Alexander Arutiunian (1920–2012)
Trumpet Concerto in A-flat Major (1950)

Armenian composer Alexander Arutiunian is best known for his Trumpet Concerto, a work celebrated for its vibrant rhythms, expressive melodies, and distinctive Armenian character.

The concerto has a poignant history. In 1943, Arutiunian had intended to write a trumpet concerto for his friend Zsolak Vartasarian, a talented trumpeter who tragically lost his life during the Second World War. The work was eventually completed in 1950, seven years later.

Although strongly influenced by Armenian musical traditions, the concerto contains no direct quotations of folk melodies. Instead, Arutiunian captures their spirit through his own musical language. Unlike a traditional three-movement concerto, the work unfolds in one continuous movement, moving between brilliant, energetic passages and moments of lyrical tenderness.

Interestingly, the dazzling cadenza commonly performed today was not written by Arutiunian himself, but by the renowned trumpeter Timofei Dokshizer in 1977, who also played an important role in bringing the concerto to international recognition.

Carl Höhne
Slavische Fantasie (1899)

German composer Carl Höhne is remembered primarily for his Slavische Fantasie, a brilliant showpiece originally written for cornet and piano. Published in 1899, the work was dedicated to cornet virtuoso Franz Werner as a gesture of friendship.

Despite its title, Slavische Fantasie (Slavonic Fantasy) bears a striking resemblance to the Hungarian Csárdás, a dance known for its contrast between slow, expressive passages and lively, energetic rhythms.

The piece moves through a series of contrasting moods, from lyrical, singing melodies to dazzling technical passages. Its changing tempos and expressive character demand not only virtuosity but also considerable musical sensitivity from the performer.

More than a display of technical brilliance, Slavische Fantasie captures the dramatic and expressive possibilities of the trumpet, bringing the music to an exhilarating conclusion.