

## **1. Schumann - Allegro in B Minor, Op. 8**

Robert Schumann's Allegro in B Minor, Op.8 is an elegant and emotionally charged piano composition. This masterpiece was composed in 1832 and represents one of Schumann's early works. The sonata is divided into three sections: Allegro, Adagio, and Finale.

It commences in a mournful B minor, conveying profound emotions and introspection. As the music unfolds, we encounter passionate and dynamically changing melodies and harmonies. The Adagio section brings a sense of tranquility and introspection, infused with strong romantic sentiments. Finally, the Finale bursts forth with vigorous rhythms and intense music, culminating in a magnificent conclusion.

One notable feature of this piece is the transition from the somber B minor beginning to the beautiful and vibrant B major ending. The sonata offers a glimpse into Schumann's inner world, filled with emotional depth and musical tension. Through its enchanting melodies and rich harmonies, this sonata stands as a remarkable representative of romantic music, cherished by piano enthusiasts and musicians alike.

## **2. Nikolai Medtner - 6 Skazki (Tales), Op. 51**

**No.1** - Allegro molto vivace al rigore di tempo e sempre leggierissimo

**No.3** - Allegretto tranquillo e grazioso

**Nikolai Medtner - 6 Skazki (Tales), Op. 51** is a collection of music fairy tales composed in 1928, and this piece was created by Medtner when he was living in France after leaving Russia.

No.1 marked "Allegro molto vivace al rigore de tempo e sempre leggierissimo," opens this musical fairy tale in a unique way. This piece is in D minor and is dedicated to Cinderella and the young Ivan the Fool. Medtner uses many music ideas and themes that pay homage to Russian folk traditions and repeatedly emphasizes the same musical motif. This story has charming characteristics with a sense of urgency. In terms of form, it can be considered a sonata-allegro, as it features two contrasting themes in related keys, tonal fluctuation in the development section, and a return to the main key in the recapitulation.

No.3 sounds elegant and moving, possibly related to the character Cinderella. This story is designed with a contrasting Russian folk melody as the main theme, presenting a colorful musical imagery through the interweaving of various themes. Medtner excels at using narrative styles from folk songs, folk legends, and short stories in his piano compositions.

### **3. Maurice Ravel - La Valse**

(choreographic poem for orchestra, piano transcription by the composer)

"La Valse" by Maurice Ravel is a symphonic poem originally composed for orchestra, later adapted into a piano transcription by the composer himself. Ravel conceived the idea for "La Valse" in 1906, intending to pay tribute to the Viennese waltzes of Johann Strauss II by naming it "Wien," the German name for Vienna. Years later, Ravel's student, Manuel Rosenthal, recalled that Ravel believed that "all composers truly desired to succeed in writing an excellent waltz." He stated, "Unfortunately, it's very difficult. Therefore, I have attempted to compose a symphonic waltz as a tribute to the genius of Johann Strauss." However, Ravel didn't begin serious work on the piece until 1919 when he received a commission from Sergei Diaghilev to create a new score for the Ballets Russes. The period between the initial idea and completion of the work was marked by the upheaval of World War I. Despite his exemption from military service due to health reasons, Ravel served as an ambulance driver during the war and also faced the tragic death of his mother while he was at the front.

This composition is filled with beautiful melodies, abundant vitality, and intricate harmonies and rhythms, capturing the power and emotions of a magnificent Viennese ballroom dance. In the second part of the piece, the themes introduced in the first part reappear but are fragmented and recombined, creating increasingly frenzied music. The wild dance repeatedly approaches a climax and then retreats, finally building to an exhilarating conclusion.