

ABOUT THE COMPOSERS

Johann Friedrich Burgmüller

Life

Johann Friedrich Burgmüller was born on December 4, 1806 in Regensburg, Germany. He was a pupil of his father, Johann August Franz Burgmüller (1766–1824), a musical theater director in Weimar and various south German centers, as well as a composer of stage works, songs and sacred pieces. His brother Norbert (1810–1836) was also a pianist and composer. It was Norbert's output of symphonies, chamber music and songs that did the most to bring the name of Burgmüller to musical prominence. Johann helped edit his brother's orchestral pieces.

Johann Burgmüller attempted, but failed, to attain the position his father had previously held as music director in Düsseldorf. Consequently, he became a music teacher in Mühlhausen and an active cellist in Basel. In 1832 he settled in Paris and became a French citizen in 1842. There he found success as a piano teacher and composer of salon pieces and descriptive piano studies intended for children. Burgmüller died in Beaulieu (near Paris) on February 13, 1874.

Music and Books

Burgmüller's piano studies, Opp. 73, 105, 109 and, most particularly, Op. 100, have achieved pedagogical prominence for their musical and instructional significance. The *25 Progressive Pieces*, Op. 100 and *18 Characteristic Studies*, Op. 109, were selected for this book because of their worldwide popularity. They captivate pianists with their melodic appeal and stimulate the imagination with their descriptive titles provided by the composer. Their pedagogical significance is due to the linking of technical considerations with musical ideas.

The etudes in Op. 109 are more difficult than those in Op. 100. It is interesting to note that Burgmüller dedicated Op. 109 to Stephen Heller. In addition to these piano studies, Burgmüller composed works without opus numbers including variations, waltzes, nocturnes, and polonaises, as well as salon and dance pieces for solo piano, and for one piano, four hands. He also composed stage works and two ballets, *La Péri* (1843) and *Lady Harriet* (1844). While Burgmüller's compositional output for piano is small, his studies remain an important part of the pedagogical literature.

Carl Czerny

Life

Carl Czerny was born in Vienna on February 21, 1791. He came from a musical family; his grandfather was a violinist and his father was an organist, oboist, pianist, and piano technician. Carl began playing piano at age three and composing at seven. His first teacher was his father, who taught him mostly Bach, Mozart and Clementi. Czerny's public debut was in 1800, when he performed Mozart's *Concerto in C minor*, K. 491. By age ten, Czerny gave numerous recitals in his parents' home in Vienna, at which Beethoven was present. Beethoven was so impressed with young Czerny's performance of his *Sonata in C minor* ("Pathétique"), Op. 13, that he agreed to accept him as his pupil. Under Beethoven's tutelage for three years, Czerny became well known for his house concerts, where he performed many of Beethoven's compositions from memory. Although he consistently received critical acclaim for his performing abilities, Czerny did not believe himself to be a strong pianist. He felt he lacked the brilliant virtuosity needed for a successful performance career. He ultimately lost interest in performing. His only scheduled concert tour was cancelled before it began in 1805 due to political unrest in Europe.

At age 15, Czerny began what was to become a highly successful career as a teacher. He based his pianistic teaching on Beethoven's and Clementi's teaching methods. He also taught his students that it was possible to render 100 dynamic gradations on the piano, as did Anton Rubinstein (1829–1894). His profound success made him highly sought after as a teacher. Even though Czerny was highly selective in choosing students, he taught up to twelve lessons a day in the homes of Viennese nobility.

Among his famous students was Beethoven's beloved nephew, Karl. However, his greatest contribution was as the teacher of the two most influential teachers of the next generation: Franz Liszt (1811–1886) and Theodor Leschetizky (1830–1915). Liszt began studying with Czerny at age nine. Czerny was Liszt's only teacher, apart from his father. While Czerny was impressed with Liszt's musical talent, he felt that much work was needed to strengthen his technique. For the first few months he forced Liszt to drop all of his repertoire and study only exercises and scales in all keys. The emphasis was on correct fingering, strict rhythm and tone production. Liszt's *Transcendental Etudes*, A. 172, clearly reveal the

ADDITIONAL WAYS TO PRACTICE SCALES & ARPEGGIOS

- a. Parallel and contrary motion—1, 2, 3, 4 octaves
 b. Two octaves parallel motion (going up and down), 2 octaves contrary (going out and in),
 2 octaves contrary (going in), 2 octaves parallel (going down)
 c. Scales: Trilling every 2 notes, every 3 notes
 Arpeggios: Play as repeated broken chords in all inversions

Scales (2 notes) Continue up

(3 notes) Continue up

Arpeggios (3 notes) Continue up:

- d. Add-a-note: add on one note at a time until span 2 full octaves

Scales Continue

Arpeggios Continue

- e. One hand *p*, the other *f*; or one hand legato, the other staccato
 f. Scale in one hand, Alberti bass in the other

Continue down

For a challenge, cross RH over LH and play 2 octaves lower.

Continue down

For a challenge, cross LH over RH and play 2 octaves higher.

Scales in Parallel and Contrary Motion

- Listen for evenness on every note with smooth crossings when the thumb passes under.
- Keep the fingers firm and the forearms and upper arms relaxed.
- See pages 10–11 for different ways to practice this etude.

Charles-Louis Hanon (1819–1900)
No. 38

4.

6

11

17

22

27

UNIT THREE

Voicing a Double-Stemmed Accompaniment Under a Lyrical Melody with Grace Notes and Arpeggios

- Practice first by “blocking” the LH broken chords. When playing as written, sink into the dotted quarter note and raise the wrist slightly for a lighter sound on the eighth notes.
- Listen for a singing melody in the RH; pay careful attention to smooth thumb crossings for arpeggios and scales.
- The grace notes should flow gently into the melodic line.

Carl Czerny (1791–1857)
Op. 599, No. 77

Andantino (♩ = 50–60)

1. *mp dolce* *pp* *mf*

5 *mp* *p cresc.* *mf*

9 *mp*

13

8va

8va

(1 2 3 1 2 3 1 3 5)

3 4 3 2 4 2 1 1 2 2 4 2 4 2 4 5 2

5 1 3 5 4 2 1 4 2 1 4 2 1 4 2 1 1 3 5 1

5 4 2 5 4 2 3 5 4 2 3 5 1

2 1 2 4 2 3 1 2 2 1 2 3 3

4 2 5 3 1 4 2 5 1 2 5 1 2 2 (1) 4 (3)

5 1/2 3(2) 5 1/2 (4) 5 1/2 1/3 2/4 5 4 5 1/3 4 5 1/2 5 1/2 2(1) 4(3)

Graceful LH Cross-Over Notes; Voicing RH Melody with Accompaniment in the Same Hand

- First practice LH alone, using a graceful arm gesture for large leaps in mm. 1–7 and mm. 25–34. In mm. 9–16, use slightly more arm weight on the first beat of each measure.
- In the RH, use additional arm weight to project the top-note melody; keep the fingers close to the keys and the wrist loose to keep the double notes soft.
- The RH melody and LH cross-over “bell” should always project above the accompaniment.

Morning Bell

Andante sostenuto (♩ = 80–92)

Johann Burgmüller (1806–1874)
Op. 109, No. 9

9.

4

8

12

Voicing and Control of a RH Melody with Double-Stemmed Notes, and Broken and Solid Chords; Sharp LH Octaves and Rhythmic Accompaniment

- This etude features many of the technical challenges used throughout this book.
- In the RH passages with broken chords, keep the forearm free as the fifth finger plays and makes a semi-circle. Listen carefully to slightly bring out the double-stemmed melody notes.
- In mm. 36–79, listen that all notes sound together and bring out the top note. Keep the wrists loose and fingertips firm.
- Pay strict attention to the articulation in the LH. Listen for good tone and balance with the RH.

Novellette

Stephen Heller (1813–1888)
Op. 45, No. 17

Allegro vivace (♩ = 108–120)

The musical score is presented in four systems, each with a measure number in a box at the beginning of the system:

- System 1 (Measures 7-11):** Starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The right hand features double-stemmed notes with fingerings 2, 5, 3, 1, 2, 4, 2, 3, 2, 4, 2. The left hand has broken chords with sharp octaves. Dynamics transition to piano (*p*) in measure 10.
- System 2 (Measures 12-16):** Starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The right hand continues with double-stemmed notes and fingerings 2, 3, 2, 3, 2, 4, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 3. The left hand has broken chords with sharp octaves. Dynamics transition to piano (*p*) in measure 15.
- System 3 (Measures 17-21):** Starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The right hand continues with double-stemmed notes and fingerings 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2. The left hand has broken chords with sharp octaves.
- System 4 (Measures 22-26):** Starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The right hand continues with double-stemmed notes and fingerings 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2. The left hand has broken chords with sharp octaves.