

Italian Concerto BMV 971: J.S Bach

J.S Bach, known as the father of harmony and generally regarded as one of the greatest composers of all time, was recognized for his skill in contrapuntal invention and motivic control and his talent for writing tightly woven music of powerful sonority. Some of his famous instrumental works are the Brandenburg Concertos and the Goldberg Variations, and vocal music such as the Dt Matthew Passion and the Mass in B minor.

The Italian Concerto was part of the 2nd part of his four-volume collection Clavier-Übung (Keyboard Practice). The first movement features the Ritornello form, in which the orchestra (tutti) had a recurring main theme, called the Ritornello, interspersed with a soloist or group of soloists (soli) playing solo lines between the recurrences of the Ritornello. Bach was able to imitate this form which required the soloists and an orchestra, using only a two-manual harpsichord. The louder manual allowed him to imitate the role of the tutti sections, while the softer manual represented the soloists.

Trois Nouvelles Etudes: Frederic Chopin

No. 1 in F Minor

No. 2 in A-flat Major

Frederic Chopin was a Polish composer and a virtuoso pianist of the Romantic era who wrote primarily for solo piano. He has maintained worldwide renown as a leading musician of his era, one whose "poetic genius was based on a professional technique that was without equal in his generation". Chopin was known for the many genres of music he composed for the solo piano such as Mazurkas, Ballads, Scherzos, Nocturnes and Polonaises.

Chopin wrote his Trois Nouvelles Etudes for piano in 1839, as a contribution to "Méthode des méthodes de piano", a piano instruction book by Ignaz Moscheles and François-Joseph Fétis. The first of the Trois nouvelles etudes is an intimate piece in F minor. It develops students' facility with 3-on-4 poly-rhythms.

The melody of the second etude in A-flat major sits atop a series of chords in the right hand with a simple bass in the left hand. It develops students' facility with 2-on-3 poly-rhythms.