

Produced by Andrew Kazdin

GLENN GOULD

THE MOZART PIANO SONATAS, VOL. I

Side 1

SONATA NO. 1 IN C MAJOR, K. 279

I—Allegro (4:38)

II—Andante (5:45)

III—Allegro (5:45)

SONATA NO. 2 IN F MAJOR, K. 280

I—Allegro assai (3:15)

II—Adagio (4:30)

III—Presto (3:45)

Side 2

SONATA NO. 3 IN B-FLAT MAJOR, K. 281

I—Allegro (2:45)

II—Andante amoroso (4:32)

III—Rondo: Allegro (3:45)

SONATA NO. 4 IN E-FLAT MAJOR, K. 282

I—Adagio (2:35)

II—Menuetto I and II (3:45)

III—Allegro (3:15)

SONATA NO. 5 IN G MAJOR, K. 283

I—Allegro (3:15)

II—Andante (2:45)

III—Presto (3:45)

The Sonatas are in the public domain.

As a child, Mozart was known primarily for his extraordinary talents at the keyboard, where he read difficult pieces at sight, improvised exquisitely, and generally performed so masterfully that when he played in Vienna at the age of six his father, Leopold, could write to a friend that "everyone says that his genius is incomparable." At this same early age, Mozart was already composing piano sonatas with violin accompaniment, but few of these were written down because of the boy's marvelous ability at improvisation. Until the age of eighteen, only four-hand piano sonatas or works for pupils appear to have been noted—everything else was either performed from memory or improvised spontaneously.

Mozart's earliest extant piano sonatas were composed as a group during the summer and fall of 1774 when he was residing in Salzburg after his third trip to Italy and before a short stay in Munich. At this time in Mozart's life, his father was anxious that his son procure a permanent position at a court, and it is possible that these sonatas were written for performance before prospective patrons. In any case, this was the purpose they served, and in the four years after their composition, Mozart performed them frequently.

First mention of the sonatas in family correspondence occurs in a letter, dated December 21, 1774, from Leopold to his wife. It was written in Munich, where father and son had journeyed for a performance of the young composer's opera buffa *La finta giardiniera*. Nannerl, Wolfgang's sister, was to join them a few weeks later, and, in his letter, Leopold instructed that she "bring copies of Wolfgang's sonatas and variations, and any other sonatas she likes, for they do not take up much room. . . . She need not bring many concertos, for we have Wolfgang's

concerto here, and if she brings a few others, that will be quite sufficient, for who knows whether she will use them at all."

Evidently, these works were not exclusively for Wolfgang's use but might also be performed by his sister, who was an excellent pianist. Nannerl's playing of the first two of these sonatas at home in Salzburg is mentioned in a letter of November 17, 1777, from Leopold to his wife and son, then in Mannheim: "We are alone every day and if we go on practicing during the winter, Nannerl will be able to accompany everything, figured or unfigured, in the easiest or the most difficult keys, and what is more, with the most unexpected changes of key. For in this respect your compositions afford her ample opportunity to perfect herself. Moreover, we always choose the most difficult ones and especially your works in C major [K. 279] and F major with the minor movement [K. 280]."

The C-Major Sonata mentioned above is the first of the series and shows the influence of Italian style, especially in the Alberti bass patterns and broken chords of the first movement. The Andante is based on a triplet figure that migrates between the treble and bass, and the Allegro finale shows a trace of Mozartean humor: The development begins with the staccato second theme in modulating sequences, after which one expects an equally long development of the first theme—but in a teasing way it is introduced only momentarily and then leads immediately into the recapitulation.

The F-Major Sonata referred to in the same letter is the second in the series and bears the mark of Joseph Haydn, whose work in the same key was printed in 1773 and may have become known to Mozart during his stay in Vienna. The Adagio, in F minor, contains many modulations and harmonic inflections of the sort Leopold also mentioned in his letter.

On September 23, 1777, Mozart and his mother set out on a long journey, from Salzburg to Paris, in search of a court that would hire the young composer. After an unsuccessful stop in Munich, they moved on to Augsburg and Mannheim. From Mannheim, on November 13, Mozart wrote to his father about a visit to the court of Prince Ernst von Ottingen-Wallerstein, where he played for Ignaz Becke, Kapellmeister for the Wallerstein family. "He [Becke] was sorry that he could not arrange some music in my honor, but on that very day most of the performers had taken a holiday and gone out walking to some place or other. At his request I had to try his clavicord, which is a very good one. He frequently exclaimed 'Bravo!' I improvised and played my sonatas in B flat and D."

These sonatas were K. 281, in B flat, and a later sonata, K. 284, in D, composed in Munich in 1775 for Baron von Dürnitz and often included with the early group of five. K. 281 is typical of the style galant of which Becke himself was a master, and perhaps for this reason Mozart chose this particular sonata to perform for him. The Andante amoroso begins with a dynamic contrast used for the first time in any of Mozart's autographs—*forte* to piano in the first two beats of the sonata. The final Rondo movement is considered by many to be the most advanced of any of these sonatas. The gavotte-like main theme appears five times, being set off by various intermediary melodies.

Mozart and his mother spent four months in Mannheim trying to impress upon the Elector of the Palatinate the young com-

poser's desire for a permanent position at his court. During this time, Mozart became acquainted with the musicians of the famous Mannheim orchestra, and especially with Christian Cannabich, the conductor and first violinist. On the 4th of November, Mozart wrote his father that "I played all my six sonatas today at Cannabich's." An earlier letter from Augsburg on October 17, 1777, also recounts a performance of the complete series: "Here and at Munich I have played all my six sonatas by heart several times. I played the fifth in G at that grand concert in the Stube." The references to six sonatas in these letters include K. 284, the Dürnitz Sonata, which was eventually published separately from the first five.

The fourth sonata of the group of five, K. 282, in E flat, begins with a slow movement, resembling in this respect three of Mozart's violin sonatas and perhaps calling to mind the older church-sonata plan. The second movement comprises two minuetts, the second of which functions as a contrasting trio, while the final Allegro represents the culmination, as regards tempo, of the entire sonata.

The Sonata in G Major, K. 283, the last in the series of five and Mozart's only piano sonata in G, was the one played separately at the concert in the Augsburg Geschlechterstube on October 16. The Allegro of this work has a dialogue-like primary theme that is linked to the anticipated secondary theme by quick unison bass runs. After a short development, the recapitulation begins in the usual tonic, but veers into a short minor section before returning to the main key to conclude the movement. In the development section of the Andante, Mozart again fools the listener by returning to the main theme before the actual recapitulation has begun. The combination in the Presto finale of lyrical themes, short bursts of runs, and delicate staccato chords produces a varied and ingenious effect that must have impressed the Augsburg audience.

On March 23, 1778, Mozart finally arrived in Paris with his mother, but in July of that year he died, and Mozart died with no hopes of obtaining an appointment. Finally, on September 11, Mozart wrote to his father from Paris saying that he agreed to return to Salzburg to renew his connections with the court there. In this letter a last mention is made of these sonatas, here referred to as his "difficult" ones: "As for my three concertos . . . I shall sell them to the man who engraved my sonatas, provided he pays cash for them. And, if I can, I shall do the same with my six difficult sonatas. Even if I don't get much, it will surely be better than nothing. On a journey one needs money." Mozart failed in his attempts, however, and the sonatas were not published until 1799, eight years after his death.

—Jean K. Wulf

Engineering: Fred Plant, Raymond Moore.

Library of Congress catalog card number 78-1426 applies to MS 7097.

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GLENN GOULD THE MOZART PIANO SONATAS VOL. I The Early Sonatas, Nos. 1-5



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Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart 1756–1791

Piano Sonata No. 1 in C major K 279 (189d)

C-Dur · en *ut* majeur

- | | | |
|---|--------------|------|
| 1 | I. Allegro | 4:18 |
| 2 | II. Andante | 5:29 |
| 3 | III. Allegro | 1:48 |

Piano Sonata No. 2 in F major K 280 (189e)

F-Dur · en *fa* majeur

- | | | |
|---|------------------|------|
| 4 | I. Allegro assai | 3:15 |
| 5 | II. Adagio | 5:08 |
| 6 | III. Presto | 1:49 |

Piano Sonata No. 3 in B-flat major K 281 (189f)

B-Dur · en *si* bémol majeur

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------|------|
| 7 | I. Allegro | 2:52 |
| 8 | II. Andante amoroso | 4:34 |
| 9 | III. Rondeau. Allegro | 3:42 |

Piano Sonata No. 4 in E-flat major K 282 (189g)

Es-Dur · en *mi* bémol majeur

- | | | |
|----|---------------------|------|
| 10 | I. Adagio | 2:40 |
| 11 | II. Menuetto I & II | 3:30 |
| 12 | III. Allegro | 1:12 |

Piano Sonata No. 5 in G major K 283 (189h)

G-Dur · en *sol* majeur

- | | | |
|----|-------------|------|
| 13 | I. Allegro | 2:14 |
| 14 | II. Andante | 2:39 |
| 15 | III. Presto | 2:37 |

Total Time 48:07

Glenn Gould piano

Original LP: MS 7097 · Released March 18, 1968

Recording: Columbia 30th Street Studio, New York City,

November 9, 1967 [1–3]; August 11 & November 9/10, 1967 [4–6];

May 25/26 & November 10, 1967 [7–9]; July 25 & November 9/10, 1967 [10–12];

May 25/26, 1967 [13–15]

Producer: Andrew Kazdin · Recording Engineers: Fred Plaut & Raymond Moore

Cover Photo: Herschel Levit · Liner Notes: Jean K. Wolf

LP Matrix: XSM 135367 [1–6], XSM 135368 [7–15] (stereo);

32 11 0045-1 [1], 32 11 0045-2 [2/3] (mono)

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