
Le Clavier bien tempéré I

collection des préludes et fugues de

Jean Sébastien Bach
(1685–1750)

arrangées pour le piano à quatre mains par

Henri Bertini jeune
(1798–1876)

*12^e prélude et fugue
en fa mineur*

Partition

Henri Jérôme Bertini 1798–1876

Henri Jérôme Bertini was born in London on October 28, 1798, but his family returned to Paris six months later. He received his early musical education from his father and his brother, a pupil of Clementi. He was considered a child prodigy and at the age of 12 his father took him on a tour of England, Holland, Flanders, and Germany where he was enthusiastically received. After studies in composition in England and Scotland he was appointed professor of music in Brussels but returned to Paris in 1821. It is known that Bertini gave a concert with Franz Liszt in the Salons Pape on April 20, 1828. The program included a transcription by Bertini of Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in A major for eight hands (the other pianists were Sowinsky and Schunke.) He was also admired as a chamber music performer, giving concerts with his friends Fontaine (violin) and Franchomme (cello). He remained active in and around Paris until around 1848 when he retired from the musical scene. In 1859 he moved to Meylan (near Grenoble) where he died on September 30, 1876.

Bertini concertized widely but was not as celebrated a virtuoso as either Kalkbrenner or Henri Herz. One of his contemporaries (Marmontel) described his playing as having Clementi's evenness and clarity in rapid passages as well as the quality of sound, the manner of phrasing, and the ability to make the instrument sing characteristic of the school of Hummel and Moscheles. Thomas Tapper, in the preface of his edition of the *Études* Op.100 published by Ditson, says:

He was in his time a shining example of the most admirable qualities of an artist. Living in an age of garish virtuosity, and hailed as a brilliant executant himself, he maintained nevertheless the most rigorous standards of musicianship in his playing, in his compositions, and in the music which he appeared before the public to interpret. This is the more remarkable when one considers that his manhood was reached during the luxuriant period of French romanticism and that the extravagances of the literary outburst were reflected in the musical movements of the time. Virtuosity was subjected to sore temptations and many succumbed. Bertini stood for the sounder qualities of the artist and gradually acquired an extended and remunerative *prestige*. His life was singularly devoid of incident and official distinction, but the legacy of pedagogic works which he has left to us and his honorable activity give it every right to be called a success.

Bertini was celebrated as a teacher. Antoine Marmontel, who devoted the second chapter of his work on celebrated pianists to Bertini, writes

He was unsurpassed as a teacher, giving his lessons with scrupulous care and the keenest interest in his pupils' progress. After he had given up teaching, a number of his pupils continued with me, and I recognized the soundness of the principles drawn from his instruction.

It is above all in the special class of studies and caprices, that Bertini's immense popularity is founded. It is here that he occupied a unique position and opened the path over which the next generation of composers was to rush after him. In each of his numerous collections of studies, embracing every degree of difficulty, he has insistently given to every piece, easy or difficult, brief or extended, a character of salient melody. The technical problem to be overcome presents itself as a song; even where the study is devoted to the problem of velocity the general contour falls into a melodic curve, and this is the first and transcendent cause of the universal success of these pieces, which are, furthermore, natural in respect to rhythm and carefully thought out harmonically.

Robert Schumann, in a review of a piano trio in the *Gesammelte Schriften*, comments that Bertini writes easily flowing harmony but that the movements are too long. He continues: "With the best will in the world, we find it difficult to be angry with Bertini, yet he drives us to distraction with his perfumed Parisian phrases; all his music is as smooth as silk and satin."¹ German sentimentality has never appreciated French elegance.

Bertini is best remembered today for his piano method *Le Rudiment du pianiste*, and his 20 books of approximately 500 studies.

For more information on the life of Bertini, see *Henri Bertini pianiste virtuose, compositeur de musique* (Grenoble, 1999) by Pascal Beyls (<http://perso.wanadoo.fr/pascal.beyls/bertini/bertini.html>).

¹ from Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music, Second Edition, Volume 1, page 124.

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12^e en fa mineurPrélude
Andante.J.S.Bach
arr. H.J.Bertini

Primo

legatissimo. p esp.

Secondo

p legato.

3

tr

24

1 5

5

cres.

cres.

tr

7

Measures 7 and 8 of a piano piece. The score is written for four staves (two treble and two bass clefs). The key signature has four flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat, D-flat). Measure 7 features a complex melodic line in the upper treble staff with many beamed sixteenth notes and accents, while the lower staves provide harmonic support. Measure 8 continues this texture, ending with a trill (tr) in the upper treble staff.

9

Measures 9 and 10 of a piano piece. Measure 9 shows a continuation of the melodic activity in the upper treble staff, with a forte (f) dynamic marking in the lower bass staff. Measure 10 features a trill (tr) in the upper treble staff and a change in the lower staves, including a key signature change to three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat).

11

Measures 11 and 12 of a piano piece. Measure 11 continues the melodic development in the upper treble staff. Measure 12 shows a more active bass line in the lower staves, with a key signature change to two flats (B-flat, E-flat).

13

p

15

cres.

cres.

17

f

f

19

p legato. esp. cres. f dim.

p cres. f dim.

21

p rall. pp ten.

rall. pp ten.

Fugue à 4 voix Andante.

legato.

legato.

[5]

[8]

[11]

14

Measures 14-16 of a piano arrangement. The score is written for four staves (two treble and two bass). The key signature has three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). Measure 14 features a melodic line in the upper treble staff with a slur and a triplet of eighth notes. The lower staves provide harmonic support with eighth and sixteenth notes. Measure 15 continues the melodic development. Measure 16 concludes the phrase with a final chord and a fermata.

17

Measures 17-19 of the piano arrangement. Measure 17 begins with a new melodic phrase in the upper treble staff, characterized by slurs and grace notes. The bass staves continue with rhythmic accompaniment. Measure 18 shows further melodic elaboration. Measure 19 ends with a sustained chord in the bass and a melodic flourish in the treble.

20

Measures 20-22 of the piano arrangement. Measure 20 features a melodic line in the upper treble staff with a slur and a trill (tr) on the final note. The bass staves provide harmonic support. Measure 21 continues the melodic development. Measure 22 concludes the phrase with a final chord and a fermata.

23

26

29

32

cres.

35

f

38

dim.

41

p

p

p

44

cres.

cres.

cres.

47

f

f

f

50

dim.

dim.

53

cres.

cres.

legato il basso.

56

dim. e rall.

tr

pp

pp