pioneer in taking Australian performance to China where he has given recitals and masterclasses in



Beijing and other cities during two tours. He was appointed Honorary Professor of the Tianjin Conservatory of Music.

Ronald Farren-Price is Associate Professor and Head of Keyboard at the School of Music at the University of Melbourne. He has been named as a Steinway artist by Steinway & Sons.

In addition to his career as a concert

pianist, Ronald Farren-Price is a Principal Fellow of the Faculty of Music, University of Melbourne where he is a former Dean as well as a former Director of the Australian National Academy of Music. Ronald Farren-Price was awarded the Order of Australia in 1991 for services to music. He was the recipient of the University's Dublin Prize in 2002 and in 2005 the AMEB awarded him an honorary FMusA and the University of Melbourne conferred on him the honorary DMus.

*Recorded at Melba Hall,
University of Melbourne
on RFP Steinway 507410*

*Sound recording and digital
editing by Martin Wright,
Move Records*

Photography by Dieter Muller

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Total playing time 73 minutes

*Other piano recordings by Ronald Farren-Price
include programs by Beethoven, Chopin, Debussy
and a second volume of favourite short works.*

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