



# Largo

*Music by*



Vivaldi

Mozart

Beethoven

Chopin

Dvořák

Schumann

Amadis

7169

DDD

## LARGO

Largo brings together relaxing music by the great composers of the classics, in an album that spans music over the past three centuries. The twelve tracks have been selected to create that mood of repose ideal for bringing a relaxing close to a busy day.

Two hundred and fifty years after they were composed, the group of concertos, *The Four Seasons*, took the name of **Antonio Vivaldi** to the top of the 'pop' classic charts. Born in 1678 Antonio was to become the most prolific Italian composer in the early part of the 18th century, owing much of his success to the training he had received in the church. He was to be known as 'The Red Priest', by virtue of his mass of red hair, though it was to be his secular, rather than his sacred, music that made him famous. In his early years he earned a living as a virtuoso violinist, and, when it suited him, he worked in sacred establishments.

It was to be the years he spent teaching music in a school for orphaned and abandoned girls that proved so productive, the vast quantity of music he wrote for his pupils to perform allowing him to experiment and take music down new paths. He also brought these unfortunate children to such a level of excellence, that musicians used to travel to Pietà to hear the orchestra and its soloists perform. From the technical demands of the music he wrote for them, they must have been of prodigious talent. Though we only have an accurate date of composition for a few of the hundreds of works he wrote, it is thought that the majority of his concertos for woodwind and strings date from his two periods there.

His concertos were in the conventional three movements, two fast ones framing a central slow movement that was often in the form of a graceful Largo, the soloist given a charming melody with a quiet accompaniment from the string orchestra.

The Lute concerto probably predates his days in Pietà, a work of delicate lyricism that was originally scored for lute, two violins and continuo. It is also the lute that features in the Double Concerto for Viola d'amour (an ancestor of our modern cello), Lute and Strings. It is a musically advanced work with wonderful interplay between the instruments, and most probably comes from the later years of his life,

Vivaldi was known to often change the solo instrument when performing his concertos, depending upon the availability of the musicians. If he were still alive he would hardly be surprised to hear the concerto he wrote for Sopranino Recorder (the smallest of the recorder family) played in a modern adaptation for Piccolo and Strings.

Every pianist will recall that magical moment of achievement when they successfully negotiate the lyrical Adagio Cantabile, from **Beethoven's** '*Pathétique*' Sonata, one of the evergreens in the piano repertoire. First performed by the composer in 1799, it comes from the period when he had finally established himself in Vienna as one of the great composers of his day, and though the work's nickname was not his own, it reflects the rather wistful mood of the music.

While they were still teenagers, **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** and his sister, Anna, were touring Europe as soloists, their father taking as much money as he could get for his talented children. In addition to his brilliance as a keyboard player, Wolfgang was writing music of value by the age of five, and though he was to live just thirty-five years, he composed a monumental amount in every format from opera to simple song settings. Among this massive catalogue of works are twenty-seven concertos for keyboard, most written for his own use. They still form part of every concert pianist's essential repertoire, the twentieth, written in 1785, being among the most popular. The flowing lyricism of the central Romanza contains one of Wolfgang's most graceful and unforgettable melodies.

**Fryderyk Chopin** was given the title, ‘Mozart’s Successor’, and by the age of 12 he had surpassed everything that his bemused teacher could impart. He was a restless student, and after graduating from the Warsaw Conservatory earned a living as a concert pianist, though his frail health was to affect his career to the extent that he gave only 30 major concert-hall performances. He appears to have had no love for his native Poland, and would have quickly moved from there had he not fallen in love with a young singer, Konstancia Gladkowska. It was under those romantic passions that in 1829, at the age of nineteen, he composed the Larghetto for his Second Piano Concerto. He was later to move to Paris where he became one of the greatest composers of romantic solo piano music, a career cut short at the age of 39.

A dreamer who experienced the peaks of happiness and the troughs of despair, **Robert Schumann** died in 1856 at the age of 46. Though he had his illicit flirtations, his married life to Clara, which only came after a bitter legal battle with her father, had brought many piano works of tenderness composed for her in those years before they could marry. He was a gifted orchestral composer who wrote violin, piano and cello concertos, and four fine symphonies. It took almost two years to write the Second Symphony, a task completed in 1846. The third movement is a restful Adagio espressivo, the soothing strings setting the backdrop for the delicate woodwind.

In 1891 **Antonin Dvořák** was invited to the States to take up the directorship of the National Conservatory of Music in New York. The salary to tempt him there was an incredible \$15,000 per year, and though he hated leaving his native Bohemia, he arrived in New York the following year, and threw himself into his teaching and assimilating everything American. His high regard for the country came with his Ninth Symphony, which he called, ‘*From the New World*’. It was composed between January and May 1893 and contains the influence of spirituals, the second movement, a haunting Largo, with its cor anglais solo, making a direct quotation from *Swing low, sweet chariot*.

# Largo

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|----------|---|------|---|---|-------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>VIVALDI Largo (e) cantabile from Flute Concerto in F major, RV 434</b><br>Concentus Hungaricus   | 3:27 | <b>8</b>  | <b>BEETHOVEN Adagio cantabile from Piano Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13, "Pathétique"</b><br>Silvia Capová, Piano                            | 5:08  |
| <b>2</b> | <b>VIVALDI Largo from Oboe Concerto in D minor, RV 454</b><br>Concentus Hungaricus  | 2:43 | <b>9</b>  | <b>MOZART Romanza from Piano Concerto No. 20 in D minor, K. 466</b><br>Peter Lang, Piano / Capella Istropolitana / Christoph Eberle           | 8:57  |
| <b>3</b> | <b>VIVALDI Largo from Lute Concerto in D, RV 93</b><br>Dall'arco Chamber Orchestra / István Parkányi  | 5:56 | <b>10</b>   | <b>CHOPIN Larghetto from Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op.21</b><br>Anna Malikova, Piano / Moscow Symphony Orchestra / Constantine Krimetz | 9:28  |
| <b>4</b> | <b>VIVALDI Largo from Concerto for 2 Flutes in C major, RV 533</b><br>Dall'arco Chamber Orchestra / István Parkányi                           | 2:54 | <b>11</b>   | <b>SCHUMANN Adagio espressivo from Symphony No. 2 in C major, Op. 61</b><br>Slovak State Philharmonic Orchestra / Johannes Wildner            | 10:02 |
| <b>5</b> | <b>VIVALDI Largo from Concerto for Viola d'amore and Lute in D minor, RV 540</b><br>Dall'arco Chamber Orchestra / István Parkányi             | 3:56 | <b>12</b>   | <b>DVOŘÁK Largo from Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95, "From the New World"</b><br>Bratislava Radio Symphony Orchestra / Ondrej Lenárd       | 11:24 |
| <b>6</b> | <b>VIVALDI Largo cantabile from Cello Concerto No. 4 in A minor RV 422</b><br>György Kertész, Cello / Hungarian State Opera Chamber Orchestra | 3:52 | <b>Total 72:33</b>  |   |       |
| <b>7</b> | <b>VIVALDI Largo from Piccolo Concerto in C major, RV 443</b><br>Dall'arco Chamber Orchestra / István Parkányi                                | 4:46 | <br><b>7169</b><br><b>DDD</b> |   |       |

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