Subject: Schubert Piano Sonatas
Posted by elektratig on Tue, 09 Aug 2005 11:28:27 GMT
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One of the interesting and wonderful things about music -- and (for me at least) classical music in particular -- is that it can take your brain a while to reorient itself in order to appreciate it. Schubert has been that way for me.When trying to educate myself about classical music, I listened to some Schubert -- and it left me underwhelmed. I've previously admitted that I was guided by the principle, "follow what you like; don't worry about what you don't like." I set Schubert aside and went on to greener pastures.Fast forward to about seven days ago. After hearing an utterly beautiful piece as background to a scene in a movie (Robert Bresson's "Au Hasard Balthazar"), I had to track it down . . . and found it in my collection, unlistened-to for many years and forgotten: a movement from Schubert's penultimate piano sonata, Piano Sonata No. 20 in A, D. 959.At all events, I spent most of last weekend listening to my disc(s) with the Piano Sonata on it. Absolutely stunning! Where did that come from?I can't tell you how the version I have, a Phillips Duo with Alfred Brendel playing the last three Schubert Piano Sonatas plus other works, compares with others -- I haven't heard any others. Duos are a two-for-the-price-of-one series that tend to be good introductions to composers' greatest hits; I bought many when I was starting out. Alfred Brendel is a highly-respected pianist who is generally classified by the cognoscenti, I think, as "cerebral" (vs. wildly romantic), although I don't hear that. The discs get decent reviews in the Penguin Guide and on Amazon; I haven't checked Gramophone.Nonetheless, for a Schubert "starter", I don't think you can go wrong.FWIW, the movement that first grabbed me was the Second Movement (entitled "Andantino") of the A Major Sonata. The opening phrases are painfully beautiful.
Brendel Plays Late Schubert Piano Sonatas