

## **Burgmuller - The Shepherd's Return Op 109 No 3**

### **What does the title mean?**

This is a study, which is a piece that explores and improves a particular piano technique. The techniques in this piece are stride bass (oom pa pa) and continuous meandering RH quaver passages. The title is pictorial, of a shepherd returning from looking after the flock, and so perhaps has been away for a few days. The character of the music is joyful, as if work is over.

### **Analysis:**

Interesting that the harmony does not start at 'home' in the tonic key - this is like the title - the shepherd is returning home, so the harmony moves from dominant to tonic.

**Form** - rondo with introduction and Coda (rondo - theme comes back 'round')

Introduction

Bar 1 to 4 - introduction, on the dominant seventh chord of D.

Section A

Bar 5 - main theme which shifts from the dominant to the tonic of G major.

Section B

Bar 13 - B minor (dominant relative minor or relative minor of D major)

Section A

Bar 20 - back to G major

Section C

Bar 29 - C major (sub-dominant major)

Section A

Bar 37 - transitions back to G major via A minor and D major

Bar 40 to end G major

Coda

Bar 52 - G major

### **Period and style:**

Romantic period

- Typical of the Romantic period are wide range of dynamics, accented dissonance, pictorial pieces, use of rubato (vary the tempo), modulation to unrelated keys, wider range on the piano, incorporation of the damper pedal, homophonic texture (main melody), longer phrases, use of expressive ornaments.

### **Notation:**

Allegretto - little fast and lively (slower than allegro)

Slur - play legato and shape the phrases

Dolce - sweetly

P - piano - soft

Ped. - use the right sustain pedal

Crescendo - gradually getting louder

F - forte - loud

Diminuendo - gradually getting softer

Dimin. E riten. - getting gradually softer and immediately held back

Grazioso - gracefully

A tempo - return to original speed

Mf - mezzo forte - moderately loud

Pp - pianissimo - very soft

Dolcissimo - very sweetly

Energico - with energy

Accent - play the note loudly

Sf - sforzando - sudden loud note

Staccato - short and detached

Arpeggiato - roll the chord

