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Preface

The purpose of this book is to provide a resource that promotes interest in and awareness of the available body of concerto literature written for the intermediate-level pianist. The study of piano concertos is sometimes considered a landmark goal for piano students. It is a musical genre often reserved for the most advanced students, as many of the most well-known works in the concerto genre are very challenging, beyond the skill set of intermediate-level pianists. However, numerous composers, from the early Baroque masters through contemporary composers, have created captivating works at the intermediate level. These engaging and musically satisfying compositions are the focus of this volume.

At the end of our research, we studied over 270 complete pieces, most of which contain multiple movements. We reviewed concertos that are currently in print as well as a number of out-of-print items that were procured through interlibrary loan holdings. All works annotated in this volume were personally examined, and every effort was taken to ensure the accuracy of the information provided. We chose not to identify individual works as “in print” or “out of print,” as the market for in-print materials is constantly in flux.

Our desire was to create a straightforward resource. Throughout the book, composers are arranged alphabetically by last name. An index is also included listing all composers alphabetically by last name. Appendix A lists composers by historical period. For the purposes of this book, musical periods are defined as follows: Baroque (1600–1750), Classical (1750–1825), Romantic (1825–1900), and 20th Century/Contemporary (1900–present day).

The descriptions include information about publishers, tempo, key, instrumentation, and technical and musical content. Annotations highlight the challenges and inspirations of each movement, as well as pertinent stylistic features.

The compositions were written for a variety of keyboard instruments, including the harpsichord, organ, clavichord, and piano; this is specified under the title of each entry. Additionally, each entry identifies the collaborating ensemble, whether it is an original part for a second piano, an orchestral reduction for piano, or an original part for string orchestra, orchestra, band, rhythm ensemble, or even a “humming audience.” Listings with the designation of “full score” do not have an available piano reduction.

The tempos provided have been taken directly from the printed edition whenever possible. For editorial markings, suggested tempos appear in this bracketed format: [$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 120$]. Tempos in parentheses, such as ($\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 120$), are given by the composer.

The commentary, while intended to be objective, also naturally reflects the experiences of the reviewers. All comments are meant to guide the teacher's selection process in a positive manner, without bias or personal influence.

Jane Magrath's 10-level grading system from *The Pianist's Guide to Standard Teaching and Performance Literature* served as our model. We added a Level 10+ to accommodate upper-level concertos that contain some Level 8, 9, or 10 movements along with movements of greater difficulty. Length, technical requirements, and tempo were all considered when determining the level of a piece. As in any subjective system, some readers may hold a differing opinion of the levels assigned. Grading allows a point of comparison between the works included in this book and is not an absolute determination.

Writing this book has been a labor of love for both of us. We continue to be amazed by the vast body of literature available to students and teachers under the umbrella of "intermediate piano concertos." We hope that this volume encourages more frequent and diverse use of this wonderful genre of music.

Karen Beres, Winston-Salem, North Carolina
Christopher Hahn, Missoula, Montana

Using This Resource

Arrangement of Entries

Composers are listed alphabetically rather than by style period. For composers with more than one compositional entry, pieces are ordered by catalogue number (Op., Hob., etc.) or alphabetically by title for works without catalogue numbers. All movements have been annotated individually, with tempo, key, and level indications provided for each. In some instances, composer biographical information has been included to familiarize the reader with lesser-known composers or to summarize a composer's style and contributions to the concerto genre.

Appendices

Two appendices provide additional ways to sort the repertoire. Appendix A, *Composers by Historical Period*, presents a quick view of composers included in this book sorted by compositional period. Appendix B, *Concertos by Level*, is a comprehensive list of each movement sorted from level 1 to level 10+.

Descriptions

Descriptions are generally limited to style characteristics, technical demands, and pedagogical uses of the work. Additional comments have been included to convey benefits or drawbacks of a particular piece. When there are multiple publishers of a composition, the indication "many standard editions" is often used rather than a citation for each individual publisher.

SAMPLE ENTRY

COMPOSER (LAST, First) (Birth Year–Death Year) Country of Birth/Nationality

Background information about composer's works and/or compositional style.

Title

General background information about the specific piece (occasionally included).

(Original Instrumentation, Score Format, Publisher(s))

1. *Movement title* (metronome marking)

Description, including musical characteristics, technical challenges, and reasons for recommendation. (Key/tonality, suggested level)

Acknowledgements

In a project as large as this, there are many people to thank. First, deep gratitude is expressed to E. L. Lancaster, Senior Vice President and Keyboard-Editor-in-Chief at Alfred Music, whose vision identified the need for this particular book and whose counsel brought it to print. We are indebted to Albert Mendoza, Senior Keyboard Editor at Alfred Music, for lending his inimitable eye for detail and keen editorial skill to our manuscript. Thanks must also be expressed to Dr. Jane Magrath, Professor of Music at the University of Oklahoma. Her guidance and wisdom during our doctoral studies have allowed us to become the teachers that we are today. Her leveling system for intermediate piano music is a foundation for this book, and we are grateful for the path that she has forged.

We are indebted to the music library staff members at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and the University of Montana for their help in obtaining concertos through interlibrary loan. Leslie Kamtman at UNCSA was a particularly invaluable resource in finding compositions that were difficult to locate.

Anna Asch, Dianne Goolkasian Rahbee, Stephen Halloran, Alexander Peskanov, and Tanya Shevtsova provided us with self-published copies of their concertos. In addition, we want to offer our appreciation to the publishers who provided us with scores, including Alfred Music, A-R Editions, The FJH Music Company, Hal Leonard Corporation, The Lorenz Corporation, and Willis Music.

Most importantly, we want to express our deep appreciation and love for our spouses and families, who have supported and encouraged us throughout this process and in every adventure we undertake.

Leveling of Literature

Based on Jane Magrath's leveling system in *The Pianist's Guide to Standard Teaching and Performance Literature*.*

Reference Chart for Grading

Level	1	Walter and Carol Noona, <i>Little Concertino in C Major</i>
Level	2	George Anson, <i>Kid Koncerto</i> ; Albert Rozin, <i>Little Concerto</i>
Level	3	Franz Joseph Haydn, <i>Concertino in C Major (Divertimento)</i> , Hob. XIV:3 (movements 1 and 3); John Thompson, <i>Concerto Americana</i>
Level	4	Isaak Berkovich, <i>Piano Concerto, Op. 44, for Student and Teacher</i> (movements 2 and 3); Matthew Edwards, <i>Concerto for Young Pianists</i> (movements 1 and 2)
Level	5	Helen Boykin, <i>Concerto in F Major</i> (movements 1 and 3); Alexander Peskanov, <i>Concerto No. 8, "Spring Concerto"</i>
Level	6	Dennis Alexander, <i>Concertino in D Major</i> ; Joseph Frederick Wagner, <i>Concertino in G Minor</i> (movements 1 and 3)
Level	7	Anna Asch, <i>Concertino No. 1 in C Major</i> ; Giovanni Paisiello, <i>Concerto No. 2 in F Major</i> (movements 1 and 2)
Level	8	Johann Nepomuk Hummel, <i>Concertino for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 73, in G Major</i> (movement 3); Jean Williams, <i>Concerto in A Minor</i>
Level	9	Franz Anton Hoffmeister, <i>Concerto in D Major, Op. 24</i> (movements 1 and 3); Alexander Peskanov, <i>Concerto No. 7</i>
Level	10	Johann Christian Bach, <i>Keyboard Concerto in E-flat Major, Op. 7, No. 5</i> (movement 1); Dmitri Shostakovich, <i>Concerto No. 2 in F Major, Op. 102</i> (movement 1)
Level	10+	Ludwig van Beethoven, <i>Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat Major, Op. 19</i> (movements 1 and 3)

* Jane Magrath, *The Pianist's Guide to Standard Teaching and Performance Literature* (Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Music, 1995).

Abbreviations

- BWV *Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis* or *Bach Catalogue of Works*, the numbering system for J. S. Bach's works
- ca. circa
- F. numbering as given by Martin **F**alck, who published a catalogue of Wilhelm Friedemann Bach's works in 1913
- H. E. Eugene **H**elm, *Thematic Catalogue of the Works of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), a thematic catalogue for the works of C. P. E. Bach
- Hob. Anthony van **H**oboken *Joseph Haydn: Thematisch-bibliographisches werkverzeichnis*, the thematic catalogue of Haydn's works
- IMSLP **I**nternational **M**usic **S**core **L**ibrary **P**roject (<https://imslp.org>)
- K. Ludwig Ritter von **K**öchel, *Chronologisch-thematisches Verzeichnis sämtlicher Tonwerke Wolfgang Amadeus Mozarts*, the chronological catalogue of Mozart's works
- No. number
- Op. Opus
- Vol. Volume
- WoO **W**erke **o**hne **O**puszah (works without opus number), referring to works by Beethoven in George Kinsky and Hans Halm's *Das Werk Beethovens: Thematisch-Bibliographisches Verzeichnis seiner sämtlichen vollendeten Kompositionen*
- Wq. Alfred **W**otquenne, *Thematisches Verzeichnis der Werke von Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach*, a thematic catalogue for the works of C. P. E. Bach

ABEL, Carl Friedrich (1723–1787) Germany

Abel wrote six piano concertos in Op. 11, each of which is performed with seven instrumentalists: two each of Violin I, Violin II, and Viola, and one Cello. These works are musical and technical predecessors of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's piano concertos, but in a more concentrated, two-movement form.

Concerto in F Major, Op. 11, No. 1

(Piano and string orchestra, full score, handwritten manuscript, IMSLP)

1. *Allegro ma non troppo* [♩ = ca. 132–138]

Written in an accessible two-part texture, this movement features a right-hand melody over left-hand accompaniment patterns. Abel utilizes many Classical compositional techniques, including sequential progressions, duple versus triple subdivisions of the beat, and straightforward yet engaging themes. A short cadenza allows the student to experiment with thematic ideas in an improvisatory manner. (F major, level 7)

2. *Menuetto* [♩ = ca. 136]

The movement opens with an orchestral statement of the theme followed by the keyboard solo entrance in a two-part form with repeats. Opportunities for elaboration exist in the repetitions of the introduction as well as in the second half of the D minor section of the piece. A few cadential passages foreshadow keyboard figurations of well-known Classical compositions. (F major, level 7)

Concerto in B-flat Major, Op. 11, No. 2

(Piano and string orchestra, full score, handwritten manuscript, IMSLP)

1. *Allegro* [♩ = ca. 132]

An orchestral statement of the main theme precedes the initial solo piano entrance. The pianist serves as both a soloist and a member of the ensemble, with the keyboard part fluctuating between presentations of the themes and harmonic outlining. This movement contains an abundance of scales and arpeggios, and provides multiple opportunities to include cadenzas. (B-flat major, level 7)

2. *Rondo allegro* [♩ = ca. 92–96]

Beautiful, lyrical lines contrast with sprightly, playful moments in this rondo. The mood is stately and joyous. Keyboard solo statements are followed by a repetition of these statements supported by the orchestra. The recurrent rondo theme (of the ABACA form) facilitates solid memorization throughout the movement. (B-flat major, level 7)

Concerto in E-flat Major, Op. 11, No. 3

This delightful work would be an effective substitute for an early Mozart or Haydn concerto.

(Piano and string orchestra, full score, C. F. Peters)

1. *Allegro maestoso* [♩ = ca. 132]

Incorporating more chromatic alterations, this *Allegro maestoso* is harmonically and technically more involved than *Concerto No. 1* or *No. 2*. Duple and triple subdivisions of the beat are found in frequent alternation in this movement. Musically dramatic, it offers opportunities for nuance in performance, even into the movement's cadenza. (E-flat major, level 9)

2. *Tempo di menuetto* [♩ = ca. 132]

A regal minuet opens the second movement with a highly decorated theme and incorporates more complex rhythmic gestures and technical demands than Abel's earlier concertos. The keyboard solo and orchestral lines reflect an aristocratic air. The work moves through a number of tonal centers. (E-flat major, level 8)

ALEXANDER, Dennis (b. 1947) USA

Dennis Alexander's three concertos are written for solo piano with piano accompaniment. The level of the accompaniment is slightly less demanding than that of the solo part.

Concertante in G Major

(Solo piano with piano accompaniment, two pianos, Alfred Music)

1. *Maestoso/Allegro gioioso/Andantino/Presto* (♩ = 60, 120–126, 92, 132)

A grand introduction is followed by a jovial, energetic theme with sparkling figuration that demands adept fingerwork. A fully notated cadenza showcases the soloist's technical mastery. (G major, level 8)

2. *Andante amorevole* (♩ = 80)

The slow movement opens with a solo that consists of a rhythmically sophisticated theme accompanied by 7th-chord harmonies. Following the solo introduction, the theme shifts into the accompanying piano supported by arpeggiated fingerwork in the solo piano line. (D major, level 7)

3. *Rondo (Allegro giocoso/Moderato/Allegro risoluto)* (♩ = 138, [♩ = ca. 176,] ♩ = ca. 184)

Alexander's tuneful melody requires careful attention to capture its rhythmic complexity and mixed meters. Glissandos add an exciting element to the solo part. The *Allegro risoluto* may be particularly challenging, with its combination of a rapid tempo and quick choreographic shifts. (G major, level 9)

Concertino in D Major

(Solo piano with piano accompaniment, two pianos, Alfred Music)

Allegro giocoso/Andante cantabile (♩ = 120, 60)

Written in one continuous movement, this piece winds its way through a number of key changes to a driving finish. Piano I involves chromaticism, with arpeggios divided thoughtfully between the hands. The work demands quick, clean fingerwork and clear articulation. According to the publication's introduction, Alexander wrote this composition to include "brisk passagework designed to fit neatly in the hand, seamless harmonic shifts, thrilling meter changes, and built-in technical fireworks." (D major, level 6)

Imperial Concertante

(Solo piano with piano accompaniment, two pianos, Alfred Music)

1. *Allegro molto* (♩ = 108)

Traversing four octaves of the piano in its first 24 measures, this work combines a quick pulse with offbeat harmonic punctuations supporting a catchy theme. Alexander creates a seamless transition into a lyrical middle section, with the solo piano taking the melodic lead. Cross-hand arpeggiations support the second piano's following statement of the theme. Note distributions between the hands are carefully marked, and chords are written in positions that should be familiar to the intermediate pianist. Sixteenth-note flourishes in the second piano add to the solo piano's dazzling ending. (C major, level 5)

2. *Andante cantabile* (♩ = 84)

Following traditional bass-line motion, this movement's theme is attractive and technically accessible. Challenges for the pianist include syncopated pedaling and shaping of long melodic lines. The short duration of the work, along with its limited hand span demands and slower tempo, make this middle movement slightly less difficult than the preceding one. (G major, level 4)

BEARD, Katherine (1926–1990) USA**Concerto in D Minor**

(Piano and orchestra, two piano reduction, Wynn Music)

Allegro moderato (♩ = ca. 126)

In one continuous movement, this short concerto showcases uncomplicated writing with few surprises. Clear articulation and dynamic directions as well as efficient fingering suggestions are provided, and the work is well designed for the player with small hands. With imitation used as the main compositional device in the development section, the technical demands are thoughtfully controlled in the solo. The Piano II part (level 4) is slightly less difficult. This is a solid choice as a straightforward intermediate concerto. (D minor, level 5)

BEETHOVEN, Ludwig van (1770–1827) Germany

The five standard piano concertos of Ludwig van Beethoven are well-known works, presenting formidable challenges that place most of them outside of the limits of this volume's grading system. Only three of his works for piano and orchestra fall within the technical and artistic range of this book and are annotated here.

Concerto in E-flat Major, WoO 4

This concerto appears to be Beethoven's earliest existing work to incorporate the orchestra and is assumed to have been composed at the young age of 14.

(Piano and orchestra, full score, A-R Editions)

1. *Allegro moderato* [♩ = ca. 96–116]

Opening with a galant orchestral theme, this movement showcases the pianist in flurrying passages of scalar and arpeggiated figures, double 3rds, and broken octaves, among other technical demands. The opportunity to craft a cadenza opens up possibilities for greater personal expression. The relatively unknown status of this work, combined with the charming themes and stately feel of the movement, make this an attractive option for a pianist venturing beyond the scope of intermediate repertoire. (E-flat major, level 10+)

2. *Larghetto* [♩ = ca. 50]

An intimate work with an emphasis on expressive and rhythmic demands, this slow movement showcases a number of passages that contain decorated 64th-note runs. The occasional embellishment in triplets adds interest to the delicate line. In binary form, the work contains a middle section of technical display over slowly punctuated orchestral harmonies. Emotional depth is necessary to communicate the beauty of this *Larghetto* amid the dense notation. (B-flat major, level 10)

3. *Rondo [Allegretto]* [♩ = ca. 66–72]

The opening rondo theme, with its infectious youthful spirit, permeates an intricately designed final movement in ABACADAEA form. Alternating with the "childlike" melody are sections of arpeggiated figurations with a Hungarian-style theme in E-flat minor that inserts a few moments of gravitas into an altogether exuberant work. (E-flat major, level 10+)

Rondo in B-flat Major, WoO 6

Originally intended as the final movement of Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat Major*, this rondo displays attributes of Mozart's writing style.

(Piano and orchestra, full score, Breitkopf & Härtel)