



LOUISE FARRENC

COMPLETE WORKS
FOR VIOLIN AND FORTEPIANO

ALEKSANDRA KWIATKOWSKA
historical violin
ANDERS MUSKENS
fortepiano

LOUISE FARRENC (1804–1875)

COMPLETE WORKS FOR VIOLIN AND FORTEPIANO

VIOLIN SONATA IN C MINOR, NO. 1, OP. 37 (1848)

- 1 I. Largo–Allegro
- 2 II. Poco adagio
- 3 III. Finale. Allegro vivace

VIOLIN SONATA IN A MAJOR, NO. 2, OP. 39 (1850)

- 4 I. Allegro grazioso
- 5 II. Scherzo. Allegro
- 6 III. Adagio
- 7 IV. Finale. Allegro

VARIATIONS CONCERTANTES SUR UNE MÉLODIE SUISSE, OP. 20

- 8 Introduzione. Andante maestoso – Tema. Andante – Variation I. Più mosso – Variation II – Variation III. Brillante – Variation IV. Andante sostenuto – Finale. Vivace

Aleksandra Kwiatkowska: historical violin
Anders Muskens: fortepiano
Jakub Klimeš: producer, audio engineering

Recorded in October 2022 in the context of the 2022 Artist-in-Residence Programme for strings and fortepiano, this album was produced with the generous support of the Schloss Weißenbrunn Foundation, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Adriana Jacoba Fonds, and the Geelvinck Muziek Musea. Cover design includes assets designed by Hello-Pixel / Freepik.

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Aleksandra Kwiatkowska, *historical violin*; Anders Muskens, *fortepiano*

Rehearsal in Nikomedeskirche, Tübingen



M^{me} Louise Farrenc.

LOUISE FARRENC: WOMEN, FEMINIST, PIANIST, COMPOSER, PEDAGOGUE, SCHOLAR

Louise Farrenc (1804–1875) was a French composer, virtuoso pianist, pedagogue, and music scholar. Born in Paris, she showed promise as a pianist and composer from a young age, studying with one of Muzio Clementi's pupils, Anne Elisabeth Cécile Soria. At the age of 15, she began composition studies with Anton Reicha, the composition teacher at the Paris Conservatoire, and a proponent of Viennese Classicism. Further piano virtuoso training was imparted through occasional lessons with Johann Nepomuk Hummel and Ignaz Moscheles. In 1821, Louise married the prominent music publisher, Aristide Farrenc (1794–1865), and it was through his firm that she later published many works. Aside from a tour to England in 1832, she ultimately spent the majority of her career in Paris, frequently performing publicly throughout the 1830's.

Farrenc's compositions mostly focused around her instrument: the pianoforte, as solos or in chamber music combinations. Her first published works appeared between 1825–39, including the "Variations concertantes sur une mélodie Suisse," Op. 20. These compositions received high praise from Farrenc's contemporaries, including Robert Schumann. Soon, Farrenc also began to compose more ambitious orchestral pieces, including 3 symphonies, 2 concert overtures, and piano variations with orchestral accompaniment. The two violin sonatas Op. 37 and 39, presented on this album, were composed during a highly creative period between 1848–58 alongside many other chamber works, including the famous "Nonet" Op. 38, which was premiered by famous violinist Joseph Joachim. For her great contributions to the chamber music genre, she was twice awarded the "Prix-Chartier" by the Académie des Beaux-Arts in both 1861 and 1869.

In 1842, Farrenc was appointed professor of piano at the Paris Conservatoire: a position she occupied until her retirement in 1873. She was notably the only woman to hold a permanent chair at this institution throughout the entire nineteenth century. Unfortunately, she was paid less than her male colleagues for nearly a decade. However, after the successful premiere of her "Nonet" and the associated acclaim her works received, her demands for equal pay were finally met. Her students were a testament to the excellence of her teaching, and went on to have prestigious careers and win many competitions. Included amongst her famous students was her daughter, Victorine.

In 1861, Louise began a new project alongside her husband Aristide: *Le trésor des pianistes*. According to Oxford Music, this was "a comprehensive anthology of harpsichord and piano music from a repertory encompassing 300 years." It was periodically issued during 1861–1874, and in total, consisted of 23 volumes. After Aristide's death in 1865, she continued working on the publication of an additional 15 volumes up until her own death in 1875. Louise was sure to always furnish her students with a foundation in earlier epochs of music-making – a spirit carried into her work on *Le trésor*, whereby masterworks of the past which otherwise had fallen into obscurity were edited and republished for wider appreciation. Through *Le trésor*, Farrenc became one of the first "early music pioneers," as evidenced by her attention to discovering past performance practices and negotiating them with the instruments (that being the mid nineteenth-century piano, as harpsichords had by then fallen out of favour) and stylistic practices of her day. This is evidenced by the introduction she wrote in her posthumous *Traité des abréviations* (1895).

However, after Louise Farrenc's death in 1875, her contributions to classical music were quickly forgotten until recently. Her distinguished excellence and incredible career definitely deserves a return to the spotlight nowadays, and can prove inspiring to women who still face inequality of opportunity in today's society. Farrenc is one of many female composers in classical music history, who played an important role in its development, and she deserves to be recognized and her music heard once more today.



Above: Recording setup at Schloss Weißenbrunn, October 12, 2022

LOUISE FARRENC'S WORKS FOR VIOLIN AND PIANOFORTE

This album presents Farrenc's complete works for violin and pianoforte for the first time recorded on period instruments: a Georg Klotz violin c. 1796 loaned from the Dutch Nationaal Muziekinstrumenten Fonds, and a fortepiano by Joseph Johann Brodmann, built in Vienna c. 1827, from the Schloss Weißenbrunn Foundation collection. The violinist: Aleksandra Kwiatkowska and the fortepianist Anders Muskens in their historically informed approach attempted to adopt and integrate performance practices from Farrenc's time, to more faithfully render her intentions. Through the use of period instruments rather than modern ones, the musicians explored different colours and shades in sound, due in part to the gut strings on violin and the more direct sound of the Viennese mechanic. Experiments with rhythmical flexibility, tempo rubato, the artful use of portamento, and controlled vibrato all contributed to a historically-inspired, expressively-free, sentimental, stylistic approach to mid-nineteenth-century Romantic music. Recorded in October 2022 in the context of the 2022 Artist-in-Residence Programme for strings and fortepiano, this album was produced with the generous support of the Schloss Weißenbrunn Foundation, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Adriana Jacoba Fonds, and the Geelvinck Muziek Musea.

The "Variations concertantes sur une mélodie Suisse," Op. 20, were likely composed in the early part of the 1830's, and was one of Farrenc's first chamber works. Before this, she had focused primarily on works for solo piano.

Following a model common at the time, Farrenc based her virtuosic variation set on a rather operatic song, said to be Swiss-inspired but not currently identified with any known melody. It is possible the tune may be of the composer's invention, as her husband Aristide had access to many collections of folk song materials from which she may have been inspired. The influence of Farrenc's former teacher, Hummel is clearly felt in many of the virtuosic piano passages.

This spirit of Farrenc's work on *Le trésor des pianistes* is certainly felt in her violin sonatas, which show an affinity for well established models of the past rather than the new-fangled trends of her immediate pianist and composer contemporaries. Consequently, the two violin sonatas Op. 37 and 39 closely follow stylistic and structural models set forth by Viennese classicists like Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Hummel, and Schubert, in addition to their German Romantic successors like Mendelssohn and Schumann, rather than taking stylistic elements from her immediate contemporaries in Paris like Chopin.

The sonata in c-minor, Op. 37, published in 1848, has many shades of Schumann and Beethoven, beginning in the tragic mode, full of long, sorrowful melodies and stormy outbursts. The beautiful, tender adagio that follows will remind listeners of Beethoven's Sonata Pathétique, including an agitated episode in a-flat minor. The final rondo, in a spirited tempo, evokes the mischievous wittiness found in many of Beethoven's c-minor rondos, and is full of humour, charm, and unexpected turns of phrase. Théophile Gautier wrote admiringly of this sonata in 1848: 'an excellent addition to her catalogue of works,

and written, like most of them, in an austere classical style reminiscent of the great masters.' The sonata was performed by Farrenc herself and violinist Joseph Joachim at a concert on March 19, 1850 the Salons Érard in Paris, in addition to the famous "Nonet," Op. 38.

Farrenc's sonata in A-major, Op. 39, published in 1850, is markedly different from the former. The work brings lightness, elegance, and *sprezzatura*, which contrasts the tragic heaviness of the c-minor sonata; yet, the compositional structure again remains true to the forms of the Viennese classicists. The first movement, beginning with a very Mozartean theme, revels in a blissful innocence and charm in a constant duet between the piano and violin. The second movement is a delightful Scherzo, again full of humour and sneaky harmonic twists. The Adagio which follows begins with a simple yet emotionally-moving theme, which develops in beautiful cantabile. Long operatic lines are set against lush textures, with an earnest sweetness and tenderness throughout. The Finale—another rondo—concludes the sonata with eloquent grace and charm, full of playful, florid flourishes and passagework.

Sources: Oxford Music; MUGi (Musik und Gender im Internet); Florian Noetzel Verlag, and Clemency Burton-Hill: "The women who changed music", BBC.



Above: the musicians and producer at Schloss Weißenbrunn



Anders Muskens is a Canadian early keyboard specialist, music scholar, and ensemble director, active as an international artist in North America and Europe. He began piano studies at the age of 4 in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada and completed an Associate Diploma (ARCT) in modern piano from the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto under the tutelage of Dr. Irina Konovalov. With support from the Edmonton Community Foundation and the Adriana Jacoba Fonds, he completed a Masters in Fortepiano at the Royal Conservatoire of The Hague under Dr. Bart van Oort and Petra Somlai, with Fabio Bonizzoni and Patrick Ayrton for harpsichord. He is currently a doctoral candidate in musicology at the Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Matthew Gardner, Prof. Dr. Thomas Schipperges, and Dr. Jed Wentz, where he is researching the connection between rhetorical acting and music in the period 1740–1830. He has performed regularly at the Utrecht Early Music Festival, and has given performances at the Schwetzingen SWR Festspiele, Het Concertgebouw Amsterdam, the National Music Centre, the London International Festival of Early Music, the Salle Bourgie in Montreal, and many more. Muskens is the founder of the ensemble Das Neue Mannheimer Orchester: an international initiative to revive the music of the Mannheim School in the second half of the eighteenth century.



Aleksandra Kwiatkowska is a Polish violinist based in the Netherlands. In 2021, she graduated with a Masters in Baroque Violin with distinction under the direction of Kati Debretzeni and Walter Reiter from the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague. In 2015, she graduated from her studies in modern violin from the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Warsaw under the direction of Julia Jakimowicz-Jakowicz, Jakub Jakowicz and Magdalena Szczepanowska. As a violin soloist and chamber musician, she has participated in a variety of concerts and festivals across Europe, Indonesia and the USA. Among these ensembles include the 'Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century,' 'Il Gardellino,' the 'Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment Academy,' 'Opera2Day,' 'New Dutch Academy,' 'Collegium Vocale Academy,' and 'Das Neue Mannheimer Orchester.' In 2020, she performed as a soloist in Schinttke's 'Moz-art à la Haydn' concerto, alongside members of the 'Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century' and students of the Royal Conservatoire of The Hague. In March 2022, Aleksandra released her first solo album of Ivan Khandoshkin Violin Solo Sonatas Op. 3 under the Etcetera label. From January 2022, Aleksandra has been playing on a Georg Klotz violin built in 1796 with a baroque bow by Luis Emilio courtesy of the Nationaal Muziekinstrumenten Fonds in the Netherlands.