



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

A Piano Magazine subscriber-exclusive digital resource

Chris Madden presents:

A Pleasant Morning by Jean Louis Streabogg

Preparation and Presentation

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

- Faber Classic Sonatina (1st movement)
- Gurlitt 24 Easy Melodious Studies, Op. 50, no. 1
- Any additional piece in which standard scale fingerings appear

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

- Fun fact: The composer's last name was actually "Gobbaerts," which is "Streabbog" spelled backwards!
- What sounds "pleasant" in this piece? Does anything feel "pleasant" when playing?
- Which elements of the piece indicate that it's morning? (the ascending scales could be compared to the sun rising or rising from bed).

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

- The form of this piece is A – B – A with a coda. Once you learn the A section in mm. 1-8, you've also learned mm. 17-24. This is over half of the piece!
- The B section alternates between G pattern fingering (mm. 9-10) and C pattern fingering (mm. 11-12).
- When transitioning back into the A section in mm. 15-16, always use C Major scale fingering to stay oriented during the twists and turns.

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

- Warm-up with C Major scale in each hand, as it appears several times in the piece.
- Practice playing a repeated note with finger 5 followed by two-note slur to finger 4 (mm. 1-2)
 - For example, use fingers 5 – 5 – 4 to play C – C – B, and continue this pattern down the piano on white keys (B – B – A, etc.).
- While playing, say "up – down – up," which corresponds with wrist movement.
- Visually identify the difference between the LH chords in mm. 7-8 and mm. 9-10. Now practice finding these two chords quickly by starting with your hand in your lap.

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

- Listen for the tension and release on all two-note slurs.
- Pace your dynamics by starting your long crescendos and decrescendos at least 2 beats after the symbol is written.
- In the B section, give more sound on measures where the dominant occurs (mm. 9, 11, 13) and less when the tonic occurs (mm. 10, 12, 14).

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

- Lift the LH early in m. 6 so that you can arrive on time for the chord in m. 7. The shape of fingers 1-2 remains the same – just move up a fifth.
- On the downbeats of mm. 26-27 in the coda, your LH 5th finger should be hovering above the correct note – don't move too far!