

P R E F A C E

The five volumes of the *Piano Literature* series (Books 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6) contain a selection of choice smaller works in original form by master composers of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. Because there is almost no keyboard music by master composers easy enough for first-level students, Book 1 is a collection of folk songs and singing games in delightful piano arrangements.

The selections in Book 2 and the following volumes were carefully considered from the standpoint of difficulty, not only technically but musically. In each volume, our aim has been to include compositions of fairly uniform difficulty and only compositions that can be played beautifully by the average student at that level.

The series is planned to provide:

- 1) A thorough musical preparation for performance of the composers' major keyboard works through experience with representative smaller works at each of the five levels.
- 2) Experience in a variety of styles and forms and an understanding of the way these styles and forms have developed in the history of music.

All of the selections are presented in their original form. The fingerings are based on a study of the tempo and dynamics as well as ease of performance. We are aware that in many cases there may be more than one good way to finger a passage and recommend that students study the fingering from the standpoint of what best fits their own hands.

A glossary, containing definitions of all the musical terms used in the music and in the biographical notes, appears at the end of each book.

Frances Clark, Louise Goss and Sam Holland

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Johann Sebastian Bach *1685–1750*

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH belonged to a famous family of musicians who lived in central Germany. This family was well known for almost two centuries before Bach's birth in 1685. His father and uncles, his grandfather and great-uncles, and even his great-grandfather had been violinists, harpsichordists, organists, and conductors. Johann Sebastian had more than twenty children, and four of his sons—Carl Philipp Emanuel, Johann Christoph, Johann Christian, and Wilhelm Friedemann—also became composers.

Bach himself was the greatest member of this famous family. He was born in the city of Eisenach in Germany. As a boy, he studied violin, harpsichord, clavichord, organ, and singing. As a man, he had a number of fine musical positions, both at court and in the church. In addition to teaching, conducting, and playing the organ, Bach wrote many kinds of music—for choir and orchestra, chamber music, and music for solo instruments. An important part of this music was for clavier. Today, when the older keyboard instruments such as harpsichord and clavichord are uncommon, we play Bach's music on the piano.

The years in which Bach lived marked the end of one important period in the history of music. From about 1600 to 1750, music was of the type and in the style which we now call baroque. Bach's importance in baroque music can be seen in the fact that the date of his death (1750) is now used to mark the end of the whole baroque period.

The two giges and the bourrée that follow are single movements from fragmentary suites.

Gigue

From the *Suite in F Minor*,
BWV 823

Johann Sebastian Bach

Allegretto

The musical score for the Gigue, BWV 823, is presented in five systems. Each system consists of a treble and bass staff. The key signature is F minor (three flats) and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked 'Allegretto'. The first system begins with a forte (f) dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and fingerings. Measure numbers 8, 15, 22, and 29 are indicated in the left margin. The piece concludes with a repeat sign at the end of the fifth system.



Domenico Scarlatti

1685–1759

Except for the fact that his was seven years longer, Domenico Scarlatti's life exactly parallels that of the great German composer Johann Sebastian Bach.

Scarlatti was the son of an Italian musician, Alessandro Scarlatti, who was one of the most important early opera composers. Domenico was born in Naples. He studied music with his father and learned to sing, play the harpsichord and organ, and compose.

At the age of 16, Scarlatti was made organist and composer of the royal chapel in Naples, and at 17, he began to write operas. Two years later, he went with his father to Rome and then was sent to Venice to study the harpsichord with Gasparini.

As a man, Scarlatti became music director for Queen Maria Casimira of Poland, who was then living in Rome. Later, for a short time, he was director of music at St. Peter's Church in Rome. Finally, he went to live in Lisbon, where he was music director for the royal family and music teacher for the young princess Maria Barbara. When Maria Barbara became Queen of Spain, she made Scarlatti her court composer and he spent the rest of his life at the royal palace in Madrid.

Although Scarlatti wrote many different kinds of music, his most important compositions were for harpsichord. He was one of the greatest keyboard virtuosos of his day and one of the most gifted of all Italian harpsichord composers. He wrote more than 600 pieces for this instrument—some of them light, graceful, melodious compositions and some of them brilliant technical pieces, like the many short sonatas.

Sonata in G Major

L. 79; K. 391

Domenico Scarlatti

Allegretto

The musical score is written for piano in G major, 3/4 time. It consists of six systems of two staves each. The first system begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo is marked **Allegretto**. The first measure is marked *mf* and includes fingerings 2, 4, 3, 4, 4, 4, 4, 1, 5, 4, 1, 5, 4. The word *simile* appears in the second measure. Measure numbers 6, 11, 16, 22, and 28 are indicated at the start of their respective systems. Dynamics include *mf*, *f*, and *p*. The score includes various musical notations such as accents, slurs, and fingerings. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots in the final measure.