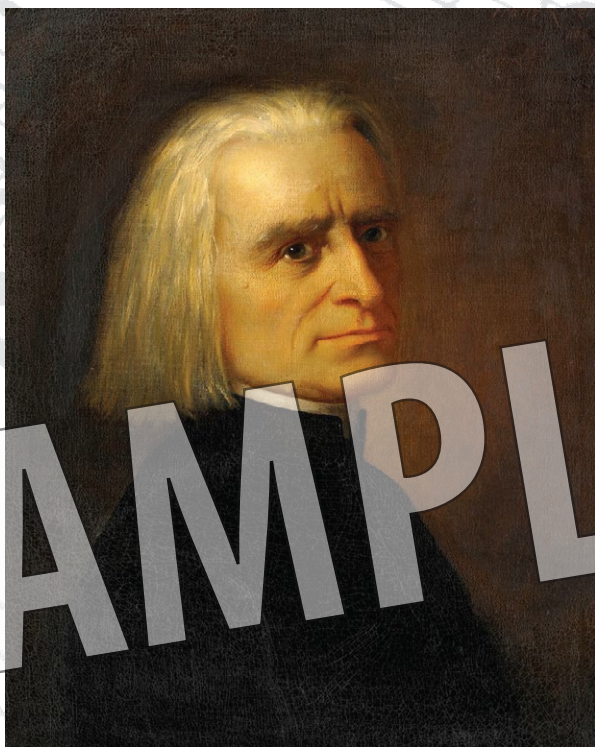


Simply Charlotte Mason presents

Music Study With the Masters



liszt

*“Let the young people hear good music as often as possible,
... let them study occasionally the works of a single great master
until they have received some of his teaching, and know his style.”*

—Charlotte Mason

With **Music Study with the Masters** you have everything you need to teach music appreciation successfully. Just a few minutes once a week and the simple guidance in this book will influence and enrich your children more than you can imagine.

In this book you will find

- Step-by-step instructions for doing music study with the included audio recordings.
- Listen and Learn ideas that will add to your understanding of the music.
- A Day in the Life biography of the composer that the whole family will enjoy.
- An additional longer biography for older students to read on their own.
- Extra recommended books, DVDs, and CDs that you can use to learn more about the composer and his works.

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Franz Liszt
(1811—1886)

by Emily Lin and Sonya Shafer

Music Study with the Masters: Franz Liszt
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Cover Design: John Shafer

ISBN 978-1-61634-445-0 printed
ISBN 978-1-61634-446-7 electronic download

Published by
Simply Charlotte Mason, LLC
930 New Hope Road #11-892
Lawrenceville, Georgia 30045
simplycharlottesmason.com

Printed by PrintLogic, Inc.
Monroe, Georgia, USA

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Charlotte Mason on Music Study

“Let the young people hear good music as often as possible, and that *under instruction*. It is a pity we like our music, as our pictures and our poetry, mixed, so that there are few opportunities of going through, as a listener, a course of the works of a single composer. But this is to be aimed at for the young people; let them study occasionally the works of a single great master until they have received some of his teaching, and know his style” (*Formation of Character*, p. 235).

How to Use Music Study with the Masters

1. Play the music recordings often and mention the composer's name when you do. You can play them as background music during a meal, while running errands in the car, at nap time or bedtime, or while the students work on some handwork. (Try not to keep them playing all day or during noisy times when other sounds or conversation would distract.) Encourage students to describe what the various pieces make them think of, to “draw the music” with art, or to move to the music. Allow them to form their own relations with it.
2. Read the *A Day in the Life* biography to the students and ask them to narrate. Enter this composer in your Book of Centuries. You can assign the *The Story of* . . . expanded biography to older students for independent reading during the weeks you linger with this composer. Other *For Further Study* resources are listed if you would like to learn more.
3. Once every week or so, give focused listening to a particular piece. Use the Listen and Learn ideas in the back of this book to guide your listening and discussion.

As opportunity presents itself, go to a concert that features the music of this composer so students can listen to a live performance.

A Day in the Life of Liszt

from *The Private Life of the Great Composers*
by John Frederick Rowbotham, edited by Sonya Shafer

Liszt was not an early riser. His evenings were too entirely devoted to the brilliant life of salons and concert rooms for him to make a practice of getting up very soon in the morning. When he was a young man, living in Paris, his friends were accustomed to gather in his rooms at midday. On these occasions he would generally be in bed, and his visitors would sit about the apartment and chat with him in that recumbent position. As he lay back on the pillows, he as often as not had a silent keyboard lying across the bedclothes; and his fingers would incessantly travel over its keys while he talked and jested with those around him, exercising but making no sound. In this way he could combine necessary technical practice with the pleasure of friendly company and, besides, have a whole day before him unbroken by any need to exercise at the piano.

Whether such a plan of practicing would be sufficient for most players seems doubtful, but for Liszt it answered all requirements. At that time his fingers were so supple and strong that he could touch a key so softly as to elicit a sound as if the string were being breathed upon; and the next moment he could strike it so hard as to break the wire.

When living at Weimar—which may be taken as a typical period in his life—he inhabited a beautiful house in the park, which the Grand Duke had presented to him. Here he lived in very elegant style and free of all expense. The place was originally furnished and put in order by the Grand Duchess herself. The walls of his study were pale gray, with a gilded border running round the room, or rather two rooms, for the study was separated into two distinct chambers by crimson curtains. The furniture was crimson, and a splendid grand piano stood in front of one window; the sash of this window

was nearly always wide open, and looked on the park.

To have to sit and play at an open window in all weather was a penance which many a pupil of Liszt had to undergo. Still, there was no arguing with him, or else he might refuse to give the lesson. Liszt was a man who acted entirely on impulse, and it was extremely necessary to keep him in good humor. Just opposite this historic window used to be a dovecote. The doves kept up a frequent flutter in front of the open sash, and sometimes would come and settle on the sill itself.

The writing table in the room was beautifully fitted up with things that all matched. Everything was in bronze—inkstand, paperweight, matchbox, etc.—and there was always a lighted candle standing on it by which Liszt might light his cigars at any moment without troubling to strike a match.

Such is the room in which Liszt gives his lessons, and he enters it on the morning in question. He looks as if he has only just risen, his grooming being somewhat negligent, and he carries in his mouth a large cigar. There are half-a-dozen ladies in the room, waiting for their lessons. These pupils he allows himself to treat somewhat cavalierly, since he does not receive any fees from them. Sometimes he sends them all away, declaring that he is not in the mood for giving a lesson that day. At other times he will give a lesson to one only, and the remainder of the pupils, after waiting an hour or two in hopes of their turn coming, have to depart without any lesson, to their great mortification. As a rule, however, he does not let his impulses extend so far as that.

Liszt's focus in these lessons is quite remarkable. He scarcely ever troubled himself to give advice concerning the technical aspects of a performance. No, what he looked for, and endeavored to inspire in his pupils as the main consideration, was the general effect of the performance. The young ladies have each brought their piece of music (Liszt will never suffer a piece to be brought twice.), and the various compositions are laid reverently on the piano, awaiting the master's perusal.

He enters, smoking his cigar, and taking up the pieces, he

The Story of Liszt

from *The World's Great Men of Music: Story-Lives of Master Musicians*
by Harriette Brower, edited by Sonya Shafer

Part 1: "I want to be such a musician as [Beethoven]."—Liszt

Franz Liszt, in his day the king of pianists, a composer whose compositions still glow and burn with the fire he breathed into them; Liszt the diplomat, courtier, man of the world—always a conqueror! How difficult to tell, in a few pages, the story of a life so complex and absorbing!

A storm outside: but all was warmth and simple comfort in the large sitting-room of a steward's cottage belonging to the small estate of Raiding, in Hungary.

It was evening and father Liszt, after the labors of the day were over, could call these precious hours his own. He was now at the old piano, for with him music was a passion. He used all his leisure time for study and had some knowledge of most instruments. He had taught himself the piano, indeed under the circumstances had become quite proficient on it. Tonight he was playing something of Haydn, for he greatly venerated that master. Adam Liszt made a striking figure as he sat there, his fine head, with its mass of light hair, thrown back, his stern features softened by the music he was making.

At a table nearby sat his wife, her dark head with its glossy braids bent over her sewing. Hers was a sweet, kindly face, and she endeared herself to everyone by her simple, unassuming manners.

Quite near the old piano stood little Franz, not yet six. He was absolutely absorbed in the music. The fair curls fell about his childish face and his deep blue eyes were raised to his father, as though the latter were some sort of magician, creating all this beauty.

Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C-Sharp Minor, S. 244/2

(Disc 2, Track 5; approx. 11 minutes)

As Liszt was coming into his own as a musician, so was the instrument he played on. The grand piano as we know it was being developed around the time Liszt was born. Before that, the early pianos had clumsier *action* (the way the keys move levers to strike strings inside) and were made with a lighter wooden frame. In the early 1800s, a new style of piano—with a more precise lever action, an extended range of high and low notes, and a sturdy metal frame—changed piano music forever. Liszt was the first composer to take full advantage of this stronger, more agile modern instrument.

Liszt was also the first person to turn the piano sideways on the stage. Until then, the performer was either facing the audience, looking over the piano, or turned so the player's back was to the audience, allowing them to see the keyboard. But Liszt wanted concert-goers to see both his face and his hands, so he turned the piano sideways, showing off his dramatic profile. He was a great showman, who wore a cape and gloves for his concerts. He would stride onto the stage, cape billowing behind him; toss his gloves on the floor under the piano (to be snatched up later by adoring fans as a souvenir); flip his long, flowing hair over his shoulder; and then the real show would begin

Hungarian Rhapsody Number 2 was inspired by a traditional Hungarian folk dance called a *czardas*, something that young Liszt would have learned growing up in Hungary. A *czardas* begins with a slow, serious section called a *lassan*, followed by a lively section called the *friska*, which builds in excitement and speed until a grand finish. The *czardas* is not a delicate, refined dance for the royal court. Rather, it is a dramatic, exciting country dance, filled with energy and feeling, that uses strutting,

stomping, skipping, crouching, leaping, kicking, whirling, and clapping.

Imagine being in the audience while Liszt performed this piece. The notes leap, stomp, whirl, and fly, and you can picture Liszt's hands dancing a thrilling *czardas* up and down the keyboard, performing technical acrobatics and grand theatrics, the likes of which nobody had ever seen, and truly were not even possible before. This is one of Liszt's most famous pieces because it so perfectly captures the heritage, skill, and character of this pioneer of the modern piano.

As you listen to this piece, try to imagine the type of dancing that would go along with it. If you like, get up and dance along, using some of the ideas listed above for dance moves.

Music Study with the Masters: Liszt

Track Listing

Disc 1

Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-Flat Major, S. 124 (17:49)

1. Allegro maestoso (5:08)
2. Quasi adagio (4:33)
3. Allegretto vivace (4:11)
4. Allegro marziale animato (3:57)

5. Les préludes, S. 97 (16:16)
6. Les préludes, S. 637 (Version for Piano Duo) (14:46)
7. Prelude & Fugue on the Name BACH, S. 260 (13:15)

Disc 2

1. 50 Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli: Theme (0:55)
2. 50 Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli: Variation 24 (0:36)
3. Grandes études de Paganini, S. 141: No. 3 in G-Sharp Minor “La campanella” (4:46)
4. Liebestraume, S. 541: No. 3. Nocturne in A-Flat Major (4:22)
5. 19 Hungarian Rhapsodies, S. 244: No. 2 in C-Sharp Minor (10:39)
6. Der Tanz in der Dorfschenke, S. 110, “Mephisto Waltz No. 1” (11:15)
7. Die Trauergondel (La lugubre gondola), S. 134 [version for cello and piano] (8:11)
8. Annees de pelerinage, 3rd year S. 163: No. 4 Les jeux d’eau a la Villa d’Este (The Fountains of the Villa d’Este) (6:58)
9. Grand galop chromatique, S. 219bis (2:14)
10. Bagatelle sans tonalite, S. 216a (3:38)
11. Romance oubliee, S. 132 (3:49)
12. Christus, S. 3: II: Post Epiphaniam. Pater noster (Chorus) (7:53)