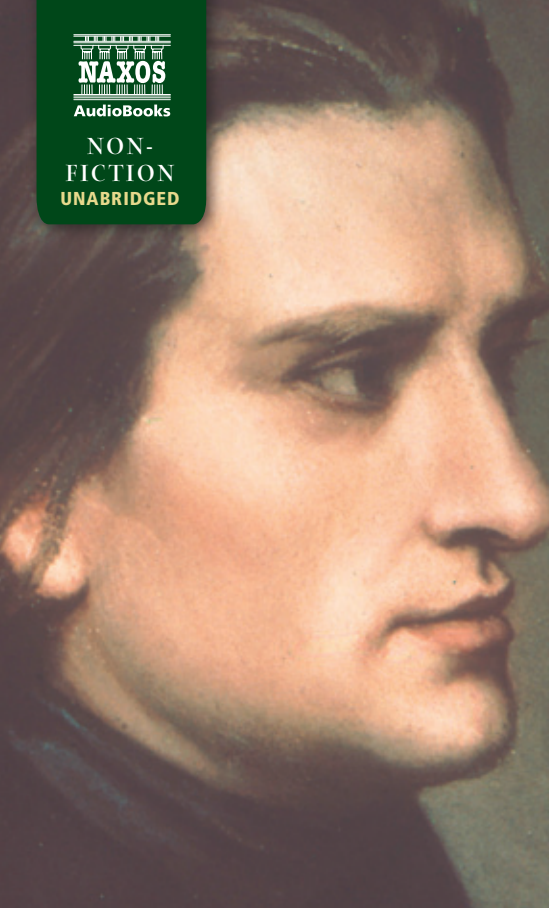




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NON-
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The Life
and
Works of
**Franz
Liszt**

Written and read by
Jeremy Siepmann

with
Neville Jason
as Liszt

With substantial
music
extracts

1	Childhood and Youth	9:26
2	La Campanella Jenő Jandó, piano	4:46 Naxos 8.550510
3	Enter the Countess Marie d'Agoult	3:25
4	Au Lac du Wallenstadt Jenő Jandó, piano	2:43 Naxos 8.550548
5	Rivalry with Thalberg	6:34
6	Schubert, arr. Liszt: Die Forelle (The Trout) Peter Nagy, piano	4:31 Naxos 8.550217
7	Travels in Italy Dante Sonata Jenő Jandó, piano	6:55 Naxos 8.550549
8	Patriot and Hero: Liszt returns to Hungary	10:04
9	Transcendental Étude No. 2 in A minor 'Fusées' Jenő Jandó, piano	2:25 Naxos 8.553119
10	Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6 in D major, 'Pesther Carneval' Hungarian State Symphony Orchestra; Mátyás Antál, conductor	12:28 Naxos 8.550142
11	The End of the Affair: break-up with Marie	10:54
12	Consolation No. 3 in D flat, 'Lento placido' Philip Thomson, piano	3:22 Naxos 8.553516

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| 13 | Lisztomania
Transcendental Study No. 8 in C minor, 'Wilde Jagd'
Jenő Jandó, piano | 6:53
Naxos 8.553119 |
| 14 | The Virtuoso Retires | 4:38 |
| 15 | Berlioz, arr. Liszt: Un bal (Symphonie fantastique)
Idil Biret, piano | 6:28
Naxos 8.550725 |
| 16 | Weimar and the Princess
Symphonic poem: Prometheus
Polish NRSO; Michael Halász, conductor | 11:03
Naxos 8.550487 |
| 17 | Liszt and Wagner
Sonata in B minor
Jenő Jandó, piano | 13:03
Naxos 8.550510 |
| 18 | Exit from Weimar
Symphonic poem: From the Cradle to the Grave
New Zealand Symphony Orchestra; Michael Halász, conductor | 9:47
Naxos 8.553355 |
| 19 | The Abbé Liszt | 4:02 |
| 20 | Ave Maria
Antonella Balducci, soprano; Paolo Crivellaro, organ; Radio Svizzera Choir,
Lugano; Diego Fasolis, conductor | 4:01
Naxos 8.553786 |
| 21 | The Final Period | 12:15 |
| 22 | Unstern! Sinistre, disastro
Arnaldo Cohen, piano | 5:59
Naxos 8.553852 |

Total time: 2:35:52

Jeremy Siepmann

The Life and Works of

Franz Liszt

(1811–1886)

'I consider Liszt the greatest man I have ever met. By this I mean that I have never met, in any other walk of life, a man of such mental grasp, splendid disposition and glorious genius. I have met many, many great men, rulers, jurists, authors, scientists, teachers, merchants and warriors, but never have I met a man, in any position, whom I have not thought would have proved the inferior of Franz Liszt, had Liszt chosen to follow the career of the man in question. Liszt's personality can only be expressed by one word, "colossal".'

– Alfred Reisenauer (1863–1907), Pianist, composer and pupil of Liszt

In many ways, Liszt was the ultimate Romantic. By comparison, even Schumann seems conservative today, and Chopin, while writing, like Schumann, extraordinarily Romantic music, felt himself out of sympathy with almost every aspect of the Romantic movement (the only two composers he loved unreservedly being Mozart and Bach). What they all had in common was the time in which they lived.

At the time of Liszt's birth, the world was changing rapidly, and not only in Europe. The United States was growing fast, the British Empire was expanding eastwards and into the Indian subcontinent, the Industrial Revolution, born in the England of the 1780s, was transforming society at a rate without precedent. As machinery increasingly helped to subjugate the earth, as men

acquired powers hitherto regarded as the province of the Almighty, religion itself began to be called into question. With the advent of the Machine Age came increased prosperity. With increased prosperity came an increasing population. Parallel to the Industrial Revolution was a new, commercial revolution. Trade between Europe and Africa, Asia and the Americas expanded dramatically. Communications spiralled outwards and upwards, new roads, the growth of railways, the invention of telegraphy, all introduced a new variety into everyday life, particularly in Europe, the epicentre of commercial expansion. In every corner of the world mankind was in the ascendant. The clear-cut stratifications of 18th-century European society, well-suited to the prevailing logic and principled objectivity of the Enlightenment, with its reverence for design and order, were increasingly supplanted by a new fluidity. Social control was passing inexorably from a long-dominant aristocracy to a rapidly increasing and prosperous middle class. And as music had been an adornment of the ruling

classes, so it now became cultivated as a symbol of genteel prosperity by the inexorably rising bourgeoisie. Decreasingly the emblem of a controlling power, it became a potent source of individual expression. As the 19th century advanced, so the cult of the hero gained ground. The Romantic ego became colossal. As humanity increasingly usurped the prerogatives of God, the concept of the one against the many emboldened the previously oppressed. A natural by-product of this was a surge of nationalism which rocked the world through most of the 19th century. Subject nations threw off their shackles, or suffered grievously in the attempt, hence the wave of political revolutions prevailing in Europe at the time of Liszt's birth and through most of his life.

Music in the Classical era, that is to say most of the 18th century and the early part of the 19th, was based on preconceived notions of order, proportion and grace. Beauty and symmetry of form were objects of worship in themselves and combined to create a Utopian image, an idealisation of universal experience. In the

Romantic Age, which lasted from the death of Beethoven to the outbreak of the First World War, this was largely replaced by a cult of individual expression, the crystalization of the experience of the moment, the unfettered confession of powerful emotions and primal urges, the glorification of sensuality, a flirtation with the supernatural, an emphasis on spontaneity and improvisation, and the cultivation of extremes – emotional, sensual, spiritual and structural. Where a near-reverence for symmetry had characterized the classical era, Romanticism delighted in asymmetry. And if there was a rebellion against the tenets of the recent past, there was an almost ritualized nostalgia for the distant past and in many cases an obsession with literature and descriptive imagery. Form was no longer seen as a receptacle but as a by-product of emotion, to be generated from within. While the great Romantic painters covered their canvases with grandiose landscapes, lavish depictions of atmospheric ruins, historical scenes, portraits of legendary heroes and so on, the great Romantic composers, Liszt,

Berlioz and Wagner most of all, attempted similar representations – in sound, but not by sound alone. Notes, rhythms, tone colours and melodic fragments were consciously related to specific ideas, to characters and their development. Music took on an illustrative function to a degree never previously attempted. In its cultivation and transformations of folk music (or that which was mistakenly perceived as folk music), it became an agent of the nationalism that fired the souls not only of Wagner and Liszt, but of Chopin, Glinka, Mussorgsky, Borodin, Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov, Verdi, Grieg, Brahms, Richard Strauss, Smetana, Dvorak, Albeniz, Granados, Falla, Saint-Saëns, Debussy, Bartok, Vaughan Williams, Sibelius, Charles Ives, George Gershwin, Aaron Copland – all of whom can be considered as Romantics, irrespective of their dates. In the music dramas of Wagner, all arts become part of a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

A further feature of the Romantic imagination was a taste for extravagance. Grand opera, particularly in Paris, anticipated the Biblical spectaculars of

Hollywood in its heyday, and many of Liszt's more flamboyant operatic 'paraphrases' honoured it in kind. In the symphonic works of Berlioz, Strauss, Mahler, Bruckner and the pre-revolutionary Schoenberg, orchestras assumed gargantuan proportions, while the 19th-century oratorio tradition in England and Germany resulted in choruses not only of hundreds (300 was commonplace) but even of thousands. At a concert in Boston, Massachusetts in 1872, Johann Strauss the Younger conducted an orchestra of 2,000 and a chorus ten times that size (presumably equipped with telescopes). Nor was the humble piano excluded from such excesses. The French composer-pianist Henri Herz was a pioneer of the multipiano jamboree, but was outclassed by the American Louis Moreau Gottschalk, who mounted in Havana, Cuba, a concert featuring no fewer than 40 pianos. This, then, was the world in which Liszt flourished (though he stood apart from the cult of musical elephantiasis), and in which he ultimately failed, writing beyond the understanding of all but a few of his

contemporaries. In his final phase as a composer he was quite consciously writing for generations yet unborn.

Notes by Jeremy Siepmann



Formerly Head of Music at the BBC World Service, **Jeremy Siepmann** is an internationally known musician, teacher, broadcaster and author. His pupils include pianists of worldwide repute, his programmes for the BBC number more than a thousand (among them the international award-winning *Elements of Music*) and his books include biographies of Brahms and Chopin and two volumes on the history and repertoire of the piano. He is the author and presenter of two major series for Naxos: *Classics Explained* and *Life and Works of the Great Composers*, as well as the one-volume *Instruments of the Orchestra*.

Cast

Jeremy Siepmann Narrator • **Neville Jason** Liszt

Other parts read by **David Timson** • **Elaine Claxton**
Laura Paton • **Raphael Clarkson**



Neville Jason trained at RADA where he was awarded the Diction Prize by Sir John Gielgud. For Naxos AudioBooks he has read *War and Peace*, *The Life and Works of Marcel Proust*, *Remembrance of Things Past*, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* and *The Once and Future King*.



David Timson has made over 1,000 broadcasts for BBC Radio Drama. For Naxos AudioBooks he wrote *The History of the Theatre*, which won an award for most original production from the Spoken Word Publishers Association in 2001. He has also directed for Naxos AudioBooks four Shakespeare plays, including *King Richard III* (with Kenneth Branagh), which won Best Drama Award from the SWPA in 2001. In 2002 he won the Audio of the Year Award for his reading of *A Study in Scarlet*. He reads the entire Sherlock Holmes canon for Naxos AudioBooks.



Elaine Claxton has worked extensively in UK theatre, including London's Royal National Theatre. She has twice been a member of the BBC Radio Company, during which time she participated in over 200 broadcasts.



Laura Paton trained at LAMDA where she won the St Philip's Prize for Poetry and the Michael Warre Award. She has toured the UK extensively in productions as varied as *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and Oscar Wilde's *Salomé*. Among her other recordings for Naxos AudioBooks are Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, and both volumes of *Grimms' Fairy Tales*.



Raphael Clarkson was born in London in 1987. He played key roles in two theatre productions while still in primary school – as Lionel Grossman, food critic, and as Dracula. He has also played a child in the ENO's production of Massenet's *Don Quixote*. A trombonist and jazz pianist, he is also a keen footballer.

Credits

Recorded at Bucks Audio Recording, Buckinghamshire and Hats Off Studios, Oxfordshire
Engineers: Alan Smyth, Michael Taylor

Sound Editors: Simon Weir, Classical Recording Company; Michael Taylor, Ariel Productions
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Written and produced by Jeremy Siepmann

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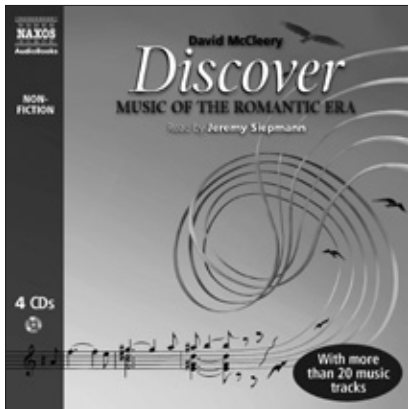
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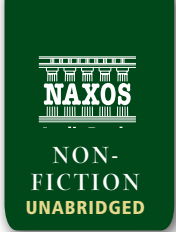
The Life and Works of Franz Liszt

Written and read by **Jeremy Siepmann**
with **Neville Jason** as Liszt

The life of Franz Liszt was as daring and spectacular as his music. Famed throughout Europe as the greatest pianist of the 19th century, he was one of the most original and prophetic composers who ever lived. Beautiful in youth, glowering in age, his high-profile love affairs were the talk of the town wherever he went and his generosity to young musicians was legendary. In this account of his epic life, actors' readings combine with plentiful musical excerpts to paint a living portrait of a highly complex man.



Formerly Head of Music at the BBC World Service, **Jeremy Siepmann** is an internationally known musician, teacher, broadcaster and author. He is the author and presenter of two major series for Naxos: *Classics Explained* and *Life and Works of the Great Composers*.



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CD ISBN:
978-184-379-508-7

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