

Nocturne E minor – Fryderyk Franciszek Chopin

Title – Nocturne (night piece) - this is a descriptive title, depicting sounds of the night. The nocturne style was first composed by John Field, and consists of broken choral accompaniment with lyrical melodies.

Notation:

Andante – at an easy walking pace
p – piano – soft
molto legato – very smooth and connected
acciaccatura - small note before the main note - ornamentation
cresc – crescendo – gradually getting louder
dim – diminuendo – gradually getting softer
riten – ritenuto – hold back the speed, immediately slower
a tempo – return to former speed
mf – mezzo forte – moderately loud
simile – similarly
tr - trill - rapidly alternate between two notes - ornamentation
poco a poco cresc – little by little gradually getting louder
f – forte – loud
aspiratamente – aspiring or longing
poco dim – gradually getting softer a little bit
8va – up an octave
triplets – three notes where two of the same usually go
pedale sempre – always play with pedal
dim poco a poco – little by little gradually getting softer
grace notes - decoration/ornament small notes
sempre diminuendo – always gradually getting softer
pp – pianissimo – very soft
calando – becoming softer and slower

Period: Romantic

Style: - Romantic style - melody has long phrases, melody very important. Harmonic shifts chromatically or to unrelated keys. Accent of dissonance. Homophonic texture (melody in foreground). Epic or small pieces, character pieces typical. Piano development influenced music greatly, many piano pieces written at this time.

Romantic style (from 'About Music') - expansive singing melodies; wide ranging melodies, varied with chromatic inflections; rhythmic diversity and elasticity; tempo rubato; increasing chromaticism; expanded concepts of tonality; homophony, turning to increased polyphony in later years of era; genres included symphonic poems, art songs, solo piano works; expansion of forms and interest in continuous as well as miniature programmatic forms; mainly secular works for paying audiences (not sacred for church); wide ranging dynamics for expressive purposes; new instruments; increased virtuosity with more direction from composers in scores; expression concerned with individual emotion, mood, atmosphere; interest in the bizarre and macabre.

Composer:

Genres – mainly piano works – preludes, mazurkas, polonaises, etudes, ballades, vales, piano concertos.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fr%C3%A9d%C3%A9ric_Chopin

Keys and form: E minor introduction. Section A: Bar 2 - melody enters. Bar 6 goes to G major (relative major) but then back to E minor. Bar 10 repeats theme with variation. Bar 14 onwards different ending, extends the ending - section ends in B major (dominant of new key E major or tonic/parallel major).
Section B - B major/E minor from bar 23 to bar 30
Section A - bars 31 to 46 - virtuosic variation and ends in E major
Section B - E major - has little coda to finish in E major
(Binary form)