



# **Chopin Through His Contemporaries: Friends, Lovers, and Rivals (Contributions to the Study of Music and Dance)**

*Pierre Azoury*

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Dual natures comprised Chopin's personality. On one hand, he was a highly creative romantic idealist and on the other, a realist trying to cope with the world at large. Documentary evidence illustrates the disparities in his personality as a reflection of these two diverse aspects of his psyche. Of special interest are five previously unpublished letters in English and the unfolding of Chopin's controversial relationships with Tytus Woyciechowski, Julian Fontana, George Sand, and Solange Sand. This critical portrayal of Chopin's personality traces his journeys and experiences from Warsaw to Paris and reveals, among other characteristics and traits, Chopin's developmental problems during his adolescence, his unattractive behavior in his relationship with Julian Fontana, and George Sand's unrequited love for Chopin. The culture of the time and the atmosphere surrounding Chopin's relationships emerge in the detailed evidence presented.

The book is divided into two parts. The first is relevant to Chopin's youth in Warsaw. His relationship with Tytus Woyciechowski during the formative years in Warsaw significantly impacted Chopin's emotional development. The second part of the book focuses on Chopin's adult years in Paris including his liaison with George Sand, which is considered through her daughter, Solange, and four friends and acquaintances common to both Sand and Chopin. The text is extensively annotated and this research of Chopin's life and personality will appeal to both the Chopin scholar and enthusiast. It will also be of interest to students of French Romantic literature, Romantic music, and Polish music of the nineteenth century.

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