CLAVIER-BÜCHLEIN

Little Piano Book

Kirill Monorosi op. 2

Preface



The pieces in this volume were inspired by my students and intended for practical music making. My goal in composing them was to create melodious, instructive works that are fun to learn and practice, and which prepare students for the works of the great masters. Although the collection is intended for those starting their musical journey (the pieces were written with children in mind as there are no octaves in any of the works making them ideally suited for small hands), they can be played by pianists of any age and ability. The pieces are written in a variety of forms and genres, from old dances (such as the Menuet and Waltz) through to polyphonic pieces and technically challenging works like the Toccatina and Tarantella. They cover key pianistic techniques and most important musical concepts (such as phrasing, structure, playing in various keys, use of pedals etc...).

Further information on the works can be found in the NOTES section at the end of the volume, which serves as a guide to the pieces.

The title *Clavier-Büchlein* (which could be translated as "Little Piano Book") is borrowed from J. S. Bach. His *Clavier-Büchlein vor Wilhelm Friedemann Bach* is one of the earliest and most important collections of pieces assembled for instruction. It is a collection of remarkable quality, with a real breadth in the choice of repertoire as well as of the compositional and keyboard techniques that are explored in the works. It was a source of inspiration for this volume, with several pieces directly inspired by J. S. Bach. There are also pieces inspired by A. Vivaldi (*A little concerto grosso*), L. van Beethoven (*Bagatelle 1*), R. Schumann (*Melody*), F. Mendelssohn (*Scherzo*) and B. Bartók (*Folk Dance*), while other works evoke different moods and scenes (one of my absolute favourites is *First Snow*).

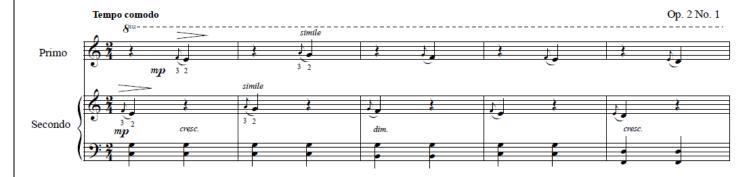
Ensemble playing, apart from being fun, is extremely important for a beginning musician, therefore my *Clavier-Büchlein* contains 11 pieces for piano four-hands, where the student can explore both the primo and secondo parts to improve reading in both treble and bass clefs. Several of these duet pieces also appear in solo versions, with the duet version serving as an easier introduction to the piece.

I sincerely hope that the works in this book contribute to the available teaching and performance repertoire, and that pianists enjoy making music and playing pieces from this *Clavier-Büchlein*!

NOTES

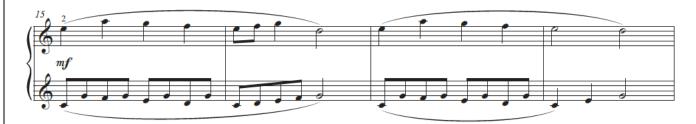
Apart from learning or reinforcing signs and terms found in every piece (tempo indications, articulations, dynamics and other expressive indications), there are a number of other concepts that can be taught through these pieces. The most important are outlined below. It is important to keep returning to the same concepts to ensure the student can recognise these ideas in other contexts and in new pieces he or she will be learning in the future.

Op. 2 No. 1 Grace note warm-up (Duet)

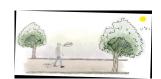


I approach this piece (or a multitude of variations of it, of different lengths and using different chords and keys) with beginner students as a game where the student copies my Right Hand without reading the score. Key concepts that can be taught through playing this piece by rote are: down and up movement of the wrist, tone production and quality, dynamic shaping (diminuendo on last note). In reading notes, the most important lesson here is recognising the appoggiatura and learning how to play it correctly. Other important concepts on the printed score are: simile and the 8va sign.

Op. 2 No. 2 Melody

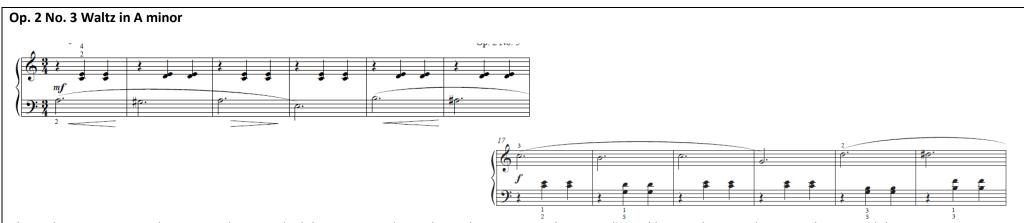


Key concepts: telling a story through music; ternary (ABA) form (the drawing illustrates the idea that the repeat of the A section can be played with a slightly different feel or mood); phrasing; dynamic shaping of phrase (endings are always softer); melody/accompaniment and balancing hands (projecting the melodic line); major/minor; relative keys (C major / A minor); positional playing (two positions, one for each section).



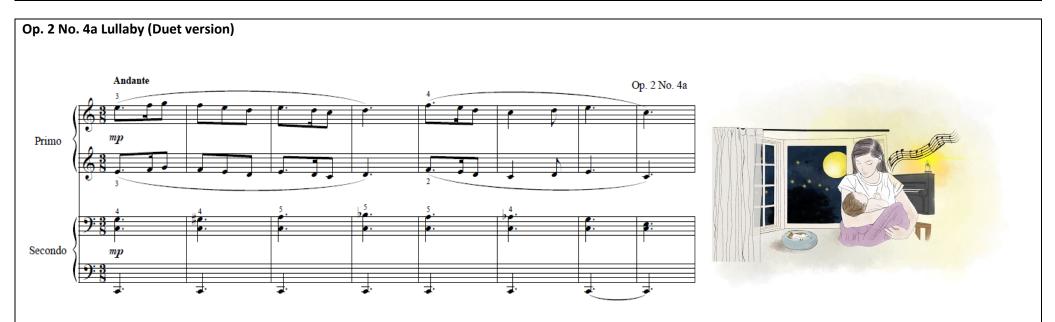






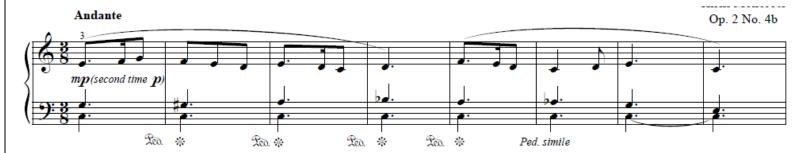
The waltz is a European dance in triple time which became popular in the 19th Century. Waltzes are danced by couples in embrace, with a step, slide, step pattern that results in accents on the first beat of every bar. There were many waltzes composed for all occasions: waltzes for ballroom dancing, concert waltzes (to be heard in a concert), waltzes for music making at home. Many were composed for the piano (Chopin's waltzes are very famous), and well as orchestra. Johann Strauss II is known as the Waltz King as he wrote over 500 dances, of which at least 150 are waltzes!

The Waltz in A minor is a gentle, smooth and graceful Waltz. Concepts: strong/weak beats (in any Waltz, the first beat of every bar is slightly emphasized); chromatic line (bars 9-13. This can be used as an introduction to the chromatic scale). Reinforce concepts: ABA Form; relative keys of A minor and C major; fermata; phrasing and balance between hands (projecting the melodic line). Here the balance needs to change for the B section as the melody is in the RH.

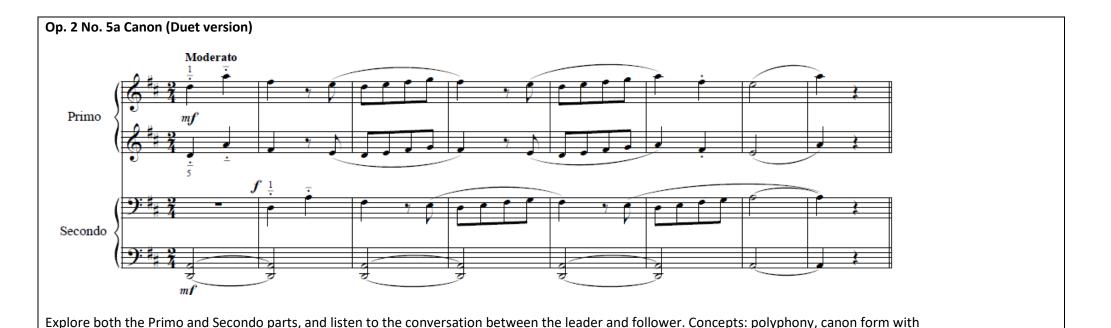


Explore both the primo and secondo of this piece, as unlike the first work in this book, both the primo and the secondo parts are of almost the same level (so it can be played by two students, or with the teacher playing either primo or secondo parts). Concepts: dotted rhythms. The dotted rhythm can be introduced through clapping and then asking the student to find every bar which has a dotted rhythm. Ensure that phrasing is clearly separated and shaped dynamically, with phrase endings always softer. Apart from focusing on hand position and posture, take care to ensure that the student plays with a good sound quality at all times.

Op. 2 No. 4b Lullaby (Solo version)



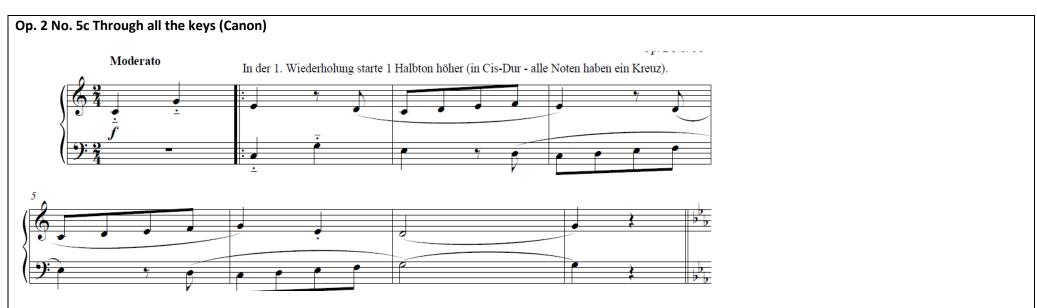
Playing both the primo and secondo parts of the duet version of this piece prior to beginning the solo version helps prepare for the challenges of this work. This piece introduces playing a three-part texture, with two parts in one hand. Concepts: Layers and voices (learning to think horizontally in several parts): note the pedal point in the bass, the chromatic line in tenor, and the melodic line in the soprano. In the B section, take care that the A4 in the RH is held for the full value. Experiment with balance in this section, playing the RH parts or the LH part louder, and choose a balance that you find more attractive (there is no right or wrong way - it is more a question of directing the attention to listening and learning how to balance. Reinforce concepts: ABA Form and learn about the Da Capo al Fine indication; relative keys of C major and A minor; phrasing and balance between hands. If the sustaining pedal is introduced in this piece, it is important to grasp the "late pedal" technique in order to avoid blurring.



leader and follower at the octave; key of D major; binary (AB) form; melodic inversion (in the B section); pedal point; articulation, positional playing.

Op. 2 No. 5b Canon (Solo version)

This piece is written in a two-part texture, which demands independence of hands and a good coordination. Ensure that each voice is played with its own articulation and is clearly shaped. This canon can be played in the major OR minor mode. Try playing this work in D minor (in the same position, but with an F-natural instead of the F-sharp). Other keys can also be introduced through transposing this piece.



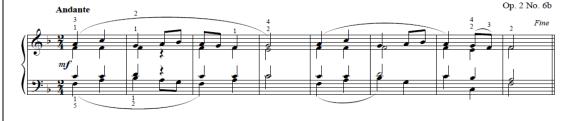
This is a perpetual, modulating canon. It is not so much a performance piece as a practice piece. It starts in C major, with the second section in C minor. However, the ending of the canon is changed to modulate to the key a semitone above, therefore the first Canon ends in C-sharp minor, and immediately begins in C-sharp major. This change is quite abrupt, so direct your attention to how the music suddenly feels different. As each of the keys only required one hand position, this piece can be used to teach different keys, key signatures and modulation. Taking it one key at a time is a good strategy here. Although C major is a good starting point at the beginning, it is also not necessary to start in C major once other keys have been mastered. The original ending (see Canon No. 5b, can be used in the key that you wish to end the piece in).

Op. 2 No. 6a In Four Parts (Duet version)



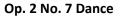


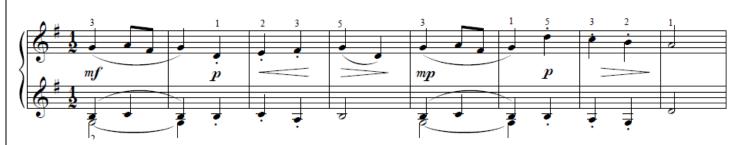
Keys of F major and D minor. This piece builds on the previous works, and introduces four-part texture. Explore both the Primo and Secondo parts (the Secondo is much more challenging here!). Concepts: four parts, voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass); suspensions; juggling a melodic line between hands. Reinforce phrasing and ensure all phrases are clearly separated.



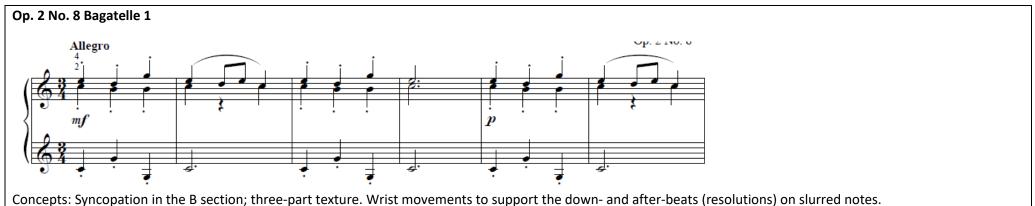
Op. 2 No. 6b In Four Parts (Solo version)

Play through the individual voices phrase by phrase (focusing on the stems and highlighting each voice in a different colour can help separate them visually). Join voices in twos (e.g. Bass and Tenor, then Bass and Alto, etc...), then threes then finally play all four voices. It is also possible to practice singing one voice and playing another (or others). Concepts: silent finger change; juggling a melodic line between hands.

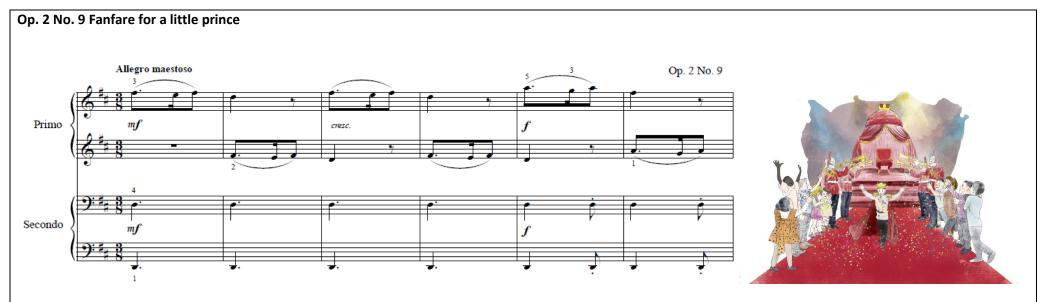




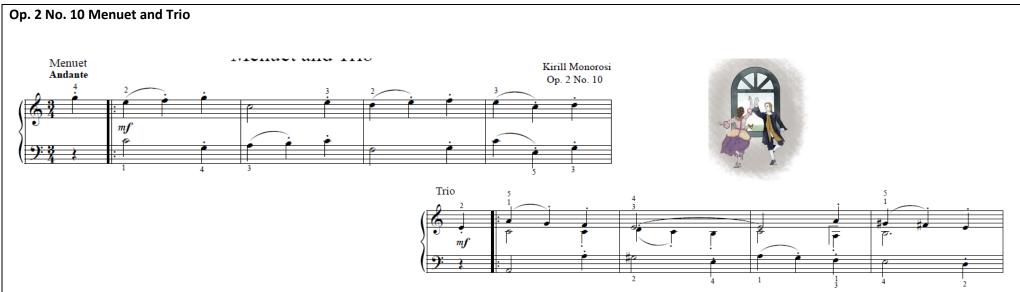
Concepts: Sequence (bars 15-25). As the sequence is descending, this should be supported by a decrescendo. It is important to make a connection between the inner processes of pieces (the musical structure) and the performance elements that help project these processes. For example: recognizing sequences, and then playing a crescendo or decrescendo (depending on whether it is an ascending or descending sequence) to support it.



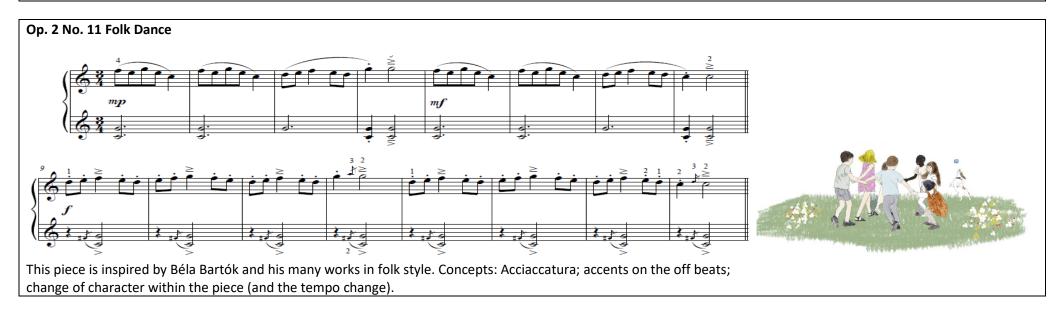
concepts: syncopation in the B section; three-part texture, whist movements to support the down- and after-beats (resolutions) on siured notes.

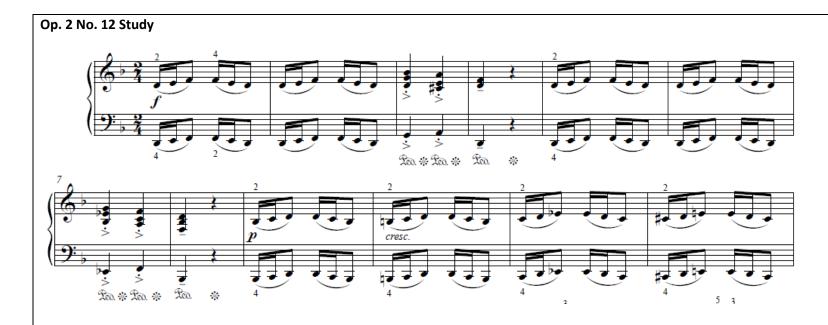


Explore both the Primo and Secondo parts. Concepts: imitation; pedal point (revise dotted rhythms). An important keyboard technique that can be learned here is changing fingers on one key in repetition. Note the change in the articulation between stacc. and legato.

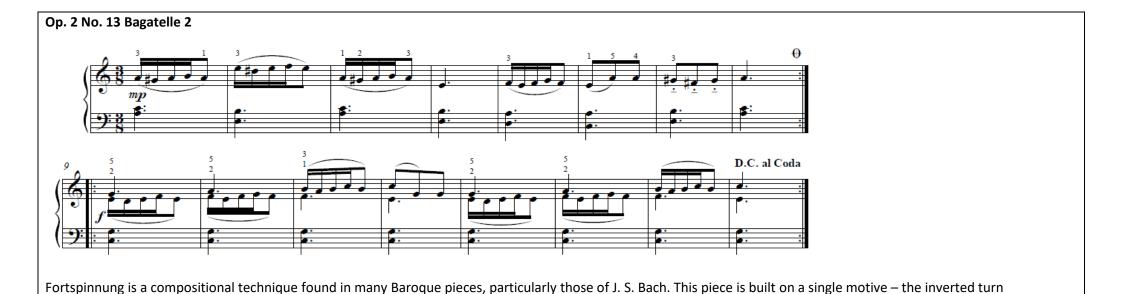


The Menuet (sometimes spelled Minuet or Minuetto) is a graceful French dance in triple time that was popular in Europe in the late 17th and 18th Centuries. The name comes from the small steps (pas menus) taken in the dance. In dances at court, the Menuet was played by an orchestra, and was usually paired with a second Menuet that was contrasting (in key and therefore character). The second Menuet was often played by only three instruments to provide further contrast to the whole orchestra – hence the name TRIO – meaning for three performers or in three parts. Countless Menuets by composers from the Baroque and Classical periods exist as individual pieces, or as parts of larger works such as Suites (collections of dances) or Symphonies. The accentuation in Menuets is in two bars (unlike Waltzes, where each first beat is slightly accented), and some Menuets (like this one) begin with an upbeat. The Trio is in three parts (or three melodic voices imitating three individual instruments). Some layering practice will help master the texture of the Trio. Take care to ensure articulation is executed accurately and note the imitation and dialogue between the voices in both the Menuet and Trio.





A piece written using the technique of fortspinnung (the spinning out of a single idea or melodic cell into a linear texture). The middle section presents a new melody in chordal style, while the bass continues with the rhythm and melodic outlines of the A section. The chordal idea of bars 3-4 is further developed in bars 25-32. Note the difference in effect of the same passages in major and minor.



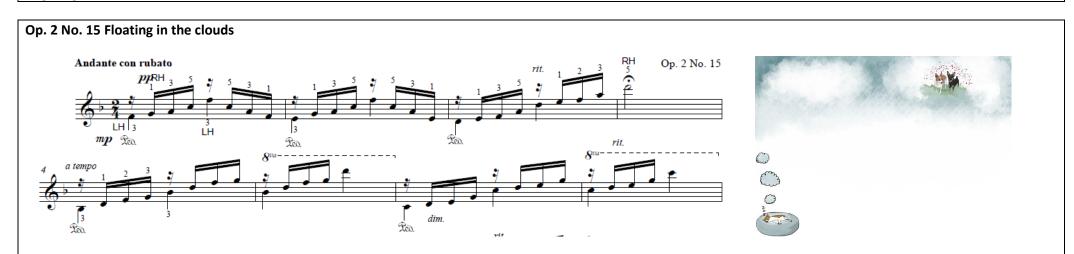
(gruppetto). Concepts: Motive, turn (gruppetto), fortspinnung, una corda pedal; Coda; 8va sign. A delicate touch is needed in the Coda to convey the finesse of the ending.

Op. 2 No. 14 Canon in G minor (Duet) Primo Primo

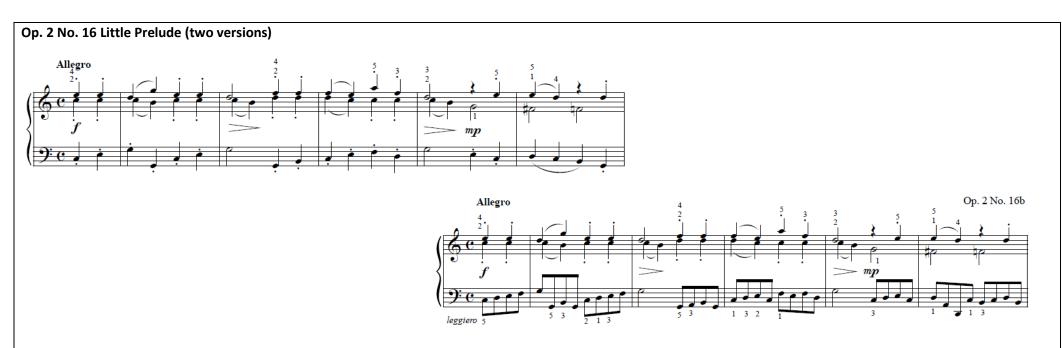
mp

Secondo

JS Bach was a great master of polyphony, and composed numerous canons (apart from the independent canons, there are those in the Goldberg Variations, The Musical Offering, The Art of Fugue, as well as works in canon form integrated into other pieces, like sections of the great F major Toccata for organ or the Andante from the Sonata for Violin and Piano BWV 1015). This work is an accompanied canon at the 5th (the follower is a fifth lower than the leader). It is an homage to Bach, and closes with the BACH motive. That it is the 14th piece in the book is also no accident (find out what the number 14 meant for Bach!). Concepts: Key of G minor; Polyphony; Melodies and accompaniment. BACH motive; upbeat. Explore both the Primo and Secondo parts. In the primo part (the actual canon), the player is introduced to independent dynamics in each of the hands, as well as hearing 3 lines simultaneously. Each of the melodic lines have to be shaped dynamically. For an extra challenge, this canon can be played as a solo piece: play the two voices of the primo part in the RH, and the lower of the bass voices of the secondo in the LH. Write out the Canon on two staves, adding new fingerings for the RH.



Concepts: through composed; tempo rubato; hand crossing; sustaining pedal. The piece should sound dreamy and spontaneous, not mechanical! Explore rhythmic flexibility here and decide where to take more time, trying out different possibilities and reflecting on them. This type of practice is essential in developing the skill of interacting with works and making your own decisions through trying various options, and through critical listening. A good touch and a warm, delicate tonal quality are vital to conveying the mood of this piece.



Concepts: Consonance and dissonance; tension and resolution, passing notes and figurations (in the LH, the bare harmonic outline of the version with the simplified Bass is then filled in with passing notes in the next version); Binary (AB) form. This is inspired by J. S. Bach's Little Preludes, particularly the set of six from a copy by Bach's student J. C. Kittel (BWV 933-938), as all of them are in Binary form. Incidentally, the largest number of Little Preludes by Bach are found in the Clavier-Büchlein vor W. F. Bach. The two versions of this Prelude may also be played in alternation in repeats (simple version first half, then on repeat the filled-in version first half, then simple version second half, followed by filled-in version second half). This is the common practice in Bach's Sarabandes and agréments of the English Suites 2 and 3, or the Sarabande and Double from the English Suite 6.

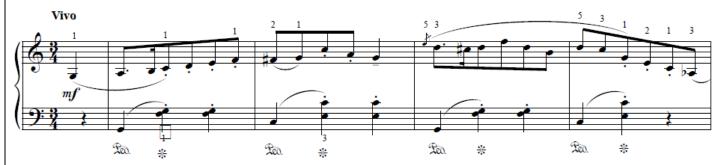






The word Invention was used by a number of composers for very different types of works written for various instruments. The most famous Inventions are no doubt the 15 two-part and 15 three-part inventions composed by J. S. Bach, the earliest versions of which are found in the Clavier-Büchlein vor W. F. Bach. This work differs in structure from the Inventions of J. S. Bach as it develops contrasting material in the B section. Imagining the tonal colours and expressive qualities of two woodwind instruments (in my mind I hear the oboe and bassoon), will help focus on tonal control and achieve a more musical performance. Concepts: Invention, part-swapping; polyphony and canon; upbeats; ossia measures. Key of D major.

Op. 2 No. 18 Waltz in C major



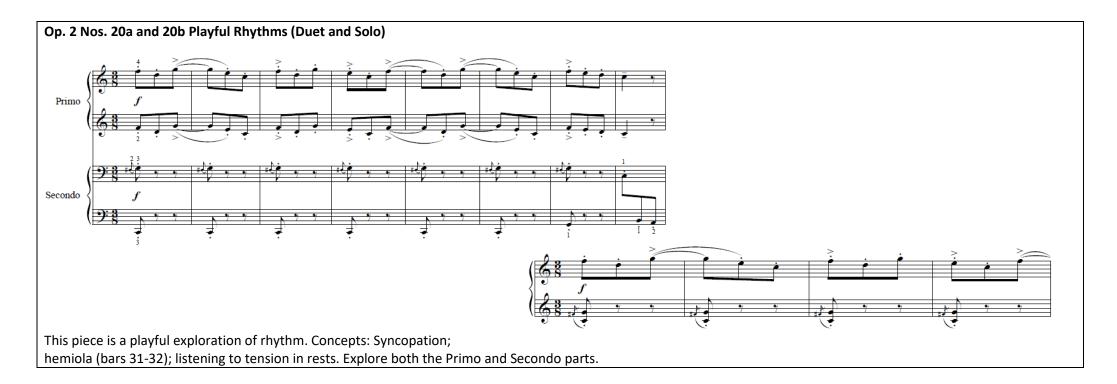
This Waltz is quite energetic, with a broad melodic range that spans over an octave in just the first two bars.

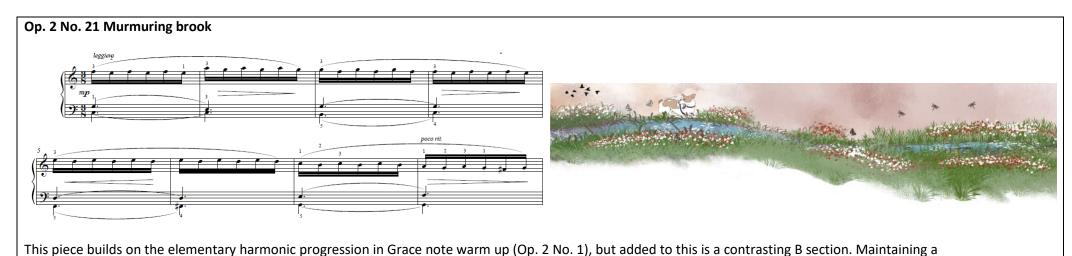
Attention to articulations and much dynamic support is needed to bring out the character of this piece. Concepts: Upbeat, Waltz.

Op. 2 No. 19 Dreaming



Concepts: harmonics; sostenuto pedal; 15ma sign (two octaves higher). Listening to sound, especially in the rests is extremely important here to deliver a sensitive and beautiful performance, and convey the mood and character of this work. If a sostenuto pedal is available, using it will help improve coordination, as the piece requires the use of both the sostenuto and sustaining pedals.

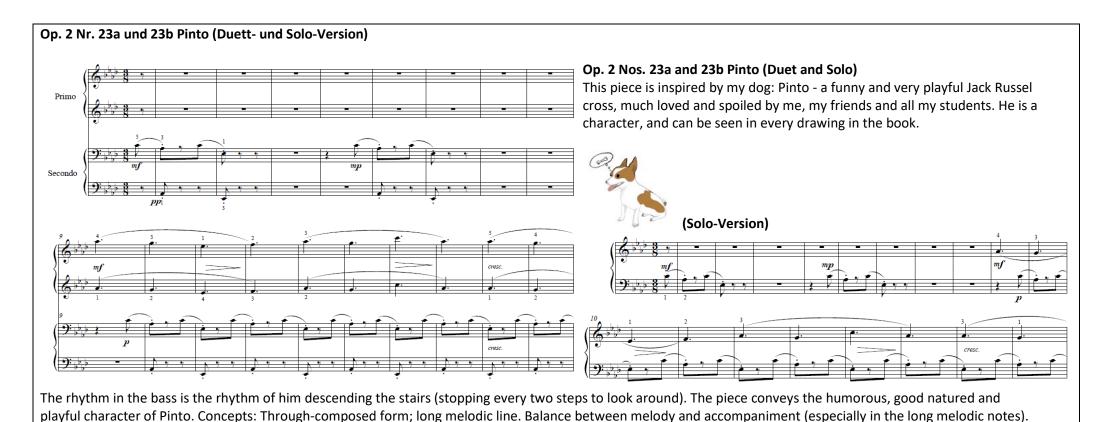




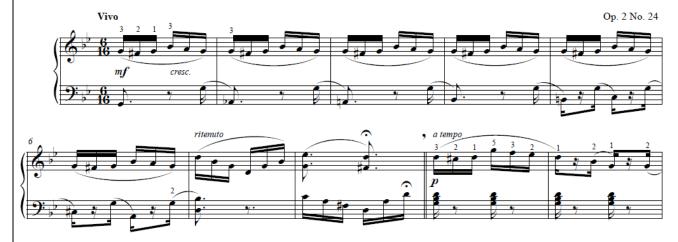
relaxed arm and hand is important, in order not to tense up in the written-out trills. The trills should not be played mechanically, but lightly and with a sense of flow. Ensure a good sound at all times and shape the semiquavers dynamically in order to achieve an expressive and sensitive performance. Concepts: Trills; ternary form.

Op. 2 Nr. 22 Toccatina Presto Solution Presto Solution Solution Presto Solution Solution

Eine gute Koordination ist erforderlich, um den andauernden Handwechsel in einem schnellen Tempo zu bewältigen und Ausdauer ist erforderlich, um die Leichtigkeit und das Tempo durchgehend beizubehalten. Das Klopfen des Rhythmus auf den Knien, bevor Sie mit dem Üben des Stücks beginnen, hilft, diese Koordination mit mehr Selbstvertrauen zu bewältigen.



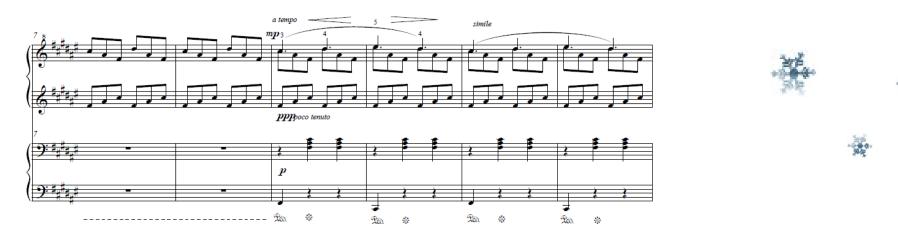
Op. 2 Nr. 24 Tarantella



Op. 2 No. 24 Tarantella

This piece is in a complex ternary form, where each section is itself in ternary form: Introduction, A–B–A1, C–D–C1, A1–B1–A2, Coda. Variety and a sense of momentum and development is achieved through varying each section on its return. Only one section is repeated exactly (A1) for greater cohesion. This piece uses a typical Tarantella rhythm. Concepts: Tarantella; hand crossing; complex ternary form, G minor and E-flat major; contrast between homophonic and polyphonic sections.

Op. 2 No. 25 First Snow (Duet)



This is one of my favourite pieces in this collection. It evokes the magic of wintertime, and seeing snow for the first time. The snowfall starts with a single snowflake, and becomes a swirling dance of snowflakes. A Waltz in mixed time, with a combination between 6/8 and 3/4 time. I explored this combination earlier in my Etude in B-flat major (Op. 1 No. 21). Concepts: Key of F-sharp major; double sharps; mixed time. Although this is an unusual key to read, the piece is not difficult to play, apart from the rhythmical coordination between primo and secondo. It is important to release the pedal on the second beat to ensure that the dance character is clearly projected. Explore both the Primo and Secondo parts.

Op. 2 No. 26 A little concerto grosso (Duet)



Concepts: Ritornello form; concerto (solo and grosso); tutti/solo; imitation; sequence (bars 31-37). This is a large-scale piece that explores an extended, Ritornello form that is found in Baroque concertos, particularly by Antonio Vivaldi. The contrast between Tutti and Solo sections should be clearly brought out. Explore both the Primo and Secondo parts and listen to several concertos to see how the form is applied in different contexts and get a sense of character and style of the works.





Op. 2 No. 27 Scherzo (Duet)

Inspired by F. Mendelssohn's style of writing, with his signature brilliant, fast and light passagework, this piece tests the endurance of both players!

Maintain a lightness throughout the quaver passagework (stable fingering will help). Explore both the Primo and Secondo parts.





Kirill Monorosi

Kirill Monorosi is a Sydney-based pianist, musicologist and teacher. He studied at the Franz Liszt Hochschule für Musik in Weimar, Germany, and completed his PhD in musicology at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. He was a finalist and Diploma prize-winner of the 2010 J. S. Bach International Piano Competition in Würzburg (of which he has been co-artistic director and co-chair of the jury since 2017), and has been awarded a number of awards, including the Churchill Fellowship (2014). He has given recitals with solo, chamber music, song works and has appeared as soloist with orchestras in Europe, Australia, Latin America and Russia. His recordings of J. S. Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier book 1, and Beethoven's Diabelli Variations (live recording) are available on all major platforms.

Kirill is passionate about passing on his love of music through teaching (on the rare occasions that he is not teaching, he can be found taking walks with Pinto), and a number of Kirill's students have won music scholarships at leading schools in Sydney, and have achieved success in local, national and international competitions, performing in venues such Carnegie Hall (New York), the Mozarteum (Salzburg), and the Sydney Opera House. In 2021, he published his Op. 1: 24 Etudes.



In spite of a lack of formal education and credentials, Pinto has an established career as a much-loved studio dog.

Pinto

Yu Guo grew up in Beijing, and for as long as she remembers, she was an avid lover of painting. At the moment, Yu lives in Sydney and is in her senior year at UNSW, majoring in Landscape Architecture. She works on a number of projects as a freelance artist and graphic designer. Yu loves sharing her passion for art, spending her free time teaching children drawing and painting. Her enthusiasm and skill make her a sought-after and successful teacher.



Yu Guo

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