

Cesare Pugni:  
*DOCH' FARAONA*  
*La Fille du Pharaon/*  
*Pharaoh's Daughter*



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Ballet in 3 acts and 9 scenes with prologue and epilogue  
Scenario by Jules-Henri Vernoy de Saint-Georges and Marius Petipa  
after Théophile Gautier  
Choreography by Marius Petipa  
Music by Cesare Pugni

Edited and Introduced by

Robert Ignatius Letellier

**CAMBRIDGE**  
**SCHOLARS**  

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**P U B L I S H I N G**

Cesare Pugni: *DOCH' FARAONA La Fille du Pharaon/Pharaoh's Daughter*,  
Edited and Introduced by Robert Ignatius Letellier

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Cesare Pugni. Lithograph (St Petersburg, c. 1860)



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# INTRODUCTION

**Cesare Pugni**

***DOCH' FARAONA***

***La Fille du Pharaon/Pharaoh's Daughter***

Ballet in 3 acts and 9 scenes with prologue and epilogue

Scenario: Vernoy de Saint-Georges and Marius Petipa, after Théophile Gautier

Choreography: Marius Petipa

Music: Cesare Pugni

Sets: A. Roller and G. Wagner

Costumes: Kelwer and Stolyakov

First performance: 30 January 1862, St Petersburg, Bolshoi Theatre

Principal dancers: Carolina Rosati (Aspasia), Nicholas Golts (Pharaoh), Marius Petipa (Lord Wilson/Ta-Hor), and Lev Ivanov (A Fisherman)

## Origins

The great Italian ballerina Carolina Rosati (1826-1905) had been engaged as guest artist with the Imperial Theatres since 1855. By 1861 the ballerina's contract with the company was set to expire, and upon leaving St. Petersburg she had decided to retire from the stage. By contract she was allowed one last benefit performance in a new production, and in late 1861 she requested the director Saburov to begin preparations. Saburov approached Marius Petipa (1818-1910), and inquired as to whether or not he could stage a ballet for Rosati in only six weeks. Petipa answered confidently, "Yes, I shall try, and probably succeed." Saburov then put all other projects on hold so that the company could concentrate on the production of the new work.

During his sojourn in Paris for the staging of *Le Marché des Innocents*, Petipa acquired a scenario from the dramatist Jules-Henri Vernoy de Saint-Georges (1799-1875) for a ballet titled *La Fille du Pharaon*, inspired by Théophile Gautier's *Le Roman de la Momie* (1858). Petipa decided that this scenario, set in exotic ancient Egypt, would be perfect for the production Rosati so desired. Throughout the Victorian era Europe was fascinated with all things concerning the art and culture of ancient Egypt, and Petipa was sure that a ballet on such a subject would be a great success.

## Production

Petipa began work immediately, collaborating with the composer Cesare Pugni (1802-70), who produced a melodious and effective score with the alacrity for which he was well known. The spectacle was prepared in only 6 weeks, in good time for Rosati's farewell performance. The ballet was produced on 30 January [old style 18 January] 1862, with great success. The work exceeded even the opulent tastes of the Tsarist audience, it being some time since such an exotic subject and lavish production had been seen on the Imperial stage. This great success earned for Petipa the position of *Sécond Maître de Ballet* to the Imperial Theatres (assistant ballet master) in St Petersburg.

The ballet was in fact a resounding success. The spectacle lasted over 4 hours and featured a cast of 400, some 80 of them dancers. The work went on to become the most popular ballet in the entire repertory of the Imperial Theatres—by 1903 it had been performed 203 times. It marked the last of Rosati's appearances in Russia, but thereafter tempted other great ballerinas, including Marie Petipa, Ekaterina Vazem, Virginia Zucchi, Mathilde Kschessinskaya and Anna Pavlova, each of them contributing her own interpretation of the heroine's part.

## **The *ballet à grand spectacle* and Ancient Egypt**

The ballet illustrates the choreographic trend of the 1860s and 1870s to imitate French *grand opéra*, by developing the *ballet à grand spectacle*. This typically lasted four hours and used different styles and techniques and a large number of participants, with plots characterized by strong dramatic contrasts. Petipa's penchant for folklore saw him include an inauthentic dance of bayadères and a central magical transformation scene dedicated to a pageant of the world's great rivers—from the Guadalquivir through the Thames to the Neva—all dressed in national costumes. This historical inaccuracy and mixing of styles raised a few criticisms, especially in Moscow, in spite of the general taste for grandiose sets and costumes concerned more with display than realism.

Interest in Ancient Egypt had been revived by historical, archaeological and political events. Napoleon's expedition to Egypt, where he defeated the Mamelukes at the Battle of the Pyramids (1798), and the finding of the Rosetta Stone (1799), which had enabled Jean-François Champollion to decipher hieroglyphics, had established a perennial interest in Ancient Egypt. This was later revived by Auguste Mariette's discovery in 1851 of the Serapeum at Memphis and the digging of the Suez Canal in 1859—as well as by reports of the educated élite returning from the Grand Tour which now invariably included the Middle East. The fashion would culminate in Verdi's *Aida* (1871), written for the opening of the Suez Canal, only to be revived yet again with Howard Carter's discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamen in 1922.

## **Petipa and Saint-Léon**

In the cultural world of Russia in the 1860s, Arthur Saint-Léon (1821-70) answered the success of Petipa's pseudo-Egyptian magnum opus with the fantastical *The Little Humpbacked Horse, or The Tsar Maiden* (1864), a ballet adaptation of Pyotr Yershov's famous Russian poem. The work proved to be a success equal to that of *Pharaoh's Daughter*, with its series of fantastical tableaux set both underwater and on an enchanted isle, as well as the ballet's final grand divertissement celebrating the many peoples of the Russian Empire.

Though Arthur Saint-Léon was technically and by title Petipa's superior, the two men were viewed as equals by the critics and balletomanes of the day, and would rival one another with splendid productions throughout the 1860s. Not only did Saint-Léon and Petipa have their own respective audiences and critics, but also their own ballerinas—Petipa mounted the majority of his works at that time for his wife, the prima ballerina Maria Surovshchikova- Petipa, while Saint-Léon devised the majority of his works for Marfa Muravieva. Despite their rivalry, nearly every ballet staged by Petipa and Saint-Léon during the 1860s used the music of the same composer, Cesare Pugni.



Marius Petipa (photograph, 1855)



The Chevalier Jules-Henri Vernoy de Saint-Georges



Portrait of Théophile Gautier, in *L'Illustration*, after a photograph by M. Bertall, 1869

## **The Scenario**

The ballet was inspired by Théophile Gautier's *Le Roman de la Momie*. Gautier (1811-72), a major exponent of literary exoticism, wrote a story rich in romantic expedients: the passionate love story of the great priest's daughter Tahoser and the Pharaoh set in a Biblical Egypt, as well as a Gothic taste for gloomy corridors and dark tombs. Many of these emphases were played down in the scenario, which does, however, retain a sense of the fantastic which accompanies Gautier's depiction of earthly passions. He conjured up a fragment of the past through the inhalation of opium—a motif familiar in the works and lives of contemporary Romantic artists, such as Thomas De Quincey. Gautier also developed a special aura for his characters by conjuring up the borderline between life and death, a characteristic preoccupation of all Egyptian art.

Gautier further undercut the atmosphere of terror and gloom by recurrent use of irony, with its anticlimactic effects. A similar sense of irony was fostered in the ballet, by use of national stereotyping, as in the moment when Lord Wilson, the quintessential English gentleman impassively attempts to sketch the desert landscape while threatened by the growing simoom, or by use of personality foibles, as when Aspacia, on rising from her sarcophagus, glances appreciatively into a mirror and is reassured to find herself as pretty as she was a few millennia before in her old life. This ironic element is given a further humorous dimension in the comic portrayal of Lord Wilson's manservant, John Bull.

The scenario also retained the essential characteristics of the heroine of the story. The title role required an artist who had a special dramatic talent, as did Carolina Rosati, who made the most of the scenes of love, fear, and courage which confront Aspacia. These scenes find their dramatic culmination in Aspacia's attempt to cast herself onto a flower-basket hiding a snake, a gesture redolent of Cleopatra's famous suicide. Later assumptions of the role saw other dramatic emphases: twenty years later, Virginia Zucchi (1847-1930), less conventionally, portrayed an unusually humane princess; her successor, Mathilda Kschessinskaya (1872-1971), preferred to depict an arrogant and voluptuous persona, and turned it into more of a virtuoso role.

## **The Story**

The story tells of the adventures of the English Lord Wilson and his servant, who seek shelter from a storm in an Ancient Egyptian tomb. They smoke opium and in their dreams are taken back to the times of the characters buried there: Lord Wilson meets the Pharaoh's daughter Aspacia during a lion hunt, helps her to escape from the invidious attentions of the King of Nubia, and undergoes various adventures with her in the Egyptian countryside (including a visit to the watery underworld of the King of the Nile where all the great rivers of the world are represented in national dance). He is eventually saved from sacrifice and united with her in marriage, before waking to the cold light of reality.

## **Prologue**

In an oasis of the Egyptian desert, Lord Wilson and his manservant John Bull, who have joined a caravan of Armenian merchants, are forced by a sandstorm to take refuge with the others in a pyramid. The guardian of the monument shows Lord Wilson the mummy of the Pharaoh's favourite daughter. Under the influence of opium given to them by the merchants, Wilson and Bull fall into an hallucinatory dream. The young Aspacia, rising from her sarcophagus, calls her retinue back to life. Placing her hand on the young Lord's heart, she vanishes in a cloud.

## **Act 1**

Wilson and Bull, reincarnated under the influence of the drug into the ancient Egyptians Ta-How and Passifont, save Aspacia from the jaws of a lion. Ta-Hor, refusing any reward, declares his love for her. Aspacia is already promised in marriage to the King of Nubia, but prefers to flee with Ta-Hor, thus arousing her father's anger. The disappointed suitor sets off in pursuit of them.

## **Act 2**

Aspacia is discovered hiding in a fisherman's hut by the Nubian King. She proves insensitive to both his protestations of love and his threats, and throws herself into the Nile to escape him. She sinks down to the underwater realm where the Ruler of the Waters gives a feast in her honour, involving five of the world's most important rivers. The King of the Nile eventually allows Aspacia to return to the world, and she rises to the surface in a shell.

## **Act 3**

Ta-Hor, taken captive, is sent before Pharaoh, who decrees that unless he brings back Aspacia he will die by a serpent's bite. The Princess reappears, accuses the King of Nubia, and by threatening to allow herself to be bitten by the snake, secures Ta-Hor's freedom. Consent for their marriage is now won, and Aspacia and Ta-Hor rise to Osiris's heaven in apotheosis.

## **Epilogue**

The stage darkens, and we are back in the interior of the pyramid. Wilson, Bull and the merchants wake from their drug-induced sleep, and the mummies and statues are once more inanimate.

### **The Music**

The music shows Pugni working at the height of his abilities, and aspiring to a a broader and grander style in keeping with the grandiose subject. His melodic sense served him well, as did a consistent rhythmic verve and harmonic directness. There is a good balance between mime and dance. The opening scenes of the Prologue before and in the Pyramids and the later Sacrifice of Isis provide sustained instances of pantomime, while the extended *Pas d'Action* and the underwater Scene of the Rivers, Stream and Springs provide sustained sequences of dances, both the usual series of waltzes and polkas, as well as in the latter, a group of imaginatively inflected national styles. The episode with the Egyptian Fellahs (peasant farmers and fishermen) allows for folk-like dance episodes. Opportunities for grander statements are reserved for the excitement of the Lion Hunt in act 1, and the pomp of Pharaoh's Entry and March. There is a real sense of drama and excitement generated by the build-up to his appearance with all the Court, and later with the King of Nubia. Quieter moments of sustained lyrical reflection are provided by the encounters between Aspicia and Lord Wilson/Ta-Hor, with the various ensuing *pas de deux*, which feature the solo cello and harp. The entr'acte to the great River Scene provides a virtuoso part for the flute. The most powerfully affecting writing comes in the final Apotheosis, where the triumph of the lovers and their exultation sees the lyrical pathos of their nuptial *andante* over rocking arpeggios broadened into great high octave doubling and a general sense of emotional elation that is realized most effectively.

### **Production History**

The ballet was popular in Moscow, with significant revivals:

- Imperial Bolshoi Theatre (choreography Petipa), with Praskovia Lebedeva as Aspicia, 29 November [old style 17 November] 1864;
- Imperial Bolshoi Theatre (choreography Aleksander Gorsky after Petipa), with Vasily Tikhomirov as the English Tourist (Ta-Hor/Lord Wilson) and Enrichetta Grimaldi as Vint-Anta (Aspicia);
- Imperial Bolshoi Theatre, 27 November 1905;
- the Bolshoi Ballet, a new production, a complete reconstruction by Pierre Lacotte on 5 May 2000, with Svetlana Zakharova and Sergei Filin, which included only three reconstructed dances from Petipa's original choreography for the *Grand Pas d'action* of Act 2. This revival was a great success, and through its wider performances and video/DVD has reintroduced the ballet to the contemporary scene.

The Sergeyev Collection, housed in the Harvard University Theatre Collection, contains choreographic notations of Petipa's 1898 production for Mathilde Kschessinskaya. The notations document Petipa's choreography for the dances of the principal roles, while the rest of the choreography (i.e. for the corps de ballet and much of the action sequences) is only vaguely documented.

### ***La Fille du Pharaon* in the arrangement by Pierre Lacotte**

Lacotte's revised scenario follows the original storyline fairly closely.

#### **Act 1**

Introduction/Tempête au pied des Pyramides

Le Rêve

La Chasse royale

Le Singe

La Nuit

La Chasse royale (suite et fin)

Exploit de Ta-Hor

**Act 2**

Rencontre au Palais  
 Les Fiançailles  
 Grand Défilé 1 (Pas d'action)  
 Miroir  
 Grand Défilé 2 (Pas d'action)  
 Grand Défilé 3  
 Traité  
 Evasion du palais

**Act 3**

Le Village des pêcheurs  
 Trois Rivière  
 Le Royaume du Nil  
 La Condamnation  
 Le Retour d'Asicia  
 Le Triomphe de l'amour

**Le Réveil**

The score was also edited by Alexander Sotnikov, who reduced the quantity of music and rearranged the order of the numbers. The numbers from the original score are in brackets

1. Introduction
2. Entry of the Bedouins [No. 1a]
3. Storm [No. 1b]
4. Moderato
5. Andante
6. The Huntresses [No. 2]
7. Moderato
8. Pas du Teorre oriental [No. 3a]
9. The Monkey [No. 3b]
10. Andantino [No. 2]
11. Moderato
12. Allegro moderato
13. Allegro
14. Allegro
15. Allegro
16. Lion Hunt [No. 3d]
17. Entry of Pharaoh [No. 3e]
18. Scene and March (The Nubians) [No. 4a]
19. Aspicia and Lord Wilson [No. 4c]
20. Moderato molto
21. March of Pharaoh [No. 4d]
22. Allegro agitato
23. Grand Pas d'Aspicia [No. 5a]  
     Meno  
     Allegro
24. Pizzicato
25. Moderato
26. Andante (flute solo)
27. Allegro moderato
28. Allegro vivo
29. Allegro agitato  
     Allegro vivace
30. Allegro moderato
31. Allegro guisto (coda)
32. Transition

33. Allegro
34. Allegro vivo
35. Flute solo (Ciardi) [No. 7a]
36. Abduction of Aspicia [No. 5b]
37. Recital—Andantino [No. 6a]
38. Danse [No. 6a]
39. Storm [No. 6b]
40. Pas Féllah (Peasants) [No. 6c]
41. The Thames [No. 7f]
42. The Seduction (più mosso) [No. 6e]
43. Grand Pas des Fleuves [No. 7c]
44. The Nile [No. 7c]
45. The Guadalquivir [No. 7e]
46. The Hong Ho [No. 7h]
47. The Neva [No. 7i]
48. Coda [No. 7k]
49. Dances of the Naiads [No. 7l]
50. Pas de Vision [No. 8]
51. Les Augures [No. 9a]
52. Le Serpent d'Isis [No. 9b]
53. Pas de Fleuves [No. 7a]
54. Return of Aspicia [No. 9d]
55. Récit de la Cabane [No. 9e]
56. Dénouement [No. 9f]
57. Pas de Crotales [No. 9g]
58. Pas de Deux [No. 9h]
59. Apothéose

**Marius Ivanovich Petipa** (born Victor Marius Alphonse Petipa on 11 March 1818 in Marseille, France—died in Gurzuf in the Crimea, Russian Empire, in what is now Ukraine, on 14 July [O.S. 1 July] 1910), French ballet dancer, teacher, and choreographer, is possibly the most influential of all balletmasters and choreographers (George Balanchine, for example, cited Petipa as his primary influence).

Petipa is remembered for his long career as *Premier Maître de Ballet* of the St. Petersburg Imperial Theatres, a position he held from 1871 until 1903. During this time he created over fifty ballets, some of which have survived in versions either faithful to, inspired by, or reconstructed from the original: *La Fille du Pharaon* (1862); *Don Quixote* (1869); *La Bayadère* (1877); *Le Talisman* (1889); *The Sleeping Beauty* (1890); *The Nutcracker* (most likely choreographed by Lev Ivanov, with Petipa's advice) (1892); *Le Réveil de Flore* (1894); *Le Halte de Cavalerie* (1896); *Raymonda* (1898); *Les Saisons* (1900), and *Les Millions d'Arlequin* (*Harlequinade*) (1900).

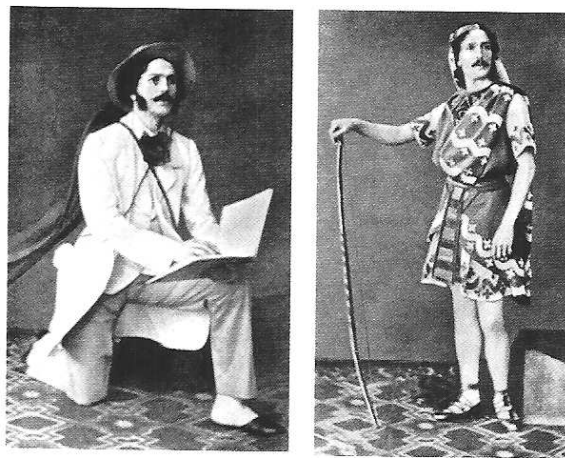
Petipa also revived a substantial number of works created by other choreographers. His productions become the definitive versions on which nearly all subsequent revivals would be based: *Le Corsaire*, *Giselle*, *Esmeralda*, *Coppélia*, *La Fille Mal Gardée* (with Lev Ivanov), *Le Petit Cheval bossu* [*The Little Humpbacked Horse*] and *Swan Lake* (with Lev Ivanov).

Various dances from Petipa's original works and revivals have also survived in an independent form in versions either based on the original or choreographed anew by others: the Grand Pas classique, Pas de trois and Mazurka des enfants from *Paquita*; various pas de deux, like the La Carnaval de Venise from *Satanella*; *The Talisman*; the Esmeralda Pas de deux and the Diane and Actéon Pas de deux from *Esmeralda*; *Le Halte de Cavalerie*; *Don Quixote*; *La Fille Mal Gardée*; and *Harlequinade*.

Most of the full-length works and individual pieces which have survived in active performance are considered to be cornerstones of the ballet repertory.



The Grand pas des chasseresses from act 1 of Petipa's final revival of *Pharaoh's Daughter* at the Maryinsky Theatre, St. Petersburg (1898). In the center is Mathilde Kschessinskaya as the Princess Aspacia (right), and Olga Preobrajenskaya as the slave Ramzé (left)



Marius Petipa as Lord Wilson/Ta-Hor (1862)





Mathilda Kschessinskaya as Aspasia (1898)



The Pas de chasseresses (Bolshoi, 2000)



# LA FILLE DE PHARAON.

## GRAND BALLET

en trois actes et huit tableaux, avec prologue et apothéose

composé par

M<sup>r</sup>. Saint-George

musique de ..

# CESAR PUGNI

arrangement pour le

# PIANO

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Propriété de l'Editeur.

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**S. PÉTERSBOURG, chez Th. STELLOWSKY,**  
Fournisseur de la COUR de S.M. L'EMPEREUR de toutes les Russies,  
Grande Morskoï, maison Laufert, N<sup>o</sup> 27.

**LA FILLE DE PHARAON.**

BALLET EN TROIS ACTES AVEC PROLOGUE ET APOTHÉOSE

musique de

**CÉSAR PUGNI.****INTRODUCTION.**

**PIANO.** *Allegro*

The musical score is written for piano and consists of six systems of music. The first system is marked 'Allegro' and 'PIANO.' with dynamics 'f' and 'mf'. The subsequent systems show increasing complexity and intensity, with dynamics 'f' and 'ff' appearing. The music features a mix of melodic lines and dense harmonic textures, including chords and arpeggios. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 6/8. The score concludes with a double bar line and a final chord.

## N° 1.

## PROLOGUE.

The musical score for the Prologue is written for piano and features six systems of staves. The first system begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a time signature of 3/4. The first staff of this system is marked with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The score is composed of piano accompaniment and vocal lines. The piano part is characterized by dense, often block-like chords and arpeggiated figures, particularly in the right hand. The vocal lines, appearing in the upper staves of each system, consist of eighth and sixteenth notes, often with grace notes and slurs. The key signature changes to two sharps (F# and C#) in the fifth system. The piece concludes with a final cadence in the sixth system.

5551 3



*Moderato.*

*mf*

*Meno mosso.*

*p*

The musical score is written for piano and consists of five systems. The first system is marked 'Moderato.' and 'mf'. The second system continues the 'Moderato' tempo. The third system is marked 'Meno mosso.' and 'p', indicating a change in tempo and dynamics. The fourth and fifth systems continue the 'Meno mosso' tempo. The score features a variety of musical notations including eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Allegro.

*f*

*f*

*f*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

Moderato.

*p*

1. 2.

551

5



This page of musical notation is for a piano piece, likely a transcription of a vocal melody. It consists of eight systems of staves, each with a treble and bass clef. The music is written in a key with one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'Moderato' at the top left. The notation includes various dynamic markings such as 'p' (piano), 'cresc.' (crescendo), 'dim.' (diminuendo), 'poco' (poco), and 'sean' (sean). There are also performance instructions like 'do' and 'a'. The music features complex rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and is marked with asterisks (\*) and 'Qw' in some measures. The page number '5551' is visible at the bottom center.

*Allegro moderato.*

2

5551

7

*Piu mosso.*

The musical score consists of six systems of music. Each system has a treble staff and a bass staff. The tempo is marked *Piu mosso.* at the beginning. The key signature has two flats (B-flat major). The time signature is 2/4. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The dynamics *poco a poco* and *dim.* are indicated in the final system.

This page contains six systems of musical notation, each consisting of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The notation is complex, featuring many beamed sixteenth and thirty-second notes, suggesting a fast tempo. The key signature is D major (two sharps). The systems are marked with various dynamics and performance instructions:

- System 1:** Starts with a *dim.* (diminuendo) marking, followed by a *f* (forte) dynamic.
- System 2:** Ends with a *poco* (poco) marking.
- System 3:** Contains a *poco* marking in the middle and a *dim.* marking towards the end.
- System 4:** Features a *p* (piano) dynamic marking.
- System 5:** Features a *pp* (pianissimo) dynamic marking.
- System 6:** The final system, ending with a double bar line.

The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and slurs, indicating a technically demanding piece.



Moderato.

The musical score is written for piano in 4/4 time, key of D major. It is marked "Moderato." The score consists of seven systems of piano accompaniment. The first system includes dynamic markings like *p*, *f*, and *pp*, and articulation marks like *\** and *acc*. The second system has a "12" measure repeat sign. The third system features a double bar line. The fourth system has a double bar line. The fifth system has a double bar line. The sixth system has a double bar line. The seventh system has a double bar line and a "12" measure repeat sign. The score is written for piano with treble and bass staves.

This page of musical notation, numbered 11 in the top right corner, contains seven systems of music. Each system consists of a piano (left hand) and a right-hand part. The notation is written in a single staff for each part, with the piano part often featuring a continuous bass line. The right-hand part includes various melodic lines, often marked with '12' and '2' above the notes, indicating specific fingerings or techniques. Dynamic markings such as 'pp' (pianissimo) and 'p' (piano) are used throughout. The notation is in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. The page concludes with a double bar line and a final measure marked with a '1'.