

Produced by Andrew Knaul

M 33515

**GLENN GOULD**  
**THE COMPLETE MOZART PIANO SONATAS.**  
**VOL. 5**

Side 1  
**FANTASY IN C MINOR, K. 475**  
**SONATA NO. 14 IN C MINOR, K. 457 (Beginning)**  
I—Allegro  
II—Adagio

Side 2  
**SONATA NO. 14 IN C MINOR, K. 457 (Conclusion)**  
III—Molto allegro  
**SONATA NO. 16 IN B-FLAT MAJOR, K. 570**  
I—Allegro  
II—Adagio  
III—Allegretto

**SONATA NO. 17 IN D MAJOR, K. 576**  
I—Allegro  
II—Adagio  
III—Allegretto

The selections are in the public domain.

As their careers progressed, many of the great pianist-composers diminished their production of solo piano works. Even Bach's output of keyboard music declined in his later years (although in his case external circumstances were part of the cause), and the same pattern can be traced in Beethoven, Schumann, Liszt, Bartók, Prokofiev, Mendelssohn and others.

To a certain extent, this phenomenon occurs as the musician becomes better-known and is able to seduce or abandon his activities as concert virtuoso to concentrate on the financially riskier occupation of professional composer. Freed from the necessity of writing piano music for his own use, the composer directs his activities towards other media. But it is also undeniable, and in some cases decisive, that as the composer gains more experience in writing for varied media, he becomes more interested in using the potentially greater resources of vocal and instrumental combinations. As much was certainly true of Brahms, who returned to the piano in his career to write very different music than he had at the beginning) and who spent the middle portion of his career exploring a wide variety of resources and writing little for piano solo.

Thus it was with Mozart, who wrote 13 sonatas for piano up to his 22nd year and only a handful more in his remaining 14 years of life. (His production of shorter piano pieces declined correspondingly.) In Mozart's case, it was not even the abandonment of the concert platform that affected him, since he never did retire as a pianist and little music for piano solo

was played at public concerts in his time. (It is said that not one of Beethoven's sonatas was played before a concert hall audience during his lifetime; the piano recital was yet to be invented, by Liszt.) As Mozart's patronage by the nobility for whose invited audiences he did play piano solos and his teaching activities declined, his use for solo piano works declined also. For the public audiences growing in the last years of his life, Mozart needed orchestral works and opera.

But there was some other strong inner impulse that drew Mozart towards larger performing forces: He even wrote three great symphonies—his last—with-out having a commission for any of them. Perhaps even more significant is the fact that his last piano sonata, K. 576, was supposed to be the first of a series of six written for a commission. But Mozart, who could not afford to turn down a paid commission, did not finish the series.

Earliest of the works in this album are the *Fantasia* and *Sonata* in C Minor, K. 475 and K. 457—pieces linked (under his own supervision) not only by tradition but also by Mozart's having published them as a single manuscript. Nevertheless, while they probably make their best effect when played together, the pieces are not obligatory companions: Mozart is known to have played the *Fantasia* alone.

The *Fantasia* was an afterthought: It was composed in May 1785, seven months after the completion of the *Sonata* in October 1784. "This fantasia," says musicologist Arthur Huchnina, "is unique because in other pieces by Mozart coexist such strongly contrasted ideas in so short a space." The entire work, *Fantasia* and *Sonata*, is of uncommon emotional intensity for Mozart. "It is clear that it represents a moment of great agitation," wrote Alfred Einstein. "The *Sonata* form of 1784 is too small for the expansion of feeling... and it is accordingly only fitting that this C Minor *Sonata* should be followed by a piano concerto—K. 491—a vessel fully adequate to its content."

In the combination and contrast of the forms of *fantasia* and *sonata*, we have a fascinating insight into Mozart's musical processes. The *fantasia* of Mozart's time is an improvisation, or an imitation of one. Certainly the C Minor *Fantasia* is improvisational in tone, hence its extreme contrasts. Following, we hear a work in strict *sonata* form. The first movement is a *sonata-allegro*, the second a set of variations, and the third a rondo. As in the other great piano sonata in minor, the *Sonata* in A Minor, K. 310, the slow movement is relatively tranquil and provides the necessary contrast, but the outer movements are tragic in tone and the whole work concludes in minor key. Perhaps it would be going too far to say that the *Fantasia* and the *Sonata* represent different ways of treating the same emotional material, but perhaps one can describe the *Fantasia* as a meditation upon

the content of the *Sonata*. And when both works are contrasted with the C Minor Concerto, composed only a few months after the *Fantasia*, it is fascinating to note the way Mozart created differing works in differing forms from similar material.

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The last of Mozart's piano sonatas are those in B-Flat Major, K. 570, and in D Major, K. 576, both composed in 1789, two years before the composer's death. Both are written on a relatively small scale, especially in comparison with the C Minor *Sonata* or the Paris sonata of 1778. However, unlike the *Sonata* in C Major, K. 545, they are not intended as teaching pieces: Their brevity is the compression of music for the connoisseur, not the simplicity of music for children.

The B-Flat Major *Sonata* was written in February, for what purpose we do not know. It is not difficult or worthy piece, but nevertheless shows enough conspicuous signs of Mozart's finest craftsmanship that we may be certain he intended it for educated listeners and performers. Alfred Einstein refers to this work as "perhaps the most completely rounded of them all, the ideal of his piano sonata." Such touches as the clever modulation by which Mozart brings the first movement's second subject into the tonic key for his recapitulation, or the humorous use of counterpoint in the finale, are certainly aimed at experienced ears. There is also in existence a version of this sonata for piano with violin accompaniment, but Mozart apparently did not arrange it.

The *Sonata* in D Major was written in July. In the interim, Mozart had travelled to Prussia, where he received from King Friedrich Wilhelm II commissions for six string quartets (of which only three were composed) and six piano sonatas. The sonatas were intended for the King's eldest daughter, Princess Friederike. Either Mozart forgot his purpose or else the Princess was a fine musician, for the one sonata he composed, while brief, is far from simple. Its spirits are high enough to please a royal patron, but counterpoint and chromatic harmonies abound throughout the work. On the same trip that took him to the court of Prussia, Mozart had stopped in Leipzig and played on the organ. Bach had played there. Perhaps in this *Sonata* we hear yet another tribute by Mozart to the earlier master he had so long and so deeply admired.

—Laelle Gerber

Engineering: Kent Warden, Frank Dean Deasonville, Fred Plaut  
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Other albums of *Mozart Piano Sonatas* by Glenn Gould:  
Vol. 1: Piano Sonatas 1-5 MS 7007  
Vol. 2: Sonatas 6, 7, 9 MS 7274  
Vol. 3: Sonatas 8, 10, 12, 13 MS 7479  
Vol. 4: Sonatas 11, 15; Fantasy in D Minor, K. 397; Sonata in F Major with Rondo, K. 333/K. 494 MS 3248

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## Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart 1756–1791

### 1 Fantasia in C minor K 475

c-Moll · en *ut* mineur  
Adagio

15:01

### Piano Sonata No. 14 in C minor K 457

c-Moll · en *ut* mineur

2 I. Allegro

4:18

3 II. Adagio

12:11

4 III. Molto allegro

4:54

### Piano Sonata No. 17 in B-flat major K 570

B-Dur · en *si* bémol majeur

5 I. Allegro

3:40

6 II. Adagio

4:21

7 III. Allegretto

2:36

## Piano Sonata No. 18 in D major K 576

D-Dur · en *ré* majeur

8 I. Allegro

3:13

9 II. Adagio

3:49

10 III. Allegretto

4:01

Total Time 58:19

## Glenn Gould piano

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*LESLIE GERBER*