



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

A Piano Magazine subscriber-exclusive digital resource

Suzanne Newcomb presents:

Sonatina in G Major I. Moderato II. Romanze by Ludwig Van Beethoven

Process and Practice

Fully Present: tips for maintaining focus and engagement over time

- Learn in sections, examining the form.
- Allow 2-3 weeks to learn each movement.
- Encourage the student to review the 1st movement while learning the second.
- Culminate the study of this piece with a memorized performance of both movements.

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

- Discuss the form of ABA+Coda. Practice each in an isolated fashion.
- When piecing back together, practice transitions for flow.
- Examine the function of each section. Does it introduce? Does it conclude? Does it develop, thickening the plot?

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

- Play through each movement in its entirety. Did the performance have a nice arc reflecting the ABA form? Did the conclusion wrap up the ideas with a sense of resolution?

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

- The metronome is effective in both movements of this piece, although there is freedom in the tempo right before the returning A sections. A teacher should show the student how to ignore the metronome there, and pick up tempo again when the A section returns. Then turn the metronome off and recreate the scenario.
- Is the melody prevailing throughout? Intermittent interruptions from the LH disrupt the flow to the listener. Be mindful of balance between the two hands.

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

- Sing the RH melody. Breathe in between phrases.
- After examining the form of the piece throughout the student's study, encourage them to tell their own story through their performance. It doesn't need to be actual prose, it can simply reflect feelings, especially the second movement, the Romanze.

- Ponder how the two movements complement each other. Why were they paired together? How does the character of each movement fit with its partner? What harmonic ideas do the movements share?
- Write in some dynamics. Then experiment with the opposite! Each time, make it super-convincing. Then decide on your final interpretation (or be spontaneous!).

Deep knowing: tips for securing memory

- Again, be super-aware of the form. Study deviations in note passages that start out the same. Study the score away from the piano.
- While playing, think of how the music looks on the page.
- Be able to sing the melody from memory.
- Memorize the LH separately. Try singing the RH along with it!

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

- Preparing for a performance is tiring work. Be sure to allow plenty of time for the process, even if it just means putting the piece away for a day or two after it is learned. When you pull it back out, it's like seeing an old friend! Bring it back slowly, revisiting your previous ideas. Examine which ideas work, and which ones you might want to change. Double-check any technical challenges. Then allow a few more days to practice the performance. Play for friends and family. Listen to their feedback, even if they are not musicians. Record yourself. When the big day comes, you will have a one-of-a-kind gift to share with your audience! And Beethoven will be proud.