

manuscripts he had withheld from publication. Always painstaking in the process of composition and hypercritical of his own works, he was afraid some work might survive him that would be less than his best. Fortunately for posterity, there were some Chopin manuscripts that did not go up in smoke in their creator's fireplace, among them the *Nocturne in C-sharp Minor*.

The *Ballades* are Chopin's largest single-movement works, presenting a series of contrasting moods, much as would a good storyteller. *Ballade No. 3* has as its inspiration the story of the water sprite Ondine, sister to the Lorelei, who leaves her home among the immortals at the bottom of a lake to live with a mortal with whom she has fallen in love. Chopin uses a contrast of range in the first theme to suggest the feminine and masculine qualities of the sprite and her lover, and a descending chromatic scale to suggest her act of revenge for his having betrayed her (She lures him into the lake and he drowns.) But Chopin allows tranquility, rather than tragedy, to have the last word, perhaps suggesting the return of quiet waters after the tumult.

Chopin's *Sonata in B-flat Minor* presents a full range of musical emotion, from the passion of the first movement and the beginning of the *Scherzo* to the grief of the famous funeral march that is its third movement. Tenderness is sublimely expressed in the trio of that march, while the final movement, a *Presto*, can be seen as an expression of the numbing of all feeling. Here the composer has virtually eschewed all harmony, allowing the two hands to proceed in octaves much of the time. Chopin said about this movement: "The two hands chatter together in unison."

*The Steinway concert grand piano is a gift from  
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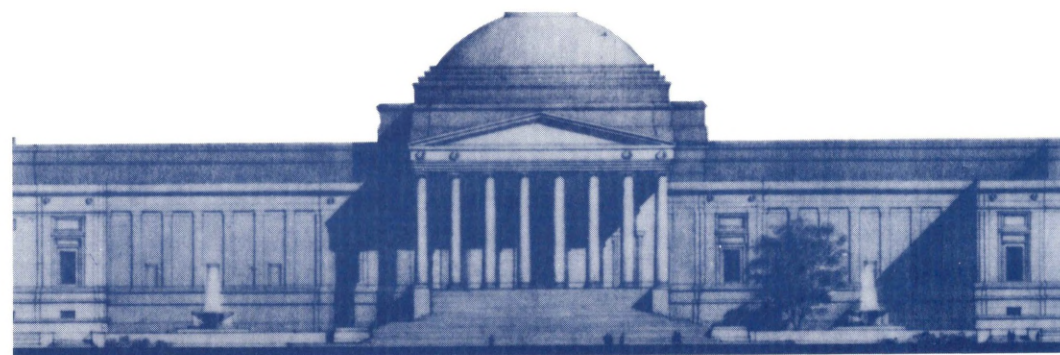
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