



**CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC
COLLEGE OF CREATIVE ARTS
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**MUF655
RESEARCH PROJECT**

**COMPARING *RUBATO* PLAYING ON CHOPIN'S NOCTURNE,
OP. 15 NO. 3 IN G MINOR**

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OCTOBER 2021 - FEBRUARY 2022

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, praises to the God, the almighty, for His bounty and grace, then I was able to complete this thesis successfully despite various trials and tribulations.

With this opportunity, I would like to say a million thanks to Dr. Juan Daniel Montoya Valencia, as my supervisor, for the patience, support, advice and guidance given which helped a lot in the success of this thesis. All the help, enthusiasm, strategy and his wisdom has taught me a lot. Not to forget the line-up of lecturers of this subject of Conservatory of Music, Universiti Teknologi MARA who are willing to share their experiences throughout this study. All the experiences are definitely unforgettable.

Many thanks to both my dear parents, Mr. Salim bin Muda and Ms. Rita Kartini binti Mahiran who always give love, encouragement, prayers, reminders and life guidance that I need. Thank you to my fellow classmates for their support and help, so that this thesis and study can successfully be perfected. Indeed, all the sacrifices from all parties are greatly admired and will be remembered for the rest of my life.

Finally, thanks also to all who directly or indirectly involved in providing suggestions and assistance in preparing this thesis. Hopefully this research and thesis can be used as a useful knowledge for the future generations.

ABSTRACT

Rubato playing in Nocturne, Op. 15 No. 3 can be applied or interpreted differently by different performers. The dominant explanation for this is individual pianistic styles of the performer. The data of this study are obtained from journals and articles, score analysis and performance analysis. Contrary to Chopin's style of rubato playing, which is the 'melodic rubato', Sviatoslav Richter and Li Yundi used '*accelerando* and *rallentando*' and '*temto* and agogic accent' to perform Chopin's Nocturne, Op. 15 No. 3 in G minor. The findings of this study indicates that Chopin's rubato is no longer widely used in this century.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Throughout the evolution of Classical Music, several musical terms have been difficult to be define with a word because of their meanings and *rubato* is one of them. It is one of the most confusing and misused techniques in the Classical Music history.

1.2 Background of Study

The word means “stolen” and *rubato* is time given to one note at the expense of some other. (Matthews, 1887) Perceived as a product of the Romantic period, it actually has existed earlier than the Romantic period by several hundred years, proved by manuscripts of the Renaissance. The term was introduced by Pier Francesco Tosi in his textbook on singing techniques, *Opinioni de' cantori antichi e moderni* (1723). (Hudson, 1996) In the book, Tosi applied rubato in singing where the *rubato* technique can help in making the melodic line more expressive. The “earlier *rubato*” was less known to be used. It incorporated an even tempo on the accompaniment line and a free tempo on the melodic line. Classical musicians will find it difficult and weird, but it was actually the type of *rubato* that most 18th and 19th centuries’ musicians like Mozart and Chopin preferred. The rubato with expressive tempo fluctuation was important in the 19th century and is categorized under “later *rubato*”

Frédéric Chopin, a Polish-born pianist and composer of countless of masterpieces influenced many other musicians with his talent. However, he had only performed 30 public performances in 30 years of concertizing. No one has ever contributed as many significant works as Chopin and no one can even come close to replace him. All of his works are for solo piano or combination of piano with other instruments. He