



A Piano Magazine subscriber-exclusive digital resource

Pamela Pike presents:
A Little Piece, op. 68, no. 5 by Robert Schumann

Process and Practice

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

- Isolate, play & repeat only a few phrases (or small chunks) at a time to reassess sound and coordination.
- Review/play melody & bass line only.
- Practice LH shadowing thumb.
- Imagine & re-create how the melody and bass line would sound on different instruments.
- Sing and play; Breathe appropriately.

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

- Play 2-4 measures at a time (using steps above).
- Our edition uses fingering suggested by Clara Schumann; Are we using this fingering? How does it help us achieve our musical goals?
- Compare & contrast similar sections (i.e., measures 1-2 & 13-14); what is the same? what is different?
- Can you memorize these small sections?

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

- Draw a music "map" of the form of this piece.
- Consider the overall dynamic plan; try different dynamics and explore which might work best.

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

- Sing and breathe; Try this at different tempi. Which feels most natural?
- Explore using rubato at some climaxes and cadences points; where does it work & why?

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

- Is the tempo appropriate to convey the melodic shape of the piece?
- How might we signal different sections?
- Where might rubato be appropriate, based on melodic line and harmonic progression?
- How might slight changes in harmony change your performance and interpretation?

Deep knowing: tips for securing memory

- Explore the harmonic progression.

- Identify sections & segments (label).
- Play the piece referring only to your music "map."
- Understand & explore slight harmonic variations in the accompaniment to the melodic line.

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

- Understand the form & architecture of the piece.
- Create dynamic plan.
- Listen for shaping of each phrase, within the dynamic plan.
- Record yourself and listen to the recording with the score.
- Watch the video of your playing; do your gestures support the intended musical expression of this piece?