



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

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Laura Amoriello Presents:

“Arabesque” from 3 Klavierstücke by Josephine Lang

Process and Practice

Fully present: tips for maintaining focus and engagement over time

- Try interleaved practice: Alternate between the three sections of the piece rather than always starting from the beginning.
- Continue to engage with the layers of the piece: sing the top voice, play combinations of voices, and block the harmonies. Pick a different strategy each time you practice to keep the mind, body, and ear engaged over time. If you haven’t already, move on to the challenge of playing one voice while singing another!

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

- The short-short-long phrase structure of this piece provides convenient practice units. Master each phrase individually first. Then, combine the phrases: short + short, short + long. As your combinations become more secure, group all three phrases together.
- When you can comfortably play three phrases with fluidity and expression, move on to sectional practice. Can you play each section fluidly and musically? Try interleaved practice: Alternate between sections rather than always starting from the A-section.

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

- By this point, you have probably engaged quite a bit with the layers of this piece! Continue utilizing the strategies discussed above: sing the top voice, play combinations of voices, block the harmonies, and sing one voice while playing another. Always include singing as part of your practice: keeping the ear actively engaged is critical to voicing and expression in this piece.
- As you block the harmonies, jot in chord names or Roman numerals. Harmonic analysis will facilitate flow and memory in this piece.

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

- Be sure to observe the composer’s tempo and timing indications throughout the piece.
- To facilitate phrasing over the barline, practicing grouping: Take a slight pause on the downbeat of each measure, making sure not to pause before the downbeat. You can apply this practice strategy by phrase first, then section as you get more comfortable. After grouping, play the phrase or section as written to assess your flow.
- For an extra challenge: Practice without looking at the keys! This is especially useful for the leaps to low bass notes in the B-section (mm. 18 and 38, for example).

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

- Keep singing! Maintaining an aural, inner connection to the top line is essential for heartfelt expression in this piece.
- Alter the chord in m. 69 as needed to fit your hand size. Options include: roll the chord, leave out the RH B-flat and/or LH E.
- Connect with a sense of what it meant for a woman to compose and publish at this time in history. What challenges do you think Josephine Lang faced? What do you think she was thinking or feeling as she continued to compose through her personal challenges?

Deep knowing: tips for securing memory

- Memorize one phrase at a time. Use your harmonic analysis to guide you.
- Study the score away from the piano. Can you visualize and/or audiate each phrase without playing?
- Continue exploring the layers of the piece and playing with voices: Sing the top line, play combinations of voices, sing one line while playing another.

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

- Continue to connect with the composer, her personal and professional challenges. What challenges have you faced? How can you share this deep meaning with your audience?
- Sometimes it can be helpful to “take a break.” Resting from a piece often provides new ways of playing it. If you have the time before any performance deadlines to do so, give it a try!
- You can also practice performing for others, record yourself, or practice playing the piece “cold” (with no warm-up).