



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

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Lesley McAllister presents:

***Monday Morning in the City* by Dianne Goolkasian Rahbee**

Preparation and Presentation

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

- Kabalevsky: *The Clown* Op. 39, No. 20
- Rebikov: *The Bear*
- Shostakovich: “Hurdy-Gurdy” from *Puppet Dances*
- Goolkasian Rahbee: *Running Around*, Op. 105, No. 4
- Antheil: *Little Shimmy*

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

- Syncopated Rhythm Experience through Movement: Tapping a steady beat while the teacher taps syncopated rhythms; vocalizing syncopated rhythms while tapping a steady beat; and then tapping a steady beat and clapping on the syncopations.
- Improvisation on Quartal Harmony: Play an ostinato left hand pattern while improvising on fourths in the right hand in C major.
- Explore fast melodic fourths in different keys with hand position changes through rote playbacks.
- Explore ostinato 521 broken chords in different keys through rote playbacks.

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

- “Hardest-first” approach: start at the end, learning the four measures of the coda. Clap the right hand rhythm; tap the right hand while playing the left hand; and then play the right hand alone, naming the bottom note of each cluster. When playing right hand alone, eyeball the next chord before making quick position changes, use arm weight, and think of an “in-in-down” movement to accent the syncopated note.
- Melodic/rhythmic patterns: Find similar 1- or 2-measure segments in the right hand. Play the right hand in very small segments, even 1 or 2 measures at a time, and find similar spots to practice in immediate succession.

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

- Measures 2, 4, 10, and 12 practice suggestions: Play as blocked chords; use 3-note groupings, stopping on the position change; and then add one group at a time in

rhythm. Play mm. 7-8 as blocked chords, noting the position change at the end of m. 8.

- Transition practice: Practice quick hand position changes from the first to the second page (m. 8-9) and circle/mark the pattern change in mm. 10 and 12.
- Students should use slight rotation to line up their forearm with the pinky during the LH ostinato pattern so they avoid ulnar deviation. This will also help them to place a light emphasis on the downbeat and avoid keeping the hand stretched out through the entire piece.

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

- The piece should sound brash, exciting, energetic, and confident. Students must take note of sudden dynamic changes and keep a strong tone quality, sinking to the bottom of the keybed, in both hands.
- Keep the left hand growing through the end of the measure (the end of the crescendo) in mm. 2 and 4, with a sudden soft in m. 3.
- Note that the left hand is not marked staccato, even though students might be tempted to play it that way. They should stay light and bouncy without making the notes too detached.
- Because the title creates a picture in the mind, it will be easy for students to come up with imagery to help achieve the sound they want. They can imagine horns honking at the end, and people pushing each other and running across the street during the sixteenth note passages, for instance.

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

- A steady tempo with clear, even notes is a must. Students can vocalize the sixteenth notes with syllables like "ti-ka ti-ka," for example, and be careful not to rush through the last sixteenth note of each beat group.
- As the piece gets faster, it will become easier for students to rush and become sloppy. Once-a-day check-ins with the metronome are helpful as the tempo continues to rise to ensure that students do not take extra time between sections and position changes.
- Students need a solid *ff* and *fff* sound at the end for an exciting finale. To achieve this, they must use the weight of the whole arm rather than pushing on the keys with force.