Bartolomeo De Francesco Cristofori Encyclopedia Article

Bartolomeo De Francesco Cristofori

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Bartolomeo De Francesco Cristofori

1655-1731

Italian harpsichord maker credited with inventing the piano, which he called a "harpsichord that plays soft [piano] and loud [forte]" (c. 1709). In effect a grand piano, Cristofori's pianoforte was wing-shaped and featured an independent damper mechanism and strings struck with hammers. From his first design in the early 1700s, Cristofori made improvements to the pianoforte. By 1726 his instrument had all the elements of the modern twentieth-century piano.