
FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN

CONCERTO No. 1

for Piano and Orchestra
E minor/e-Moll/Mi mineur
Op. 11

Edited by/Herausgegeben
Michael Stegmann

PREVIEW
Low Resolution



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PREFACE

When Frédéric Chopin gave the first performance of his F minor Piano Concerto in Warsaw on 17 March 1830 (the work was not published until 1836, as No. 2, with the opus number 21), he was already working on a new composition for piano and orchestra. Tytus Wojciechowski, a close friend of Chopin's, was one of the first to be told about the work: 'I believe that my second concerto in E minor will remain without merit for me until you have heard it.'¹ Wojciechowski was also informed in detail about the further progress of work on the piece:

The *Adagio* of the new concerto is in E major. I have not tried to display power in this movement; it is quiet and melancholy romance. Its effect is meant to be like that of gently gazing upon a placid sea, awakens a thousand sweet memories, like a stroll in a beautiful moonlit night in the woods. That is why the accompaniment is so simple.

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Although this passage refers to Chopin's Op. 21, we can assume, given the biographical background to the genesis of the E minor concerto, that the later work too – or at least the

middle movement – is a musical portrait of Konstancja Gludkowska. We should certainly be wary, however, of assigning too much importance to these facts. After all, it was the conservative emphasis placed on music's utility to the romanticized past that led to the idea that could be formed in the first place (and can still be lost).

All kinds of... about of this kind... were directed... gratitude ex... was abundantly suffi-

...unhappy... and especially so... Vienna, Prague, ... wanted way to wait... of his new concerto... "My plan is to spend two... and to go from there to Italy, ... in Milan during the winter."² ... was to be only partially realized.

... Wednesday I rehearsed my concerto with the... I was satisfied to some extent, but not completely so. The finale is generally felt to be the most attractive movement (it is also the easiest to follow). How will it go with the orchestra? The rehearsal is on Wednesday, and I shall send you word then. Tomorrow I shall go through it with the quartet once more. And when it is all over, I shall depart, [...] But where, when there is nowhere to draw me [...]"³

But the concert preparations dragged on.

You cannot imagine how much this confounded yet unavoidable waiting bores me. After the orchestral rehearsal for my second concerto the public performance was fixed for Monday next. [...] On the one hand, I am scarcely looking forward to it; on the other, I am curious to see what impression it will make. The Rondo, I think, will go down well with

¹ To Tytus Wojciechowski, 30 April 1830; quoted in *Correspondance de Frédéric Chopin 1810–1849 I (L'Asabe: 1816–1831)* (Paris, 1981), 155

² Wojciechowski, 15 May 1830; *ibid.*, 166

³ Wojciechowski, 3 October 1829; *ibid.*, 132ff

⁴ Eril Naumann, *Allgemeine Musikgeschichte* (Berlin, 1927), 641

⁵ To Wojciechowski, 4 September 1830; *ibid.*, 186

⁶ To Wojciechowski, 18 September 1830; *ibid.*, 190

everyone. Soliva⁷ told me to my face: 'It does you the utmost credit.' Kurpiński⁸ praised its originality, Elsner⁹ the rhythm.¹⁰

The concert, on 11 October 1830 (in the second half of which Konstancja Gładkowska sang a cavatina from Rossini's *La donna del lago*), was Chopin's last public appearance in Poland.

I did not have the slightest trace of stage fright and I played as if I was alone. Everything went well. The hall was full. The first piece was the symphony by Gömer. Then came yours truly with the *Allegro* in E minor; on the Streicher grand it seemed to play itself.¹¹ Ear-splitting 'Bravo's. [...] Then it was the turn of the *Adagio* and Rondo. [...] If Soliva had not gone to the trouble of taking my score home and studying it, and if he had not conducted in such a fashion that I could not race ahead of the orchestra, then I don't know what might have happened tomorrow. But he had everything firmly under control and it was the first time I have had such an easy performance with an orchestra.¹²

On 2 November 1830 Chopin left Warsaw and headed for Vienna. The Polish emigration party no doubt made a great impression on him. The first step on the road to Paris was where Chopin met the Italian pianist and teacher of his new teacher, Francesco Liszt. The German pianist, 'they say, is a very distinguished player', they say, 'and is very well recommended.'¹³ Liszt was a student of the Viennese pianist and teacher Ignaz Moszyński and together they were among the witnesses of the outbreak of the

⁷ Józef Soliva (1797–1833), teacher of singing at the Warsaw Conservatory, 1821–32.
⁸ Józef Kurpiński (1785–1857), in his day a famous Polish composer, especially of opera.
⁹ Józef Elsner (1799–1859), Silesian composer and music theorist, director of the Warsaw Conservatoire 1821–34 and teacher of Chopin.
¹⁰ To Wojciechowski, 5 October 1830; op. cit., 202.
¹¹ The instruments of the Viennese firm of Streicher enjoyed very great popularity in the 19th century. Johann Baptist Streicher (1796–1871) was the sole proprietor of the firm after 1833, which existed from 1802 until 1896.
¹² To Wojciechowski, 12 October 1830; op. cit., 207ff.
¹³ To his family, 9 November 1830; *ibid.*, 212.

Warsaw revolution. Wojciechowski returned to Poland to join the uprising; Chopin stayed on alone and found himself in increasing difficulties: 'Above all, it is the events in Warsaw that have worsened my position here, to the same extent that they would have improved it in Paris.'¹⁴ Even the fact that Chopin's teacher included the new piano concerto in some of his concert programmes (and was himself a politically motivated pianist, who had deep hatred) of the Vienna Congress (Chopin himself refused to play on 29 July 1831) was an indication of the city, then called a Moscow of the North, where Chopin arrived. Chopin's first appearance in the French capital received a mixed reception, and he was soon a member of a circle of artists who were known as the 'salon' of the fashionable public. Chopin's first appearance as a pianist in the 'salon' of Franz Schläpinger published in the *Journal des Débats* in the same year, Wessel was the first English edition in 1834.

On 12 December 1834 Chopin appeared in the concert that Hector Berlioz was arranging at the Paris Conservatoire. It may have been the middle movement of Op. 11 that he played:

In conclusion, Monsieur Chopin, a highly gifted composer and a pianist inimitable of his kind, gave a performance of an *Adagio* of his own composition. It is a piece which, when combined with the movements that precede and follow it, must assuredly make the finest impression.¹⁵

A few months later, on 5 April 1835, the E minor concerto received a performance as part of a benefit concert on behalf of Polish refugees; besides Chopin and the conductor François Habeneck, Franz Liszt, the violinist Heinrich

¹⁴ To Józef Elsner, 26/29 January 1831; *ibid.*, 251.
¹⁵ Tomasz Niidecki (1800–52), Polish pianist and composer; pupil of Elsner and student friend of Chopin.
¹⁶ P.R. [= P. Richard?], in *Gazette musicale de Paris*, no. 52, 28 December 1834, 424f.

Editorial Notes

The sources

A¹ The autograph score (not extant), on which Chopin was working between about March and August 1830.

(TA) The Polish musicologist Ferdynand Hoëssick maintains that both of Chopin's piano concertos were orchestrated by Ignacy Feliks Dobrzyński.²⁴ It remains unknown whether a half-autograph (piano part by Chopin, orchestral parts by Dobrzyński) was involved, or merely additions by Dobrzyński to the complete autograph.²⁵ If Hoëssick's conjecture is correct, the identity of (TA) and A¹ cannot be ruled out.

One of these two sources, the orchestral parts of which were written out by Chopin's close friend Józef Linowski,²⁶ with amendments possibly made by Soliva,²⁷ formed the basis for the first performance of the work in Vienna on 2 October 1830.

A:N In Vienna, the concerto was first performed on the 2 October 1830. Eliseyevich's edition of the score, published in 1831, is based on the autograph score, which he had seen in Vienna in 1830. It is possible that he had seen the autograph score in Vienna in 1830, but it is more likely that he had seen it in Leipzig in 1831.

(U) The manuscript was in fact left in Vienna on 20 July 1831, so that Nidaeki probably returned the manuscript of the concerto before this date. The possibility, however, that Chopin prepared a second autograph in Vienna cannot be ruled out.

²⁴ cf. Krystyna Kobylańska, *Frédéric Chopin - Thematisch-bibliographisches Werkverzeichnis* (Munich, 1979), 29

²⁵ loc. cit.

²⁶ cf. Chopin's letter to Wojciechowski, 31 August 1830, (see 1 above), op. cit., 179

²⁷ see 12 above

²⁸ to Elsner, 29 January 1831 (see 14 above); op. cit., 253

A:F In the spring of 1832 – certainly before 17 April – Chopin sent the score of the E minor concerto and other works (Opp. 8, 13, 14 and 21) to the Paris publisher Jacques-Hippolyte-Aristide Faurès; this may have been (A²) or, equally,

A:FS When Maurice Schlesinger published his introduction to the first edition of the concerto, Faurès mentioned the score and its possession by Schlesinger. In his postscript to the first edition of Op. 111 by Schlesinger, published in 1832, Schlesinger's letter to Faurès in 1832, his Leipzig colleague Eliseyevich's letter to Faurès in 1832 is the last certain reference to the score as Chopin's autograph.

(S) The first German edition published the concerto in 1832, on the basis of the autograph score, which was sent to Leipzig on Chopin's autograph. This present edition has made use of:

S The orchestral score (plate number 3050)

Sk The piano arrangement (plate number 1409)

These two sources, however, seriously differ from one another in places.

EA:K The first German edition, by Friedrich Kistner, also appeared in 1833, in Leipzig; it is probable that it too is based on the autograph A:F, sent to Leipzig by Schläsinger. This present edition has made use of:

Kst The (incomplete) parts (plate numbers 1020, 1021 and 1022)

Kk The piano arrangement (plate number 2340)

As with EA: S, Sp and EA: S, Sk, these two sources seriously diverge in places.

EA:W The English first edition, published by Christian Wessel in London in 1834 (plate number 1086), may be based

²⁹ Kobylańska, op. cit., 29

on the autograph, sent to London from either Paris or Leipzig, but may equally have been taken from one of the two first editions of the previous year.

EA:Sp² 'Some of Chopin's pupils collected the printed editions of their teacher's works (mainly copies of the French editions); they served as teaching copies and contained varying quantities of insertions [...], annotations, corrections, fingerings, variants and dedications.'²⁰ One of these copies, corrected in the composer's hand, is contained in volume I of the collection belonging to his pupil Camille Dubois, née O'Méara, who studied with Chopin from about 1844 onwards.

EA:Sp³ Another copy – with the solo part of the middle movement of Op. 10, No. 3 – is included in volume II of the collection belonging to Jane Williams, Kistner, who received her copy from Chopin between about 1840 and 1849.

a:F After Chopin's death, the manuscript of the ceiling Albert Franchomme (a:F) from the first edition of the work was found in the possession of the composer's nephew, the pianist and conductor Karol Mikuli (K:Kst). It is not clear on what basis Franchomme's autograph was used in the EA:Sp or another source.

During the second half of the 19th century and the first years of the 20th, a series of new editions were published. These differ from the previous editions in varying degrees, and include 'improvements' in instrumentation, suggestions for performance of the solo part, and fingerings. The principal of these editions are:

New edition by Carl [Karol] Mikuli: Kistner, Leipzig (plate numbers 5373 and 5374)

²⁰ *ibid.*, XV.

²¹ Facsimile, Paris 1982.

New edition by Karl Klindworth: Bote & Bock, Berlin (plate number 12263)

New edition by Hermann Scholtz: Peters, Leipzig (plate number 6210)

New edition by Claude Debussy-Durand, Paris (plate number 9710)

New edition by Emil von Sauer: Schott, Mainz (plate number 30328)

NA: New edition by the National Academy of Music, New York

B&H: of the three editions published by Bote & Bock, Berlin

NA: This volume (1911) is the basis of the present edition of the work brought out by the National Academy of Music in 1961 as part of the edition of Chopin's works edited by Mikulski.

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Editorial principles

The nature of an autograph makes it impossible to reconstruct a version of the text that can be regarded as an incontestable authority. In addition, the first editions that have been consulted as primary sources for the present edition do not yield identical readings: EA:S is not the same as EA:K, nor, as already mentioned, are Sp and Sk or Kst and Kk. Basically, five sources have been used as the basis of this new edition: Sp, Sk, SVEA:SS, Kst and Kk.

Many of the divergences among these five sources arise from printing defects. This applies particularly to the (relatively large) accent symbol and the (relatively small) *decrescendo* hairpin, which can often scarcely be distinguished from one another.

In some places the arrangement by Albert Franchomme (a:F) and the Polish new edition (NA:IFC) with its detailed editorial commentary were consulted, as secondary and tertiary sources respectively.

VIII

A special problem is presented by phrase-markings, both in the solo part and in the orchestral parts; not uncommonly these yield two or even three different readings from within the five primary sources. Since Sp is the oldest source, and the only one that is certainly based on Chopin's autograph, and since it proved on the basis of textual comparison to be the most reliable, its readings have in general been preferred.

The notation of parallel passages has been treated in parallel fashion in all cases; occasionally parallels could be established only by

means of editorial additions. (Added ties/slurs are shown as lines; added dynamic marks etc. are placed in square brackets.) All fingerings in this edition are Chopin's own: in the middle movement, partly from S⁵. The orchestral part has been taken unaltered from Sp and K¹.

The fundamental aim has been to reconstruct the assumed original form of the work and to comply with Chopin's intentions as they emerge from the sources.

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