



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

A Piano Magazine subscriber-exclusive digital resource

Andy Villemez presents:

***La fille aux cheveux de lin*, from Préludes, Book 1, L.117/8 by Claude Debussy**

Process and Practice

Fully Present: Tips for maintaining focus and engagement over time

- Avoid setting interpretive choices "in stone."
- Continue to explore different options for voicing, pedaling, phrasing, and color throughout the study of the piece

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

- Use phrases as sections for practice eventually adding two phrases together to practice transitions
- Practice the first few notes of each section of a different color in order to drill changing timbres frequently and consistently

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

- Identify similarities in harmony and texture among the phrases, connecting ideas across the piece

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

- Subdivide 16th notes through long notes and transitions in tempo
- Use opening motive as an aural reminder of original tempo

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

- Encourage finding multiple options for phrasing, voicing, and color choices
- Encourage a student to develop their own narrative for the music, separate from the title
- Incorporate singing of the melody into everyday practice
- if una corda pedal is available, have student choose one "special moment" where the color contrast of the una corda could be used (mm. 24-25, for example)

Deep knowing: Tips for securing memory

- Be able to sing the melody while playing the LH alone
- Memorize in phrases hands separately
- Practice "performing" at the beginning of different phrases so you establish mental "safe" points

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

- Encourage performances to have at least one different interpretive choice each time
- Encourage conducting and singing in home practice