



## The Great Composer-Pianists: Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Brahms

*Dr. Rachel Franklin*

Monday, March 17, 2025 - 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. ET

Popular speaker and concert pianist **Rachel Franklin** guides a unique look at the monumental keyboard talents of four great composer-pianists and how their performing virtuosity influenced the piano works we enjoy today.

With a legacy of printed compositions but no recordings, how can we get closer to the white-hot moments of creation and performance when these artists poured out their genius for fortunate and astonished listeners? How did the composers' musical imaginations and their signature performance styles influence the development of how pianos would be constructed and sound? And did their contemporary audiences even comprehend what they were hearing?

Franklin offers fascinating exploration into the creative minds—and hands—of a quartet of piano pioneers celebrated for their prowess as composers and performers. She concludes each lecture with a live performance of a work by the spotlighted composer.

British-born Franklin has been a featured speaker for organizations including the Library of Congress and NPR, exploring intersections among classical and jazz music, film scores, and the fine arts.

### **March 17th: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770-1827**

"His improvisation was most brilliant and striking. In whatever company he might chance to be, he knew how to produce such an effect upon every hearer that frequently not an eye remained dry, while many would break out into large sobs; for there was something wonderful in his expression in addition to the beauty and originality of his ideas and his spirited style of rendering them. After ending an improvisation of this kind he would burst into loud laughter and banter his hearers on the emotion he had caused in them. "You are fools!" he would say. "Who could live among such spoiled children?" he would cry..." **Carl Czerny**.

Mozart may have enchanted his listeners, but Beethoven overwhelmed and frequently disturbed them. While constantly harassing piano makers for stronger instruments and dealing with encroaching deafness, Beethoven created entirely new piano techniques almost by accident as he fought to express his titanic ideas on the instrument. We look at his spiritual views, friendships, dedicatees, and how his immensely complex life played directly into his piano improvisations and compositions.

### **Beethoven's works explored, media used**

#### **"Rondo alla ingharese quasi un capriccio" (Rage Over a Lost Penny" Op. 129, 1795**

- Olga Scheps  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1dcaX3HEBRs>

#### **BBC documentary "The Genius of Beethoven" pt. 1**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QVtf5LbXB2s>  
Parts 2 and 3 are also available on Youtube

#### **Piano trio in C minor, Op. 1, No. 3, 1795**

- Beaux Arts Trio  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7aWBgWDmsmk>

#### **Concerto No. 1 in C, Op. 15, 1793-1800**

- Margarita Höhenrieder, Staatskapelle Dresden & Fabio Luisi  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=279KL-eVnVM>

#### **Piano and cello sonata No.1 in F major, Op. 5, 1796**

- Nicholas Rimmer, Gabriel Schwabe  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llnwPWvgifg>

#### **Sonata quasi una fantasia, Op. 27, No. 2 (no.14) in C# Minor, "Moonlight", 1801, a comparison of interpretations**

- Louis Lortie, Jeno Jando  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K5-lqJZPxQY>

"Kreutzer" sonata for violin and piano, No. 9 in A, Op. 47, 1803

- Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Fazıl Say  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OF9fneQ50Us>

Sonata No. 21. in C, Op. 53 "Waldstein" 1804

- Daniel Barenboim  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3l18HTo5rY>

"Der Wachtelschlag" (The Quail), WoO. 129, 1804

- Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Jörg Demus  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9QpVgRIA\\_Dg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9QpVgRIA_Dg)

Concerto No. 5 in E flat, "Emperor" Op. 73, 1809

Sonata No. 26 in E flat, Op 81a "Lebewohl" (Les Adieux) on a reproduction of an original Graf), 1810

- Ronald Brautigam  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Al3CAw7RC1o>

Cello and piano sonata No. 5 in D, Op. 102, 1818

- Mischa Maisky, Martha Argerich  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRggcrD2t70>

Sonata No. 29 Op. 106 "Hammerklavier", 1818

- Valentina Lisitsa  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETjfAlHpjY>

Sonata No. 31 in A flat, Op. 110, 1821

Bagatelle No. 6 in E flat, Op. 126