



Smithsonian Associates

Musical Miniatures: The Perfect Magic of Shorter Works

Dr. Rachel Franklin

Thursday, September 19, 2024 - 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. ET

September 19 Piano miniatures: an infinite world in a tiny box

We continue our musical storytelling through the medium purely of piano. Short piano works are frequently defined as “character pieces” and there are literally thousands of them. Chopin commands that genre but he was far from the first. Bach toccatas, the Mozart D minor fantasia, and Beethoven’s bagatelles introduce us to later mini-masterpieces such as Schubert impromptus, Chopin mazurkas, Brahms intermezzi and Debussy preludes.

Works explored, media used:

J.S. Bach, 1685-1750

Toccatà in C minor, BWV 911, approx. 1714

- Ivo Janssen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2BjF1xtA8WA>

W. A. Mozart, 1756-1791

Fantasia in D minor, K. 397, 1782

- Cyprien Katsaris

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BkZ8ci8_k4

Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770-1827

Bagatelles, Op. 126, 1825

- Wilhelm Kempf

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-zHJQPmDal0>

Franz Schubert, 1797-1828

Impromptu in G flat, Op. 90, No. 3, 1827

- Vladimir Horowitz

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FxhbAGwEYGQ>

Frederic Chopin, 1810-1849

Mazurka in A minor, Op. 17, no. 4, 1832-33

- Aimi Kobayashi

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vv-Kz1PsgvM>

Selection of Etudes Op. 10 & Op. 25, 1833, 1837

- Evgeny Kissin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hwOveZlugk&t=950s>

Claude Debussy. 1862 -1918

Douze Études, Book I, Pour les octaves, 1915

- Mitsuko Uchida

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qi5A2te4mnl>

La Cathédrale Engloutie, from Préludes I, no. 10, 1910

- Nelson Freire

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVMGwPDP-Yk>

Dave Hurwitz on the best Debussy Études recording

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhJeKOkwXIs>

Johannes Brahms, 1833-1897

Intermezzo in C, Op. 119, no. 3, 1893

- Marc-André Hamelin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X47U7ZNpM0o>

Waltzes, Op. 39, 1865

Maurice Ravel, 1875-1937

Le Gibet, from Gaspard de la Nuit, 1908

- Martha Argerich

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3-kW_hqLGY

Sergei Prokofiev, 1891-1953

Vision Fugitives, Op. 22, 1917

Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847

Rondo Capriccioso. Op. 14, 1828-30

- Jan Lisiecki

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHyVPZXeC0w>