



COMPOSER BIOGRAPHY

**CARL CZERNY**

BORN: February 21, 1791

ERA/STYLE: Romantic

DIED: July 15, 1857

HOMETOWN: Vienna, Austria

Carl Czerny was a pianist, composer, and teacher who is best remembered for his many books of studies for the piano. He was also one of Beethoven's best-known students!

Carl started playing the piano at age 3 and began composing original pieces when he was 7. His father, also a pianist, was his first teacher, and taught him many works by Bach, Haydn, and Mozart. He performed recitals in the family home for guests and gave his first public performance of a Mozart concerto in 1800, at just 8 years old!

Merely a year later, young Carl Czerny performed for Beethoven, who was so impressed that he agreed to take him on as his student. Czerny would study with him intensely for five years, and the two musicians would remain friends until Beethoven's death in 1827. Beethoven also selected Carl to premiere two of his famous piano concertos!

By the age of 15, Carl was already a successful piano teacher in Vienna, teaching up to 12 lessons a day in the homes of Viennese nobility. It was around this time that Carl would meet an even younger Franz Liszt, who would become his most famous pupil, and one of the most famous composers and pianists to ever live. He was so impressed with young Liszt that he taught him free of charge! To return the favor, Liszt would later premiere many of Carl Czerny's works and also dedicated a book of his own piano studies to his teacher.

While he had always been a composer, after 1840, Czerny shifted his focus to solely writing music and composed many exercises for the piano to cover all skill levels, from young children just beginning the instrument to the most advanced piano virtuoso. Throughout his life, Czerny composed more than 1,000 pieces of music! He never married and had no children, so when he passed away in 1857, his money was left to his housekeeper and worthy charities, including a local Vienna school for the deaf.