



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

A Piano Magazine subscriber-exclusive digital resource

Jessie Welsh presents:

“Introduction” from *Valses Poéticas* by Enrique Granados

Preparation and Presentation

Context: pieces that are helpful to have experienced or played before approaching this one

- Friedrich Burgmüller: *12 Brilliant and Melodious Studies*, Op. 105
- Selections from Edvard Grieg’s *Lyric Pieces*
- Selections from Robert Schumann’s *Scenes from Childhood* and/or *Album Leaves*
- Frederic Chopin’s Waltzes (levels 7-9)

Get Ready: creative activities to explore before the first encounter with the score to prepare a student for deeper engagement and more immediate success

- Play for the student and discuss the character and meter—why might the composer choose a piece in 2/4 as an introduction to a set of waltzes?
- Model the choreographed “dance” of the hands & ask the student to describe the motion/gesture.
- Play a five-finger pattern in A major up the piano.
- Conducting in 2 (or marching) and speaking subdivisions of 4, 6, and 8.

Initial Focus: features to pay attention to first; priority steps in reading and absorbing the music

- Find & bracket mini “etudes.”
- Map the positions of your hands both separately and together.
- Choreograph gestures in time (feeling meter) hands separately and then together.

Coordination Essentials: physical skills and drills for common technical challenges in the piece

- Play-prepare between position shifts.
- Place, then play - feel the shape first!
- Over-the-bar line practice.
- Identify, draw, and feel gestures, first away from the piano and then in position.
- Play from the keys—stay close, move horizontally, and feel the shapes of each chord/position.

Expressivity: ideas to connect with the expressive and musical nature of the piece

- Play bass and melody alone to hear the tension/release of the progression.
- Voice the top notes for the singing melody to shine amid the many rapidly moving notes (*staccato* the lower notes for practice).

- Listen for “arc” shaping that follows the direction of the line.
- Practice small sections fast to hear the connection of the small units into a longer line.
- Conduct while the teacher plays and vice versa.

Look Forward: approaches to set up for success with refinements that will need attention a few weeks down the road

- Practice small sections fast for both longer lines and building stamina.
- Voice the top notes with a singing tone.
- Exaggerate the dynamics, especially on repeated sections.
- Practice *staccato* on fast notes for clarity of sound within the large gestures.
- Practice eyes-closed for tactile memory of positions and increased aural awareness.