

PIANO MAGAZINE

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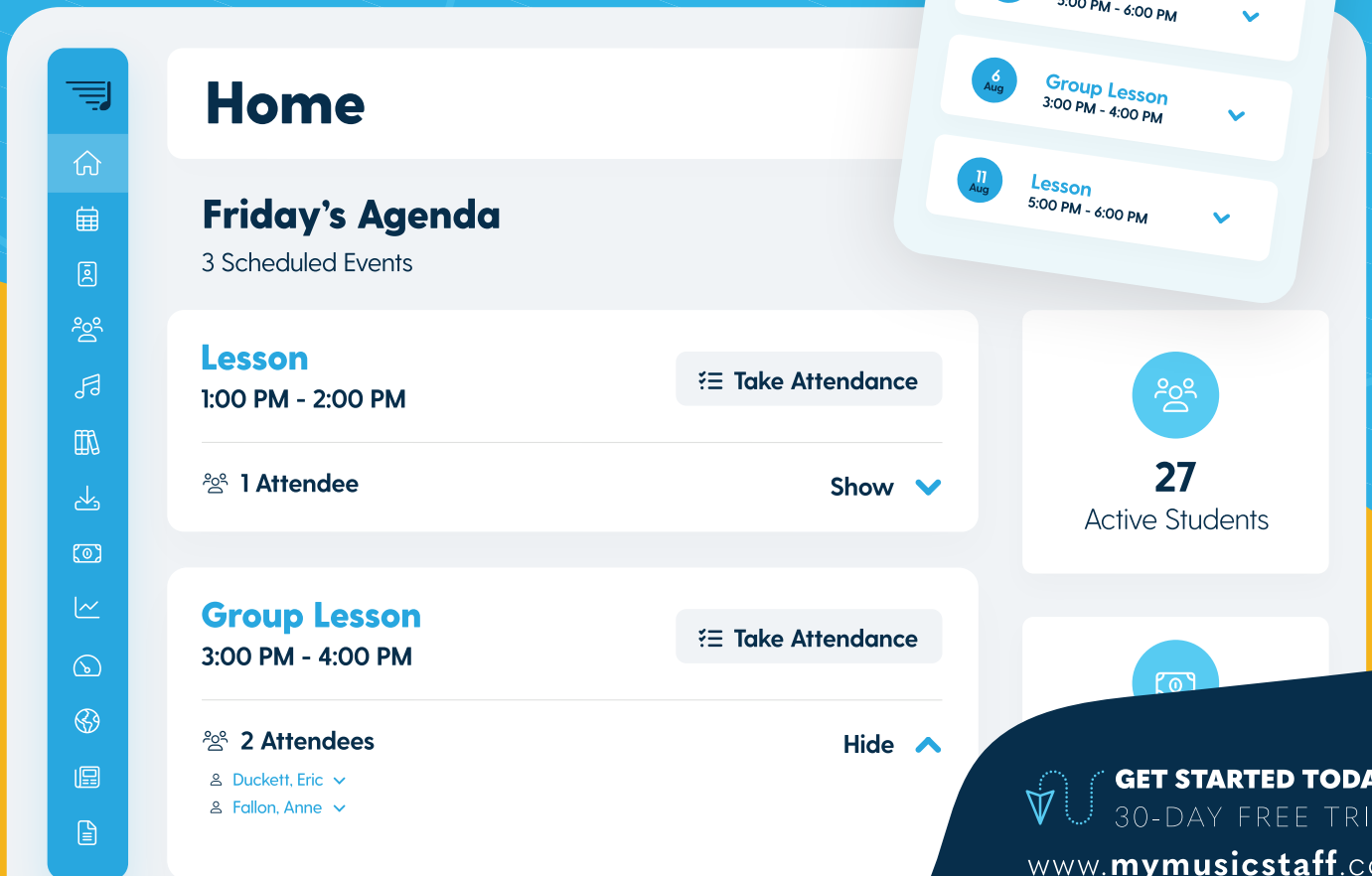
JANE MAGRATH
Answers Your Intermediate
Repertoire Questions

DEVELOPING
Practicing Skills during
the Intermediate Years

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PRACTICING ALONGSIDE

Our Intermediate Students

by Sara M. Ernst

10

EXPLORE

- 6** EDITOR'S LETTER
Pamela D. Pike
- 7** PIANO NEWS FROM
AROUND THE GLOBE

LEARN

- 10** PRACTICING ALONGSIDE OUR
INTERMEDIATE STUDENTS
Sara M. Ernst
- 25** THE LEGACY OF MIRIAM HYDE
Jerry Wong
- 58** REMAKING OURSELVES AND
THE STANDARD CANON:
Perspectives and Resources for
Promoting Diversity, Equity,
and Inclusion in Classical Music
Nicholas Reynolds

TEACH

- 17** TEACHING CONTEMPORARY
PIANO TECHNIQUES TO
INTERMEDIATE STUDENTS with
Alexina Louie's *Star Light, Star Bright*
Lynn Worchester Jones
- 33** CECILE CHAMINADE'S *ALBUM
DES ENFANTS*: A Treasure Trove of
Intermediate-Level Teaching Pieces
Adrienne Wiley



THE
LEGACY
of

FRANCES
LARIMER

By Yeeseon Kwon,
Gayle Kowalchuk,
and E. L. Lancaster

46

REFLECT

- 46** THE LEGACY OF
FRANCES LARIMER
Yeeseon Kwon, Gayle Kowalchuk,
E.L. Lancaster
- 56** MUSIC TEACHING AND
PERFORMING BEYOND THE
STUDIO AND CONCERT HALL
Julie Jaffee Nagel
- 77** LIFE IN MUSIC
Jennifer Snow

PLAY

- 60** PUPIL SAVER
Rippling Spring Waltz
by Estelle Ricketts
Leah Claiborne
- 80** QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
Jane Magrath

DISCOVER

- 39** A HUMMEL TREASURE HUNT
Joanne Haroutounian
- 63** NEW MUSIC & MATERIALS
- 70** BOOK REVIEWS
*Teaching the Whole Musician:
A Guide to Wellness in the Applied
Studio* – Paola Savvidou
review by Meg Gray
- 72** RECORDINGS
- 79** PIANO MAGAZINE VOLUME 13
ARTICLE INDEX

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Winter 2021–2022

INTERMEDIATE STUDENTS: MIND THE GAP

PAMELA D. PIKE *Editor-in-Chief and Chief Content Director*



Arguably, facilitating student learning and performance during the intermediate-level years is where many teachers spend most of their teaching hours. Intermediate piano music takes years to work through and as the music becomes more demanding, these years coincide with activities that compete for students' attention. For some, the intermediate years feel like a cavernous expanse for which there is no longer the method book "road map" serving as guide; the gap feels wide. Often perceived as a liminal space between the productive elementary years and the exciting time of learning recognizable advanced repertoire, the intermediate years are an important transitional time—they form a pivotal bridge between practicing, playing, and performing elementary and advanced repertoire.

Many precollege piano teachers work with students on intermediate skills, technique, and repertoire for a longer period than any other stage of learning. The repertoire of the intermediate years encompasses many levels,¹ from easy sonatinas and dance movements to more challenging character pieces, individual movements of longer works, and early sonatas. While exploring intermediate music, students refine and improve upon piano technique and begin to internalize musical style unique to specific composers or time periods. This is not a time to rush through, learning just a few compositions per year; rather, it is a phase where students can savor the delights of exceptional literature. Thoughtfully drawing from the plethora of music at each level, and allowing students to experience diverse music from each, teachers provide the foundation upon which advanced performance rests.

When student independence and autonomy are encouraged during the intermediate years, independent, lifelong amateur musicians are formed. Unfortunately, many children never attain musical competency at the intermediate level.² Children who experience some autonomy over their learning and who succeed with attaining reasonable goals will develop feelings of competence, be more motivated to continue with learning, and persist when learning becomes difficult.³ Students should be encouraged to develop independent practice skills during the intermediate years. While learning appropriately leveled intermediate music, students have opportunities to identify problems, use

practice techniques from their toolkit, evaluate their success, try again, as needed, and experience success. Lessons learned in one composition may be applied to similar challenges encountered in new music. Seeing the opportunities presented in learning new music and tackling new challenges allows young pianists to develop a growth mindset.⁴

The role of the teacher is paramount during all learning phases, but whether working with teenaged or adult intermediate students, teachers who encourage students to become more independent with their personal practicing, can explore musical technique, nuance, and style during lessons. The teacher's role begins to shift to one of a facilitator, coach, and musical mentor,⁵ where the student-teacher relationship is less hierarchical. Meaningful lifelong music making depends on how well intermediate pianists learn to navigate learning new music, when the teacher is no longer by their side.

In this issue of the *Piano Magazine*, we provide tools for navigating the intermediate levels with articles featuring diverse intermediate repertoire for your studio and helping students develop practice skills. In celebration of Jane Magrath's much-anticipated new book,¹ which features a wealth of new intermediate music, she responds to your questions in the "Questions and Answers" column. Jane has been a mentor to many of us, so we know this will be a "must read." Finally, we pay tribute to Frances Larimer, another important mentor in our field. As you read about her legacy, consider how you will mentor your students, especially intermediate pianists in the coming weeks, months, and years. ■

NOTES

¹ For details on leveling and repertoire suggestions for intermediate teaching pieces see, Jane Magrath, *Piano Literature for Teaching & Performance: A Graded Guide and Annotated Bibliography*. Piano Education Press, 2021.

² Gary E. McPherson and Jane W. Davidson. "Playing an Instrument" in *The Child as Musician: A Handbook of Musical Development*. Oxford University Press, 2011.

³ Edward L. Deci, with Richard Flaste. *Why We Do What We Do: Understanding Self-Motivation*. Penguin Books, 1995.

⁴ Carol S. Dweck. *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. Ballantine Books, 2006.

⁵ Although used interchangeably here, there are technical differences between the terms tutor, instructor, facilitator, coach, and mentor. See, Peter Renshaw, *Lifelong Learning for Musicians: The Place of Mentoring*. Lectorate Lifelong Learning in Music & the Arts, 2009, for definitions and discussion.

Piano News from Around the Globe

Winner of 18th Frederic Chopin International Piano Competition Announced

On October 20, Canadian pianist Bruce (Xiaoyu) Lui won first prize at the 18th Frederic Chopin International Piano Competition in Warsaw. Delayed by one year due to the pandemic, Lui competed against twelve finalists, performing the Chopin *Concerto in E Minor*, Op. 11. Second prize was shared by Alexander Gadjević (Italy and Slovenia) and Kyohei Sorita (Japan). Third prize was awarded to Martin Garcia Garcia (Spain). Janet Lopinski, director of the Canadian Chopin Society, who was in Warsaw for the competition, reflects:

“It was an incredible experience to be able to attend the 18th Chopin Competition in Warsaw, Poland. Hearing so many wonderful young pianists perform the music of Chopin in the land of his birth was especially powerful after the quiet months of the pandemic when live performances were on hold. It seemed that the competitors had used the time wisely, gaining deeper insights into their programs. The performances seemed exceptionally imaginative, insightful, and communicative, and the audience response more enthusiastic and heartfelt than ever before. Videos of all the sessions remain available on the 18th Chopin Competition website. Three of the twelve finalists were just 17 years old,

leaving us to wonder what the future may bring as they continue to experience life and grow as artists. I found myself in awe and amazement of the high level of artistry, passion, and originality in performances of the beloved works of Chopin that have already been performed and recorded by so many master pianists and encouraged by the large number of young people in the audience, both in the concert hall and online. The music of Chopin is indeed in very good hands!”

Busoni Piano Competition Winner Announced

Jae Hong Park, of South Korea, won the 63rd International Ferruccio Busoni Piano Competition in September. The 22-year-old pianist has also previously won the Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition for Young Artists and the Cleveland International Piano Competition for Young Artists. He studies at the Korea National University of Arts. The 2021 international jury was presided by pianist Louis Lortie. The exciting semi-final and final performances are archived online.

Spanish & Portuguese Piano Magazine Abstracts

Beginning with the Autumn 2021 issue, the *Piano Magazine* is publishing abstracts of the main articles in Spanish and Portuguese. Abstract translations are available at claviercompanion.com. 📖

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PRACTICING ALONGSIDE

Our Intermediate Students

~~~~~ by Sara M. Ernst ~~~~~

Practice may be readily defined by our elementary students as “playing the piano at home” and by intermediate students as “time spent learning my music.” Advanced musicians acquire a nuanced definition of practice, which may include concepts like warming up, deep listening and analysis, artistic exploration, cultivating technical freedom, and rehearsing performance. Some musicians refer to practice as a cherished and coveted daily time in their otherwise busy schedules. These varied definitions reveal a balanced, four-part structure to practice (see fig. 1): warming up, making and enjoying music, developing mastery and artistry, and preparing to perform.

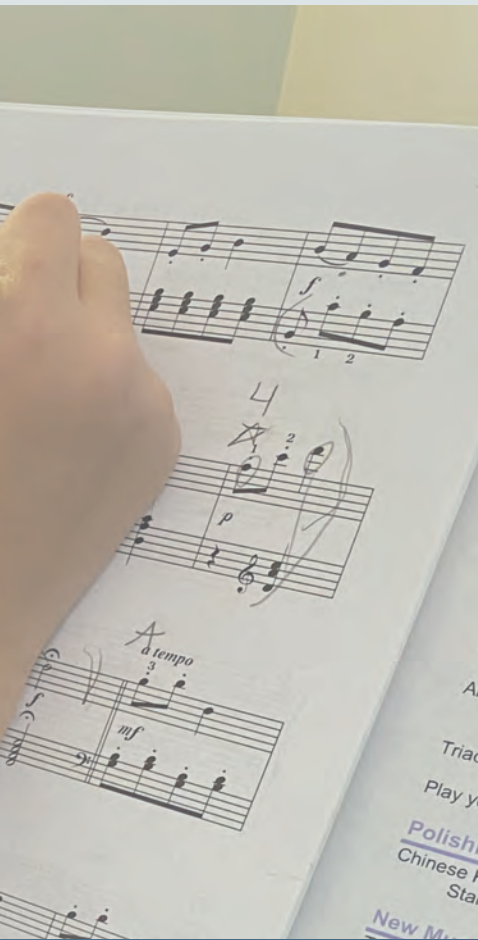


Figure 1: Four parts of practice

Musicians at all levels can benefit from this balanced perspective on practice. Warming up helps us transition from other activities, preparing the body, mind, and ear for the focused efforts ahead. Time spent enjoying the sound of the instrument, “playing” for the pleasure of making music, connects us deeply to our craft. Mastery and artistry result from problem solving and sound exploration, and lastly, performance is rehearsed.

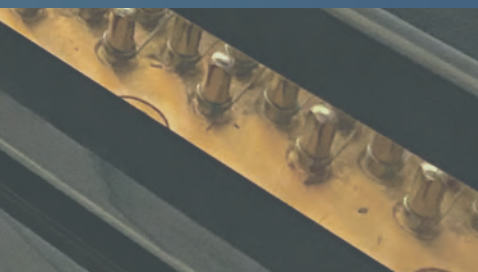
### Balanced Assignments for Successful Practice

For the intermediate student, this four-part definition of practice infers a careful balance of activities on the practice assignment: warm-ups, music for enjoyment (student choice), new pieces, and repertoire for polishing (see fig. 2).



Figure 2: Four parts of a piano practice assignment

**Warm-ups** include a variety of short drills in multiple keys, covering the categories of five-finger patterns, chords, scales, and arpeggios. With these, students can establish a healthy technical approach and expand their knowledge of common keyboard patterns. The **Student Choice** category, which I often label **Creative Activities** or **On Your Own**, can include music and skills of personal interest. This can be holiday or popular music or music created through improvisation, composition, and harmonization. Currently, my intermediate students have



With a patient, supportive attitude and unceasing guidance, the teacher can enhance a student's practice abilities, self-direction, and enjoyment of making and performing music.

Halloween music, improvisation, and play-and-sing lead sheets on their assignments. I ensure any music to be read can be learned independently in one or two weeks, and I engage my students in crafting this portion of the assignment. Students benefit from the intrinsic motivation when creating their own music, and they build self-efficacy through choosing music and learning with ease. Furthermore, this category may provide an oft-needed boost of motivation to commence practice.

Music in the **New** category are those pieces in the note-learning stage, whereas **Polishing** is for pieces being honed for artistic command. The feelings of success and enjoyment that result from playing a piece with confidence and mastery can certainly result in a desire to play more. Although, having too many pieces in the learning stage can be frustrating because it requires sustained focus and effort. It is a formidable goal to have two or three pieces in the note-learning stage and one or two performance-ready pieces. For my students, not all pieces continue to the polishing phase, but rather, those we identify as ideal for upcoming recitals, events, or repertoire classes.

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## Building from Elementary to Intermediate

Practice skills are a facet of a comprehensive piano curriculum, and like all facets, learning to practice begins from the first lesson. Hopefully, the elementary student develops a regular routine for practice, a desire to play, a feeling of self-efficacy, and an understanding that learning piano requires persistence and dedication. At the beginning, practice time will largely entail playing through pieces learned in the lesson, and then expand to include these basic practice principles:

- ✓ **Routine completion of assignment:** Practice occurs daily, never skipping two days in a row, following the assignment provided in the lesson.
- ✓ **Preparation steps:** Practice begins by studying the music: how it sounds, the form, the rhythm, and the patterns.
- ✓ **Mindful repetition:** Practice has repetition of pieces and parts, three to five times each, to develop understanding and fluency.
- ✓ **Musical sound from the start:** During practice, observe and learn with all marks of expression.
- ✓ **Slow, accurate, purposeful:** Learning starts from a slow pulse, so that playing is accurate in notes, fingerings, rhythms, and musical markings.
- ✓ **Sectional learning:** The form is marked in the music (i.e. ABA), and learning occurs through these parts.
- ✓ **Isolate hard spots:** Tricky aspects, such as changes in hand placement or difficult coordination, are practiced first.

Because the intermediate literature is far less congruent than elementary educational repertoire, intermediate practice thus requires students to be self-guided in their work and use even more problem-solving strategies. This list of elementary practice skills can be used as an assessment checklist when evaluating intermediate students who are not making sufficient progress between lessons.

With this strong elementary practice foundation, a student's transition to intermediate repertoire can be relatively straightforward. The intermediate curriculum for practice requires a more expansive toolkit of strategies

for the unique features of the repertoire being studied. In the lesson, these must be demonstrated by the teacher and explored by the student, such that achievement is felt by the student. Score annotations must be part of the process; *giving the pencil to students* gives them ownership. In the list of practice strategies below, I have indicated the standard written symbols that I use with my students.

**Hands or voices separate:** When one hand has a new or cumbersome technique, isolating the single hand can be helpful. This is also true of counterpoint, that hearing each line on its own can train the ear. This is not a mode of learning, but rather, a practice strategy with special purpose.

- **Place a bracket around the individual parts and write the hand or voice that needs practice (i.e., LH only or 3 voices)**

**Blocking and grouping:** Complex figures made of runs, scales, broken chords, and arpeggios can be mastered by dividing it into digestible parts. Blocks and groups may be determined by use of the hand, the notes before a shift of position or finger crossing, or a change of harmony. They can also be grouped by motivic (pitch) or by the beat (rhythmic). When blocking, play the notes under the hand simultaneously, whereas when grouping, play the notes sequentially. Pause to prepare each block/group. Practice should start with the block/group, and then chain the blocks/groups together.

- **Place parentheses around the parts, and write block or group.**

**From the last:** To build fluency through a section—for example, one made of four phrases—begin with phrase 4. Then play phrase 3 and 4, then 2 through 4, and then 1 through 4. This can also be applied to whole pieces from sections, and to small sections from blocks and groups.

- **Draw stars at each starting spot and number them from the end.**

**Three speeds:** With large sections or whole pieces, practice at three speeds—slow, medium, and goal speed. As a basic guideline, the slow tempo should be approximately a third less than the goal. Medium is the middle point between slow and the goal. For example, an *allegro* piece would be practiced at mm=72, 96, 120. A metronome can be used to establish these speeds, although it may not be advisable to play with the metronome clicking.



Score annotations must be part of the process; *giving the pencil to students* gives them ownership.

- **Document these speeds at the start of the piece.**

**Metronome, notch it up:** With small sections that pose difficulty at the goal speed, begin with a tempo that is easy, and increase the speed by one click (2–8 bpm) between repetitions. If an error occurs, reduce by one click.

- **Bracket the section. Document the starting speed and fastest speed achieved.**

**Purposeful pause:** If there is a note, count, or rhythm that is often played incorrectly, insert a preparatory pause. Only proceed when the hand and ear is ready. This trains the mind to think ahead for accurate playing, instead of engraining an error.

- **Circle what needs correction and/or preparation. Draw a stop sign in the score before the circle.**

**Silent shifting:** Find where hand positions change and move between them silently, seeking to make the movements precise, efficient, and direct.

- **Draw an arrow between the changes of position.**

**Opposites:** Sections meant to be played soft or loud, *staccato* or *legato*, can be practiced in the opposite dynamic or touch. Sections that are extremely high or low can be practiced in different registers of the piano. Pieces or sections that require control and endurance can benefit from this technique.

- **Draw a bracket and write in the opposite sound for practice (Ex: Loud and *staccato*, or Practice 8va)**

This list above is what I consider core intermediate practice skills, but it is certainly not comprehensive. For more detailed practice strategies found in student and teacher guides, see my favored studio resources at the end of this article.

### Eradicating Bad Habits

If intermediate students have deficiencies in their practice approach, these must be purposefully addressed *in the lesson*. For instance, a student who practices by playing through each piece once needs to learn how to **isolate hard spots** and use **mindful repetition**. Spend time in every lesson modeling and guiding this elementary principle of practice. If a student continually overlooks fingerings and musical markings, assign a series of quick-learn pieces (ideally chosen with input from the student). Use these

pieces to provide weekly, in-lesson opportunities to lead the student through **slow, accurate, purposeful** reading. Another approach is to only send home sections for practice that have been fully learned during the lesson. The antidote for bad habits at home is to guide good alternative habits in *every lesson for many months*. Be tenacious, but patient and encouraging!

### Preparing for Performance during Practice

Practicing for performance is also a meaningful and consequential skill to cultivate in students. Often, I discover that even advanced musicians do not view performance preparation any differently than customary practice. But, the mental and musical skills that must be rehearsed include: self-guided focus, deep listening, performance flow, coping with nervousness, and stage presence. As a student enters the polishing phase, I will ask questions such as: What will you listen for as you play this phrase expressively? What are your sound goals for this section? How artistically can you play the ending? I will follow the discussion by having the student play the section several times with a “performance mindset,” which I define as performing the section fluently while focusing on and listening for artistic goals. After each playthrough, I use teacher coaching and student self-evaluation to refine artistic elements and refocus the mind and ear. These “performance reps” of sections, if done intentionally, will ultimately result in performance flow through self-guided focus on artistic listening.

As the performance date draws near, we will address stage presence by planning how to start and end the piece and by rehearsing the performance in its entirety. We will also play in repertoire classes and video record to practice performing while experiencing feelings of anticipation and nervousness. We will also spend time imagining how wonderful the piece will sound in the recital hall and how much the audience will enjoy hearing this music. I will also express my gratitude for their efforts in practice and affirm that I am confident in their readiness.

### Pedagogical Mindset for Guiding Effective Practice

A crucial pedagogical perspective to maintain is that while the student practices to master *this specific piece*, the teacher is building the student’s *practice skills* through this piece. Therefore, it is essential to practice together with specific strategies in every lesson, and to follow-up in the next lesson by asking the student to demonstrate the approaches from the prior lesson. Because the score was annotated, the student can easily return to each of the symbols and review the strategy by defining the technique and practicing again during the lesson. At first, this will require substantial guidance from the teacher, who will need to model and refine the student’s process. Over time the student will gain independence and may eventually transfer these ideas to new pieces.



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There are several other key educational considerations when teaching intermediate students that will impact growth of practice skills:

1. Assign music that is at an appropriate reading and playing level. For my intermediate students, I select music that can be accurately and fluently learned in three to five weeks. Motivation can quickly wane if a piece takes too long to learn.
2. Carefully prepare the first week of learning to ensure accurate initial practicing. In the introductory lesson, I will include sight reading from the score, formal analysis, discovery of pitch and rhythm patterns, initial work on sound and technique, and practice goals.
3. Give the student ownership and personal agency. Ask the student to write reminders, notes, fingerings, and practice indications in the score. The student can also write down goals and steps for learning. At times, I also give my students a list of possible pieces from which they will select their preference.
4. Ask the student to listen critically and identify errors, oversights, and measures that need improvement. Resist the urge to tell and fix, instead, nurture the student's self-direction. If the learner struggles to self-assess, use video recording and playback during the lesson as a tool for directed listening. Or, have the student play in sections and ask detailed questions to focus attention.
5. Engage the student in problem solving and goal setting through open-ended questions: How can you practice to maintain a steady pulse? How can you practice to secure this unexpected fingering? What are three goals for your practice this week? Follow up by trying out these ideas and practicing together.

Practice at Home

Through the elementary years, caregivers will have provided personal and cognitive support to the young learner, ensuring practice, facilitating completion of the assignment, and communicating questions or concerns at the next lesson. Teachers may need to encourage this continued support and open dialogue through the intermediate years and adolescence. Parents often mistakenly believe that a child who enjoys piano will not need to be told to practice. But, even motivated, autonomous children need personal support. This includes scheduling daily practice, enabling focused and uninterrupted time, encouraging persistence, and commending effort. As children progress through school, schedules may become complicated, and caregivers should be guided to avoid scheduling practice at the end of the day when fatigue is likely.

## Final Thoughts

The intermediate years of piano study are such an inspiring time! Pianists have a vast repertoire of music to learn and perform, and there are many skills that can be explored. Teachers can seek to balance their students' time at the instrument, providing them with well-rounded assignments that include technical skills for warm-up, activities that inspire the individual, new music to be learned through mindful practice, and repertoire to be polished for performance. With a patient, supportive attitude and unceasing guidance, the teacher can enhance a student's practice abilities, self-direction, and enjoyment of making and performing music. Through this pedagogical approach, we can instill in the next generation a desire to embrace the life-changing, fulfilling, daily ritual musicians call *practice*. 🎹



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## PRACTICE RESOURCES FOR THE STUDIO

Nancy O'Neill Breth, *The Piano Student's Guide to Effective Practicing*. Hal Leonard, 2004.

Nancy O'Neill Breth, *Practicing the Piano: How Students, Parents, and Teachers Can Make Practicing More Effective*. Hal Leonard, 2012.

Phillip Johnston, *The Practice Revolution: Getting Great Results from the Six Days between Lessons*. Practice Spot Press, 2004.

Phillip Johnston, *Practiceopedia*. Practice Spot Press, 2006.

# Teaching Contemporary Piano Techniques to Intermediate Piano Students with Alexina Louie's *Star Light, Star Bright*

by Lynn Worchester Jones

Introducing intermediate piano students to twentieth- and twenty-first-century compositional techniques and styles is essential, especially as we move from Gen Z students to those in Generation Alpha (born in the early 2010s). In *Star Light, Star Bright* (1995),<sup>1</sup> both generations will find an established, musically rich collection of nine pedagogical solo piano pieces tailored for this purpose by Alexina Louie,<sup>2</sup> an internationally recognized, living female composer. Students will gain greater rhythmic control, perceive their sound differently, explore new freedoms in their technique, and appreciate the importance of score study. Effective performance of these techniques will build a student's inner conductor as they absorb the importance of rhythmic values and new approaches to time and space. Beyond the pedagogical benefits, these pieces may also help teachers retain students who are resistant to, or need a break from, traditional repertoire.

*Star Light, Star Bright* comfortably and brilliantly engages the intermediate-level student with minimalism, frequent meter changes, unmeasured music, and new presentations

of musical notation. The pieces sound sophisticated and advanced beyond their pianistic requirements, and alone or in combinations are excellent choices for study in lessons, recital performances, and competitions. One approach in teaching this set is to study and perform the pieces in pairs. Each piece is brief—two to four pages—with the right number of contemporary musical techniques, styles, and new challenges. Louie provides musical directions that are succinct, specific, and inviting for students new to the way these techniques sound, feel, and appear on the page; and students and teachers will appreciate her pedal markings, ample fingerings, tempo alterations, articulations, and dynamics in the music.

Eight out of the nine pieces are listed in *The Royal Conservatory Piano Syllabus, 2015 edition (RCPS)*<sup>3</sup> and they offer Gen Alphas an opportunity to be intrigued by stars, planets, and galaxies as they explore new sounds and colors emanating from this celestial set.



## “Star-Gazing”

“Star-Gazing” employs two distinct notational figurations: a rapidly repeated gesture in the right hand which appears twice, and a *senza misura* in measure 23 where one discovers repeated chords that should increase in speed over five seconds. *Senza misura* markings indicate that the music is to be played freely and measured in seconds. Students can practice this *senza misura* by utilizing a stopwatch to begin playing the first five repeated chords and then play faster and faster until the five-second mark. The G-flat major and F major chords are juxtaposed in root position, first inversion, and second inversion in both hands in twelve of the thirty-one measures. Prepare students in advance by separately practicing these chords in all their inversions by rote. Students will also encounter meter changes that range from 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, and 5/4, in addition to a few rapid passages that sound like a flourish of stars. “Star-Gazing” is listed as Level 8 in the RCPS, p. 68.

The image shows a musical score excerpt for "Star-Gazing". It features two staves, treble and bass clef. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The time signature is 4/4. The section is marked "senza misura" and "ca 5\"/>

**Excerpt 3:**  
“Star-Gazing” from  
*Star Light, Star Bright*,  
by Alexina Louie, m. 23.  
Used with permission.

## “Rings of Saturn”

“Rings of Saturn” is a brilliant presentation of chord clusters, unmeasured music, and shifting meters for developing students. The two *senza misura* sections in measures 1 and 20 may seem like the most challenging parts initially, however students will find those measures easier to master than the metered measures with chord clusters, especially measures 13 through 16. In these measures with chord clusters, many of the chords may be taught in advance by rote to build muscle memory in new hand shapes and fingering groupings. Measure 1 is to be played in ten seconds and measure 20 repeats alternating arpeggiated hand-over-hand chords that span a total of thirty seconds. Similar to the *senza misura* in “Star-Gazing,” students can utilize a stopwatch and pace their gestures over the indicated time in seconds while watching the clock. Transitioning between *senza misura* and metered measures should be practiced so that students have internalized a set, quarter-note pulse and tempo in the metered sections, which also shift between 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, and 5/4. “Rings of Saturn” is listed as Level 8 in the RCPS, p. 68.

The image shows a musical score excerpt for "Rings of Saturn". It features two staves, treble and bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. The section is marked "senza misura" and "ca 10\"/>

**Excerpt 4:**  
“Rings of Saturn” from  
*Star Light, Star Bright*,  
by Alexina Louie, m. 1.  
Used with permission.

## “Moonlight Toccata”

“Moonlight Toccata” is an accessible introduction to the twentieth-century *toccata*. This showy piece displays a performer’s rapid, detached touch with brief interludes of melodious, *legato* phrases. Every passage feels comfortable and flows from one phrase to the next and the piece is especially suited to small hands. The continuous alternating single pitches from left to right hand outline repetitive chords that create stunning sound waves with the use of the damper pedal. Students can practice the alternating single-note gestures by softly chunking six notes at a time to create two harmonic groups per measure. This harmonic chunking exercise will secure fingering, touch, and sound for students who like to play fast. “Moonlight Toccata” is listed as Level 9 in the RCPS, p. 75.

Leggiero ♩ = ca 80  
detached (with pedal)

*pp*  
*una corda*

**Excerpt 5:**  
“Moonlight Toccata”  
from *Star Light, Star Bright*,  
by Alexina Louie, mm. 1–3.  
Used with permission.

## “O Moon”

“O Moon” is suitable for the student interested in reading and performing unmeasured music with floating, stemless chord clusters and dissonant harmonies. This piece employs many of the same contemporary compositional techniques found in “Rings of Saturn,” however its overall sound is more abstract and ethereal. “O Moon” has two distinct sections divided equally between the two pages. The first section, and measure, is marked *senza misura* and is to be played freely in one minute and fifteen seconds. The second section is metered until the final measure (m. 17) where the last *senza misura* appears in this collection. Students will experience measures 12 to 16 distributed in three staves—a compositional approach found again in the final piece, “Into Forever.” There are left-hand leaps into the bass clef that should be practiced after smoothly playing the synchronous chords in the top two treble clefs. “O Moon” is listed as Level 8 in the RCPS, p. 68.

*senza misura*  
0" 23"

*p*  
*una corda*

**Excerpt 6:**  
“O Moon” from  
*Star Light, Star Bright*,  
by Alexina Louie, m. 1.  
Used with permission.

## “Shooting Stars”

“Shooting Stars” is a character piece that depicts the title sound through several ascending and descending scalar figures divided between the hands to avoid thumb tucking. Pianists will also be tasked with rolled chords, hand crossings, and repeated intervallic figures. Although the entire piece is metered and the linear runs are metrical, pianists can convince the listener otherwise when played expressively. Students should try to achieve a ringing tone with full damper pedal to capture a sparkling sound and be quick to get to the bottom of the key bed in these scalar lines—staying close to the keys for rhythmic evenness. Repeated musical ideas make this piece a faster study than many of the others found in this collection. “Shooting Stars” is listed as Level 7 in the RCPS, p. 61.



**Excerpt 7:**  
“Shooting Stars”  
from *Star Light,*  
*Star Bright*, by Alexina  
Louie, mm. 1–2.  
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Introducing intermediate piano students to twentieth- and twenty-first-century compositional techniques and styles is essential, especially as we move from Gen Z students to those in Generation Alpha (born in the early 2010s).

## “Blue Sky II”

“Blue Sky II” is a minimalist piece that opens with eight introductory measures that provide students with a taste of bitonality. From measure 9 to the end, the piece is filled with a melodically driven minimalistic style. One transitional section interrupts the overall texture of running eighth notes through beautifully sequenced descending clusters, thirds, and chords at measures 21 to 24—the most difficult passage in the piece. These chords should be played detached and with the damper pedal, and they should be the first measures learned. “Blue Sky II” is listed as Level 7 in the RCPS, p. 61.

**Excerpt 8:**  
“Blue Sky II” from  
*Star Light, Star Bright*, by  
Alexina Louie,  
mm. 1–4.  
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for MTNA's return to in-person conferences with the 2022 MTNA National Conference, March 26-30, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In addition to a full face-to-face experience, MTNA will offer a virtual option for attendees that will include curated content from the in-person event.

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## “Into Forever”

“Into Forever” is the final piece in the collection and students are introduced to reading piano music in a range of two, three, and four staves. Composers in the twentieth century spread out their notation into three or more staves to achieve clarity in voicing and presentation of material. In this piece, the third and fourth staves frequently employ chord clusters with open palms, and the student will find it cleaner to read these performance directions in multiple staves. Practicing one staff at a time and slowly adding an additional staff will help to gain familiarity in training the eye movement to span a large vertical range. Students will find it surprisingly intuitive when combining staves, as much of the piece is written in unison. Most of this piece is to be played in the *piano* and *pianissimo* dynamic levels.

**Excerpt 9:**  
“Into Forever” from  
*Star Light, Star Bright*,  
by Alexina Louie,  
mm. 1–4.  
Used with permission.

## Closing Thoughts

*Star Light, Star Bright* will pique the interest of students who can create supernal and atmospheric sounds in new ways while learning how to interpret and play unmeasured measures, frequent meter changes, chord clusters, rapidly repeating gestures, minimalist music, new symbols and markings, and music presented in three to four staves. Gen Zers and Gen Alphas will discover a gentle invitation into the world of contemporary solo piano repertoire composed by a living female composer at the intermediate level. 🌌



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Editor’s Note:

Visit [claviercompanion.com](http://claviercompanion.com) to hear performances of the musical excerpts.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The *Star Light, Star Bright* collection of intermediate piano solos, by Alexina Louie, was most recently available in print at J. W. Pepper, [jwpepper.com/Star-Light-Star-Bright/5982051.item#.YVcHNtNKjPZ](http://jwpepper.com/Star-Light-Star-Bright/5982051.item#.YVcHNtNKjPZ), accessed October 5, 2021; and is available for purchase as a pdf download through the Canadian Music Center Online Library at [cmccanada.org/shop/14154/](http://cmccanada.org/shop/14154/), accessed October 5, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Born in 1949, Alexina Louie is a Chinese Canadian female composer who has achieved international acclaim, and whose works have become part of the standard repertoire. Read more about Alexina Louie in her biography found on her website at [alexinalouie.ca/full-bio](http://alexinalouie.ca/full-bio).

<sup>3</sup> The Royal Conservatory Piano Syllabus (RCPS) may be accessed online at [files.rcmusic.com/sites/default/files/files/RCM-Piano-Syllabus-2015.pdf](http://files.rcmusic.com/sites/default/files/files/RCM-Piano-Syllabus-2015.pdf). RCPS page references listed in this article are taken from this document, accessed on October 5, 2021.

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• Up stem (♩) = Right Hand (RH) will play.

Christ-mas cook-ies, can-dy canes, Snow-flakes on our win-dow panes.  
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ACCOMPANIMENT (Student plays one octave higher)

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## THE LEGACY *of*

# Miriam Hyde

by Jerry Wong

When I relocated to Melbourne, Australia, from the United States in June of 2019, I was immediately struck by the sense of tradition and cultural reverence that was deeply felt and clearly acknowledged by new colleagues, acquaintances, and students. Recurrent themes included the widely held belief that curricula related to music studies were constantly evolving. A dedication to composers from Australia and a commitment to discuss, study, program, and reflect upon their works was one principle that was uniquely intertwined with this ideal. There were often references to composers Miriam Hyde, Percy Grainger,

and Carl Vine, and works by all three made frequent appearances in lessons, masterclasses, and performances. I became increasingly struck by the ingenuity and wide-ranging scope of Hyde's works. The intensity of her harmonic language coupled with her innate ability to write for the budding virtuoso pianist led me to dig a bit deeper. As familiarity with her work increased, I came to know a figure who was thoroughly embedded into the musical life of Australia for the better part of three-quarters of a century and whose creative genius remains a lasting inspiration to performers, students, and teachers.

## A Lifetime of Creativity and Recognized Achievement

Miriam Hyde (1913–2005) came from a musical family, receiving early instruction and encouragement from her mother. Formal studies occurred at the University of Adelaide's Elder Conservatorium, following which she received an Australian scholarship for study abroad in London. While at the Royal College of Music, both her identity as a concert pianist and voice as a composer developed simultaneously. She returned to Australia three years later and embarked on a career of significant influence and sustained recognition. Eventually settling in Sydney, she criss-crossed the country on concert tours, gave lectures on a variety of pedagogical topics, and adjudicated for student festivals, all the while remaining prolific as a composer. Her compositional output included dozens of piano works, songs, instrumental sonatas for clarinet, viola, and flute, as well as various chamber and orchestral works. Hyde's success in her multiple endeavors, as well as her commitment to arts education, was acknowledged repeatedly by the international community. She received an honorary doctorate from Macquarie University in Sydney, the Office of the Order of the British Empire (OBE), the Office of the Order of Australia (AO), and numerous awards from artistic and musical societies throughout Australia and abroad.

## Pedagogical Interests and Associations

The popularity of Hyde's piano works can be intrinsically linked to her long-standing association with the Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB), an organization that is at the very fundamental core of musical and cultural life in Australia. AMEB exams and syllabi are part of an accepted and widely utilized educational system throughout even the most remote areas of the country. Hyde devoted countless hours to adjudication on behalf of AMEB and her compositions began to appear on the syllabi with increased frequency throughout her lifetime. Peter McCallum, chief music critic for *The Sydney Morning Herald*, wrote in her January 2005 obituary: "...her name will be irrevocably linked with memories of immobilising terror—those lonely sweaty-palmed moments in cold corridors before playing piano for the Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB), an organisation for which she has provided more music than almost any other Australian composer."<sup>1</sup>

## Sight Reading Adventures

*Sight Reading Adventures* far surpasses the immediate impression made by its title. It is a series of graded books that task a certain skill or pattern recognition. Short exercises build upon one another and lead the young pianist towards a strong sense of musical fluency and pianistic adaptability. At the more elementary levels, for instance, several examples might be devoted to the single task of learning to play a dotted-half note in one hand with flowing, even quarters in the other. Additional material devotes itself to concepts such as the recognition of slurs versus ties, imitation of motives between the hands, and alternating articulations. In each instance, Hyde offers succinct advice to the student regarding the apparent goal, which is of equal benefit to the teacher as well. For a more intermediate or early-advanced student who might be struggling for sufficient time in the busy day to build sight-reading skills, the *Sight Reading Adventures – Supplement* is highly recommended. The *Supplement* is made up of many short examples centered around preparation for, and exposure to, the tonal world and compositional devices of the late-Romantic period. Chromaticism and unexpected accidentals are plentiful, while the various patterns presented seem focused on developing some of the basic virtuosic skills that are synonymous with that era. Thick chords, leaps, thumb crossings, frequent changing of clefs, and smooth *legato* hand crossing examples are all among the various prescribed challenges. Hyde's approach to reading is multi-faceted and might be used in parallel approach with the earlier books of Béla Bartók's *Mikrokosmos*. Both volumes make an exhaustive attempt at attaining skills that will eventually translate into learning an eclectic range of styles.

## Graded Piano Series

There is an abundance of Hyde's compositions that can be classified as teaching material, all of which are exclusively published by Wirripang. Following the progression of the *Graded Piano Series* from the first through fifth books reveals limitless knowledge of piano teaching and a charming creativity. The works are obviously considered with tender sensitivity towards children's themes and Hyde gives titles such as "Friendly Cat" (*Preliminary First Grade Children's Suite No. 1*), "Flying My Kite" (*Preliminary First Grade Children's Suite No. 2*), "The Trombone Lesson" (*Second Grade Little Sketch Book*), and "Drifting Cloud"

(*Third Grade Pictures Tone*). Teachers who regularly assign and program works, such as Seymour Bernstein's *Birds* or *Racoon*s, Edward MacDowell's *Ten Woodland Sketches*, and Octávio Pinto's *Scenas Infantis*, might take great pleasure in adding Hyde's *Graded Piano Series* to the studio repertoire list. Like Bernstein, the blend of pianist and teacher is constantly apparent in Hyde's works as she carefully strives to offer thoughtful fingerings, articulation markings, and pedal instructions that develop the budding pianist while enhancing the performance.

Hyde's use of text painting in many of these works is sophisticated, yet easily grasped by the younger student. One example could include "The Last Raindrops Fall" from the *Preliminary First Grade Children's Suite No. 1*.



**Excerpt 1:**

Miriam Hyde, "The Last Raindrops Fall,"  
from *Preliminary First Grade Children's Suite*  
No. 1, mm. 1-8.

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Similarly, in “The Leaves are Falling” from *Tone Pictures Graded Piano Series – Third Grade*, one can note the effortless dialogue between the two-note slurs in the right and left hands trading wistfully back and forth, as if on a breezy autumn day.

**Excerpt 2:**

Miriam Hyde, “The Leaves are Falling,” from *Tone Pictures Graded Piano Series – Third Grade*, mm. 1–4. Used with permission.

There are humorous examples from these works as well. See the surprising C-flat and E-flat in the left hand at the close of this seemingly predictable phrase gesture in “My Old Teddy,” also from the *Preliminary First Grade Children’s Suite No. 1*.

**Excerpt 3:**

Miriam Hyde, “My Old Teddy,” from *Preliminary First Grade Children’s Suite No. 1*, mm. 1–10. Used with permission.

For a student with a more developed facility and the ability to incorporate a bit of velocity, *Frost Fairies* from *Three Impressions Graded Piano Series – Fifth Grade* is a delightful work. A teacher who might normally introduce the concepts of fleeting arpeggios and sweeping gesture by assigning Mendelssohn’s *Songs Without Words*, Opus 19, No. 3 could consider “Frost Fairies” as an excellent alternative.

**Excerpt 4:**

Miriam Hyde, “Frost Fairies,” from *Three Impressions Graded Piano Series – Fifth Grade*, mm. 1–6. Used with permission.



### Accomplished Virtuoso Pianist

Hyde followed in the tradition of Mozart, Chopin, and Liszt by paralleling her virtuoso skill as a performing pianist alongside her compositional output. During her formative years of study at the Royal College of Music in London, focus on piano studies was as serious as composition lessons in her education. During that time, she was an avid concertgoer and later cited hearing Rachmaninoff in live concerts as illuminating and highly inspirational. Highlights from her earlier years on the concert stage included debut appearances with the London Symphony Orchestra and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. The latter appearance was also the premiere of her First Piano Concerto in E-Flat Minor.

While the years that ensued after returning to Australia from England were filled with a variety of academic and family obligations, as well as a deepening interest in composition, Hyde remained a formidable pianist. Her dedication to the concert stage never waned. In fact, when arriving at the major milestones of both her eightieth and ninetieth birthdays, she marked those years with celebratory recital tours and broadcasts throughout Australia.

In August of 1991, the 78-year-old Hyde gave an interview on the Australian Broadcast Corporation's popular *Sunday Afternoon* show with Peter Ross. She spoke with great poise about her career and a particularly pivotal meeting early on with Percy Grainger, who remained arguably Australia's most revered composer at that time. Following the interview, Hyde performed *The Fountain*, an example of one of her evocative character pieces. The playing was elegant, confident, precise, and without distortion or exaggeration.

Photo courtesy of Wirripang

While Hyde's pianism seemed to illustrate tremendous composure and physical calm, it also sparkled with brilliance and imagination.

Students seeking further insight into the interpretation of Hyde's piano works can consult several of her CDs on the Wirripang label. One such example is the disc titled *Valley of Rocks*, which contains twelve of her compositions, including the often-played work of the same title, *Sonata in G Minor*, and the popular *Magpies at Sunrise*, among many others. Like the live performance on the ABC, this recording again exhibits remarkable pianism, characterized by an exacting and disciplined interpretation, as well as many moments of profound expression.

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## Literary Interests

Hyde's creativity spilled over from music to literature. She was as skilled with the pen as she was at the keyboard. In fact, over the course of her lifetime she wrote more than fifty poems that covered a wide range of themes and topics. Fifteen of them served as texts for her songs and three were published in the Economy Press. Her major published literary work with Currency Press was an autobiography titled *Complete Accord*. In it she details a fascinating life dedicated to the pursuit of the arts and their higher causes, all written in descriptive and persuasive prose. Further evidence of Hyde's dedicated use of the pen can be found in *Papers of Miriam Hyde* which are held in the National Library of Australia. The collection organizes a sixty-six-year time span of correspondence, including letters to dozens of professional musicians, as well as communications with noted arts organizations such as the Australian Broadcast Corporation, Australian Music Examinations Board, and Music Teachers National Association in the United States.



Photo courtesy of the  
Australian Music Centre.

## Advanced Works for the Concert Stage

While recognized as a composer of beginning and intermediate-level piano music that contains strong pedagogical intent, Hyde also wrote compelling advanced works for the concert stage. Chief among her large-scale works is the three-movement *Sonata in G Minor*. The piece has many pianistic challenges and requires a strong octave technique, developed control of voicing and texture, as well as an abundance of emotional temperament. Hyde expressed the significant influence of events during World War II in the preface of the score. "The first movement was written in 1941, the year in which my husband, Marcus, was taken prisoner after battles in the Middle East, Greece and finally Crete. He was to spend the remainder of the war in Germany. There was day-to-day anxiety, as communication was sparse and letters were censored."<sup>2</sup> Noted Australian pianist Geoffrey Tozer (1954–2009) was a loyal advocate of the work and his stunning live performance commemorating Hyde's ninetieth birthday can be heard on YouTube. He introduces the performance by saying, "it has to be one of the openly expressive, wonderfully emotional pieces I think you can ever imagine being written in Australia."<sup>3</sup>

Among Hyde's most frequently performed concert works is a short five-minute character piece titled *Valley of Rocks*. Written in 1975, its popularity is partially tied to the 1988 Sydney International Piano Competition. It has been placed on the required repertoire list and received many performances by contestants during the widely broadcast competition. The work was inspired by a popular tourist destination in North Devon, England that has the same title. Hyde visited the Valley of Rocks with her husband and was struck by the spacious and timeless sensation of the location. *Valley of Rocks* evolves slowly and creates an ethereal musical image that is wonderfully aligned with its creative origin. In addition to Hyde's own sensational recording of the piece, Australian pianist Kathryn Selby included it on an ABC Classics recording to great critical acclaim.

The work opens with all parts moving in a static motion, requiring the pianist to have an acute physical control of even *legato* and balance of parts.



**Excerpt 5:**  
Miriam Hyde, *Valley of Rocks*, mm. 1–4.  
Used with permission.

As the piece unfolds, there are several bravura climaxes, including this sweeping gesture which utilizes the full extent of the keyboard and incorporates the rhythmic friction of triplets versus eighths.

#### Excerpt 6:

Miriam Hyde, *Valley of Rocks*, mm. 67–69.

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*Valley of Rocks* is full of harmonic density and an elastic sense of time unfolding towards clangorous arrival points that embrace the full range of the keyboard. The overall effect draws parallels to Claude Debussy's *La cathédrale engloutie* and contains similar pianistic challenges.

There is a tempo shift at the final climactic moment when the theme returns in augmentation. This comes as a complete surprise to the listener and reveals the composer's creative ingenuity.

#### Excerpt 7:

Miriam Hyde, *Valley of Rocks*, mm. 123–129.

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This piece serves as an ideal example of one of Hyde's many effective works for the concert stage in which imagery, personal expression, and a unique harmonic language are all in abundance.

### Conclusion

Miriam Hyde was a towering figure in the musical life of Australia for decades. Her ability to balance pedagogical concepts with compositional prowess, while maintaining a pianistic profile alongside literary ambitions is truly astonishing. Her multifaceted legacy will remain an inspiration for audience members, aspiring pianists, and seasoned pedagogues for many years to come. 📖



JERRY WONG has gained critical acclaim for performances as soloist, chamber musician, and recording artist on the MSR Classics label. His masterclasses have led him to China, Hong Kong, Italy, Korea, Macau, Malaysia, Russia, Singapore, and Taiwan, as well as throughout the United States. Wong holds the position of Associate Professor of Piano and Co-Head of Keyboard at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music in Australia.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Peter McCallum, "Ninety Years of Music Making," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, January 21, 2005, [www.smh.com.au/national/ninety-years-of-making-music-20050121-gdkjao.html](http://www.smh.com.au/national/ninety-years-of-making-music-20050121-gdkjao.html).

<sup>2</sup> Miriam Hyde, *Sonata for Piano in G Minor* (Wollongong, Australia: Wirripang Pty Ltd, 2016), Preface: Notes by the composer.

<sup>3</sup> Geoffrey Tozer, "Geoffrey Tozer Introduces and Plays Miriam Hyde – Piano Sonata in G Minor (1944)," YouTube video, [youtube.com/watch?v=R7IzLuhUxcl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R7IzLuhUxcl).



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# Cécile Chaminade's *Album des Enfants*: A Treasure Trove of Intermediate-Level Teaching Pieces

By Adrienne Wiley

*It is unfortunate that Cécile Chaminade's piano music has been swept under the proverbial carpet. She, among other female composers, provided a wealth of compositions for the budding pianist.*

Her music is pedagogically sound, musical, technically appropriate, and frankly, quite inviting in sound and style. Her compositional output for the piano numbers more than 200 pieces: there are several large works, such as her well-known *Konzertstück* for piano and orchestra, her piano sonata, and especially her *Concertino* for flute, in addition to other miscellaneous chamber pieces, and works for voice. With respect to her piano music, she is probably best known for her *Scarf Dance*, which was arranged for the piano from her ballet-symphonic *Callirhoë*, Op. 37. But it is her *Album des Enfants I and II* that, while not well known, are pedagogically sound and deserve our attention. These two albums provide a wealth of intermediate and late-intermediate pieces that are unique in style and sound: teachers and students will enjoy these pieces not only as study pieces, but also as performance repertoire.

## EARLY LIFE and EDUCATION

Cécile Louise Stéphanie Chaminade was born in Paris on August 8, 1857, into a well-to-do family. Both of her parents were musicians: her mother, a pianist and singer, gave Cécile her first piano lessons, and her father, a violinist, managed the Paris offices of a British insurance firm. The family resided in Paris and took their holidays at their villa, Château de la Farge in Périgord. It was on one of these holidays, about 1869, when their neighbor, Georges Bizet, stopped in to visit. It is documented that he admired Cécile's musical talent greatly, for she had just started to compose music, and thus he suggested she and her parents seek outside musical training. Another source states that Hector Berlioz was also a strong influence in getting Cécile music instruction. Regardless, Cécile was taken to the Paris Conservatoire about 1867–1868 and was evaluated by Le Couppey. His assessment was enthusiastic as he strongly encouraged the parents to enroll her in the institution for theory instruction. Her father was opposed to this idea as he felt it was not “proper” for a young lady to study music in this setting. After some time, however, he did relent and allowed Cécile to study privately with Le Couppey. In addition, she would also start private study with two more faculty at the Conservatoire: Marmontel and Savard. At some point thereafter, she became a student of Benjamin Goddard.

## EARLY CAREER

In 1877, Cécile gave her first professional playing debut, and by the following year, she started giving recitals of mostly her own music. This would continue to be a trend for many years to come. Future recitals would often feature her works: piano pieces and songs. The peak of Chaminade's performance career may have been the performance of her *Konzertstück* for piano and orchestra (1889): this performance placed her in the center of French cultural life and truly embedded her as a solid pianist and composer. She performed this work in Great Britain, France, and the United States with great success.

In the 1890s her creativity blossomed. She wrote many more songs and piano music: this literature became the backbone of her recitals and her popularity. In 1901, she married Mathieu Carbonel, a music publisher. The marriage was strictly platonic: both parties resided in separate residences, thus allowing her to compose and perform at her will. Carbonel died in 1907 of a lung disease.

## GROWING POPULARITY

Chaminade's popularity was propagated by her performances in Great Britain, France, and especially in the United States. In particular, her smaller pieces gained her quite a following: teachers and students alike enjoyed her music tremendously. Interestingly, she developed a large following in the States. The National Federated Music Clubs fostered the formation of the "Chaminade Clubs:" these clubs started somewhere near the end of the nineteenth century and were scattered all across the United States. The membership was comprised predominantly of women. Club meetings often featured the members performing musical works, some by Chaminade, and some by miscellaneous composers. The main focus of these clubs was to provide a venue for women to perform and to socialize. It is estimated that 100–200 Chaminade Clubs were active in the United States. Clubs were being organized as late as the 1940s.

In 1913, Chaminade received the highest honor given to a woman by the Paris government: the Chevalier of the Legion of Honor. During 1913 and 1914, she recorded piano roles for the Aeolian Piano Company and continued to compose and perform.

Many of Chaminade's 400 compositions are primarily piano pieces. Towards the end of her life, her popularity waned, and critics leveled attacks on her music for being "parlor-style music that was not in vogue." Despite this, she did capture the essence of salon music in the nineteenth century and her music was endearing to many. In general, her piano pieces entice the ears of the listener: most are character pieces with fanciful titles, tuneful, featuring harmonies that are pleasant to the ear, and most are composed in ABA form. Chaminade's health continued to decline from 1925 to her death in 1944. She shares the same death year as her contemporary, composer and pianist Amy Beach.

### *Album des Enfants I and II*

The *Album des Enfants I* (1906) and *Album des Enfants II* (1907) each contain twelve delightful pieces for the intermediate to late-intermediate pianist. Many of the pieces in both collections are character pieces and both collections feature a fair amount of dance forms such as the "Rondeau," "Gavotte," "Gigue," and "Tarentelle," from *Album des Enfants I*; and the "Rigaudon," "Scherzo-Valse," and "Valse-Mignonne" from *Album des Enfants II*. All of these pieces are pedagogically sound and can and should serve

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not only as regular repertoire, but study pieces as well. Teachers and students alike will find the sounds of the pieces nostalgic and yet, refreshingly new—certainly very few of these pieces are being performed today.

It would be lengthy and time consuming to highlight every piece from both collections, so selected pieces worthy of including in our teaching repertoire will be introduced here.

### “Rondeau”

From the *Album des Enfants I* is the delightful “Rondeau.” The *rondeau* originated as a form of French Medieval poetry. This poetry was often sung and usually offered up four stanzas. As it evolved in the Renaissance era, it blossomed to feature six verses, and by the time it landed in the Baroque era, it would become a sectional piece featuring the form that we now refer to today as “Rondo:” A-B-A-C-A-D... etc. Chaminade retains the compound meter (6/8) and stays within a succinct A-B-A format, offering a more Renaissance-style *rondeau* featuring a graceful and lyrical melody. This piece will require the student to execute rhythms precisely. Although pedal is not indicated, it can be used at the discretion of the teacher. This *rondeau* provides an opportunity for study of a character piece and would be a welcome addition to any student’s repertoire.

**Excerpt 1:**  
Cécile Chaminade,  
“Rondeau” from  
*Album des Enfants I*,  
mm. 1–4.

Allegro (♩ = 162)

Piano

### “Gavotte”

The *gavotte* is a Baroque dance and hails from the southern regions of France. It was a very popular dance during the reign of King Louis XIV. Following the influence of Bach’s *gavottes*, Chaminade starts hers on the half measure, the upbeat. Normally a *gavotte* would be written in binary form, however, Chaminade uses A-B-A form, and she cleverly challenges the student by casting the melody in the left hand when it returns again at the end. Students will need to focus on playing sixteenth-note passagework cleanly and evenly, especially when the left hand is the featured soloist. This *gavotte* would be a good preparatory piece prior to assigning the easier Baroque *gavottes* by composers like Bach, Corelli, Handel, and Pachelbel.

**Excerpt 2:**  
Cécile Chaminade,  
“Gavotte” from  
*Album des Enfants I*,  
mm. 1–4.

Allegretto (♩ = 92)

Piano

### “Barcarolle”

The “Barcarolle” draws its influence from the songs of the Venetian gondoliers. The only similarity to Chopin’s *Barcarolle* is the use of compound meter (6/8) which reflects the swaying of the boat in the waterways of Venice. While Chopin’s version has often been referred to as the “aquatic nocturne,” Chaminade’s version is spritelier in character and less subdued. Similar to the “Gavotte,” she offers up the melody in the left hand in the B section, as well as in the closing section. These moments provide interest and, of course, challenge the student to bring out the usually accompaniment-only hand, the left hand. This miniature can be used as a preparatory study before teaching the Mendelssohn *Songs Without Words*, for example.

**Excerpt 3:**  
Cécile Chaminade,  
“Barcarolle” from  
*Album des Enfants I*,  
mm. 1–4.

Allegretto (♩. = 96)

Piano

### “Tarentelle”

The *tarantella* is known as a rapid, whirling dance that originated from southern Italy. One source cites that it is a dance featuring a dancer and drummer trying to out-do each other by dancing and playing faster than the other. Another source cites it as a dance that was often used to cast out the deadly venom of the tarantula spider: the person bitten by the tarantula was supposed to dance faster and faster, thus ridding themselves of the poison. Students will more than likely enjoy the second version of this story! The compound meter, a *vivo* tempo marking, and the rapid swirls in the passagework convey the frenetic feel of a dance gone wild. The B section offers chordal playing, a brief respite to the frenzy of the A sections, and here the student may use the damper pedal to connect the chords and bolster the sound. The piece ends with a dramatic unison statement that signals the end of the piece. This piece provides a wonderful introduction to the style of the *tarantella* and can be helpful as a preparatory piece prior to other *tarantellas* by Mendelssohn, Heller, and Pieczonka.

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**Excerpt 4:**  
Cécile Chaminade,  
“Tarentelle” from  
*Album des Enfants I*,  
mm. 1–4.

Vivo. (♩ = 112)

Piano

**“Aubade”**

From *Album des Enfants II* is “Aubade,” which in French means to “greet the dawn.” A serenade of sorts, Chaminade features the left hand as the melody, thus the main goal for the student is to balance the right-hand chord work against the lyrical melody in the left hand. A short chordal B section changes things up by featuring the melody in the top note of the right-hand chords. “Aubade” is more sophisticated in terms of the need for nuanced shaping and shading of lines: students will need to listen and be sensitive to the lines and their sound. This is a wonderful character piece that can precede any of the Schumann character pieces as well as other similar repertoire.

**Excerpt 5:**  
Cécile Chaminade,  
“Aubade” from  
*Album des Enfants II*,  
mm. 1–4.

Andante tranquillo

Piano

**“Rigaudon”**

The *rigaudon* is another French Baroque dance movement, more along the folk-dance lines, dating from the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries. Cast in duple meter, Chaminade begins hers on the upbeat. Students will be challenged with the phrasing and articulations and playing the sixteenth-note rhythmic motifs cleanly. The middle section presents sequential passagework that ultimately leads up to and dissolves back into the main theme of the opening section. This is an excellent piece to further the student’s study of Baroque dance forms.

**Excerpt 6:**  
Cécile Chaminade,  
“Rigaudon” from  
*Album des Enfants II*,  
mm. 1–4.

Allegretto très rythmé

Piano

**“Élégie”**

“Élégie” is true to its usual description: a melancholy, or mournful piece, usually written in a minor mode. Of all of the pieces in Chaminade’s *Album des Enfants I* and *II*, this is probably the most musically sophisticated piece. Cast in D minor, the left hand begins with the accompaniment pattern: the right hand reaches over the left to initiate the first note, then moves back to the treble clef for the remainder of the piece. Tonal control and quality of sound are of utmost importance in the “Élégie.” While some forms of this kind will drift into a major key for the middle section, Chaminade instead writes a single-line recitative-like melody, which is the transition back to the A section.

**Excerpt 7:**  
Cécile Chaminade,  
“Élégie” from  
Album des Enfants II,  
mm. 1–4.

Andante sostenuto

Piano

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. Ped. \* Ped. Ped. \*

All of the pieces in both *Albums* are accessible to teachers and students alike. They are quality compositions that bear study and performance. It is unfortunate that at the middle to end of Chaminade’s life and compositional career her music was not looked upon as quality music. These *Albums* reflect her interest in writing literature for the intermediate pianist: even though some of the forms may seem antiquated, the music speaks volumes in sound and character and each piece offers the student something to work for musically and technically. These collections can be found easily on IMSLP: you and your students will want to add these to your repertoire list. 📖

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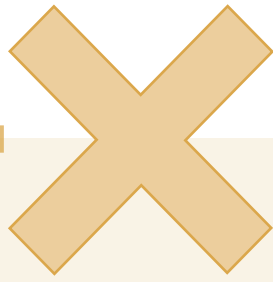
ADRIENNE WILEY teaches piano pedagogy and class piano at Central Michigan University. In her spare time, she loves researching and writing about old and new repertoire for budding pianists of all ages.

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*A Hummel*

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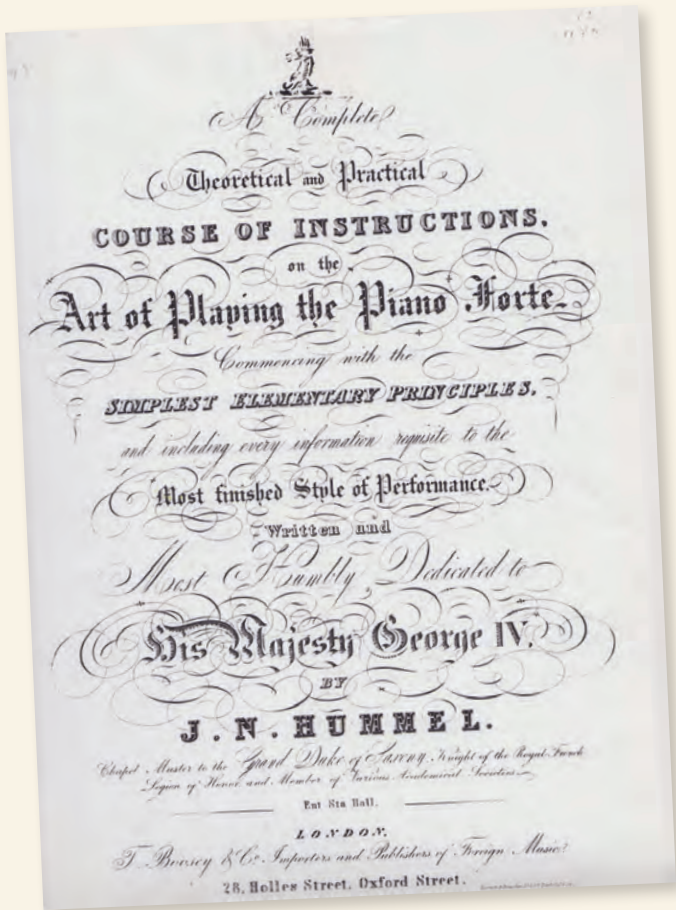
# HUNT

by Joanne Haroutounian

It all began one early morning in 1989 as I woke up to the sounds of a charming piano concerto coming from my clock radio.

As I delayed getting out of bed, I was drawn to the music because it was unfamiliar to me, and it seemed perfectly suited for repertoire that would work for the concerto competition I was in charge of for our local music teacher association. My piano teacher instinct urged me to wait until the work finished to find out the name of the composer and the title of the concerto. Noteworthy at this point is the date of this musical encounter—this was prior to awakening to iPhone alarms with catchy sound tidbits, and it predates the ease to immediately go to Google to find the playlist for the radio program. Somehow this fateful event started a lengthy quest to find out everything I could about this concerto that would be perfect for our local competition. Where to begin?

With a scrawled note showing the piece was *Concertino, Op. 73* by Johann Nepomuk Hummel, I headed to Foxes Music Store—our local store whose employees have been my right hands in locating music for many past projects. Again, remember the timeframe—this was prior to internet searches that could readily bring up this information. After Foxes' inquiries from publishers and sources, we discovered that the music was no longer in print. Aha—a challenge for me to pursue further!



Again, I look back at those days prior to the internet searches that facilitate the process and remember the wonder on the faces of my students as they leafed through drawers in the Library of Congress.

## LIBRARY OF CONGRESS RESEARCH

My location in Arlington, Virginia, minutes from Washington D.C., played a significant role in my quest because I was already familiar with the wonders of the Library of Congress music department. One rainy day a group of teenage students and I took the Metro to this amazing place so they could research piano music by George Gershwin for a recital project we were developing in the studio. I know that day's experience will stay with them as a fond memory that could only come from being in a library with a "card catalog room" with multiple drawers of Gershwin compositions to look through as a group. Again, I look back at those days prior to the internet searches that facilitate the process and remember the wonder on the faces of my students as they leafed through drawers in the Library of Congress. Their project unveiled several Gershwin works that had gone out of print but could be copied and performed for our recital. Fortunately, they are now available, thanks to a bit of inquiry and a request to the publisher.

With only a title and composer in hand, I sought assistance from the staff behind the desks of the music department. The process included completing a detailed request form which would then be searched behind the scenes within the vast library. Soon the score arrived along with permission to hear a recording of the work—but only twice. The library had two editions of the work: one from 1820 (Haslinger, Vienna) and one from 1930 (Steingraber Verlag, Leipzig). I used the 1930 two-piano score as a guide in listening, recognizing the instrumentation as noted in the Piano II score. The library allowed copying of both editions on their copy machine, so I was well equipped and eager to work on starting to edit the music.

Before leaving this special place, I decided to inquire about the treatise Hummel had developed as an outstanding piano pedagogue of his time. Sitting at the special table for rare music, I was amazed when the voluminous treatise arrived, with a thick leather cover and elegantly indented lettering on the title page: *A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course of Instructions on the Art of Playing the Piano Forte*.<sup>1</sup> The treatise title page included Hummel's dedication stated, "most humbly dedicated to His Majesty George IV."

I spent the next hours perusing every page of this amazing chronicle of piano teaching and, much to my delight, I was allowed to copy multiple pages of the volume. I knew my current task of bringing the Hummel concertino out of the dust and into the public eye would be a long-term project for me.

Hummel's trove of pedagogy writings and "teaching pieces" prompted me to look further into his career as composer, pianist, and teacher. Hummel began his piano studies with none other than W. A. Mozart, living with the family for several years, having lessons free of charge, and presenting his first performance under Mozart's direction. He was a contemporary of Beethoven and was considered one of the greatest pianists in Europe at the time. Hummel was one of the last persons to visit Beethoven before his death and Beethoven personally requested that he perform at his memorial service. Hummel had an excellent business sense and developed a great deal of wealth because of his concert tours, publishing, and teaching. He was instrumental in systemizing multi-national publishing, leading to uniform copyright laws in Germany and Austria. These insights regarding the composer increased my interest in bringing his works to other piano teachers and students even more.

## THE BRITISH LIBRARY

I followed up to discover that this charming concertino was composed in 1816 and was an arrangement for piano of an earlier work composed in 1799 for mandolin and orchestra. It was dedicated to Bartholomew Bortolazi, "maestro de mandolin." The instrumentation for orchestra consisted of strings, one flute, two oboes, two horns, and bassoon. However, the orchestral score was not found at the Library of Congress. The score and parts to the original mandolin concerto could be found at the British Library. So, off we go to London!

Our family planned a European vacation that year to celebrate our daughter's high school graduation and a few days in London were on the agenda. After enjoying the sights of the city, we decided to investigate the British Library. I went through the process of obtaining an identification card with my photo to enter the music section of the library. The smell of old wood and musty air hit me as soon as I entered the dark room. I filled out a book application slip for

the music and waited for it to arrive. Finally, I found the orchestral parts and another early edition of the work (S. A. Steiner & Comp.). Copies were only available through the photocopying service that provided electrostatic copies that were sent to my home in Virginia. Another step in the hunt was now complete.

## PUBLICATION AND PARTS

During my months of seeking the Hummel score and parts, I had approached my publisher, Kjos Music, showing my interest in how the concertino would fit squarely into the intermediate piano concerto literature where there was a gap between the student accessible concerti (Haydn *Concerto Piccolo* and *Concerto in C*) and the hefty Haydn D-major concerto. Kjos realized the value of the concertino and published the two-piano score of the *Hummel Concertino, Opus 73* in 1990. The National Federation of Music Clubs soon placed the concerto in its Festival syllabus at the Junior Concerto Class II and III levels. I was thrilled to see



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Hummel was very thorough... He describes a master teacher using “a method of instruction that is good and intelligible and who conducts himself towards children with patience and kindness and employs severity only where it becomes necessary.”<sup>2</sup>

with patience and kindness and employs severity only where it becomes necessary.”<sup>2</sup>

Hummel suggests that beginners require one-hour daily instruction, but cautions against the “erroneous opinion that to arrive at excellence, it is necessary to practice for at least six or seven hours every day; but I can assure them that a regular, daily attentive study of at most three hours is sufficient for this purpose; any practice beyond this damps the spirits and produces a mechanical rather than an expressive and impassioned style of playing.”<sup>3</sup>

The first part of the treatise contains thorough descriptions and examples of trills, appoggiaturas, slides, and other ornaments, as well as an explanation of stylistic pedaling. The volume also includes over 550 exercises in every possible combination that extends from a range of a fifth to a full octave closely resembling exercises of Aloys Schmitt, Op. 16; however, Hummel’s exercises offer further extensions of range and double notes.

Following these particulars of instruction comes a treasure trove of student pieces that can nurture technical skills and musical sensitivity at the intermediate level of development. In Hummel’s words, these are “Practical Pieces in which are exemplified the rules contained in the 1<sup>st</sup> Part.”<sup>4</sup>

the work was now available for piano students seeking new repertoire as they progressed in their studies.

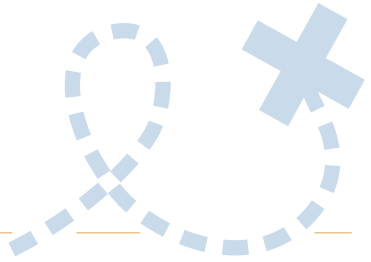
With the two-piano score now available, it was important to have the orchestral score and parts also available for performance of the work. I sought out a former student to use *Finale* to notate the parts from the British Library and create a full orchestral score. I have enjoyed sending the score and parts for performances in states across the country as well as in Europe and South America. From one of these inquiries, I discovered the parts were no longer found at the British Library, which made my determination to get them notated even more worthwhile.

## HUMMEL HUNT PART 2


Now that the Hummel *Concertino* was unearthed and available, I looked over the pedagogy treatise to see what would be of interest and worthy of publication. The treatise was a best-seller in its time—selling thousands within days of publication.

Hummel was very thorough, starting the treatise with his personal “Preliminary Observations Addressed to Parents and to Teachers of Music,” which essentially states his teaching philosophy. He describes a master teacher using “a method of instruction that is good and intelligible and who conducts himself towards children

As I read through these miniatures, I realized their similarity to the “easy and progressive studies” in Opus 100 by Friedrich Burgmüller that are favorites in intermediate repertoire. Similar to Burgmüller, Hummel found a way to create pieces that mesh technical progress with interpretive expression. Burgmüller provided descriptive titles to the studies (*Innocence*, *The Chase*) rather than using opus numbers. As I started my initial editing, I found myself also adding descriptive names to the pieces, with the rationale that students would more readily connect with Hummel’s music given a title such as “The Brook,” rather than “Allegro in A minor, Klavierschule No. 12.” There are a total of 60 Practical Pieces in the volume along with suggestions of works by other composers that he recommends for study. The pieces are charming, and again my piano teacher instinct was to see how some of them could be published for use by teachers and their intermediate students.



After back-and-forth further editing specifics, the publication of these delightful pieces in *Johann N. Hummel: Piano Masterworks in Miniature* was released in 2019. My Hummel treasure hunt was complete!




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I debated whether anyone would be interested in the lengthy journey I took to simply find a few pieces to expand pianists' intermediate repertoire. There may be some other music teachers who have a similar passion to seek out possibilities for teaching and learning in their studios.

I edited the original scores using Hummel's markings reflecting the Romantic performance style. I filtered through the collection to choose which pieces would be most appealing to intermediate pianists. This resulted in forty pieces at three levels of development. I presented these to several publishers with no success, which was disappointing but not surprising in today's music business. I decided to put them aside and venture on to different projects. After many years, an opportunity arose in 2017 that brought them to life again. At an MTNA conference I happened to mention them to my new editor at Kjos, Gary Muhlbach. It turns out he was a fan of Hummel's music and asked me to send along what I had developed. After back-and-forth further editing specifics, the publication of these delightful pieces in *Johann N. Hummel: Piano Masterworks in Miniature* was released in 2019. My Hummel treasure hunt was complete!

I debated whether anyone would be interested in the lengthy journey I took to simply find a few pieces to expand pianists' intermediate repertoire. There may be some other music teachers who have a similar passion

to seek out possibilities for teaching and learning in their studios. It is much easier and immediate today for this type of research, so I encourage you to take the plunge and go for it! I recommend that somewhere along the way you personally visit the Library of Congress or British Library, just for the experience of being there. 📖



JOANNE HAROUTOUNIAN is the founder and executive director of the MusicLink Foundation. She recently retired from George Mason University where she oversaw the piano pedagogy program.

Dr. Haroutounian presents workshops internationally and is the author of over thirty publications in piano pedagogy, music, and gifted/arts education.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Visit [claviercompanion.com](http://claviercompanion.com) to hear performances of the musical excerpts.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Johann Nepomuk Hummel, *A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course of Instruction on the Art of Playing the Piano Forte* (London: LCSH Piano-Methods, T. Boosey, 1828). This document is now available through Amazon.com.

<sup>2</sup>Hummel, *A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course of Instruction on the Art of Playing the Piano Forte*, iii.

<sup>3</sup>Hummel, *A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course of Instruction on the Art of Playing the Piano Forte*, iv.

<sup>4</sup>Hummel, *A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course of Instruction on the Art of Playing the Piano Forte*, 73.



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Frances Larimer's  
most recent  
publicity photo

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THE  
LEGACY  
of

FRANCES  
LARIMER

By Yeeseon Kwon, Gayle Kowalchuk, and E. L. Lancaster

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*The piano pedagogy world mourns the October 21, 2021, passing of Frances Larimer, a trailblazer in the field of piano pedagogy, group piano, and piano teacher training.*

Her legacy lives on through her numerous students who are today's leaders in the field. Since their graduation from Northwestern University, former students have shared her influence as editors of magazines and pedagogical music, authors of piano methods and teaching materials, researchers on teaching repertoire and teaching strategies, executives and officers in professional organizations, workshop clinicians, faculty members and administrators at colleges and universities, and independent piano teachers.



Frances Larimer  
in her studio  
at Northwestern  
University in  
the 1970s

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## Pre-College Years

Larimer grew up in Tavares, Florida, but rarely spoke about her early lessons. She did relate a story about a discussion with her mother and grandmother, who wanted Frances to take dance lessons. However, Frances insisted on taking piano lessons and began study at age seven. Following graduation from high school in 1947, she took a gap year and lived in Yokohama, Japan, where her father was stationed in the military. She returned home via ship in 1948 to enter Northwestern University as a freshman. On the ship, she met Lt. Hugh Larimer (known to his friends as Larry), who was being discharged from the army and returning to the United States to continue his studies at Northwestern University. Larimer often said that “there was not much spark there when we met on the ship.”



## Northwestern University

Entering Northwestern University in 1948, she earned Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in piano performance studying with Belgian pianist Gui Mombaerts (1902–1993). In the fall of 1948, she happened to encounter Hugh Larimer on campus. They began dating and were married five years later in 1953. Larry was a professional photographer. They became avid travelers. Larry would document the trips with photos, and Frances would organize the photos into beautiful albums with descriptions of the locations.

“

*Legend has it that graduate assistants periodically were assigned to count the multiple copies of books that were stored in the piano labs for use in the classes. If an assistant reported even one missing copy of a book, Fran instructed them to go “count again” to make sure that they had not miscounted.*

**Fran teaching a group piano class at Northwestern University shortly after installing the electronic piano lab**



Frances (or Fran as she was called by her friends) excelled at Northwestern University and upon the completion of her Master's degree, she was hired to teach in the preparatory department. Except for a one-year leave from Northwestern to fulfill a sabbatical replacement at Louisiana State University, she taught at Northwestern for her entire career. Gradually, Fran began to teach secondary students in the college division, as well. After teaching part-time at Northwestern for fourteen years, she was offered a full-time tenure-track position on the college faculty, teaching both undergraduate and graduate piano majors as well as secondary piano students.

## Contributions to Group Piano Teaching

Most of Larimer's secondary students at Northwestern had half-hour lessons, leaving her thinking that there had to be a better way to work with these students. During her one-year sabbatical teaching job, she taught class piano on twelve acoustic pianos in one room. This gave her the impetus to consider group teaching at Northwestern. She approached the department chair about the possibility of forming small classes for singers and instrumentalists, something that had not been done before at the school. The chair was supportive of the idea, and the classes were extremely successful. Thus, the Northwestern University group piano program for music majors, whose primary instrument was something other than piano, began. Northwestern's program quickly gained national attention as Fran was eager to adopt technology and materials to support the program.

As the program grew, electronic piano labs were added and a library of multiple copies of materials to use with the class was established. As the curriculum evolved with changes in the field, Fran offered summer workshops based on the Northwestern group piano model. Teachers from other universities attended to adopt strategies that developed under her leadership.

Mrs. Larimer's (as her students called her) organizational skills were legendary among her students. Everything related to the administration of the program and the organization of piano labs and materials was highly thought out and developed. Graduate assistants were often assigned to keep the labs and supplementary library materials in perfect order. Legend has it that

graduate assistants periodically were assigned to count the multiple copies of books that were stored in the piano labs for use in the classes. If an assistant reported even one missing copy of a book, Fran instructed them to go "count again" to make sure that they had not miscounted.

## Establishment of Graduate Programs in Performance and Pedagogy

In the early 1970s, Mrs. Larimer first offered a one-quarter course in teaching class piano for college-age students and adults. Gradually, it developed into a year-long series of courses that included teaching students. By 1972, she had designed a master's degree program in piano performance and pedagogy. Demand for the program increased so Larimer added an MM in Music Education and Piano Pedagogy in 1977 and the first DM in Piano Performance and Pedagogy of any school in the country in 1980. The fact that she was able to instigate these programs without a doctoral degree herself signified the respect that her colleagues on the music faculty, specifically the piano faculty, had for her.



**Fran teaching a pedagogy class on group teaching in 1995**



On a personal note, the three authors of this tribute were involved in the pedagogy program throughout Larimer's tenure at Northwestern. In the early 1970s, E. L. Lancaster approached Larimer about doing a doctorate in piano pedagogy. At that time, there was no such degree. Fran convinced the music education faculty to allow him to pursue a music education degree, with a concentration in piano pedagogy. Using him as an example of the type of student who would pursue a DM in Piano Performance and Pedagogy, she was able to institute the doctoral program. In the late 70s, Gayle Kowalchuk was Larimer's graduate assistant and a student in the MM program in piano performance and pedagogy. Yeeseon Kwon, like Larimer, did both her Bachelor and Master of Music degrees at Northwestern, working very closely with Fran. She was one of the last students to work with Larimer before her retirement. Yeeseon and another former student, Mary Beth Molenaar, were pillars of support for Fran during her retirement years.

**Fran with the authors of this article at the NCKP Conference in 2019**

*From L to R: E. L. Lancaster, Frances Larimer, Yeeseon Kwon, Gayle Kowalchuk*



**Fran with a few of the students from the Russia study group in 1996**

“

*The fact that she was able to instigate these programs without a doctoral degree herself signified the respect that her colleagues on the music faculty, specifically the piano faculty, had for her.*

In designing the degree programs in piano pedagogy, Larimer often spoke about three goals for students in her graduate programs. She wanted them to:

## 1 STUDY THE ART OF TEACHING.

This included evaluating methods and teaching materials, developing diagnostic skills, and understanding teaching approaches. Larimer kept the methods and materials for pedagogy students to evaluate in green boxes in the piano pedagogy resource area. She required students to document and summarize characteristics of these materials on file cards as a way to develop their own resource library. These file cards assignments were a source of many late-night group projects in the pedagogy resource room. When students finished the year, they truly felt that they were members of “The Green Box Society.”

## 2 OBSERVE MASTER TEACHERS AT ALL LEVELS OF INSTRUCTION.

To achieve this objective, Larimer enlisted the aid of specialists in all areas of teaching. For work with teaching children, she established demonstration classes and private lessons taught by nationally recognized adjunct faculty members from the region. As the program grew, she was able to obtain a tenure-track faculty line to hire a specialist in college-level group piano teaching. She convinced the Northwestern applied piano faculty to allow students to observe their teaching and then work under their supervision with their freshmen and sophomore piano majors.

## 3 COMPLETE INTERN TEACHING UNDER SUPERVISION.

In the early days of the program, Larimer would circulate from room to room and observe each teacher. As technology developed, she supplemented live observations with video recordings of lessons. Larimer and the student teacher would watch the video together. These intense and time-consuming sessions involved stopping the tape and discussing the pros and cons of the teaching, as well as alternate ways of approaching the instruction.



Fran introducing American teaching materials to teachers at the Rubin Academy in Jerusalem in the 1970s



Fran and a student teacher watch a teaching video

When Larimer developed the pedagogy degree programs, there were no model programs for her to emulate. She often talked about the fact that she had no formal training in teaching and had learned by trial and error. Her own lack of training and on-the-job personal experience provided the motivation to establish these programs. The Northwestern degree program that she established has provided the model for many other programs today (often established by graduates of her program).

## Work in Professional Organizations

Larimer was a tireless supporter of professional organizations and their work. From 1975–79, she planned group piano sessions for MTNA national conferences as part of her duties as National Group Piano Chairman. She served as chapter advisor for the Northwestern MTNA Collegiate Chapter and was on the Editorial Board of the *American Music Teacher* magazine. A frequent presenter at local, state, and national conferences, she often lectured on introducing twentieth-century music to pre-college students in addition to sessions related to teacher training. In the mid-1980s, she co-authored *The Piano Pedagogy Major in the College Curriculum*, a publication of the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy. This publication focused on curriculum development, highlighted outstanding pedagogy programs, and served as a model for the creation of programs at other colleges and universities.

## International Work

While many professional colleagues are aware of Larimer's lectures in Russia, her prior work at the Rubin Academy in Jerusalem and the International School of Music in Hong Kong is not as well known. At her international workshops, she would demonstrate piano teaching strategies and introduce teachers to American educational music.

As part of an exchange program with a professor from the St. Petersburg Conservatory, Larimer traveled to Russia in 1991, as the first American to lecture to piano teachers on pedagogical practices in the United States.

During this first visit to Russia, she stayed in the *dacha* that had belonged to Shostakovich in the village of Repina. Her room was Shostakovich's study which contained his original furniture including his piano.

Following this initial visit, Larimer took a small group of piano students and teachers to Russia for ten days in 1993, through a program with the International Center of Russian Musical Culture. In addition to studying the history of Russian music, students had lessons with Russian teachers, visited museums, and attended concerts. This program continued for ten years in association with the St. Petersburg State Conservatory of Music, ending in 2004.

## Retirement

In 1998, after forty-two years of teaching at Northwestern, Larimer retired from the university. That does not mean that she retired from the profession. She served as a consultant in piano pedagogy for the Academic Relations Department of the Yamaha Corporation of America. She would often visit colleges and universities to help establish new pedagogy programs and invigorate existing programs. She continued to attend professional conferences, often saying that the highlight of these events was visiting with former students and attending their presentations.



**Fran and some former students at her retirement party in 1998**

*From L to R: Jane Magrath, Fred Kern, Fran, Barbara Skalinder, Marcia Bosits*

In 2010, Fran and Larry moved to Westminster Place, a senior living community in Evanston, Illinois, and lived there for the remainder of their lives. The website for the center describes it as being a place where the curious keep exploring, and the thinkers, doers, and givers find new ways to learn, contribute, and serve. It was the perfect place for Fran and Larry to spend their senior years. The community sponsored weekly concerts (often students from Northwestern performing run-throughs of their recitals) and lectures. Sylvia Wang, a member of the Northwestern University piano faculty, presented recitals as part of the Westminster recital series. Sylvia recalls that Fran and Larry were always in the audience at her recitals.

Westminster Place provided transportation to local events including concerts of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Having had season tickets to the Chicago Symphony for many years, she continued to attend these concerts throughout her retirement. Larimer also kept active teaching a few residents who wanted to study piano and practicing piano duets with one of the more advanced pianists. Larry passed away in 2018 and Fran continued to stay active in the community.

## Awards and Legacy

Even after her retirement, the piano teaching community continued to recognize Fran's contributions to the profession. Larimer was recognized in 2006 as Illinois Music Teachers Association Foundation Fellow. In 2011, she was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Conference on Keyboard Pedagogy. The Illinois Music Teachers Association recognized her as Teacher of the Year in 2018. At the MTNA National Conference in 2019, she received the MTNA Teacher of the Year.

Frances Larimer was a teacher—not only a teacher of piano, but a teacher of teachers. Her legacy continues to live today through her former students, and she would be very proud. Mrs. Larimer encouraged each of her students to develop their strengths and pursue their dreams without becoming carbon copies of her. Her students developed tenacity by following her example, both in her work at Northwestern University and in pursuing other professional goals. Students knew that they had arrived when Fran would turn to them at a conference and say, “Don’t call me Mrs. Larimer anymore. Call me Fran.” On behalf of all your former students, the authors of this tribute say, “Thank you, Fran.” 🐾

*“Don’t call me  
Mrs. Larimer anymore.  
Call me Fran.”*

On behalf of all your  
former students,  
the authors of this  
tribute say,  
*“Thank you,  
Fran.”*



YEESEON KWON teaches piano musicianship and piano pedagogy in the music conservatory of the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University. Also specializing in andragogy, she enjoys teaching adults at the Music Academy at Northwestern University. Kwon has authored and edited numerous publications and is President of the Illinois State Music Teachers Association.

GAYLE KOWALCHYK is a member of the piano faculty at California State University, Northridge. A co-author of Alfred's *Premier Piano Course* and *Music for Little Mozarts*, she holds an Ed.D. from Teachers College, Columbia University, New York.

E. L. LANCASTER is a piano faculty member at California State University, Northridge. Previous positions include Senior Vice President and Keyboard Editor-in-Chief for Alfred Music and David Ross Boyd Professor of Music at the University of Oklahoma.

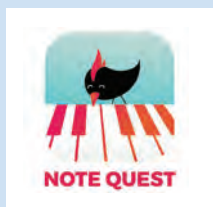
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# Music Teaching & Performing Beyond the Studio and Concert Hall

By Julie Jaffee Nagel

Many people enjoy music—listening to it, teaching it—even coping with stage fright to perform it. Why is music (with emphasis here on classical music) valuable in our mental and social lives? Despite its value, musical performers were among the most adversely affected victims of losing both real dollars and psychic (emotional) income during the COVID-19 pandemic.

All performances were abruptly canceled, schools put on lockdown, and music lessons interrupted. Many recitals, private lessons, master classes, and concerts benefitted from a quick and creative use of technology, which allowed a wide audience to experience music safely from their homes. It became clear that this audience was more diverse than those who typically could afford instrument lessons and who enjoyed attending live formal concerts. The same was true for psychotherapists who adjusted to the learning curve of teletherapy. Music reached out beyond its boundaries of the traditional teaching studio and concert hall. The opportunity to share music was discovered in the ashes of the COVID disaster in non-traditional venues, including living rooms, nursing homes, businesses, driveways, and other creative stages. Musicians began to interact with listeners in different ways. Technically remote, music came into homes and into people's lockdown lives.

## Musicians and Mental Health Professionals as Non-Traditional First Responders

Psychologically, the pandemic has ignited a mental health crisis. An emotional post-COVID “syndrome”—a psychological version of the physical long-hauler syndrome—will persist long after the biological puzzle of this virus is solved.

Abandonments in childhood, loss of family members and friends, illness, family moves, economic inequities, and divorces and breakup of the nuclear family are devastating to young children and people of all ages. Intellect, reason, and productive activities are no match to quell the devastation of the ghosts from our past personal histories, which are always lurking as skeletons in the mental closet of the mind. Emotional stress awakens them to haunt and scare us. Emotions out of sight are not out of mind. Words to express feelings often feel inadequate because they are. You can close your eyes and cover your face, but you cannot purposefully turn off your hearing and mask the melodies in your mind. Our life history accompanies us in everything we do, including teaching and performing. Music has soothed us in various ways during an intense time in our lives and in our historical moment.

I have listened to my patients burst into song about celebrations, life cycle events, and losses as music evoked memory. I cannot forget a group of children with whom I worked many years ago who could not speak but could comprehend what was said to them. Each student had an individualized computer to express what was in their mind and heart. I used music to communicate with them. One child cried as he told me, through his special device, about his parents' divorce. An adolescent girl shared her excitement about wearing eyeshadow. Music is an integral part of emotional healing from trauma and loss throughout life and most currently from COVID. Music is everywhere when we listen. So are teaching and performance opportunities.

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## Musicians as Innovators

In his visionary book, *The Artist as Citizen*,<sup>1</sup> Joseph Polisi illustrates that the pandemic has crystalized what has been clear all along. A music education involves more

than teaching performers; it also nurtures innovators and communicators. Polisi notes how the classical arts have been victims of a culture that wants quick fixes, instant cures, and immediate solutions. The power of the arts to emphasize deeper values of meaning in life has been compromised by social media, Instagram, TikTok, catchy YouTubes, and one-liner memes. As both a musician and a clinical psychologist, I have noted similar trends in the mental health profession in quests for rapid results for longstanding complex issues.

In other words, music education needs to be a partner in our localities, national life, and the world by emphasizing more than note-perfect performances and demonstrating to the public a message that the arts are vital to the soul of our nation. For studio teachers, it is never too early to introduce children to the joy of music making. School programs can continue a humanitarian emphasis on the arts as vital for people of all ages, economic statuses, musical tastes, and political persuasions. Students graduating from music schools and conservatories must become more than teacher-performers but create performances with social, humanitarian perspectives and consider playing in public in non-traditional venues and interacting with audiences. This places the music teacher in an advantageous position to nurture current students and graduates who, in turn, educate and nurture the general public about the value of the arts.

Caring about students also involves self-care. Burnout, physical issues, and concerns about future work are but a few of the endless possibilities that need attention during

and in the aftermath of COVID. Unattended (which includes not seeking professional help if needed), these issues can impede the musician's resilience and creativity. It takes a village of professionals who can collaborate with new vision and a redesigned version of educating musicians to bring the value of music to a recovering post-pandemic society.

Through both creative performing and community interactions, meaningful opportunity awaits musical performers and their teachers. Music remains perpetually relevant in our psychological and musical repertoire. Now more than ever, music relies on our ingenuity, boldness, and resourcefulness to promote its enduring and endearing value.

#### NOTES

Joseph W. Polisi, *The Artist as Citizen*. Amadeus Press, 2011.



JULIE JAFFEE NAGEL, Ph.D., is a graduate of The Juilliard School (piano), the University of Michigan (psychology and social work), and the Michigan Psychoanalytic Institute. Author of numerous psychology and music journal articles, books—*Melodies of the Mind* (Routledge) and *Managing Stage Fright* (Oxford University Press)—and a theater piece (*A Conversation Between Freud and Mozart*, performed in Steinway Hall, NYC), she was awarded the Frances Clark Center for Keyboard Pedagogy Outstanding Service Recognition Award in 2021. Dr. Nagel has a private practice in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

# Remaking Ourselves and the Standard Canon: Perspectives and Resources for Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Classical Music

by Nicholas Reynolds

The life-altering events of the past year have been a wake-up call for all of us to reassess our values and practices as artists and educators. Our musical community has developed a collective sense of advocacy and accountability that has been tremendously overdue, geared towards a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable field of music. Many of us may consider ourselves supporters, advocates, and allies, but how do we ensure that we use our good intentions to become true and respectful agents of change? Our language, tools, resources, and approaches need constant internal and external reassessment; our goal is a moving target that we must always and continuously strive towards. A good place to start is a common understanding of the language—what do the terms diversity, equity, and inclusion mean to each of us, and how do we make sure we are constantly upholding these values?

The term diversity embraces not only the equitable representation of people of different backgrounds, lived experiences, and perspectives, but also the way we understand and honor the ways in which people are unique. The diversity that we strive for in our communities can be reflected in our musical lives as well, from the repertoire we perform and assign students, to guest artists we invite to our schools, to hiring practices at our institutions. However, diversity in itself is insufficient unless it is in tandem with the values of equity and inclusion. Equity ensures that all groups and individuals have what they need in order to be successful; it also recognizes the agency of those who are under-represented and marginalized and respects their role in decision-making situations. Inclusion invites us to listen to our differences and treat others with respect regardless of those differences; it means choosing a language that doesn't inadvertently exclude or insult others and striving to be informed and respectful of our differences.

Racial and gender diversity have been at the forefront of the DEI movement in classical music given the historically perpetuated marginalization of BIPOC (black, indigenous, and people of color) and women composers. To Brazilian pianist Daniel Inamorato, founder of The Toy Piano Sanctuary and Neurodiversity Music Institute, the

conversation about diversity in classical music should not only include racial and gender identity, but also diverse physical and neurological abilities. Based on his experience working with students of many such backgrounds, Inamorato reminds us that students and artists can possess one or a mix of distinguishing traits, and it can be insensitive and alienating to categorize them based on one single kind of diversity. Avoiding assumptions and stereotyping, as well as being invested in their individual identity, is a mindset we can constantly advocate for in every aspect of our musical and personal lives.

Both music and society have changed immensely in the past 400 years, yet the repertoire in our traditional canon still includes very few works by historically underrepresented composers and new compositions. Rethinking our traditional repertoire selections, even one bit at a time, can have a great potential to reflect the changes we want to see in our society and to inspire and empower future generations of artists, teachers, supporters, and leaders. However, when it comes time to program a concert or assign pieces to students, many of us may struggle to find inclusive and diverse elementary and intermediate repertoire that is age and level appropriate.

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Dr. Susan Yang, Assistant Professor of the Practice of Piano at Vanderbilt University's Blair School of Music, shares that it is increasingly common to employ repertoire substitution; for example, we can replace a "traditional" work with one by a woman or BIPOC composer. Dr. Yang, along with a diverse team of pianists and educators, have spearheaded a groundbreaking online resource, *A Seat at the Piano* ([aseatatthepiano.com](http://aseatatthepiano.com)). ASAP is a growing database of graded keyboard repertoire by underrepresented composers which includes biographical information and links to many videos and scores. A truly invaluable resource for all pianists and teachers, the database allows us to search by name, title, level, identifier, nationality, and other keywords.

There are a number of supplemental materials teachers may consider using with their students from an early age to begin broadening their taste and acceptance of a wider array of harmonic languages. The Royal Conservatory's *Celebration Series* offers a well-rounded approach, including repertoire, etudes, sight reading, and ear training books, and much of the Baroque through Contemporary repertoire features lesser-known works and composers. Exposing our students to a more equitable representation of composers and musical languages inspires them to embrace diversity in music and instills in them the importance of understanding the background of a composer and their compositions.

Hal Leonard has published a series of books entitled *24 Traditional Folk Songs* for beginning to intermediate pianists, with folk songs from China, Korea, Japan, Malaysia, America, and Ireland. Dr. Artina McCain, Coordinator of the Keyboard Area at the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music at the University of Memphis, arranged *African American Folk Songs Collection*, which was recently published in this series. These songs include spirituals and other folk songs from the tradition of Africans who were brought to the United States and their subsequent generations.

Dr. McCain's insights teach us the importance of contextualizing music and deliberately integrating diverse and inclusive subject matter into the studio. While many of the songs in her book are upbeat and depict topics such as freedom and religion, some of them bring attention to more difficult topics; for example, there is a song about children being sold. When asked how she might address this subject with students, Dr. McCain says, "Take it as an opportunity to learn and grow rather than to bury it." We can help students understand the context in which music was conceived and the extra-musical ideas around it as a way to break a historic pattern of systemic racism and lack of equitable inclusion in classical music. According to McCain, "We must untangle the history to free our unknown bias perceptions".

McCain further states, "Keep pieces in the canon that represent the struggle that African Americans had in America so that we don't forget. At the same time, embrace that those contributions, which came from great pain, also produced great historical art."

I want to thank Dr. Artina McCain, Dr. Susan Yang, Daniel Inamorato, Henry Lebedinsky, and many others for inspiring and informative conversations, and for sharing their expertise as well as their perspectives and experiences as individuals devoted to more diverse, equitable, and inclusive musical communities.

**Through kindness and humility, each of us can be an active part of equitable change by:**

- **Frequently self-examining how our values are reflected in the decisions we make on a daily basis**
- **Recognizing our unconscious biases and privilege and never staying stationary in our growth**
- **Making the extra time and effort to step outside our comfort zones, challenging ourselves to look beyond the pieces, methods, and practices we are accustomed to using**
- **Continuing to ask respectful questions and learning about others' perspectives, even when it makes us feel vulnerable**
- **Being genuine and intentional about inclusivity**
- **Setting aside our pride when our intentions are not the right course of action or our actions don't yield the intended outcome**
- **Engaging and actively listening to those whose backgrounds, lived experiences, and perspectives are different from ours**

For those not familiar with the Sphinx Organization, their programs and initiatives are incredible resources to know and follow. Their annual conference SphinxConnect ([sphinxmusic.org/sphinxconnect](http://sphinxmusic.org/sphinxconnect)) is the epicenter for artists and leaders in diversity. ASAP also offers a list of other organizations that promote DEI values: [aseatatthepiano.com/links](http://aseatatthepiano.com/links).

I hope that through these resources and reflections we will each continue to grow and challenge ourselves every day, in our private studios, at our institutions, as administrators, in our performing careers, and in our lives. 📖



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# PUPIL SAVER

## RIPPLING SPRING WALTZ

by Estelle Ricketts

### America's Forgotten Waltz

by Leah Claiborne

When one thinks of waltzes in piano repertoire, there is no limit to the variety of composers who have contributed to this delightful genre. It is a dance that is not only fulfilling to perform, often showing different levels of virtuosity in the right hand, but also highly pleasing for audience members.

Among the many waltzes that permeate our literature, a beautiful gem that is well suited for an early-intermediate student is *Rippling Spring Waltz* by Estelle Ricketts, published in 1893. Although not much is known about Ricketts's life, the Library of Congress believes that this piece is one of the first piano manuscripts published by an African American female. Apart from the historic treasure of this composition, the music is simply too wonderful to leave sitting on the shelf!

This waltz highlights the right hand's part, and allows for the left hand to remain constant and unchanged throughout the entirety of the piece. This allows the student to develop many pianistic technical and musical challenges in the right hand, in a focused study.

#### EXCERPT 1:

Estelle Ricketts, *Rippling Spring Waltz*, mm. 25–28.

*Rotating wrist for wide interval leaps*

(a tempo, dolce)

Piano

This passage of melodic sixths serves as a wonderful study to help aid in relaxation.

#### EXCERPT 2:

Estelle Ricketts, *Rippling Spring Waltz*, mm. 41–44.

*Shaping repeated double thirds*

(Piu mosso)

Piano

Again, students often anticipate playing the same notes in a locked hand position, which causes tension. By encouraging the student to think musically and shape the repeated thirds, the student will be able to produce a beautiful and relaxed melody, despite the additional notes being performed.

**EXCERPT 3:**  
Estelle Ricketts, *Rippling Spring Waltz*, mm. 65–67.



**EXCERPT 4:**  
Estelle Ricketts, *Rippling Spring Waltz*, mm. 77–80.

*Broken and blocked octaves*



Octaves can be a challenge for students with smaller hands, or for those just learning how to manage handling notes musically in such a wide span. The beautiful aspect

of this piece is that each of these technical elements is short and can be extracted as part of a technical exercise for the student to always come back to and continue to develop.

**EXCERPT 5:**  
Estelle Ricketts, *Rippling Spring Waltz*, mm. 105–108.

*Triplets and vivace*



Students often love to play fast, and this ending gives students and audience members a satisfying finale that does not disappoint. The student has the opportunity to develop a quick and light touch to aid in the exciting ending.

This waltz is a piece that I often enjoy giving a student before making a change in the level of repertoire because this short composition has everything a teacher would want a student to be able to accomplish! Before you know it, you too will be waltzing along to America's first published piece by a Black female composer. A recommended edition is *Black Women Composers: A Century of Piano Music (1893–1990)* by Hildegard Publishing. 📖



LEAH CLAIBORNE promotes diversity in the arts by championing piano music by Black composers in her performances, research, and teaching. She serves as coordinator of Keyboard Studies at the University of the District of Columbia.

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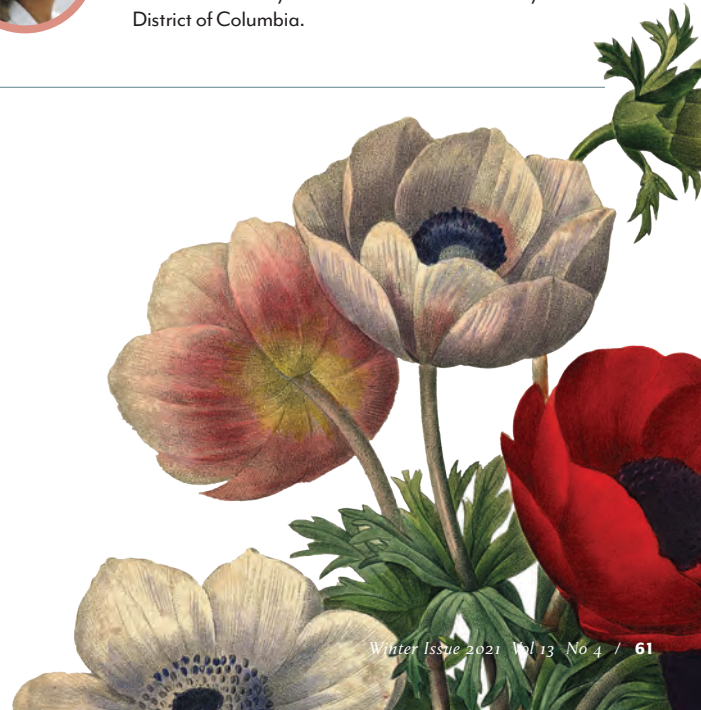
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—L.B., San Bruno, CA

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**CATEGORIES:****S** | Solo**E** | Ensemble



**(S5) SONATA IN A MAJOR, KV 331 (300i)**

by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and

**(S4) BAGATELLE IN A MINOR, WoO 59  
(FÜR ELISE)**

by Ludwig van Beethoven,  
both edited by Mario Aschauer

It is always a delight to acquire new scores, and yet rather surprising to behold new editions of Mozart's *Sonata in A Major*, KV 331 (300i) and Beethoven's *Bagatelle in A Minor*, WoO 59. Both works are established standards of piano repertoire and one may legitimately ask what prompted new editions at this time.

Conductor, harpsichordist, and musicologist Mario Aschauer has detailed the interesting history of the various sources of KV 331 (300i) in a substantial and authoritative preface. The lack of a single, definitive source provides the rationale for a critical edition that will allow pianists to make educated performance decisions.

The incredible recent discovery of not just one but two new sources has led to the publication of several new editions of KV 331 (300i). In 2014 a fragment of the autograph was discovered in Budapest, and in 2017 a previously unknown manuscript copy was located in Munich.

The 2020 Bärenreiter Urtext publication of KV 331 (300i) draws upon previously existing and newly discovered sources to render two versions of the sonata. The initial

version is based on the first edition published by Artaria in 1784. The second “reconstructed” version is drawn from the existing autograph fragment, the recently discovered one, and the newly discovered manuscript copy.

Editorial suggestions are clearly indicated by square brackets or dashed lines. In addition to a critical commentary, footnotes provide clear explanations for each of the amendments, while addressing inconsistencies regarding pitches, Mozart's use of dots and dashes, slur placement and length, dynamic marks, note stemming, and the location of the *Da Capo* indication in the *ia Allegretto* movement.

The whereabouts of the autograph of Beethoven's *Bagatelle in A Minor*, WoO 59—widely known as *Für Elise*—remain unknown. What exists is a draft of the piece as well as a notebook sketch for the first twenty-two measures. The draft also includes pencil alterations which overlay the original ink score. The alterations were ultimately abandoned, but reveal Beethoven's intentions for a rather different version of the piece.

The objective of the 2020 Bärenreiter Urtext publication of WoO 59—also edited by Mario Aschauer—is to throw light on this contemplated second version. Along with a copy of the first edition, it contains a transcription of the draft with alterations as well as a reconstruction of the second version. Once again, the critical commentary and footnotes elucidate editorial suggestions. It is enthralling to be privy to Beethoven's process and to consider an alternate iteration of WoO 59.

Both editions are highly recommended for all pianists from intermediate level on. They are a wonderful reminder that new discoveries keep classical music dynamic and vital. (Bärenreiter, \$12.00; \$5.99) —Evelyn Dias

“They are a wonderful reminder that new discoveries keep classical music dynamic and vital.”



### (S3) DUKE ELLINGTON: 16 JAZZ CLASSICS

by Phillip Keveren

Duke Ellington played a pivotal role in the history of jazz. He was an influential American composer, pianist, and jazz orchestra leader who rose to fame through his appearances at the Cotton Club in Harlem.

This collection presents sixteen masterpieces associated with Ellington. He composed fourteen of the selections, while Billy Strayhorn composed *Take the A Train* and Juan Tizol composed *Perdido*. The collection contains a nice variety of styles and moods: slow swing, ballad, variations, slow blues, and lively swing. The pieces are a delight to play.

The piano level is early intermediate. The arranger, Phillip Keveren, states in the preface that “I tried to keep the technical aspects...as clean and direct as possible.” Great emphasis has been placed on playability, and Keveren succeeds remarkably well. For example, the key signatures for fourteen of the pieces are limited to two accidentals. The rhythms are not complicated, and the note values are basically restricted to quarter and half notes along with some eighths. The pieces are short and manageable, usually two or three pages in length. Each piece presents the main theme, generally in AABA form, without any additional elaboration. Most of the selections, such as *Don't Get Around Much Anymore*, *Satin Doll*, and *I Ain't Got Nothin'*, are to be played in swing rhythm.

The collection's layout and printing are excellent. The titles listed in the table of contents are given in alphabetical

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order. Jazz chord symbols are conveniently placed above each chord. Page turns are well done, with one hand dropping out when it has little action. Fingering suggestions are given in questionable spots and do not clutter up the score.

The lyrics are included for each piece except for *Caravan* and the *Satin Doll* variations. I found singing the words was not only fun but necessary for a good understanding of the titles, moods, and styles. *Sophisticated Lady* presents a good example. Keveren's inclusion of an unusual whole-tone introduction highlights "sophistication," while the sad lyrics "when no one is nigh, you cry" explains the prominent use of highly chromatic, descending melodic and harmonic lines.

The player will encounter many interesting and typical Ellington techniques: long repetitive ostinato-like patterns as in *Caravan*, chromaticism as in *Sophisticated Lady*, harmonic sequences as in *Day Dream*, and parallel quartal chords as in *Satin Doll*. While some of the original passages were complex, Keveren has managed to arrange everything to be easily performable. This outstanding

new edition can serve as a wonderful introduction to the world of jazz and especially Ellington's greatest works. (Hal Leonard, \$14.99)—Ernest Kramer

“ Duke Ellington played a pivotal role in the history of jazz. He was an influential American composer, pianist, and jazz orchestra leader who rose to fame through his appearances at the Cotton Club of Harlem. ”



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**(S3) BILLIE EILISH FOR BEGINNING PIANO SOLO**

**(S3-4) POP PIANO HITS:  
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**(S4) COOL POP:  
8 CHART HITS FOR PIANO SOLO**

*arranged by Mona Rejino*

**(E3) HAMILTON FOR PIANO DUET**

*by Lin-Manuel Miranda, arranged by Eric Baumgartner*

*Billie Eilish for Beginning Piano Solo* features ten hits arranged for the ambitious late-elementary or early-intermediate student. These selections have been transposed to easier keys. Simplified rhythms are appropriate at this level; only one piece has sixteenth notes. The left hand is primarily whole and half notes, staying in five-finger positions as much as possible. The right hand has single-line melodies. A few harmonic thirds and fifths are sprinkled in here and there, but there are no chords to juggle. This collection would also work well as sight reading for a more advanced student. (\$14.99)

A notch more difficult, *Pop Piano Hits: Simple Arrangements for Students of All Ages* features five current hits. Two of these selections have syncopation in the left hand, and two have more complex sixteenth-note and triplet rhythms in the melody. A few have been transposed to easier keys, and none have accidentals. Harmonic intervals from a second to a sixth add richer harmonic detail. Students should be on the lookout for repeat signs in the middle of a piece, *D.S. al Coda* indications, and first and second endings. (\$9.99)

*Cool Pop: 8 Chart Hits for Piano Solo*, arranged by Mona Rejino, is sure to please the intermediate to late-intermediate student. These well-crafted arrangements include syncopation in both hands, octaves, left-hand jumps, double sixths, and chords. Most are in their original keys. (\$12.99)

*Hamilton for Piano Duet* is a must for fans of the musical. Ingeniously arranged by Eric Baumgartner, these eight hits capture the vibrant essence of the music. The duet format is a perfect way to incorporate the rhythmic complexities and energy of the original music while staying at the intermediate level. These exciting duets would work well in a recital setting. (\$19.99) — Carmen Doubrava

“...Hal Leonard always has a wide selection of the latest hits transcribed for piano.”

When intermediate-level students ask for popular music, Hal Leonard always has a wide selection of the latest hits transcribed for piano. The following four collections are the pop hits that students are asking for, and these arrangements work exceedingly well on the piano.



### (S2) THREE SONATINAS

### (S2-3) PROGRESSIVE PIANO REPERTOIRE: MID-ELEMENTARY PIANO MUSIC FROM THE 17TH TO 21ST CENTURIES IN RELATIVE ORDER OF DIFFICULTY

### (S3-4) PERSPECTIVES: SIX PIECES FOR PIANO

by Keith Snell

Keith Snell is on a roll here with a wealth of music—and we need to jump on the wagon with him! His new collection, *Three Sonatinas* (for the elementary student) is a welcome addition to the sonatina repertoire. All are unique in sound and style and beckon the budding sonatina pianist to play them. In this collection, Snell labels the form in all the first movements, indicating the exposition, first and second themes, development, and recapitulation. He does the same for the last movements (two are rondos, one is ternary). These are helpful guides to assist the student in learning common forms. Snell's

collection is a welcome addition to the teaching library; the pieces sound new and fresh and are exciting to play. Students will want to learn every one of these!

*Progressive Piano Repertoire* features thirty-three pieces that, as Snell states, can be used with any piano method or independently. The repertoire selection of this collection is intriguing. While it features several standard classical pieces, it also contains several unknowns by Reinagle, Köhler, and Szymanowski. The collection also includes several pieces composed by Diane Hidy and Keith Snell. These compositions are just delightful and very pleasing to the ear. Both Hidy and Snell are very creative with their writing, and students will enjoy these pieces. My favorites by Hidy are “Mashed Potato Clouds” and “Bridge to Forever.” I had a hoot playing Snell’s “Bounce House” and “Lights, Camera, Action!”

Snell’s *Perspectives* offers the intermediate to later-intermediate student a wealth of challenges—and fun, too! Inviting titles such as “Long Summer Days,” “Strength and Courage,” and “White Shadows” are just a few. “The Challenge” can help build impressive technique for the left hand. “Benediction,” which is cast in G-flat major, gives a nod to Schubert’s Impromptu in G-flat, and works the student on balancing melody against accompaniment. “White Shadows” is a *toccata* on black and white keys: the left hand plays the black keys, and the right hand plays the white keys. All these pieces sound good, are musically grounded, and require the student to give back in musicianship and technique. In addition, they each help to focus on a technical and musical skill. (Kjos, \$6.99; \$7.95; \$7.99)—Adrienne E. Wiley 🐾

#### THIS ISSUE’S CONTRIBUTORS:

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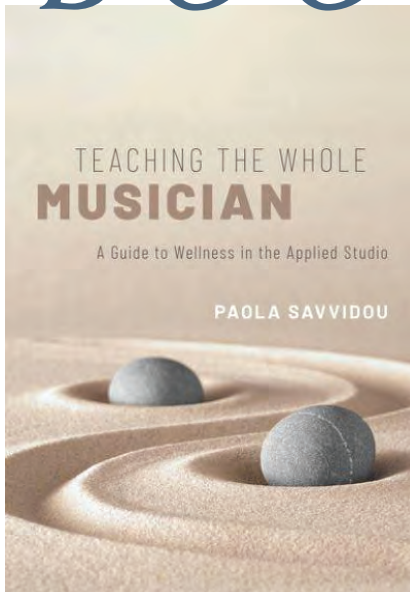


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# BOOK REVIEWS



## TEACHING THE WHOLE MUSICIAN: A Guide to Wellness in the Applied Studio

by Paola Savvidou

.....

review by Meg Gray

Wellness for musicians is a topic that came to the forefront in the 1980s and 90s, as musicians and pedagogues teamed up with medical professionals and other wellness experts to explore how musicians can play and sing in the healthiest way possible. Since that time, many articles, studies, and conference presentations have educated performers and teachers on this important subject. In *Teaching the Whole Musician*, Paola Savvidou does an exemplary job of gathering large quantities of research and organizing it into a dense, well-written volume of information that will be valuable for applied music instructors of every instrument, including the human voice.

The text is structured as follows: it begins with a general introduction to wellness. This is followed by a chapter on the role of the applied instructor, and then three chapters on the human body, presenting common injuries, physical alignment, and how to prevent injuries. An in-depth chapter discussing movement and its effects on musical expression follows; specifically discussed is the Laban movement analysis. At this point, Savvidou moves to a discussion of mental health basics, and the value of contemplative practices. *Teaching the Whole Musician* concludes with a chapter on nutrition and sleep, which is followed by an extensive notes section and many bibliographic references.

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As an experienced professor in the fields of piano pedagogy and class piano, a section that really struck a chord with me was the several paragraphs on “Who is the Twenty-First-Century College Student?” found in Chapter 1. This topic is one which is both timely (pandemic, anyone?) and very, very important. It is so easy to believe that students view the world with their teacher’s perspective, and this just isn’t true. Wise teachers try to see things from their students’ point of view, to best help them achieve their goals.

The three chapters on the human body provide a wealth of information (and diagrams!) on common physical issues and how to prevent them. The information in Chapter 3 is not earth-shakingly new, but it is very useful to find it so clearly presented and well organized in a single volume. An added benefit is that the material is comprehensive, with sections on neuromusculoskeletal health as well as hearing health and vocal health. Chapter 4 is fairly unique; it is an introduction to physical alignment, and how most effectively to stack the joints. In Chapter 5, Savvidou discusses stretching, and touches on Alexander Technique, Feldenkrais, yoga, and Pilates, amongst other topics, as a means to prevent injuries.

Savidou devotes all of Chapter 6 to Laban movement analysis and how it affects musical expression. This very interesting topic is presented in detail, and the chapter provides much to think about for applied music instructors. The chapters on the basics of mental health and the introduction of contemplation practices are an important addition to this text. Many people tend to focus on the physical, while in reality, mental and emotional issues can hinder human beings as much as a bout of tendinitis. The last chapter on nutrition and sleep is, like the other chapters, very thoroughly researched. It gathers into one place information on the importance of these topics for overall wellness.

*Teaching the Whole Musician: A Guide to Wellness in the Applied Studio* is an incredibly well-researched text on a very timely topic. It is packed with information, and provides an enormous amount of additional resources in the notes, the bibliography, and in a companion website provided by Oxford University Press. One could create an excellent course on wellness based upon the information and references in this book; I believe it will truly save careers and increase positive experiences for undergraduate and graduate music majors and faculty alike. (Oxford University Press, 2021, paperback \$29.95, other formats available). 📖



MEG GRAY is on the faculty at Wichita State University where she teaches piano pedagogy and coordinates the undergraduate class piano program. She also maintains a pre-college studio and is an active adjudicator and presenter.

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## FIRST LOOKS



## ARCANA: ALEX SHAPIRO

Adam Marks, *piano*

Innova 041

[Total Time 79:58]

innova.mu

This album presents the collected piano works by composer Alex Shapiro. The music is perhaps best summarized in the liner notes to the pieces that give the album its title: “Arcana explores the painfully fragile and often perilous relationship between humans and the secrets of earth’s abundant plant life.” Relationships are at the heart of Shapiro’s work. *Spark* commemorates the joyous work of a lost friend. *Chord History* is an exploration of the composer’s relationship with the iconic opening of Beethoven’s *Sonata Pathétique*. Her writing carries a wealth of beautiful dissonances that bring honesty to the listening experience. There is no sentiment or showmanship, nothing overly rugged or precious, just a sympathetic voice for the listener. Integral to that voice is pianist Adam Marks. The performances are rendered with an uncommon authenticity and generosity, and his spirit is felt alongside Shapiro’s every step of the way. —Jason Sifford

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Arcana explores the painfully fragile and often perilous relationship between humans and the secrets of earth's abundant plant life.



## EMILE NAOUMOFF, PIANO MUSIC

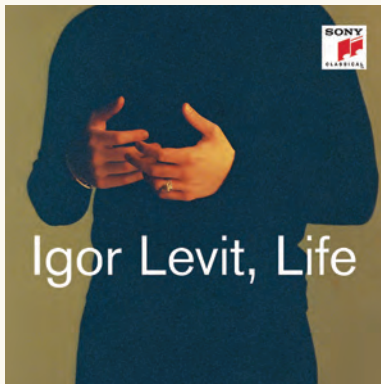
Gregory Martin, *piano*

Toccata TOCCo603

[Total Time 80:16]

[toccataclassics.com](http://toccataclassics.com)

Émile Naoumoff is a Bulgarian composer and pianist just shy of his sixtieth birthday, and one of the youngest of the ubiquitous pupils of Nadia Boulanger. This recording of his piano works reveals a composer who melds very attractive tonality/modality with a real idiomatic grace for the piano. Naoumoff very much likes to inhabit the lyrical, poignant realm, exhibited via nocturnes, elegies, a *Réminiscense* titled “Désespoir,” and most compellingly, *Cathedral in Tears*, written in 2019 in response to the Notre-Dame Cathedral fire. There are also Eastern European dances and rhythmic character pieces, recalling Bartók’s works in these idioms. Most of these selections are in miniature forms, but there is a seventeen-minute *Rhapsody* that is much broader in scale, filled with expansive polytonal gestures and a wealth of musical variety. Gregory Martin projects it all with great clarity, color, and pacing, and the CD is exceptionally well-recorded. —*Geoffrey Burtleson*



## LIFE

Igor Levit, *piano*

Sony Classical 88985424452

[Total Time 1:54:00]

[sonyclassical.com](http://sonyclassical.com)

Lush sound and ruminative contemplation beckon in this remarkable recording by Igor Levit. Life’s tragedies and losses have the power to bring forth inspiration and beauty as can be seen not only in this program, but in the genesis of several featured compositions as well. In 1909, Busoni left eternal musical tributes upon losing each of his parents. Rzewski memorialized his close friend, performance artist Steve Ben Israel, in “A Mensch” from *Dreams* (2012). As evoked in the liner notes by Anselm Cybinski: “Every piece [Levit] has chosen travels a spiritual path from the earthly to the hereafter; each of them questions the ultimate realities in its own way.” Bach, Schumann, and Liszt also carry us along this journey. The closing transcription of Bill Evans’ improvisation *Peace Piece* gives the effect of a cleansing rain on a spring day when life is renewed. An essential recording for replenishing the soul. —*Elizabeth Moak*



## HUMMEL: PIANO SONATAS, VOL. 3

Antonio Pompa-Baldi, *piano*

CRC3812

[Total Time 59:19]

[centaurrecords.com](http://centaurrecords.com)

This third installment of Hummel's complete piano sonatas features two vastly contrasting works in style and affect. The *Piano Sonata No. 4*, Op. 38 strongly bears the mark of his mentor, Mozart. It is orchestral in construction, and Antonio Pompa-Baldi clearly hears the music as such, creating fullness in sound without allowing textures to become too thick. His handling of the slow movement is especially striking, spinning florid melodic lines while maintaining a steady pulse. The *Piano Sonata No. 6*, Op. 106 is a clear precursor to the music of Chopin, characterized by melismatic and improvisatory writing in the right hand, and greater harmonic daring. Pompa-Baldi's playing changes to reflect this as well, featuring greater use of *rubato* and gestural sweep. Especially impressive is his sparing use of pedal, generating brilliance and cleanliness despite the tremendous technical difficulties present in these works. His sparkling diatonic thirds deserve special mention, and the slow movement is impeccable. —*Scott Cuellar*



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Especially impressive is his sparing use of pedal, generating brilliance and cleanliness despite the tremendous technical difficulties present in these works. His sparkling diatonic thirds deserve special mention, and the slow movement is impeccable.



## THEODORE LESCHETIZKY: MORCEAUX POUR PIANO

Tobias Bigger, *piano*

BIS-2518

[Total Time 58:52]

[bis.se](http://bis.se)

Best known in our field for his “Leschetizky Method,” with a multitude of notable piano students, Theodore Leschetizky’s original compositions are no less impressive. Bigger’s superb recording of these short masterpieces provides an excellent sampling for the edification of the listener. His playing is so exceptional that the listener doesn’t concentrate on his technical abilities or interpretations, per se, but rather is fixed solidly on the music itself. Leschetizky’s music is full of melody, and while the ghosts of contemporaneous composers such as Schumann and Mendelssohn are present, his tonal language and use of dynamic contrasts set him apart, demonstrated especially well in the *Menuetto capriccioso* (Op. 38). Several etudes in the Lisztian tradition are included, such as *La source*, Op. 36, No.1, and *Pastels*, Op. 44 demonstrated high virtuosity and musicality. Every piece on this recording would be a most enjoyable addition to any pianist’s concert repertoire.

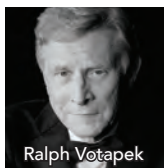
—Kristín Jónína Taylor



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### REVIEWERS:

GEOFFREY BURLESON is on the piano faculty of Princeton University, and is Professor/Director of Piano Studies at Hunter College-CUNY. He is currently recording the complete solo piano works of Saint-Saëns for Naxos Grand Piano.

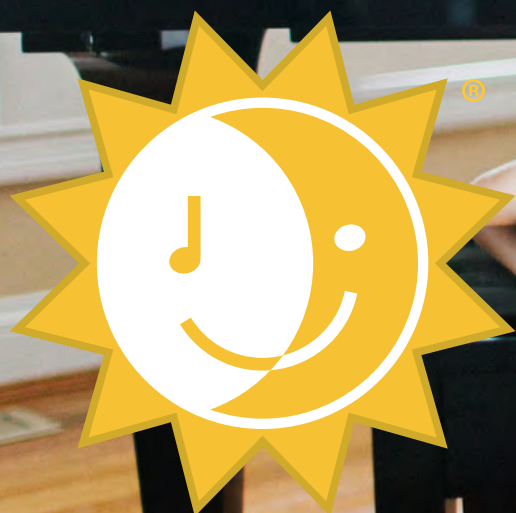
SCOTT CUELLAR received the gold medal at the San Antonio International Piano Competition. He holds degrees from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, the Juilliard School, and Rice University. He now teaches at Oberlin Conservatory.

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*A mentor is someone who allows you to see the hope inside yourself.*

– Oprah Winfrey

by Jennifer Snow

The new school year marks a time of beginnings and discoveries. As lifelong learners, we launch into the fall with aspirational plans for our students and for ourselves. The opportunity to synthesize newly acquired approaches, strategies, and skills inspires us to build on our craft and bring our best to our students.

In our field, mentorship is central to our collective success. When we reflect on our mentors, we use descriptors such as “nurturing,” “motivating,” “caring,” “expert,” “encouraging,” and “inspiring.” If you take a moment to think about your key mentors, you may feel that words do not truly encompass the impact your mentors have and have had on your life and career. Mentorship is an ongoing commitment that not only supports individual development but also fosters a more connected community.

The origins of the word “mentor” lie in Greek mythology. In Homer’s epic *The Odyssey*, Odysseus was away for twenty years and he left his infant son, Telemachus, under the supervision of his old and trusted friend Mentor. When the goddess Athena decided it was time to educate Telemachus, she visited him disguised as Mentor. Today, we use the word mentor for anyone who is a positive, guiding influence in another person’s life.<sup>1</sup>

With the passing of Frances Larimer in October, I, and many others, lost one of our influential mentors. Mrs. Larimer, as many of us knew her, was a force in the field of piano pedagogy and contributed extensively with her work. Perhaps one of her most powerful contributions was her mentorship of multiple generations of piano educators. Her lifelong commitment to mentorship extended well beyond the time of study with her. She followed her students throughout their careers and always made it a point to celebrate their success and also give honest feedback on where they were and where they were headed. This passionate interest thrived to the end of her life. She demonstrated a passion for her students, their work, and the importance of excellence in our field. This lifelong commitment created a legacy of impact that

transcended one person. In addition to individual mentorship, great mentors create a community amongst different generations of professionals that amplifies new circles of mentorship.

The continuum of mentorship is the architecture of our community. Our opportunities to mentor young people into more informed, empathetic, and responsible citizens is a testament to the profound impact we can have as piano teachers. It is deeply rewarding when we encounter our generations of students as they pursue their chosen paths throughout their lives. For students who pursue a career in music, they often expand their mentors to those who steward them through their studies launching them into the profession. Frequently, students return to their original piano teachers, as well as college mentors, for guidance and support with life as much as music. From the professional perspective, we build community around mentorship. Great mentors connect and interconnect their students, creating networks of engagement and support. It is inspiring to witness our next generation of leaders and influencers in their roles as emerging mentors.

January is promoted as National Mentorship Month. Taking time to acknowledge and recognize our mentors is important as they are the roots of our success. As educators, we hold the powerful responsibility and duty of mentorship. We strive to honor our own mentors and contribute to the next generation. The true power of our community extends from a dynamic, compassionate culture of lifelong and interconnected mentorship in service to music. 🎹

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, s.v. “mentor,” accessed October 25, 2021, merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mentor

## AD INDEX

|                                                                                   |                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Anderson University - South Carolina School of the Arts                           | 15                 |
| Arizona State University School of Music, Dance and Theatre                       | 21                 |
| Arts Ticketing                                                                    | 12                 |
| Brevard Music Center Summer Institute & Festival                                  | 27                 |
| Coastal Carolina University                                                       | 36                 |
| EPTA - Portugal                                                                   | 43                 |
| Faber Piano Adventures                                                            | 62                 |
| Farley's House of Pianos                                                          | 74                 |
| Florida Gulf Coast University, Bower School of Music                              | 41                 |
| The Frances Clark Center: Become a Donor                                          | 7                  |
| The Frances Clark Center: Courses                                                 | 55                 |
| The Frances Clark Center: A New Piano Teaching Literature Guide from Jane Magrath | 34                 |
| The Frances Clark Center                                                          | Inside Back Cover  |
| Honeywell Arts Academy                                                            | 57                 |
| Lynn University Conservatory of Music                                             | 45                 |
| Lyrical Applications                                                              | 58                 |
| Meredith College Department of Music                                              | 61                 |
| Music Teachers National Association                                               | 22                 |
| Music for Young Children                                                          | 76                 |
| My Music Staff                                                                    | Inside Front Cover |
| National Federation of Music Clubs                                                | 66                 |
| Neil A. Kjos                                                                      | 24                 |
| Piano Buyer                                                                       | 71                 |
| Piano Magazine Marketplace                                                        | 54-55              |
| Royal Conservatory of Music                                                       | 32                 |
| Royal Conservatory of Music                                                       | Back Cover         |
| Sunderman Conservatory of Music at Gettysburg College                             | 70                 |
| TopMusicCo                                                                        | 38                 |
| University of Arkansas Department of Music                                        | 72                 |
| University of Central Oklahoma                                                    | 75                 |
| University of Oklahoma                                                            | 69                 |
| University of St. Thomas                                                          | 65                 |
| Wayland Baptist University                                                        | 29                 |

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- *Hannabelle's Butterflies* (Autumn)
- *Playing Solo Jazz Piano: A New Approach for Creative Pianists* (Spring)
- *Piano-Playing Revisited: What Modern Players Can Learn from Period Instruments* (Autumn)
- *Teaching the Whole Musician: A Guide to Wellness in the Applied Studio* (Winter)
- *The Lost Pianos of Siberia* (Summer)
- *Where Are All the Black Female Composers?* (Spring)
- *Why Is My Piano Black and White?* (Spring)

## DIVERSITY COLUMN

- D. E. I.: "I, Too," (Summer)
- *Remaking Ourselves: Perspectives and Resources for Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Classical Music* (Winter)
- *The Project Recital: Repertoire Awareness in the Music Studio* (Autumn)
- *Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity: Piano Lessons in the VUCA Era* (Spring)

## FEATURED PIANISTS & PEDAGOGUES

- *Celebrating 70 Years of Composing: An Interview with American Icon Eugénie Rocherolle* (Spring)
- *In Memoriam: Nelita True* (Spring)
- *Lessons with Slenczynska* (Summer)
- *Reflections on the Frances Clark Center 2021 Lifetime Achievement Award Recipients* (Summer)
- *The Legacy of Frances Larimer* (Winter)
- *The Legacy of Miriam Hyde* (Winter)
- *Uncovering Teresa Carreño: Virtuoso, Composer, and Pioneer* (Autumn)

## PEDAGOGY AND TECHNIQUE

- *How Slow is Slow? A Practical Guide for Implementing Slow Practice* (Summer)
- *I Wish I Could Answer That* (Spring)
- *Positive Recitals for Young Students, Setting the Stage for Success* (Autumn)
- *Practicing Alongside our Intermediate Students* (Winter)
- *Teaching Adults in Group-Piano Settings: Facilitating the Musical Process* (Summer)
- *Teaching the Tough Ones: Why It's Worth It* (Spring)
- *Where Do We Begin?* (Autumn)

## REPERTOIRE (ADVANCED)

- *Brahms Rediscovered: The Solo Piano Transcriptions of His Last Opus by Busoni* (Summer)
- *Play The Octaves with Two Hands: Chopin's and Liszt's Redistributions in Their Own Works* (Autumn)
- *Reclaiming an Alternative History: New Piano Music of Florence Price* (Autumn)

## REPERTOIRE (INTERMEDIATE)

- *A Hummel Treasure Hunt* (Winter)
- *Cécile Chaminade's Album des Enfants: A Treasure-trove of Teaching Pieces for the Intermediate Pianist* (Winter)
- *Pupil Saver: Adagio in F Minor* (Spring)
- *Pupil Saver: Prelude No. 5 from Ten Preludes for the Piano* (Autumn)
- *Pupil Saver: Rippling Spring Waltz* (Winter)
- *Pupil Saver: Russian Dancer* (Summer)
- *Rocherolle's New Orleans Sketches: Teaching Tips for "Masquerade"* (Spring)
- *Teaching Contemporary Piano Techniques to Intermediate Piano Students with Alexina Louie's Star Light, Star Bright* (Winter)

## TECHNOLOGY & ONLINE TEACHING

- *A Pianist's Reflections from Germany* (Spring)
- *Digital Sheet Music Experiences for Teaching and Performance* (Autumn)
- *How's the Connection: Relational Lessons Online and In the Studio* (Spring)
- *Tech Gear for Online Lessons and Recording* (Summer)

## WELLNESS

- *Burning Brightly Without Burning Out* (Autumn)
- *Luxuriant Piano Playing: A Wellness Principle* (Autumn)
- *Professional Associations: Your Indispensable Resource for Musicians' Health Information* (Spring)
- *Music Teaching and Performing Beyond the Studio and Concert Hall* (Winter)
- *Tips for Healthy Remote Teaching* (Summer)
- *When the Well is Dry: Reigniting the Spark for Teaching* (Autumn)

# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

by Jane Magrath

**Q:** I want to include some diverse literature for my intermediate students as we prepare for recitals, festivals, and competitions this spring. What are some collections or pieces that I might look into for their piano study?

**A:** Yours is a timely question since so much fresh solo piano literature at the intermediate level is coming to the forefront. In this column I focus on repertoire from level 3 through 7, as outlined in *Piano Literature for Teaching and Performance: A Graded Guide and Annotated Bibliography*. Generally, level 3 students can play pieces such as Schumann's "Soldier's March" from his *Album for the Young*, Op. 68, as well as Kabalevsky's "Clowns" and "A Little Joke." At levels 6 and 7 students study the easiest Bach Little Preludes and Clementi and Kuhlau sonatina movements.

Karen Tanaka's 1999 collection of 25 pieces, *Children of Light*, is a compelling collection of colorful and imaginative writing playable by intermediate students. Tanaka's influence for the set centers around the current crisis in nature whereby countless wild animals have become endangered or extinct, due to deforestation, sea pollution, and ozone depletion. The entire collection is unmeasurably beautiful, requiring persuasive communication. A level 3 student might enjoy playing No. 10, "African Elephant." The hands remain in stationary positions in this minimalistic piece. A sensitive performance of this can be meaningful for a student of any age. No. 1, "Child of Light: Blue Planet," accessible for the level 4–5 student is marked to be played, "From afar, as if you are watching the Earth from space." The expressive writing in this one-page piece captivates the imagination and ear with mesmerizing 6/8 rhythmic patterns in the left hand against simple right-hand long notes that might be interpreted as flashes of light. Additional selections to note are No. 11, "Child of Light 3: Prisms in the Forest," (level 4 or 5), No. 12, "Wild Water Buffalo" (level 5), and No. 17, "Red-Faced Parrot" (level 6). This Chester Music publication is available through Hal Leonard.

In his progressive five-volume series *Piano Music of Africa and the African Diaspora* issued by Oxford, William Chapman Nyaho makes available a wealth of music by composers from Africa and Black composers

from across the world including the United States, China, Asia, the Caribbean, and South America. *Sweet Mister Jelly Roll* by Valerie Capers (also available in her wonderful collection *Portraits in Jazz*, from Oxford) is a delightful and straightforward rag in C major, playable by students at level 6 and above. Also at level 6, Florence Price's *Ticklin' Toes* is sure to bring a smile to one's face through the countless syncopations. "Dusk," originally from Nkeiru Okoye's collection *African Sketches*, is soulful and reflective, playable by a level 5 or 6 student. These pieces are included in Volume 1. Recordings of Nyaho playing the music are available on Spotify.

Lera Auerbach's collection *Images from Childhood* (2000) brings a significant and important contribution to the pedagogical teaching literature, with the pieces ranging from levels 3 through 7. "What a Story!," is a lively and captivating piece in ABA form with a coda for students at levels 6 or 7. Expect brief passages of bitonal writing and a dreamy concluding coda. If you are looking for a piece for a level 4 student, "E-Creatures," in which the music imitates electronic creatures running about, might fit the bill. It is one printed page with *leggiero* pentatonic writing. *Images of Childhood* is available through Sikorski.

This is a sampling only of inspiring and diverse intermediate-level music. Much of this fresh literature is readily available for purchase and often is reasonably priced. To locate newer scores of some composers, teachers may need to search composers' individual websites, in addition to local and national music stores. 📖



JANE MAGRATH is well known as a pianist, author, and clinician and author of the new *Piano Literature for Teaching and Performance: A Graded Guide and Annotated Bibliography*. She is Professor Emeritus at the University of Oklahoma.

# EXPLORE

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