



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

A Piano Magazine subscriber-exclusive digital resource

Annie Jeng presents:

“Cortège” from *Trois morceaux* by Lili Boulanger

Process and Practice

Fully present: tips for maintaining focus and engagement over time

- Try a variety of phrasing, pedaling, timing, and dynamics throughout your practice so that you can be spontaneous during a performance.
- This melody is absolutely charming and beautiful: enjoy it!
- Practice backwards from the last section to the first section to avoid over-practicing the beginning of the piece.

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

- Examine the form of the piece and how sections have either contrasting or similar characteristics.
- Identify the unique tonalities and harmonies of each section.
- When the main A theme returns (ABA), how is it different?
- What are the main technical challenges of each section and how do they impact the overall effect of the section? (ex. light vs. heavy sixteenth note accompaniments)

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

- Practice the transitions between sections to listen to how connecting material can influence the sections surrounding it.
- Why do you think that there is such a contrasting middle section that highlights Spanish-music characteristics?

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

- Consider how Lili Boulanger utilizes tempo changes to either break up sections, emphasize harmonic intricacies, or to simply be charming.
- The sixteenth note accompaniment should always be steady and consistent, but allow the melody to dance lightly above it.
- Select a tempo that works for you in order to deliver a controlled performance. “*Pas vite*” is not too fast.

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

- This is such a delightful piece that you have to truly discover the charm in the piece. Make it your own by exploring your own timing, color, and tone.

- Always be expressive and spontaneous. This is a beautiful piece and it's a joy to share with others!

Deep knowing: tips for securing memory

- Know what key you are playing in for each section, especially the beginnings and the final cadences.
- Compare and practice similar sections, for ex. the main theme and its return at the end.
- Sing the melody while playing only the accompaniment part. This can be particularly tricky since the accompaniment is often split between the hands.

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

- Perform this piece for friends and family, and ask what their thoughts are. Sometimes other people's ideas and interpretations can make a big impact on how we perceive performances of pieces.
- Record yourself! Stepping away from your own performance and evaluating a recording allows you to listen for things that you may not hear while you are actively playing.