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103X—WALTZ IN A FLAT



WALTZ, A FLAT, Op. 34, No. 1.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF FREDERIC FRANCOIS CHOPIN.

Born at Zelazowa, Wola, Poland, February 22, 1809 (1810?).

Died at Paris, October 17, 1849.

DURING the short span of forty years this great composer left to the world a wealth of music for the piano which is absolutely unique and which forms an indispensable part of the equipment of every pianist. He was so entirely original that one wonders whence he obtained his inspiration. The effects which he drew from an instrument were so novel that when Charles Halle first heard him he said that he could not understand how such tonal combinations could be possible upon the piano. Chopin's harmonization was so rich and varied, his melodies so highly ornamented with a profusion of scintillating arabesques, through which they seemed to show their outlines as through a veil, that a new world seemed to be revealed to the hearer. His music is extremely poetic in character and is extremely difficult to reproduce owing to its subtle character and its tremendous demands upon the technique. Chopin's hands, while small, were extremely elastic, and it is said to have been quite wonderful to see with what ease this hand glided over the most difficult key combinations. His racial characteristics show in his music, for his father was of French descent and his mother Polish, the French strain contributing gaiety and refinement, and the Polish contributing melancholy and a love of oriental mysticism.

Outside of a few songs and one or two other compositions he wrote exclusively for the piano, and no composer has ever lived who has sounded the possibilities of this instrument as has Chopin. His mazurkas reflect the spirit of Polish music, and the form under which he revealed some of his noblest inspirations—the Polonaise—is Polish in its origin, having first been used at the Coronation of a Polish Sovereign.

He was aristocratic and reserved by nature and was not apparently adapted to making public appearances. His life was a mixture of joyousness and sadness and his later days were darkened by the inroads of the disease, consumption, which finally ended his life.

His works for the piano included Waltzes, Mazurkas, Polonaises, Nocturnes, Ballades, Scherzos, Studies, Preludes, Sonatas and some other miscellaneous compositions. We strongly advise the student to lose no opportunity to become acquainted with the works of this great master of the piano, which will furnish an inexhaustible source of delight.

POETIC IDEA.—For many years the waltz had been one of many of the popular dances of the German peasantry—the so-called "Tyrolienne" being its more popular form. Suddenly, by reason of a new and very pretty waltz, splendidly danced by the four principal singers, in an opera called "Una Rara Cosa" (A Rare Thing) by Vincenz Martin (in 1787) the waltz took on a new beginning of life. It instantly became the fashion, and society learned to prize the new sensations and experiences.

The appearance of Weber's "Invitation to Dance" (in 1818), a drawing-room waltz with a love story interlarded in the music, gave the fashionable dance yet greater currency, and in Chopin's time it was very highly prized indeed. It became popular in France (in which country it is often claimed to have been first practiced) and the fashionable world counted it among its most delightful moments. The great vogue of this dance was due to the fact that it was, even from the first, more confidential between the two dancers in a "figure," and thus more fascinating than the more distant and formal relations of the older "square dances." It, therefore, belonged distinctly to the romantic epoch, in which romantic love supplied so large a key note for much which took place.

Ano. 103X-5

We do not know whether the Chopin waltzes were ever actually danced, or meant to be danced. Some one has said of them that were they to be danced, no woman below the rank of Countess should be permitted in them; and here the sentiment was but half expressed, its meaning being that these Countesses should all be of Polish birth and character, for it was the Polish women, alone, who at that time had the *chic*, the initiative, the charm, which the waltz at its best implied.

The poetic idea, therefore, is that of a floor full of finely appa-reled and beautiful women, paired with men of like nobility and grace, moving with the floating elasticity of this fascinating dance, in which one fails to remember whether in the body or out of the body, but surely in fairyland. This is the poetic idea.

FORM AND STRUCTURE.—The musical substance of this piece is all comprised in three important melodies, here marked B, C, and F Melodies. B and C form the principal subject, and melody F forms a subordinate or relieving subject, such as is often marked "Trio."

Besides the three melodies above mentioned there is an Introduction (measures 1 to 16); a transitional subject, measures 48 to 65, and a *Coda*, measures 245 to 308. Each of these melodies is several times repeated, either with or without change. For example, melodies B and C, forming the principal subject, are immediately played a second time, as indicated by the repeat signs. They also occur in Melodies L and M, (measures 178 to 209). Melody F occurs later as Melody G and I. The transitional melody D, occurs again as Melody E, slightly changed, as Melodies J and K, in a different key, and again in the original key as Melodies N and O.

Besides the foregoing there is yet another transitional melody, H, which is used in bringing back a repetition of Melody F. The piece as a whole consists of three large chapters or *cantos*. The principal part consists of melodies A, B, C, D. Melodies B, C, D are repeated in the recapitulation, as Melodies L, M, N. Melody F is the substance of the Trio, and is repeated as Melody G and I. The transitional Melody H occurs between G and I.

In addition to these Melodies there is the *coda*, consisting of Melodies P, Q, R, S. Such is the general plan of the piece. With a total of 338 measures (repeating Melodies B and C as marked) there are 96 measures to learn, besides the Coda and the changed forms of the transitional Melodies. To play the piece as a whole occupies a trifle over four minutes. The following abridgments are permissible, if during the progress of study the student desires to play for friends a complete part of the whole.

You could begin at beginning and play through as written to measure 81, and there stop. Or, one might go on after measure 81, and play straight on to measure 145; then go back to measure 17 and play through to measure 81, without repeating Melodies B and C.

A third enlargement, which is still quite an abridgment, would be to play exactly as written to measure 225, then passing directly to measure 296 (which is necessary in order to balance the rhythm) finish at the end as written.

The final enlargement is to play the whole as written, not forgetting to play Melodies B and C twice through, as indicated by the repeat signs. The repetition is necessary in order to give these two melodies their standing, as being the principal subject of the whole poem.

The rate of movement should be at about 72 to 76 of the metronome for dotted half-notes (i. e., for full measures), or the swings of a pendulum (tape-measure) 27 down to 24 inches, one swing for each full measure.

The real measure in this waltz is a 12-4, and a group of four written measures has the effect of one large measure of 12-4. You will notice, if you examine, that all the phrases run in groups of four or eight measures.

HOW TO STUDY.—RULE: *Learn each Period (melody) as you come to it, and learn it perfectly before going on further.*

In such a learning there will be two very well marked steps or stages: First, you have to learn the notes to play them in time, but slowly, counting three in a measure. This stage of work should proceed in fragments of two measures or four; never in single measures, except during the time necessary to master a difficult keyboard combination. Thus, for example, you would take the first two measures; then you have the answering phrase or completing phrase in measures 3, 4. In memorizing this, notice that you have in the right hand four notes together. The topmost and lowest of the four are melody notes and move, G, A \flat , A \sharp , B \flat . Meanwhile the middle two notes remain stationary; namely, D \flat and E \flat .

Now looking at the bass you find three notes together of which the middle one, E \flat does not move. The moving voice runs in thirds with the soprano. You will realize this more quickly if you play together the topmost notes in the left hand with the lowest notes of the right. After doing this a few times, you will be able to remember the four notes easily. You then have to play them in time, as a suitable finish after the low E \flat . Begin with this low E \flat still counting three, until you can play these measures 3, 4, in good time.

The next step will be to put the four measures together and try to play them in their proper movement. To do this, change the count to four, giving each written measure one count. The four measures of this phrase are counted just as the measures are numbered, 1, 2, 3, 4—the idea being of a 12-4 measure. In like manner you study measures 5, 6, 7, 8, which at the last will be counted 1, 2, 3, 4, precisely like the first four.

With reference to the eighth-notes, notice that all of them in this introduction follow one and the same chord-track, which you will realize by sounding all five notes of measure 11 together, provided your hand can be stretched to cover them all at once; if not, "spread" them down, and "spread" them up, in turn, until you have the chord clearly in your mind. This is all you have to play, in measures 11 to 15. The changing of accent in measures 13, 14, 15 will trouble you at first, as the chord figure of five notes is repeated five times in succession, but with the accent changing in each repetition. Notice the brackets under the groups in measures 13 to 16.

Remember that any figure or passage is half learned when you understand clearly how it is made.

The dance proper begins with Melody B, which closes with the second quarter note in measure 32. Learn first the phrase, measures 17 to 20 inclusive, melody and harmony complete. Learn the bass by itself, at first merely the low bass; then the low bass with its chords. Then both hands complete. Count at first three in a measure; after, count 1, 2, 3, 4 to the four measures.

The second phrase, measures 21 to 24, is the same melody in the key of E \flat . Learn it as directed for the pattern before. Then measure 25 is an amplification or variation of measure 17; measure 26 is a variation of measure 18; measures 27 and 28 are quite the same as measures 19, 20. The *mordent* on the first soprano note of measure 25, is played *precisely with the alto note under it*, and not before it. In like manner measures 29 to 32 are the same as measures 21 to 24, with the exception of slight variations in measure 29 (as compared with measure 22). When you have mastered these changes, you have the phrase in A \flat twice, and the phrase in E \flat twice. Then change the count to four and play in time.

Melody C contains two chords only. Namely, in measures 33, 34, 35, the chord of E_b , as also in measures 37 to 39. The only difference here is the dissonance in the bass. If you study the left hand part in measure 33, and play the half-notes and the last quarter-note together, you will have the chord, which the A_b (your thumb plays) momentarily interferes with. The same thing happens in measures 34, 35, except that this thumb note is one degree lower each time, being A_b , then G, then F. Finally in measure 36 the chord changes to one of A_b , but the thumb still interposes a dissonant note, F. Study this left hand part in the phrase of four measures, observing that the bass is always E_b , until the final measure of the period, 40. The eight measures are then repeated as measures 41 to 48, with no change whatever.

Melody D begins in the key of D_b , measures 49 to 53. Learn the bass thoroughly. The notes of the right hand part, which are syncopated (that is, sounded upon the third beat and tied over across the "one"), all take an accent; they anticipate the accent which was due upon the next note. The next phrase, measures 54 to 57, is the same thing a whole step higher; that is, in E_b instead of D_b . The third phrase, measures 58 to 61, is the same musical idea as in measures 49 to 53. The bass chords are fuller and the melody lies in octaves.

NOTE: Small hands may shorten these chords by omitting the lowest notes of each chord which extends to an octave. From measure 61 (the eighth-notes) on to 65 is the closing phrase, now in A_b . Study as already directed for its predecessors.

Melody E is simply Melody D over again, with slight improvements. The only difficulty here lies in the manner of writing the scale runs in measures 68, 69, and 72, 73. This manner was new with Chopin, as also his method of noting it by means of small notes, which, nevertheless, were meant to occupy an actual amount of time. For example, in measure 68 we have a half-note followed by a run beginning with A_b , running up the scale of D_b to F, the fourteenth note, which is written as a quarter-note falling upon the third count of measure 69. Hence, Chopin gives us thirteen notes to occupy three beats; that is to say, four notes to each beat and one to spare; this additional note we place in the last beat, under the general rule that ascending runs tend to accelerate, and the effect is better than by giving the five to the first beat and four each all the rest of the way up. Hence the run gives us D_b at the count 1, A_b at the count 2.

Chopin's intention in writing these with small notes with no division or grouping into beats, was that the run should precisely fill up the time of the three beats, but without being grouped into beats and slightly accented with each bass note, as it naturally would be if thought as a succession of beats. But in order to play it smoothly and evenly, it is necessary to practice it also evenly, for which purpose the bass must always be brought in with certain specific notes, as indicated by the lines across from the bass. The run is not at all difficult or even very fast, although it passes at the rate of upwards of 1,000 notes per minute—which is not fast for a light scale, in one hand alone.

With Melody F, we begin a new mood in this beautiful dancing scene. The melody now is for two voices, alto and soprano, and is intended to be very singing in character. It will be played a very little slower than the melodies before it. Note especially that several short slurs in this melody are liable to be mistaken for ties; namely, in measure 98 the two eighths; measure 93, the two eighths; measure 95, the two eighths; etc. The dot over the first note prevents this curve from being a tie, since it indicates that the first one is terminated before the second begins.

Melody G is quite the same as Melody F, except that some of the bass chords are taken fuller. Melody H is very easy to remember, when once it is understood as belonging to the key of B_b minor. From measures 122 to 129 it is quite the same as between measures 114 and 121, except that the second version is varied a little, the strongly dissonant G_b being much emphasized, and measure 120 varied in 128. After this, Melody I is quite the same as Melody G.

Melody J, again, is the same as Melody D, but now transposed a whole step lower, into G \flat ; and this is repeated with the runs of Melody E also in G \flat . The runs divide as before, but in actual playing there must be no division to the ear, by accent; merely a smooth and fluent run. Melodies L and M are precisely Melodies B and C over again. Melody N and Melody O are the same as Melodies D and E, except that Melody O is lengthened a bit and in measure 246 the *coda* begins, the speed being now somewhat accelerated.

The *Coda*, or Finish, consists of Melodies P, Q, R, S. In all these the idea runs in fragments of four measures, but in Melodies P and Q the modulations or chromatic passing tones are numerous and will need very careful attention.

The best way of beginning the study of this part will be to give especial attention first to the left hand part; and, in order to get the larger harmonic relations involved, take both hands to play the left hand part, using the right hand for all the chords which fall upon an accent, leaving the left hand to play the second and third quarters in each measure. Be careful of the grouping. Measures 246 to 249 make one phrase; 250 to 253 inclusive, another; 254 to 257 inclusive, another, and 258 to 261 another. Each of these phrases is to be carefully studied, counting three in a measure, and afterwards counting one to each measure, each phrase forming one of the large 12-4 measures. If you have any difficulty in remembering measures 246 to 253 distinctly, return again to the left hand alone, playing the accented quarter-note with the right hand. You will now see that starting in measure 247 with A \flat , this voice comes down, by way of G \flat , F twice, E \flat , E \flat , and if you remember this and the order of the four chords of the harmony (measures 248, 249 with A \sharp and so on) you will soon learn them.

Melody Q will require care, but the chromatics are so decided that you will find them rather easy to remember if you first study them in four-measure groups and then combine two of these into an eight-measure group. Thus, in measures 274 to 277, the chords are different positions of the same chord, which is given complete in measure 271. From here on the study will be easy.

Finally, when you have the piece well memorized, you will pay attention to the tasteful delivery of it in its proper time and spirit. This will gradually become better and better, if you do not permit yourself to forget and guess at any part of it, but learn over again anything which seems to have faded out.

In all the playing remember that it is a picture of a waltzing group of high-bred ladies and gentlemen, which you are painting in tones.

Waltz in A Flat.

Revised and Annotated by
W. S. B. Mathews.

FREDÉRIC CHOPIN, Op. 34, No. 1.

Vivace. $\text{♩} = 72 \text{ to } 76$.

Section A: Measures 1-16. Includes dynamics *f* and *sf*, and a *cresc.* marking. Section B: Measures 17-26. Includes dynamic *f*. Section C: Measures 27-33. Includes dynamic *f* and a *cresc.* marking.

103x-10.

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The image displays a page of musical notation for a piano piece, organized into five systems of staves. Each system consists of a treble staff and a bass staff, connected by a brace on the left. The music is written in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature (C). The measures are numbered sequentially from 34 to 62. The notation includes various musical symbols such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings like *p* (piano) and *ff* (fortissimo). There are also some handwritten annotations and corrections, such as '132' above measure 40 and '14' above measure 47. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 62.

63 64 65 66 67 68

69 70 71 72 73 74

75 76 77 78 79 80

81 82 83 84 85 86

87 88 89 90 91 92

Waltz 3

103x - 10.

93 94 95 96 *p* 97 98

99 100 101 102 103 104 105

106 107 108 *f* 109 110

111 112 113 114 115 116 117

118 119 120 121 *f* 122 123

Waltz 5

103x - 10.

154 155 156 157 158 159

K 160 161 162 163 164 165

166 167 168 169 170 171

172 173 174 175 176

177 178 179 180 181 182 183 184

Measures 185-192. Treble staff: 185 (4 1), 186 (5 4 1), 187 (5 2 1), 188 (4 1), 189 (4), 190 (5 1, 5 2, 4 1, 5 2), 191 (5 2), 192 (132). Bass staff: 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192.

Measures 193-198. Treble staff: 193 (2 3 1, 5 354), 194 (3 1 4), 195 (1 1), 196 (5 354), 197 (3 2 1 3), 198 (1 5 354, 3 1 4). Bass staff: 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198.

Measures 199-204. Treble staff: 199 (5 132), 200 (132), 201 (1 1), 202 (5 354), 203 (1 1), 204 (5 354, 3 2 1 3). Bass staff: 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204.

Measures 205-210. Treble staff: 205 (5 354), 206 (3 1 4), 207 (1 1), 208 (N), 209 (3), 210 (4 3 2). Bass staff: 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210.

Measures 211-217. Treble staff: 211 (132), 212 (3), 213 (4 3 2), 214 (132), 215 (3), 216 (3), 217. Bass staff: 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217.

8

218 219 220 221 222

0

223 224 225 226 227 228

132

229 230 231 232 233

8

234 235 236 237 238

8

239 240 241 242 243 244

Handwritten musical score, first system. Treble and bass staves. Key signature: two flats (B-flat, E-flat). Time signature: 3/4. The system begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The right hand features a melodic line with fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) and a slur. The left hand has a bass line with fingerings (2, 4, 5) and a slur. Measure numbers 245, 246, 247, 248, and 249 are indicated below the bass staff.

Handwritten musical score, second system. Treble and bass staves. The right hand continues the melodic line with fingerings (3, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5). The left hand has a bass line with fingerings (2, 5, 1, 2, 3, 4). Measure numbers 250, 251, 252, 253, and 254 are indicated below the bass staff.

Handwritten musical score, third system. Treble and bass staves. The right hand continues the melodic line with fingerings (2, 4, 3, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5). The left hand has a bass line with fingerings (2, 5, 1, 2, 3, 4). Measure numbers 255, 256, 257, 258, and 259 are indicated below the bass staff.

Handwritten musical score, fourth system. Treble and bass staves. The right hand continues the melodic line with fingerings (1, 3, 1, 2, 5, 3, 1, 3, 2, 1, 1, 2, 5, 3, 1, 3, 1, 3, 1). The left hand has a bass line with fingerings (2, 6, 1, 2, 6, 2, 6, 3, 6, 4, 5, 4, 5, 4). Measure numbers 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, and 265 are indicated below the bass staff.

Handwritten musical score, fifth system. Treble and bass staves. The right hand continues the melodic line with fingerings (3, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 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System 1: Measures 272-277. The right hand features a melodic line with various ornaments and fingerings (e.g., 3, 4, 1, 2, 5, 5, 5, 6). The left hand provides harmonic support with chords and single notes. Measure numbers 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, and 277 are indicated below the staff.

System 2: Measures 278-284. The right hand continues the melodic development with more ornaments and fingerings (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 5, 5, 5, 3, 4, 5). The left hand maintains the harmonic accompaniment. Measure numbers 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, and 284 are indicated below the staff.

System 3: Measures 285-291. The right hand has a melodic line with ornaments and fingerings (e.g., 3, 4, 3, 4, 3, 4, 3). The left hand continues the harmonic accompaniment. Measure numbers 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, and 291 are indicated below the staff. Measure 289 is marked with *dimin.*

System 4: Measures 292-298. The right hand features a melodic line with ornaments and fingerings (e.g., 4, 3, 1, 3, 3, 3, 3). The left hand continues the harmonic accompaniment. Measure numbers 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, and 298 are indicated below the staff.

System 5: Measures 299-305. The right hand has a melodic line with ornaments and fingerings (e.g., 4, 3, 3, 4, 5, 3, 4, 5). The left hand continues the harmonic accompaniment. Measure numbers 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, and 305 are indicated below the staff. Measure 301 is marked with *pp* and measure 304 with *ff*.

Waltz 10.

103x - 10.

RECITATION QUESTIONS ON "WALTZ IN A FLAT, OPUS 34, NO. 1."

1. What is the prevailing key of this piece as indicated by the signature?
Ans.
2. If any of the melodies in this piece are in any other key than A \flat , which ones are they?
Ans.
3. What is the proper rate of speed? Answer by metronome or by tape-measure swings.
Ans.
4. If any of the melodies are permitted to be played a little slower than this rate of speed, how much slower?
Ans.
5. How do you distribute the thirteen notes of the run in measures 68, 69, 72, 73, between the three bass notes which have to be played during the run? Where do you place the extra note?
Ans.
6. What is the principle of placing this additional note in the last part of the run instead of at the beginning?
Ans.
7. How is the strong dissonance made by the right hand octave on G \flat , against F in the bass, in measures 122, 123, intended by Chopin to be played?
Ans.
8. Are the short curves over two eighths in measures 157, 158 and other places, ties?
Ans.
9. In what length of phrases does this piece run?
Ans.
10. What rule is given as to the method of study?
Ans.
11. Did it help you when you tried to work by this rule?
Ans.
12. Which parts of this Waltz did you like best?
Ans.
13. Who was Chopin? And with what great composers was he contemporary?
Ans.

For Teacher's Record

Class No.

Received

Pupil

Grade (on Scale 100)

Address

Teacher

Ano. 103X-5