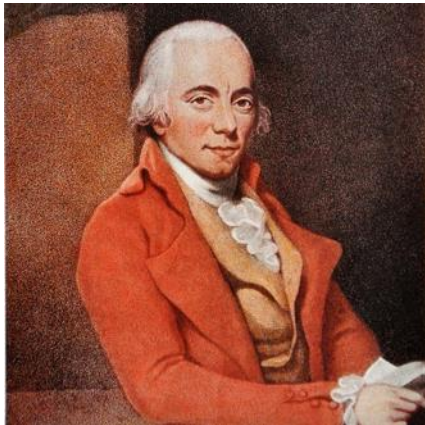


MUZIO CLEMENTI (1752-1832)

Sonatina, Op. 36, No. 1 A GUIDE TO INTERPRETATION BY COSMO BUONO



Clementi was born in Rome, Italy on January 23, 1752, the eldest of seven children of Nicolò (1720–1789) and Madalena. His father encouraged his musical talent and by age seven he was studying theory, composition, organ, and harpsichord. He came to the attention of a wealthy Englishman, Sir Peter Beckford, who was visiting Rome in 1766. He was so impressed by his talent that he offered to sponsor Muzio's musical education in England until he reached the age of 21.

The young composer would be responsible for providing entertainment for the nobleman's estate in Dorset, England. Clementi lived in England for the rest of his life. He took advantage of this time for rigorous study particularly of the piano, immensely popular in England, and made a very successful debut in London in 1773. In 1780, he undertook a concert tour of Europe which included Paris, Munich, Salzburg, and Vienna. While in Vienna, Emperor Joseph II decided to put him in a competition with Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart which ended in a tie. Clementi was also an important teacher and counted John Field, [Johann Baptist Cramer](#), [Ignaz Moscheles](#), and [Giacomo Meyerbeer](#) among his students. His later years were devoted to composition, and he was an excellent businessman capitalizing on the popularity of the piano in England by forming his own piano company and publishing firm. He spent his final years running his businesses and composing. He died on March 29 in 1832 and is buried in Westminster Abbey.

Clementi is sometimes referred to as "The Father of the Piano" as he was among the first to write exclusively for the instrument. He wrote some 110 compositions for the piano and an exercise book "[Gradus ad Parnassum](#)". He was championed by Carl Czerny, Frederic Chopin, and most recently, the great pianist Vladimir Horowitz.

SONATINA IN C MAJOR, OP. 36, No. 1

This delightful work can be studied by a student of elementary to intermediate advancement, and there is a great deal to learn musically and technically from it.

I would suggest that you begin by studying each hand separately throughout the three movements to fully acquaint yourself with the details of fingering and rhythm.

FIRST MOVEMENT—ALLEGRO


Begin with a good forte to announce the first theme, one which will give you plenty of room to make the change to piano on measure 5.

♩

SONATINE.

Op. 36. N^o 1.

Allegro.



I think small crescendos and decrescendos on the scales in measures 8, 10, 31, 33, and the longer passage in measures 12-15, 35-38 would give it an appropriate elegance and grace. Think carefully about the balance between the two hands; use a curved right hand finger for a clear melody and one in which you can make dynamic contrasts, and a relaxed flatter finger for the left with one exception in measure 21-22, where the melody shifts momentarily to the left hand so reverse this with a curved left hand finger and a flatter more relaxed right hand.



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SECOND MOVEMENT—ANDANTE

This serene movement switches key to F Major with one flat. Again the balance of the two hands is important so keep it to the melody in the right, and lighter in the left. The trills should begin on the upper note and be measured against the left hand meaning that there would be two notes in the right hand for each left-hand note. So in measure 3, the right will play A-G, A-G against the C and E of the left hand and then for the last 2 notes of the right hand, there is an ending to the trill of F-G so that should come in with the G in the left hand.

The same is true of the trill on measure 25, on the right-hand trill beginning on the A and trilling down to G.

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Regarding dynamics, vary them within each dynamic range so your piano playing can vary throughout the piece. There are two forte passages at measure 10 and 23.

Think about which you want to make the most important moment in the movement. I would use a bit of *rubato* in this movement to relieve the constant triplet rhythm and to make the melody expressive.

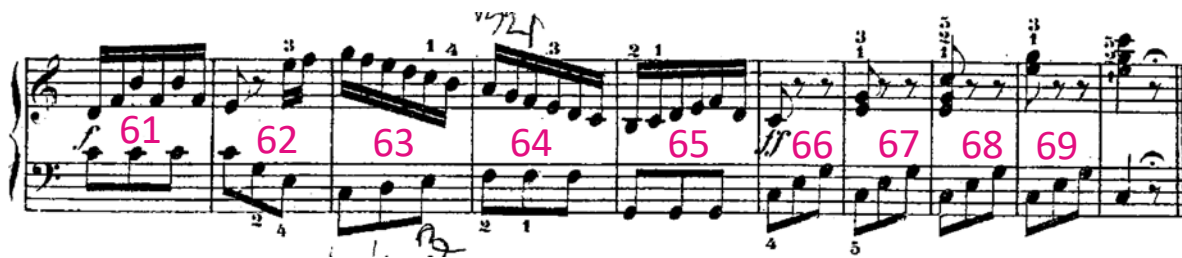
THIRD MOVEMENT—VIVACE

Back to the key of C Major, the brilliant last movement should be played with joy and a sense of fun. Enjoy playing *vivace* (lively) and expressing the delightful carefree mood of the work. Again, the left hand should be lighter allowing the right to have a full dynamic contrast and the melody clearly heard.

Clearly distinguish and contrast the piano passage on measures 21-22 with the forte of measures of measures 19 and 20 and then again in measures 21 and 22 with 23 and 24.

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At measure 25, keep your right-hand fingers well curved to bring out the brilliance of the scale passage in the right hand. The entire movement leads to the final 5 measures which should be the climactic moment of it. I think a bit of a *ritard* will give it a conclusive feeling.



A musical score for measures 61 through 69, presented in a grand staff format with a treble and bass clef. The right hand (treble clef) features a complex melodic line with many slurs and fingerings. The left hand (bass clef) provides a steady accompaniment. Measure numbers 61 through 69 are printed in pink below the notes. Handwritten annotations include 'vz' above measure 64 and 'B' below measure 63. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below notes. A dynamic marking of *ff* is present in measure 66.