



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

A Piano Magazine subscriber-exclusive digital resource

Ka Man “Melody” Ng presents: Elegy, Op 183, No. 2 by Carl Reinecke

Preparation and Presentation

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

- Pagoda Bells by Mona Rejino
- La candeur, Op. 100, No. 1 by Freidrich Burgmuller
- The Sleepy Groundhog by Martin Kutnowski

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

- Ask if the student has experienced any sad moments that relate to the word ‘elegy’ and explore the meaning of this word.
- Play the piece for the student, ask them to imagine being a film director and setting the scene for the music.
- While they listen to your performance of the piece, have them draw different contour lines with colored pencils to trace the ups and downs of what they hear on a piece of paper.

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

- Ask the student to add in hairpin dynamics markings in appropriate spots on the score to shape the music visually.
- Become familiar with the rhythmic pattern (tied note followed by 8th notes) by tapping the music with the RH melodic line only, then hands together.
- Analyze the chords and harmonic progressions of the piece before playing any notes.

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

- Explore the anti-clockwise rotation of RH melody in m.1-2, m. 5-6, m.9-10 to avoid metronomic sounding and direct “finger-attack” on the keyboards.
- Play with different voicing for the chords on the LH by emphasizing different notes of the chord in segments such as m. 11-12.
- Ask the students to block all the notes together in both hands to create cluster-chords of each measure to learn about the harmony and the big picture of the piece.
- Roll the dyad/chords of LH to learn the contour lines of the top and bottom voices in m.1-10.

- Arpeggiate the LH chords in m. 11-16 while playing the RH as written both in top-down and bottom-up directions.

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

- In m. 1-8, play the LH chord in the 1st beat and the RH note of the 3rd beat to connect with the lamenting expression of the piece as well as the 4-bar phrasing.
- Practice in between measures instead of the established phrases. E.g. Play from the 2nd beat of m. 12 going into the 1st beat of m.13; 2nd beat of m. 13 going into m. 14.

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

- Explore the tone quality and balance of each chord in the left hand by slightly shifting weights on different fingers while holding a slanted “C-shape” curvature between thumb and second finger.
- Discuss how to shape the music differently when the A section returns in m. 17
- Sing the silent tied note when playing the RH melody.