



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

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Ricardo Pozenatto presents: Valsinha (Little Waltz) by Francisco Mignone

Process and Practice

Fully present: tips for maintaining focus and engagement over time

- Encourage students to listen to varied interpretations of this piece. Notice how flexible this music is, which allows diverse interpretations.
- Encourage students to decide where to place *rubato* and other expressive features, such as *rallentando* at the of phrases. Later, encourage them to change the placement of these features and discuss how that modifies the interpretation of the music.
- The final section of the piece indicates “*Mais depressa e brilhante*” (faster and sparkly). Instead of choosing a single faster speed, try a range. Then, discuss the student’s preferences and how it changes the interpretation of the piece.

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

- The phrase structure of each section follows a pattern. Practicing the shaping of one phrase will help the student understand the next. Practice one phrase at a time, then combined for musical continuity and flow.
- Break up the accompaniment part in the final section with both hands. Have the LH play the dotted halves and the RH the double quarter-notes of beats 2 and 3, listening for balance. Then, play the accompaniment with your LH with the same balance and *legato*. Finally, add the melodic *cantabile* line.
- Add a small *rallentando* at the end of each section. After practicing each section in isolation, practice the transition between sections (e.g., measures 13-20 and measures 29-36) looking for a well-lengthened *rallentando* followed by *a tempo*.

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

- This piece is composed of three distinctive sections: measure 1-16; measure 17-32; measure 33-48. Therefore, the form ABC seems appropriate. Notice how the increased rhythmic activity between sections supports the character development of the piece.
- Take time to listen to how the repeated notes of the initial phrases are unique while belonging to different harmonies. The first two B notes, for instance, appear as part of an E minor followed by a B major harmony in measures 1 and 2. Discuss the role of these notes (and other repeated notes in the music) within the harmonic context.
- The texture is thickest in the final section. Break the texture apart during isolated practice to support the student’s development in hearing how each part makes up the whole when put back together.

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

- Encourage students to dance the waltz style, perhaps even with the teacher. This will support the student's experience with the strong downbeat of each measure and how the phrases are structured.
- The phrase contour of eighth-notes in the B and C sections suggests the use of a flexible wrist motion during the playing: a counter-clockwise circular motion. Keeping a free arm and elbow is essential for maintaining an artistic flow and better shaping these phrases.
- In sections B and C, the appearance of chromatic intervals is intensified. Have students warm up by playing chromatic scales to develop a natural feeling for the small hand shape generated when playing those intervals.

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

- While choosing specific places for *rubato* and *rallentando* throughout the piece, have students record the same passage with diverse placements. How do these placements change the interpretation of the piece?
- Encourage the student to experiment with a variety of tone colors for each section. Discuss how different approaches to the touch will create diverse tones and sounds from the piano.
- Discuss with the student what feelings or emotions this piece evokes from them. Ask: Was there a visual memory or a story attached to these emotions? How could you share them with the audience as you perform this piece?

Deep knowing: tips for securing memory

- Analyze the piece from multiple perspectives: musical form, phrase structure, thematic content, texture development, and harmonic analysis.
- Analyze the harmonic content of the C section to reinforce its memorization.
- Explore how the phrases and melodies of each section provide sequential materials.
- Notice how the phrases in the B section are a development of the phrases in the A section. Point out how the initial and final notes of the phrases between sections are the same in addition to the same accompaniment part.

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

- Remind students about interpretation possibilities. Encourage them to be in charge of their choices, especially with *rubato*, and remind them that their placements will result in a unique performance of the piece.
- Exaggerate the dynamics in practice to prepare to play at a piano that the student might not have a chance to try beforehand.
- Since all three sections are independent, encourage students to play them out of order. This will reinforce their knowledge of each section, generating confidence in their memorization of the piece.