

(List C) *Prelude No 13 from 24 preludes Op 28/CT 178* by Chopin

Title:

A prelude is a piece that comes before another piece. In the Romantic period, they became pieces in their own right. The 24 preludes have a key structure of major, relative minor, up a 5th, major and relative minor (eg C major, A minor, G major, E minor, D major, B minor). This has a nickname ‘Loss’.

Notation:

Lento – slowly

6/4 – 6 crotchet beats per bar – compound duple

Piu lento – a little slower

Sostenuto – sustained

Form and keys:

AABA (loosely, based on keys, material – arpeggiation, some melodic material)

Section A – F# major

Bar 7 – cadence to C# major (Dominant)

Section A1 – Bar 9 F# major

Bar 15 – B major

Bar 16 – G# minor

Bar 18 – F# major

Section B – D# minor (relative minor)

Bar 22 – C# major

Bar 24 – B major

Bar 28 – F# major

Prelude Op. 28 No. 13 F# major (Loss)



A wistful, tender, and somewhat melancholy piece, this is one of the longer and more melodic preludes. Technically, only the left hand poses a challenge at all, and this challenge is more in the way of learning the notes than in playing them correctly, as the latter is not too difficult once the notes are actually learned.

I have mentioned, however, that some of the preludes could be etudes. But this etude sounds so gentle, so slow, and so calm that this observation applied here is counterintuitive. No matter how counterintuitive, it is still true. This is not a test of great technical feats. Rather, it is an exercise in *touch*. No matter how correct the notes are, this prelude will sound vapid and uninteresting without a certain quality of touch. There is both a practical and musical purpose to this. Without the proper touch, the left hand – which carries the entire inner melody – will overpower the right hand, and the piece falls apart. Furthermore, even if this does not happen, a delicate touch is required to prevent the piece from becoming excessively loud. This prelude should gently resonate rather than project.

Bülow nicknamed this prelude “Loss”. This is an interesting name for the gentle – though, granted, melancholy – piece. Cortot has a much longer name: “Sur le sol étranger, par une nuit étoilée, et en pensant à la bien-aimée lointaine”. Translating to, “On the foreign soil, under a night of stars, and

thinking of my beloved faraway”, this title captures more effectively the piece’s calmer and gentle nature.

By Fred Yu <http://www.ourchopin.com/analysis/prelude0916.html>

Prelude in F-sharp Major, Op. 28 No. 13 – Lento

Hans von Bulow called this prelude, *Loss*. It was composed between 1836 and 1839, published in 1839 and dedicated to Camille Pleyel.

<http://www.chopinmusic.net/works/preludes/>

Period:

Romantic

Style:

Romantic style – long phrases, modulations to unrelated/distant keys, rubato, epic or small pieces, programme music, graded expression, extreme personal emotion. Nationalism – incorporation of home styles, melodies, harmonies

Composer:

Genres – mainly piano works – preludes, mazurkas, polonaises, etudes, ballades, vales, piano concertos.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fr%C3%A9d%C3%A9ric_Chopin