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Franz Schubert (1797-1828) Piano Trio in B-flat, D.28 Sonatensatz (1812)

Allegro

At the age of eight, Schubert started to learn the violin from his father; six years later he was composing for the family string quartet: brothers Ignaz and Ferdinand on violin, Franz on viola and his father on cello. However, the eleven or so string quartets that Schubert wrote between the ages of 14 and 20 together with other early chamber music such as today's Sonatensatz Piano Trio are now rarely played.

In July 1812 Schubert's voice was breaking; on the 26th he records in the score of a mass he had just sung with Vienna's Imperial Chapel Choir: 'Schubert, Franz crowed for the last time'. The next day he started work on this Trio under the tutelage of Mozart's ex-colleague Antonio Salieri. If it was intended to be the start of a full-scale work, other movements do not survive.

This single movement *Allegro* 'Sonate' has undoubted charm and it is both intriguing and frustrating to catch a glimpse of how the older Schubert might have developed some of its ideas, while his younger self dashes off to the next nugget. The very opening is a case in point. After three 'stop talking and listen' chords, the cello holds a high F before being joined by the violin in an exquisite, simply accompanied 4-bar phrase which you ache to have extended. A foretaste of Schubert's genius for accompanying figures comes a little later with a pianissimo staccato quaver figure in the piano that grabs your attention before the violin sings a variant of its opening phrase. The movement lasts a little under 10 minutes.