



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

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Emily Barr Presents:

“Crested Ibis” from *Children of Light* by Karen Tanaka

Process and Practice

Fully present: tips for maintaining focus and engagement over time

- Explore the concept of key depths. Experiment with playing the RH halfway into the keys and LH three-quarters into the keys to create an effective balance between melody and accompaniment.
- Listen carefully while pedaling. Adhere attentively to pedal markings to prevent too much "blur" from occurring. Ask the question, "Is my pedaling enhancing the musicality of this piece?"
- Identify the three measures where the RH accompaniment spans the range of a 9th rather than an octave. What is the significance of this within the context of the piece?

Break it up: useful practice segments; how to connect them and plug them back into the whole

- Practice mm. 1-14 with left hand alone and pedal. Listen for an ultra smooth, consistent melodic line throughout. Achieve this primarily through finger legato, but allow the pedal to assist in connecting the sound when it is not feasible for the fingers to do so.
- In the 6/4 section, play the melody with the right hand, including the tops of the rolled chords, with a full, round tone. Allow the left hand to softly play the remaining lower notes so that the rolled chords are broken up between the hands.

Layers and outlines: tips for focusing on how the parts makeup the whole

- Identify the three layers of this piece and rank them by their importance. Play each layer alone for a few opening measures. Internalize the feeling of playing each layer and their resulting sound.
- Play two layers simultaneously, maintaining the touch and tone that makes each layer distinct.
- In the 6/4 section, play the rolled chords entirely with the left hand, distinguishing between the gentle, light touch of the lower notes and the round, rich touch of the top notes.

Achieving flow: ideas for finding and maintaining tempo, managing modifications artistically

- To establish the tempo, sing the opening phrase of the melody. Tap the quarter-note pulse in your lap. Subdivide into threes to clearly feel the triplets of the RH accompaniment, and then begin the piece.

- Experiment with the timing of the rolled chords and how this relates to pedaling. Coordinating these two elements is essential to preventing "hiccups" in the piece's flow.
- Explore places to incorporate elements of rubato. Envision the melodic line as a graceful tug of war. Where does the line want to push ahead, and where does it pull back?

Make it mine: tips for developing and refining a personal, internal sense of the piece

- Ask the student to imagine this piece as a soundtrack for a moment of time in their life. What comes to mind? Find places in the piece to express the sentiment of this memory.
- Consider the harmonic language of this piece, overflowing with a variety of colors and shades. Ask the student to pinpoint the climactic harmony of the piece. Have the student assign a color to this chord. In the measures leading up to this, ask the student to play and respond to the other harmonies they hear with different colors. How do these colors relate to each other?

Deep knowing: tips for securing memory

- Revisit the form of the piece and analyze it on a macro level. How can you describe the first and last sections, and what makes the middle section different?
- Create a memory map of this piece, illustrating how the piece begins and ends, the contour of the melody, octave displacement, moments of intensification, and the climax of the piece.

Final stages: tips for ensuring performance readiness, maintaining freshness and spontaneity, and reinforcing an expressive personal connection

- Revisit the preface to *Children of Light*. How can you honor Tanaka's intention for this collection through your performance?
- Perform for family and friends. As they listen, ask them to imagine what scene, memory, or emotion this piece reminds them of. After playing, share responses and compare how the audience's ideas relate to your own interpretation of the piece.