**Fortepiano Fritz, ca. 1812**

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Johann Peter Fritz (died 1834) built beautiful early Romantic, six-octave Viennese pianos. Little is known about Fritz, but his numerous surviving instruments attest to his mastery.

Romantic instruments were highly varied, with no hint of the standardisation of today’s pianos. Compared with earlier fortepianos, Romantic pianos found a more lyrical voice and a fuller tone through changes such as larger hammers, wider soundboards and thicker strings. Their multiple pedals - sometimes as many as 7 - also expanded their range of sound colours.

“Lieder pianos” were a recognised category of this period, and Fritz’s pianos would seem to belong to this, with their warm mid-register and singing treble. It is interesting to note that Giuseppe Verdi owned a Fritz piano, which we are told was his favourite. McNulty’s copy is based on an instrument from about 1812.