
Ma Normandie

*Romance favorite de
Frédéric Bérat*

Variée pour le Piano

*Dédiée respectueusement à
Melle Joséphine Giovanetti*

par

Henri Bertini jeune
1798–1876

Op : 88

Henri Jérôme Bertini 1798–1876

Henri Jérôme Bertini was born in London on October 28, 1798, but his family returned to Paris six months later. He received his early musical education from his father and his brother, a pupil of Clementi. He was considered a child prodigy and at the age of 12 his father took him on a tour of England, Holland, Flanders, and Germany where he was enthusiastically received. After studies in composition in England and Scotland he was appointed professor of music in Brussels but returned to Paris in 1821. It is known that Bertini gave a concert with Franz Liszt in the Salons Pape on April 20, 1828. The program included a transcription by Bertini of Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in A major for eight hands (the other pianists were Sowinsky and Schunke.) He was also admired as a chamber music performer, giving concerts with his friends Fontaine (violin) and Franchomme (cello). He remained active in and around Paris until around 1848 when he retired from the musical scene. In 1859 he moved to Meylan (near Grenoble) where he died on September 30, 1876.

Bertini concertized widely but was not as celebrated a virtuoso as either Kalkbrenner or Henri Herz. One of his contemporaries (Marmontel) described his playing as having Clementi's evenness and clarity in rapid passages as well as the quality of sound, the manner of phrasing, and the ability to make the instrument sing characteristic of the school of Hummel and Moscheles. Thomas Tapper, in the preface of his edition of the *Études* Op.100 published by Ditson, says:

He was in his time a shining example of the most admirable qualities of an artist. Living in an age of garish virtuosity, and hailed as a brilliant executant himself, he maintained nevertheless the most rigorous standards of musicianship in his playing, in his compositions, and in the music which he appeared before the public to interpret. This is the more remarkable when one considers that his manhood was reached during the luxuriant period of French romanticism and that the extravagances of the literary outburst were reflected in the musical movements of the time. Virtuosity was subjected to sore temptations and many succumbed. Bertini stood for the sounder qualities of the artist and gradually acquired an extended and remunerative *prestige*. His life was singularly devoid of incident and official distinction, but the legacy of pedagogic works which he has left to us and his honorable activity give it every right to be called a success.

Bertini was celebrated as a teacher. Antoine Marmontel, who devoted the second chapter of his work on celebrated pianists to Bertini, writes

He was unsurpassed as a teacher, giving his lessons with scrupulous care and the keenest interest in his pupils' progress. After he had given up teaching, a number of his pupils continued with me, and I recognized the soundness of the principles drawn from his instruction.

It is above all in the special class of studies and caprices, that Bertini's immense popularity is founded. It is here that he occupied a unique position and opened the path over which the next generation of composers was to rush after him. In each of his numerous collections of studies, embracing every degree of difficulty, he has insistently given to every piece, easy or difficult, brief or extended, a character of salient melody. The technical problem to be overcome presents itself as a song; even where the study is devoted to the problem of velocity the general contour falls into a melodic curve, and this is the first and transcendent cause of the universal success of these pieces, which are, furthermore, natural in respect to rhythm and carefully thought out harmonically.

Robert Schumann, in a review of a piano trio in the *Gesammelte Schriften*, comments that Bertini writes easily flowing harmony but that the movements are too long. He continues: "With the best will in the world, we find it difficult to be angry with Bertini, yet he drives us to distraction with his perfumed Parisian phrases; all his music is as smooth as silk and satin."¹ German sentimentality has never appreciated French elegance.

Bertini is best remembered today for his piano method *Le Rudiment du pianiste*, and his 20 books of approximately 500 studies.

For more information on the life of Bertini, see *Henri Bertini pianiste virtuose, compositeur de musique* (Grenoble, 1999) by Pascal Beyls (<http://perso.wanadoo.fr/pascal.beyls/bertini/bertini.html>).

¹ from Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music, Second Edition, Volume 1, page 124.

Ma Normandie Op. 88

Henri Bertini jeune
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Introduction. Andante.

4

ff

pp

Leggiero.

8^a

7

tr

9

Rall.

12

p

8^a

Tema. Andante. ♩ = 66

16

Musical score for measures 16-20. The piece is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. Measure 16 starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The melody in the right hand features eighth-note patterns with accents, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment of chords and single notes.

21

Musical score for measures 21-24. The melody continues with eighth-note patterns and accents. The accompaniment in the left hand remains consistent with the previous measures.

25

Musical score for measures 25-28. The melody features longer note values and slurs. A *poco Rall :* (slightly slower) instruction is placed in the right hand starting at measure 26. The left hand accompaniment continues with chords.

29

A tempo.

Musical score for measures 29-32. The tempo returns to the original *A tempo*. The melody is more active with sixteenth-note passages. A *Rall :* (rhythmically slower) instruction is placed in the right hand starting at measure 30. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 32.

Variation 1. Allegretto.

32

f

Musical score for measures 32-36. The piece is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. Measure 32 starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth notes and quarter notes, while the left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The system concludes with a repeat sign.

37

Leggiero. *p*

8^a

Musical score for measures 37-39. Measure 37 begins with a *Leggiero.* marking and a piano (*p*) dynamic. The right hand contains a rapid eighth-note scale, indicated by an *8^a* fingering bracket. The left hand continues with a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The system ends with a repeat sign.

40

p

Musical score for measures 40-44. Measure 40 starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The right hand has a melodic line of quarter notes, and the left hand has a bass line of eighth notes. The system concludes with a repeat sign.

45

f

8^a

Musical score for measures 45-49. Measure 45 begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The right hand features a rapid eighth-note scale, indicated by an *8^a* fingering bracket. The left hand continues with a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The system ends with a repeat sign.

Variation 2. Allegro Brillante.

48 *p* *Leggiero.* 8^a

52 8^a

55 8^a *cres.*

58 8^a *f* *p*

61 8^a *f* *sf*

Detailed description: This page contains the musical score for Variation 2, 'Allegro Brillante', measures 48 through 61. The score is written for piano in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It features a complex, rhythmic melody in the right hand with frequent sixteenth-note patterns and slurs. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment with eighth-note chords and occasional rests. Performance markings include dynamics such as *p* (piano), *f* (forte), and *sf* (sforzando), as well as articulation like *Leggiero.* and *cres.* (crescendo). Fingerings are indicated with numbers 1-5 and breath marks with '(h)'. An 8^a (octave) sign is used to indicate the right hand's register. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots at measure 61.

Variation 3. Allegro.

64

p
Staccato il Basso.

69

8^{va}

72

p
rall.
lento.
4/2 4/2
8^{va}

A tempo.

77

p
cres.
f
8^{va}

Variation 4. Poco piu lento.

80 *8^a*

p

85 *8^a*

poco rall.

88

p Legato. *rall.*

A tempo.

93 *8^a* *8^a* *a tempo.* *8^a*

molto rall. *Leggiero.* *f*

Variation 5. Allegro moderato.

96

Musical score for measures 96-99. The piece is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth-note patterns and slurs. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords and single notes. Dynamics include *pp* and *Leggiero.*. Performance markings include *Red.* and an asterisk.

100

Musical score for measures 100-102. The right hand continues with eighth-note patterns and slurs. The left hand has chords and single notes. Dynamics include *pp*. Performance markings include *Red.* and an asterisk.

103

Musical score for measures 103-105. The right hand has an *8^a* (octave) marking. The left hand has a *ff* dynamic. A double bar line separates measures 103-104 from 104-105. The right hand has a *p* dynamic. Performance markings include *Red.* and an asterisk.

106

Musical score for measures 106-108. The right hand has a *cres.* dynamic and a *rall.* marking. The left hand has chords and single notes. Performance markings include *Red.* and an asterisk.

109

Musical score for measures 109-112. The right hand has an *8^a* (octave) marking. The left hand has a *pp* dynamic and a *f fuoco.* marking. Performance markings include *Red.* and an asterisk.

Variation 6. Adagio.

112

p *cres.*

Red.

115

p *tr*

Red.

117

p *cres.*

Red.

*

119

p *rall.*

Red.

*

120

p *Con anima.* *cres.*

123

f *dim.*

125

pp *cres.*

8^{va}

Red. *

127

dim. *p* *rall.* *A tempo.*

8^{va}

Red. * Red. *

Variation 7. Finale. Allegro Brillante.

129

p *Leggiero.*

8^a

134

8^a

137

8^a

4 3 2 2

f *f* *dim.* *p*

142

p *cres.* *f*

8^a

145 8^a

pp Scherz.

149 8^a

152

1. 8^a 2.

154 8^a

cres :

158 8^a

f

183

pp *lento.*

188

A tempo.

ff *Risoluto.*

193

ff *Risoluto.*

197

Presto.

ff

201

ff

In 1838 Frédéric Bérat published an album of mélodies. One of these, *Ma Normandie*, became extremely popular and is still remembered today; a reference to it can be found in *Astérix et les Normands*. The words are:

Quand tout renaît à l'espérance,
Et que l'hiver fuit loin de nous,
Sous le beau ciel de notre France,
Quand le soleil redevient plus doux,
Quand la nature est reverdie,
Quand l'hirondelle est de retour,
J'aime à revoir ma Normandie,
C'est le pays qui m'a donné le jour.

J'ai vu les lacs de l'Helvétie
Et ses chalets, et ses glaciers,
J'ai vu le ciel de l'Italie,
Et Venise, et ses gondoliers,
En saluant chaque patrie,
Je me disais : Aucun séjour
N'est plus beau que ma Normandie,
C'est le pays qui m'a donné le jour.

Il est un âge dans la vie,
Où chaque rêve doit finir,
Un âge où l'âme recueillie,
A besoin de se souvenir.
Lorsque ma muse refroidie
Aura fini ses chants d'amour,
J'irai revoir ma Normandie,
C'est le pays qui m'a donné le jour.

The present edition is based on that found in the library at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. As part of their 19th Century American Sheet Music Digitization Project they have made their copy of the George Willig, Philadelphia, edition of *Ma Normandie* available online at

<http://www.lib.unc.edu/music/eam/search.html?linked=true&ID=311>

This edition uses the old, American, style of fingering where “+” is used for the thumb and 1–4 for the fingers. I have translated this into our modern system.

Revisions

Bar 24, right hand: There is a slur over all the notes.

Bars 146–153: This repeat is written out. The *pp* and *Scherz.* do not appear the second time, otherwise the music is identical.

Approximate timing: 7:00.

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