



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

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Almond Ponge presents:

Über Stock und Stein, Op. 17, No. 5 by Max Reger

Process and Practice

Fully present: tips for maintaining focus and engagement over time

- Practice the melodic line legato to shape phrases
- Group notes into a single gesture (typically one gesture per beat for the melody)
- Ensure hands play exactly together on the beats—the hand without the melody tends to rush ahead
- Think in longer, eight-measure phrases

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

- Play the melodic line legato (e.g., chunks of eight measures)
- Focus on building effective *crescendos* and *diminuendos* when marked
- Change the rhythm—play the downbeat twice as long and the other notes twice as short
- Isolate the left hand in measures 13-16 and 41-44
- Ensure fingering consistency
- Vary articulation and rhythm; play a passage legato without rhythm, then legato in rhythm, and then as written

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

- Notice similarities and differences between repetitions of the same material (e.g., measures 1-4 and 9-12 have a similar right hand, but the left hand adds an eighth note)
- Balance the melody and harmonic support by “shadow playing” the non-melodic hand
- Analyze the form of the music

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

- Maintain tempo; have the student play one hand while the teacher plays the other, then switch
- Listen for voicing and explore highlighting different lines on repetitions
- Walk around the room while singing/humming the melody and stepping in macro beats
- Sit and clap the macro beats while singing/humming
- Practice with a metronome with only the macro beat in slow, medium, and performance tempos

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

- Discuss how the title of the piece relates to the piece, and create a narrative with the student
- Explore starting *crescendos* even softer or later
- Explore voicing unisons differently
- Explore listening to a different voice at the return/repeat of the material

Deep knowing: tips for securing memory

- Play the piece without the score, one hand at a time, audiating the opposite hand; do this in 4-8 measures at a time
- Go through the score and find repetition
- Practice from the last eight measures; work backward and add 4-8 measures at a time
- Play from memory at half the performance speed

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

- Practice starting at the trickiest sections and continue from there until the end (e.g., measures 13 and 41)
- Play in a group setting and ask for feedback from other students
- Record and evaluate your own performance