



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

A Piano Magazine subscriber-exclusive digital resource

David Cartledge presents:

Gavotte in G Major, HWV 491 ("Rigaudon") by George Frideric Handel

Process and Practice

Fully Present: tips for maintaining focus and engagement over time

- Engage the student with the harmonic content.
- Allow them to choose their own dynamics. Better yet, ask them to do it differently each time!
- Use the piece as a vehicle for experimentation. Let them try different articulations and touches, to see what they think works best.
- Let the student invent their own "Gavotte" dance.

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

- Practice "walking bass touch" in a variety of contexts—scales, 8ve sequences.
- Separate out the 2-note slurs from the RH, have them play long sequences. Let the student try different fingerings, and see what works best for them.
- Isolate and practice leaps, making sure that every note is always played in the direction of the next.

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

- Have the student analyze the harmony. Discover where the harmonic rhythm gets faster, and ask them why.
- How does Handel use motives in different keys in order to create interest?
- Which motives return in the second half? Which parts of the second half are new?

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

- Tempo can be found based on comfort with the LH octave leaps at the end.
- Listen to different gavottes—discover the wide range of tempos appropriate for this dance.
- Always remember that it is a dance! Imagine people dancing to it.

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

- Handel gifts us with a score that is mostly devoid of performance markings. It's ready to be personalized!
- Let students come up with their own ideas for the appropriate dynamics for the piece, and encourage them to change them from time to time--or on the spur of the moment!

- It is totally appropriate to improvise ornaments in this piece. Let those students who are capable find appropriate trills, mordents and so on.

Deep knowing: tips for securing memory

- Discover the underlying harmonic progression.
- Help students discover that the first note in each 2-note slur is a non-chord tone—the second note is the harmony note.
- Have the student go through the piece marking motives and phrases that are re-used, even in different keys.

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

- Our LH is a cellist: feel like we have vibrato! Sing along with the LH in practice to make this happen!
- Pick your choice of instrument for the RH—is it a violin? A flute? A trumpet? What happens if we change the instrument—do we play differently?
- Ask your student to dance to the piece!
- Always feel the directionality and buoyancy of the LH.