



Fryderyk Chopin

(1810-1849)



Poland's Gift to World Culture



Piotr Bednarski after Eugene Delacroix (c. 1838). *Photograph courtesy of John Liviero.*

Brilliant Polish composer and prince of romantic pianists

- Beginnings
- Education in Warsaw
- Fame in Warsaw and Departure from Poland
- Fame in Paris
- With George Sand
- Death in Paris
- Chopin's Legacy
- Continuing Fame
- Canadian Connections



Beginnings

Fryderyk Franciszek Chopin was born on February 22, 1810, in Żelazowa Wola, approximately 50 kilometres from Warsaw. He was baptized on Easter Sunday, April 23, 1810, in the parish church of St. Roch (now St. John the Baptist) in Brochów. His father, Mikołaj, emigrated from France in 1787 to Warsaw, where he was employed as a tutor to aristocratic youth. He married Justyna Krzyżanowska in Brochów in 1806. The following year, Fryderyk's eldest sister, Ludwika, was born. A second sister, Izabella, followed in 1811. The youngest and most beloved, Emilia, was born in 1812.

Church of Saint Roch in Brochów, where Chopin's parents were married and Fryderyk was baptized. Below right: Document recording Fryderyk's baptism in 1810. *Courtesy of Jerzy Barycki.*



The Chopin Family



Father: Mikołaj (1771-1844);
Mother: Justyna (1782-1861).



The manor house, where the Chopin family lived in Żelazowa Wola. Right: The room, where Fryderyk was born (1810). Below: The family's living room. *Courtesy of the Fryderyk Chopin National Institute (NIFC)*



Ludwika (1807-1855)

Fryderyk (1810-1849)



Statue of Chopin in Żelazowa Wola by Józef Gosławski (1954). *Courtesy of Jerry Barycki.*



Izabella (1811-1881)

Emilia (1812-1827)



Family photographs courtesy of NIFC.



Education in Warsaw

In 1810, Mikolaj took up the position of teacher of French language and literature at the Warsaw Lyceum and the family settled permanently in the capital. Ludwika, the eldest sister, was a great influence on the young composer in his early years, teaching him to read, write and play the piano.

Right: Artistic representation of the Saxon Palace before WWII, where the Chopin family lived 1810-1817. *Courtesy of Park Miniatur Woj. Mazowieckiego.*



Left: Wojciech Żywny, Fryderyk's first piano teacher. *Courtesy of NIFC.*

Right: A present-day view of the Saxon Palace gardens. *Courtesy of Jerry Barycki.*



Fragment of central section of the Saxon Palace after WWII. Today it is the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Warsaw. *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*



The Main Gate of the University of Warsaw and plaque commemorating where Fryderyk lived and studied from 1817 to 1827. *Courtesy of Jerry Barycki*



The former Rectory, where the Chopin Family lived from 1817-1827. *Courtesy of Jerry Barycki.*



Józef Elsner, Fryderyk's composition professor, who commented on his graduation certificate: "Special ability, musical genius." (1829). *Courtesy of NIFC.*



The Kazimierzowski Palace, site of the Warsaw Lyceum, which Fryderyk attended in 1823. *Courtesy of Jerry Barycki.*



The composer, Wojciech Żywny, acquainted young Fryderyk with the rules of piano playing and was responsible for notating Chopin's first piano composition, the Polonaise in B Major. After completing his studies at the Warsaw Lyceum in 1826, Fryderyk was enrolled in the Conservatory of Music at the Royal University of Warsaw which was run by Józef Elsner, under whom he undertook an advanced study of music. Chopin remarked that it was to Elsner that he owed his greatest gratitude for his musical education.



Fame in Warsaw and Departure from Poland

Young Fryderyk gained renown as a child prodigy in the salons of Warsaw. Warsaw at that time was a city in love with music and Fryderyk made a name for himself with his proficiency at the keyboard. In 1820, the Italian singer, Angelika Catalani, was so captivated by the playing of the talented 10-year-old youth that she bestowed upon him a gold watch with an engraved dedication. In 1825, he played for Alexander I, the Russian czar, and received a diamond ring in appreciation.



Gold watch, gift from the Italian soprano Angelica Catalani in 1820. *Courtesy of the NIFC.*

The Belvedere Palace, Warsaw, where Fryderyk likely played for Grand Duke Constantine and his brother, Czar Alexander I. *Courtesy of Jerzy Barycki.*



Fryderyk played his first public concert at the Palace in Warsaw (today the Presidential Palace) on February 24, 1818. *Courtesy of Jerzy Barycki.*



Church of the Visitation, Warsaw, where Fryderyk, as a student, played the organ during Masses from 1825 to 1826. *Courtesy of Jerzy Barycki.*



Chopin playing for Duke Antoni Radziwiłł in Poznań, 1828. Painting by Henryk Siemiradzki (1887). *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*



Poster for Fryderyk's public concert at the National Theatre in Warsaw on March 17, 1830. *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*



Above: Plaque commemorating the building where Fryderyk lived and composed before leaving Poland. *Courtesy of Jerzy Barycki.*



The Saxon Post Office in Warsaw, from which Fryderyk left Poland permanently in 1830. *Courtesy of Jerzy Barycki.*

Fryderyk Chopin left Warsaw on November 2, 1830, not imagining that he would never return. He was bid farewell with a parting cantata, composed by Elsner.

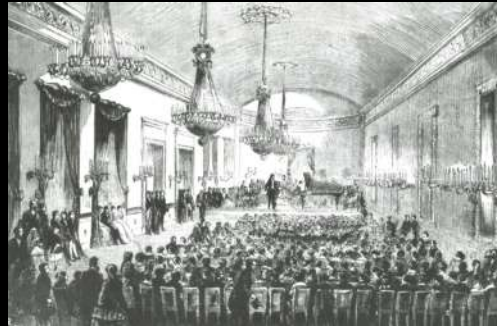


Fame in Paris

Chopin took up residence in Paris on October 5, 1831 and would remain there for the remainder of his life. In Paris, he made the acquaintance of fellow composers Rossini, Cherubini, Baillot, Kalkbrenner, Hiller, Mendelssohn and Liszt, all of whom championed Chopin's talent. Chopin's first concert in Paris took place on February 25, 1832, at the Salle Pleyel, where he performed a chamber version of his E minor concerto, which was acclaimed a huge success. Positive reviews appeared in the press. A "rebirth of piano music" was hailed with Chopin as catalyst. Fryderyk Chopin became well-known as a piano teacher, an occupation which ensured him a steady income.



Standing, from left: Jacob Rosenhain, Theodor Döhler, Fryderyk Chopin, Alexander Dreyschock and Sigismund Thalberg. Seated, from left: Edward Wolff, Adolf Henselt and Franciszek Liszt. *Courtesy of NIFC.*



Salle Pleyel, Paris, site of acclaimed concerts by Chopin in 1841, 1842 and 1848. *Courtesy of NIFC F. 3081.*



Contemporary view of the Salle Pleyel Concert Hall in Paris. *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*



Watercolour portrait of Chopin by Maria Wodzinska-1835. *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*



Above: Hôtel Lambert in Paris, home of Prince Adam Czartoryski. *Courtesy of Wikipedia.*



Above & Right: The apartment at 12 place Vendôme, Paris, where Chopin died. *Courtesy of Anna Marchlewska.*



Left: "Chopin Polonaise - Ball at Hôtel Lambert in Paris" by Teofil Kwiatkowski. *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*



In the history of music, Fryderyk Chopin is remembered as a great, fascinating, talented artist and composer, whose various musical forms and genres have had lasting appeal for all humankind. His genius surpassed the creativity of many composers world-wide, both contemporaries and those of previous generations. His subtle playing, although often presenting a technical challenge for the performer, was devoid of excessive bravado. New technical possibilities of the piano, changes in the construction of the hammers, and the expansion of the keyboard's range to seven octaves facilitated experimentation with sound. His performances touched everyone and the enthusiastic reception of his compositions ensured that Chopin did not experience the distress of an underestimated artist. He perfected his compositions before publication with exacting attention to detail.



With George Sand

Chopin's relationship with the French author, George Sand, is permanently etched in music history. Sand, like many other Parisian women, was infatuated with the Polish pianist. The words, "On vous aime" on a note passed to Chopin by Sand, began the mutual fascination between composer and writer that was to last until late 1846. For many years, Sand was for Fryderyk, not only a life companion and muse, but also a devoted nurse during attacks of his advancing illness. During the years 1839-1846, in the company of his beloved, Chopin created some of his best-loved works - among them, the 24 Preludes, Op. 28, which were completed in Majorca.



George Sand. *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*



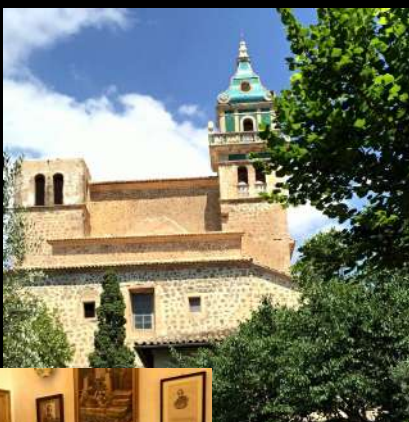
Sand's country home at Nohant. © Philippe Berthé / CMN. *Courtesy of Le Centre des monuments nationaux.*



Gardens at Nohant . © Jean-Pierre Delagarde / CMN. *Courtesy of Le Centre des monuments nationaux.*



Majorca, Spain



Valldemossa, the beautifully situated Carthusian Monastery, where Fryderyk spent a productive winter. *Courtesy of Piotr Paleczny.*



London, England

Right: London's Guildhall, where Chopin gave his final public performance (1847). *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*



Death in Paris

During the final days of his life, Chopin's sister, Ludwika, attended him, along with the composer's closest friends - Gutmann, Fran-chomme, Grzymala and Sand's daughter, Solange. Also at his bedside in his Paris apartment on the place Vendome were Rev. Aleksander Jelowicki, Duchess Marcelina Czartoryska, Countess Delfina Potocka and the painter Teofil Kwiatkowski. Fryderyk Chopin died on October 17, 1849, at 2:00 in the morning. The next day, Solange's husband, Auguste Clesinger, made casts of his death mask and left hand.



Chopin's final moments: surrounded by family, friends and his favourite flowers. Portrait by Teofil Kwiatkowski. *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*



Church of La Madeleine in Paris, where Chopin's funeral took place. *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*



Violets were Fryderyk's favourite flowers. *Courtesy of Jerzy Barycki.*

Right: Chopin's grave at P ere Lachaise cemetery is always adorned with fresh flowers, thanks in part to the approximately 800 visitors, who pass by daily. *Courtesy of Anna Marchlewska.*



Following Chopin's final wishes, his heart was removed, so that it could be returned to his homeland. His funeral took place with great ceremony on October 30, 1849 in the Paris church of la Madeleine. His body was laid to rest in P ere Lachaise cemetery where, to this day, fresh flowers are placed daily at the monument that was raised to his memory on the first anniversary of his death.



Chopin's heart rests in the Church of the Holy Cross in Warsaw, the family's parish church. *Courtesy of Jerry Barycki.*



The composer's heart was entombed in a pillar in the Church of the Holy Cross in Warsaw, where, despite the ravages of World War II and the destruction of the Polish capital, it rests to this day, an object of pilgrimage for music lovers from around the world.

Chopin's Legacy I



The Fryderyk Chopin Museum in Warsaw. *Courtesy of the NIFC.*

Fryderyk Chopin Museum in Warsaw



Chopin's original Pleyel grand piano. *Courtesy of Jerry Barycki.*



Cast of Chopin's hand. *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*



On the cabinet, Chopin's oriental figure bell and metronome. *Picture (1899) courtesy of the NIFC-F. 4096.*



Carriage clock, cufflinks and 1849 pocket diary obtained by the Chopin Museum in 2015. Oriental figure bell belonging to Fryderyk. *Courtesy of Jerry Barycki.*

After Chopin's death, admiration for his music and person grew. Each year, several hundred books, music editions and recordings dedicated to him are published around the world. The National Fryderyk Chopin Institute was created in 2001 to conserve and promote the life and legacy of the composer. It continues the work begun in the mid-1930s by the Fryderyk Chopin Institute, and, after World War II, the Fryderyk Chopin Society, which is still active today in Warsaw. The largest collection of Chopin's manuscripts is preserved in the vaults of the National Library in Warsaw.



An example of the publication of Chopin's compositions by his student Carl Mikul in Leipzig. *Courtesy of Polona.PL*



The National Library of Poland in Warsaw. *Courtesy of National Library of Poland.*



The National Fryderyk Chopin Institute in Warsaw. *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*

Chopin's Legacy II

Several dozen societies bearing Chopin's name have been created and new ones continue to arise. Piano competitions dedicated to Chopin's music are held on virtually every continent. The most prestigious is the International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition which, since 1927, takes place in the National Philharmonic Hall in Warsaw every five years.

International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition



Examples of event posters.

Above: Both courtesy of Wikipedia Commons and www.festival.pl.

Right: Courtesy of the NIFC.



Left: The National Philharmonic Hall. Next: Photo of the 3rd International Chopin Piano Competition (1937). *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*

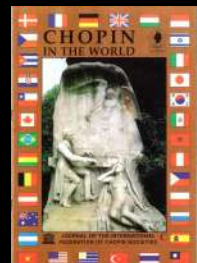
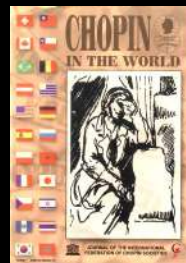
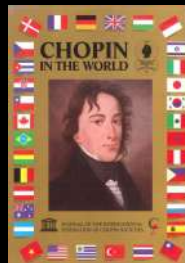
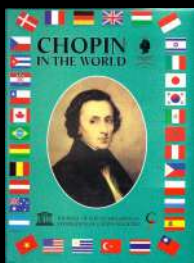
International Chopin Festival in Duszniki-Zdrój



Left: Villa where Fryderyk played in 1826. To commemorate this fact, every year since 1946, a festival has been organized in Duszniki-Zdrój for the best Chopin pianists. *Courtesy of Wikipedia.*



Left: Concert hall during the 2005 festival. Right: Examples of festival posters. *Courtesy of www.festival.pl*



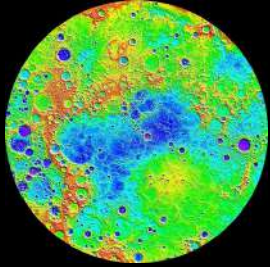
The International Federation of Chopin Societies has issued a journal every year since 1987. It reports on major Chopin-related activities around the world. Above: Examples of this journal. *Courtesy of The International Federation of Chopin Societies.*



Continuing Fame

Chopin is remembered by means of many plaques and monuments. The most frequently visited and most famous is the monument in Łazienki Park in Warsaw.

Chopin in Space



List of minor planets: 3001–4000					
Designation		Discovery		Discoverer	Ref
Permanent	Provisional	Date	Site		
3784 Chopin	1986 UL ₁	October 31, 1986	Haute-Provence	E. W. Elst	MPC

The Chopin Rose



The Chopin rose is a hybrid tea rose, introduced by Stanisław Żyła in Poland in 1980. *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*

Left: The Chopin Crater on Mercury. Located at 65.1°S, 123.1°W, it was named after the Polish composer in 1976 by the International Astronomical Union.

Above: Copy of document naming a planet after Chopin. *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*



The most famous monument to Chopin, in Łazienki Royal Park, Warsaw. *Courtesy of Jerry Barycki .*



Every summer, Chopin concerts in Łazienki Royal Park attract thousands of spectators. *Courtesy of Jerry Barycki.*



Monument to Chopin in Parc Monceau, Paris, with allegorical figures of Music and Harmony. *Courtesy of Pinterest and Wikipedia Commons.*



Chopin sculpture in Rio de Janeiro by August Zamoyski. *Courtesy of Pinterest and Wikipedia Commons.*



Chopin sculpture in Kiev. *Courtesy of NIFC.*



Right: Chopin sculpture in Singapore Gardens. *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*



Chopin bench in Havana sculpted by Adam Myjak; photo: Taida Tarabula. *Courtesy of meakultura.pl.*



Canadian Connections

In 1934, as recommended by Tadeusz Brzeziński, the Consul of Poland in Leipzig, 20 manuscripts (49 music compositions) and 13 personal letters of Chopin were purchased from the publishers, Breitkopf and Hartel. Later, they formed part of the treasures of Wawel Castle, kept for protection in Québec during the Second World War when Brzeziński was Consul General of Poland. His son, Zbigniew, became well-known in his own right as the National Security Advisor to American President Jimmy Carter. Thanks to Canada, Wawel's treasures were returned safely to Poland after WWII.



Fryderyk played for Her Majesty Queen Victoria in England on May 15, 1848. *Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.*



Above: Part of the display, "The Odyssey of Wawel's Treasures 1939-1961", showing one of Chopin's manuscripts. *Courtesy of Wawel Castel Museum in Krakow, Poland.*



Above: Examples of Chopin's manuscripts and letters kept safe in Canada during WWII. *Courtesy of the National Library of Poland.*

XVII:						
2015	Seong-Jin Cho	Charles Richard-Hamelin	Kate Liu	Eric Lu	Tony Yike Yang	Dmitry Shishkin

Above: Winners of the XVII International Chopin Piano Competition in 2015. For the first time in the history of this event, Canadian pianists finished in the top six places. Below from left: Charles Richard-Hamelin, 2nd place and Tony Yike Yang, 5th place. *Courtesy of Elizabeth Delage.*

Right: Poster for the XVII International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition in 2015. *Courtesy of NIFC.*



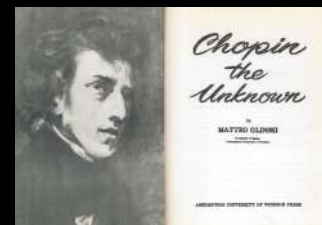
Poster for a Chopin piano concert by Piotr Paleczny at the University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, in 2004. *Courtesy of Jerry Barycki.*



Bust of Chopin by Maria Filarska, Windsor, Ontario. *Courtesy of Jerry Barycki.*



Death mask of Chopin from the collection of Maria Filarska. *Courtesy of Sr. Anna Fidor.*



Title page and picture from the book "Chopin the Unknown" by Mateusz Gliński, former Professor of Music, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario.



Europe in 1815. Courtesy of Wikipedia Commons.



Chopin's signature. Courtesy of Chopin.pl.



Places where Chopin travelled in Europe. Courtesy of Peter Sawicki.

Bibliography

Published Sources:

Wanda Bogdany-Popielowa: *Rękopisy muzyczne 1. połowy XIX wieku ze zbiorów Biblioteki Narodowej: katalog.* Warszawa 1997.

Mariola Nałęcz: *Ocalone przez BKG: katalog wystawy. Rękopisy Fryderyka Chopina.* Warszawa 2016.

Zofia Helman, Zbigniew Skowron, Hanna Wróblewska-Straus: *Korespondencja Fryderyka Chopina. T. I.* Warszawa 2009.

Józef Michał Chomiński, Teresa Dalila Turło: *Katalog dzieł Fryderyka Chopina.* Kraków, Warszawa 1990.

Non-Published Sources:

John Liviero, Piotr Paleczny, Anna Marchlewska, Park Miniatur Woj. Mazowieckiego, Sr. Anna Fidor, Elizabeth Delage, Maria Filarska, Peter Sawicki, the Fryderyk Chopin National Institute (NIFC), National Library of Poland.

Internet:

Wikipedia Commons, polona.pl, pl.chopin.nifc.pl, chopinonline.ac.uk, chopin.pl/nifc.en, pinterest and wikipedia, meakultura.pl, Le Centre des monuments nationaux, festival.pl, The International Federation of Chopin Societies.

Mariola Nałęcz, Warsaw, Poland.

Francine Sala, English translation, Windsor, Ontario, Canada

Acknowledgements

The Polish-Canadian Business and Professional Association of Windsor (PCBPAW), with a team from the University of Windsor and other partners, has prepared this display as a part of a larger exhibition as a tribute to Canada on the 150th anniversary of Confederation. This project expresses, with gratitude, the connection between Poland, Polonia and Canada. We are very grateful to the National Polish Library team: Katarzyna Ślaska, Mariola Nałęcz (the author of the text), the Fryderyk Chopin National Institute (NIFC), the Leddy Library of the University of Windsor and our Association team for the production of this display: Joan Dalton, Marg McCaffrey Piche, and Frank Simpson under the patronage of Pascal Calarco, Dean of the Library. We offer special thanks to Francine Sala, John Liviero, Piotr Paleczny, Maria Filarska, Sr. Anna Fidor, Anna Marchlewska and all who contributed to the project. Many thanks to our financial supporters: the Leddy Library of the University of Windsor, the Canadian Polish Congress Alberta Society, the Polonia Foundation in Alberta, the Władysław Reymont Foundation and our Association.

Jerry (Jerzy) Barycki

Windsor, March 15, 2017.

President, PCBPAW and Project Co-ordinator/Designer

The project is co-financed by the Senate of the Republic of Poland within the framework of fulfillment of its support for Polonia and for Polish people abroad.



Many thanks to our generous sponsors



Many thanks to our contributors



Thank You, Canada!

