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DANIEL STEIBELT

TWO RONDOS AND SEVEN SONATINAS FOR PIANOFORTE

Edited and Fingered by
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With a Biographical Sketch of the Author by
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DANIEL STEIBELT was at one time regarded as a rival of Beethoven as composer and pianist. He was born in Berlin, but the date of his birth is uncertain. It is generally said that he was born in 1755 or 1756, but the French historian, Fétis, says he knew Steibelt to be 36 years old in 1801. It will readily be understood from this uncertainty as to the date of his birth that little is known about his early life. His musical gifts reached the ear of the Crown Prince Frederick William, who became his patron and placed him under the instruction of Kirnberger. There is no record of the length of time during which young Steibelt studied under Kirnberger, and nothing is known of any other instruction which he may have received at this period. His studies were interrupted by a term of service in the army, and in 1784 he left Berlin.

In 1788 he was in Munich, and in 1789 he gave concerts in Saxony and Hanover. In 1790 he took up his residence in Paris, where he made his advent as a matured composer and performer. Hermann was the popular pianist of the day, in the French capital, but Steibelt speedily displaced him. Hermann was an old-fashioned harpsichordist, but Steibelt, whose father was a piano-maker, thoroughly understood the resources of the instrument of his day and wrote for it accordingly in a style far in advance of that of Hermann. The newcomer was in a short time the reigning virtuoso. But of course no composer could be regarded as great in Paris, unless he wrote for the stage. So Steibelt wrote a "Roméo et Juliette", which was produced at the Théâtre Feydeau, Sept. 10, 1793. The work pleased the public, and it was successfully performed outside of France.

Steibelt's position in Paris was now assured, and his pupils were numerous and of high social position. But he sold to Boyer, the publisher, as new works, some sonatas previously published in Berlin, and the discovery of the fraud made it necessary for him to leave Paris. In 1796 he went to London, where he wrote his third concerto, containing the once famous "storm rondo", and where he learned to prefer the English piano. In 1799 he returned to Germany, where he met with a warm reception. He challenged Beethoven to a public competition in playing, and met with a sound defeat. He returned to Paris in 1800, and procured the first performance there of Haydn's "Creation". He produced a ballet of his own, but he was not comfortable in Paris, and in 1802 went again to London. For six years he oscillated between the two cities, producing works for the stage and piano-music, including the two concertos in E-flat and several of his best sonatas. He also published his Method and his "Étude", a collection of 50 studies, probably his best piano-works. In 1809 he went to St. Petersburg, where he wrote additional works for the stage, and his sixth, seventh, and eighth piano-concertos. He died, after a lingering illness, on Sept. 20, 1823.

Steibelt was unquestionably a remarkable man. He was arrogant, vain, affected, and even dishonest; yet his abilities were so great that he was welcomed everywhere. It is not at all surprising to find that the best qualities of his piano-playing were those dependent upon dash, vigor, and brilliancy. He was a dazzling performer; but it is beyond doubt that he was deficient in the deeper and subtler power of art. He seems to have been aware of his own weakness, and seldom played an adagio, and even more seldom wrote one. Most of his sonatas consist of an allegro and a rondo. When he does write an andante or adagio, it is usually very brief, and often constructed on the theme of some popular song of the day. In his sonatas for violin and piano the melodies of the slow movements are given to the violin, while the piano generally has a facile tremolo-accompaniment.

Indeed, the critics of the day censured him for excessive use of the tremolo. It may be added that his technic was not fully developed, his left hand being weak. Pedals were just coming into use, and Steibelt studied their effects, which he was prone to exaggerate. It is generally conceded, however, that despite all its faults, Steibelt's playing had a good deal of originality and was very influential with audiences. His writing follows the general bent of his inclinations as a performer. The decline of the popularity of his works is inevitably attributed to their lack of high organization. One searches in vain among Steibelt's sonatas and concertos for the compact, closely knit, intellectually developed structure conspicuous in all Beethoven's compositions. Steibelt had the fatal gift of facility. Many of his movements show a fine gift for melody, but the bulk of his composition seems to have been the product of the fancy of the moment, and not the result of careful thought.

The critics of his day declared that the "Étude" was his best work, and this judgment seems to have been well grounded. It has been noted as an interesting fact, that Nos. 3 and 8 are a close approach to the style of Mendelssohn's "Lieder ohne Worte". Like almost all other composers, Steibelt has been accused of a lack of originality. It appears, however, that his modulations were much more free than those of his predecessors. He is credited with the invention of the tremolo for piano, which he used to excess. He also made very free use of the pizzicato in chamber-music. He showed some boldness for his day in his orchestral writing, and in his eighth piano-concerto he introduces vocal parts. All that he did, however, bears the stamp of superficial brilliancy. There is nothing profound or moving in Steibelt; but he made some steps in the progress of piano-playing. He wrote 81 sonatas and sonatinas, 117 rondos, 8 concertos, and a large number of other compositions.

W. J. HENDERSON.

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Rondo.

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D. STEIBELT. Op. 33, № 2.

Allegretto.

Piano.

p *dolce.*

f

dolce.

f

dolce.

smorz.

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dolce.

f

dolce.

f

p

smorz.

p

f

dolce.

sf

sf *p*

ff

Turkish Rondo.

D. STEIBELT.

Allegro.

Piano.

p *leggero.*

p

sf *mf*

f *sf*

p

p

13030

p *f* *fz* *f* *p* *f* *fz* *f* *f* *p*

f

p

p

sf

f

sf

p

cresc.

p

cresc.

p

p

f

f

Minore.

p

f

leggero.

p

sf p

cresc.

f

f

Maggiore.

p *leggero.* *p* *sf*

f *p* *cresc.*

p *f* *rf*

sf *p*

f

cre - scen - do.

con espressione.

in tempo.

ritard.

f

p

f

p

f

sf

sf

ff

Sonatina.

D. STEIBELT.

Allegro moderato. (♩= 100)

Piano.

f

dolce.

p

f

f

p

dolce.

p

più f

dolce.

f

p

f

ff

Andantino. (♩. = 50)

p

sf

dolce.

p

leggero.

p

p

Moderato. (♩ = 72)

mf

p

f

mf

f

p

f

Allegro. (♩.= 88)

mf

f

p

f

p

f

fz

fz

ff

Sonatina.

D. STEIBELT. Op. 49, Nº 1.

Allegro.

Piano.

p legato.

p

cresc.

p

mf scherzando.

pp

mf

pp

mf legato

sf

cresc.

sf

f

p poco rit.

pp *delicato.*

a tempo.

il basso sempre legato.

cresc.

f

dim.

p

pp

sentito.

pp

f

Rondo.

Allegretto.

p con semplicità.

legato.

f

p

cresc. molto.

ff

dim.

pp

Minore.

f

(5)

rit.

a tempo.

(4)

p dolciss.

sf

(4)

cresc.

f

smorz.

pp

Maggiore.

f *sf* *sf*

f

pp

p

cresc. molto.

f *dim.*

p

cresc.

ff

pp

ff

Sonatina.

D. STEIBELT. Op. 49, Nº 2.

Allegro risoluto.

Piano.

ff

f

sf

sf

mf con espress.

p l'accomp.

dimin.

pp

f

p

f

f

ff

dolce.

cresc.

f

legato.

dim.

p

cresc.

f

p

f

p

cresc.

f

dolce espress.

mf

dim.

pp

cresc.

f

p

f

f

Pastorale.

Allegro.

p

mf

p

mf

p

mf

poco

sf rit.

sf

p

f

fz

fz

p legato.

stacc.

cresc.

f

ff

dolce.

mf

p

f

stacc.

cresc.

f

p

cresc.

fz

dim.

rall.

a tempo.

mf

p

mf

p

sf sf sf

poco rit.

a tempo.

p

cresc.

f

calando.

perdendosi.

f

Sonatina.

D. STEIBELT. Op. 49, Nº 3

Moderato.

Piano.

(2d time 5)

p

il basso legato sempre.

più sensibile.

mf

cresc.

f

grazioso.

dolce.

ten.

mf

f

1.

2.

p ma brillanie.

f

f p cresc.

f legato.

p

mf

cresc.

dolciss.

f

(pp)

cresc. molto.

1.

2.

ff

Rondo.

Allegretto.

p grazioso.

legato.

cresc.

f *pp*

cresc.

f *p*

sf *p*

f

dim.

p

cresc.

f *p* *scherz-*

ando

f

p

f *p* *legato.*

pp *f* *legato.*

f

f *ff*

Maggiore.

p

p

pp

sempre pp

f

ff

scherzando.

p dolce.

ff

Sonatina.

D. STEIBELT. Op. 49, Nº 4.

Allegro.

Piano.

p con espress.

legato.

dolce.

delicatiss.

cresc.

f

p dolce.

cresc.

f

p

p

pp

f

fespress.

pp

mf

ten.

p

ten.

mf

cresc.

p

cresc.

sf

p

legato.

p delicato.

cresc. fz

f

dolce.

legato.

cresc.

f

p

pp

Rondo.

Allegretto.

mf grazioso. *p con grazia.* *nf*

ten. *p con grazia.* *p*

cresc. *f*

p *mf*

f *pp*

p cresc. *f*

p

cresc.

f

ff

p

cresc.

mf

p

mf

ten.

p

p

cresc.

f

sf

Minore.

p

cresc.

f

p

mf

p

inf

p

leggero.

cresc.

legato.

ff

dim.

p

p rit.

Maggiore.

p a tempo.

con grazia.

legatiss.

cresc.

f

mf

f

f cresc.

ff

Sonatina.

Allegro maestoso.

D. STEIBELT. Op. 49, №5.

Piano.

f

legato.

cresc.

f

p

legato.

p

cresc.

f

p

cresc

mf *p*

f

mf cresc.

il basso cantando.

f

ff

p rall.

cresc.

a tempo

mf con espress.

p *fz* *cresc.*

p *f* *dolce*

cresc.

pp *cresc.*

fz

p *f*

f *f*

Rondo.

Presto.

p

marc.

marcato.

f *p*

f

f

leggero.

cresc.

f

marc.

p

leggero.

cresc.

f

dolce il tempo. poco rit.

a tempo.

brill.

cresc.

f

p

fz

Minore

marc.

grazioso.

marc.

(4)

Maggiore.

rinf.

f

marc.

p cresc.

ff

p

f

Sonatina

Allegro (♩.=100)

D. STEIBELT. Op. 49, Nº 6

Piano

f *sf* *p* *legato*

f *sf* *p*

f

f

poco meno

rit.

cantabile espress. con dolcezza

legato

mf *f* *p* *mf* *p*

con abbandono *con abbandono*

f a tempo

mf

dim. e rall. - ten.

a tempo

mf

cresc.

f

p

mf

cresc.

p rit.

a tempo

cresc.

legato

f

p rit. - pp -

cresc.

f

sf

p

f

sf

p

f

ff *rit.* *poco meno* *dolce espress.*

pp

mf *p*

p *f*

p *cresc.* *ff*

Rondo

Presto (♩ = 138)

f *p* *cresc.* *f* *dim.* *p* *cresc.* *f* *p* *cresc.* *p* *cresc.* *mf* *ff*

p

mf

p

ff

p

cresc.

f

p

cresc.

f

f

p

cresc.

f

p

cresc

f

p

ff

ff

p

ff