



# Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

A *Piano Magazine* subscriber-exclusive digital resource

**Lesley McAllister presents:**

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

## Process and Practice

**Fully present, here and now:** tips for maintaining focus and engagement over time

- Hear the first four measures to set the tempo before playing and envision a busy city scene before you begin the piece.
- Adopt a confident posture and direct energy into the first few notes of the piece. Feel energy in your fingertips throughout.

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

- Play the right hand sixteenth notes *staccato* to practice for clarity. Listen to each note when playing it as written, emphasizing the highest notes in each group.
- Practice in two-measure groups, and then string those together into four-measure groups played at 3 different tempi.
- Practice similar measures in the right hand in succession: mm. 1, 9, and 11; mm. 2 and 4; mm. 3, 5, and 6; mm. 7 and 8, and mm. 10 and 12.
- Continue practicing in 3-note groups, stopping after each position change, for accuracy in mm. 2, 4, 9, and 12 in the right hand. You might also try dotting the first of each four sixteenth notes in long-short-short-short practice for greater security.

**Layers and outlines:** tips for focusing on how the parts make up the whole

- Try blocking the first beat of both hands in each measure (except for mm. 3, 5, and 6, where you can simply play the first note in the right hand). Note the pattern of movement between the hands.
- Continue to practice blocked chords in the left hand occasionally or even ghost the left hand while playing the right hand in order to maintain balance between the hands.

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

- Aim for an exciting and busy, but controlled, tempo. Do not allow yourself to rush through the sixteenth notes, in particular.
- Think of the left hand as a metronome to keep the beat steady.

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

- Create a story to go along with the music.
- Save your biggest sound for the very last measure, marked *fff*.
- Exaggerate the dynamics.

**Deep knowing:** tips for securing memory

- Mark similar measures with the same color sticker, or bracket them with the same color colored pencil (mm. 1, 9, and 11; mm. 2 and 4; mm. 3, 5, and 6; mm. 7 and 8, and mm. 10 and 12).
- Practice starting in several different spots in the music, perhaps planning a pick-up spot at the first measure of each four-measure group. You might practice stopping between each group, removing your hands from the keyboard, and starting again, or label each with a letter name and have your teacher call out which letter to start on.

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

- Play around with dynamics, seeing how loud or soft you can be on the most extreme dynamic markings, and how big your crescendos can be.
- Play on different pianos, in different settings, and for different people.
- Practice at two different tempi-- one fast and one very fast-- to see how you handle a faster tempo, and how that changes the character of the piece.