

## Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849)

Chopin was born in Poland but spent his twenty or so creative years based in Paris. With his supreme mastery of the keyboard and inimitable compositions for the instrument he became a luminary of the Romantic era. Afflicted early on by consumption, he worked with a tireless intensity to produce piano compositions both intricate and perfect, of every style and mood. Pears Cyclopaedia makes this discerning tribute: 'A Chopin melody, limpid, transparent, singing, can be recognised easily by anyone, but his style gradually developed into something more subtle, more satisfying than pure melody.'

The Waltz Op. 64 No. 1, popularly known in English as the 'Minute Waltz', is a famous example of the melodic and harmonic capabilities intimated above. It doesn't have to be played in a minute, at the marked *vivace*, and works nicely at a sedate pace. Chopin often deviated from his tempo markings when he played.