

EDUCATIONAL PIANO COMPOSERS

David C F Wright DMus

There are some types of composers who are almost forgotten and some who wrote educational music which is now regarded as old fashioned and worthless. Others of us remember the value of these piano tutors and studies and the good it did us.

Giuseppi Concone was an Italian composer born in Turin in 1801 and died there in 1861. For ten years, he taught in Paris returning to Turin in 1848, where until his death he was the organist and choirmaster of the Court choir. Along with his many piano pieces, he composed three short oratorios while in Paris and wrote many vocal exercises.

Henri Bertini was French, but born in London on 28 October 1798 and was a pupil of Muzio Clementi. Bertini was a child prodigy and, at the age of 12, his father took him on concert tours to London, Holland and Flanders. He studied composition in both England and Scotland. He became an excellent player of chamber music. In 1859, he moved to Meylan near Grenoble where he eventually died. Among his works is a piano method.

Johan Friedrich Franz Burgmuller was a German composer born on 14 December 1806 and died on 13 February in 1874. He composed much educational piano music and, at least, two symphonies in C minor and D respectively.

Herman Berens was born in Hamburg on 7 April 1826 and died there on 9 May 1880. Although he wrote many piano studies, he also wrote Quartets, Trios, Violin Sonatas and he was well known for his piano work, his famous School of Velocity.

A very important composer was Christian Louis Kohler who was born in Braunschweig, Germany on 5 September 1820 and who died in Konigsberg on 16 February 1896. He studied piano in Vienna with Carl Maria von Bocklet, Simon Sechler and Ignaz Seyfried. Early on, Louis Kohler was an accomplished conductor at Marienburg and Elbing. He settled in Konigsberg in 1847 and was a piano teacher and writer of several books on music. Among his pupils were Adolf Jensen and Herman Goetz.

Kohler was a critic for Hartungsche Zeitung from 1859 to 1889 and a contributor to Signale from 1844–1896. He was not only a composer of piano music but wrote three operas and a ballet.

Felix Le Couppey was born in Paris on 14 April 1811. He studied at the Paris Conservatoire with Victor Dourien. At the age of 17, he became assistant professor of harmony having received first prize for piano and harmony in 1825. From 1854 to 1886 he taught piano and wrote many textbooks on piano technique and died in Paris on 4 July 1887.

Jean-Baptiste Duvernoy was a French pianist and composer of studies mainly to strengthen fingers. His dates are thought to be 1802 to 1880. He was well known for his Elementary Studies Op 176 and his School of Mechanism Op 120.

An outstanding composer of educational and other works is C A Loeschhorn and a separate essay about him appears on this site.

© COPYRIGHT David C F Wright DMus 2016 – This article or any part of it, however small, must not be copied, quoted, reproduced, downloaded or altered in any way whatsoever nor stored in any retrieval system. Failure to comply is in breach of International Copyright Law and will render any offender liable to action at law.