



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

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Roger McVey presents:

***From the Southland* by Harry T. Burleigh**

Process and Practice

Fully Present: tips for maintaining focus and engagement over time

- Sing the RH melodies while playing the LH accompaniment.
- The 1st mvt. uses an F-sharp-minor pentatonic scale. Try improvising your own melodies with this scale using the original melody's rhythm. Do this with or without the LH chords.

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

- These pieces are structured in an ABA or ABAB format. Identify the sections and break them down into practice components.
- Reinforce the previously identified difficult spots.

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

- Most of the phrases in these pieces are related in a “question-answer” kind of way. Practice each phrase separately and identify how one phrase will complement or resolve the previous phrase. How does that relationship affect dynamics/shaping/timing?

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

- In mvt. 4, the second section of jump bass (m.70) is more difficult than the first one (m.21); use the most difficult part of the piece to gauge your beginning tempo.
- If you were singing these phrases, you would need to breathe in certain places. Play the RH melodies as if you were singing them.

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

- The use of *rubato* and expressive timing is extremely important in these pieces – explore different options until you find “your way”.

Deep knowing: tips for securing memory

- Practice playing the LH alone in sections, from memory.
- Practice playing the piece at very different tempos from memory (i.e. - the slow 1st mvt. at a fast tempo; the fast 4th mvt. at a slow tempo)
- The structural repetitions in these pieces often involve doubling or slight harmonic variation; practice the “original” version of the phrase and the “varied” version side by side.

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

- Do “practice performances” for family and friends.
- Record yourself playing and evaluate.
- Try playing the slow movements with your eyes closed. You might find that you listen differently, or that your memory is challenged and strengthened by doing so.