



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

A Piano Magazine subscriber-exclusive digital resource

Yangmingting Fang presents:

***Elf kleine Klavierstücke für die Jugend* (11 Little Piano Pieces for Young People),
Op. 15b, nos. 1-5 by Hugo Distler**

Preparation and Presentation

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

- “Morning Prayer,” Op. 101, no. 2 (Gurlitt)
- “Longing,” Op. 140, no. 11 (Gurlitt)
- “Wild Mignonette,” Op. 205, no. 1 (Gurlitt)
- “Folk Dance,” Op. 39, no. 17 (Kabalevsky)
- “Pastorale” (second movement) from Sonatina No. 1 (Latour)
- “Andante” (no. 3) and “Play” (no. 5) from *Volume 1*, Sz. 42 (Bartok)

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

- Introduce Neo-Baroque style to the student; discuss meaning, historical background, and reflections of this context found within the music
- Find a traditional piece of the specific genre and listen together; describe the similarities and difference
 - Example: listen to a waltz from this set and compare to a waltz by Chopin
- Play the piece for the student without revealing the name; encourage the student to describe the mood of the music and/or react through body movement (Dalcroze or similar methods)

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

- Explore pentatonic scales with the student
- Label sections in the piece and discover the similarities and differences related to mood, dynamics, texture, articulation, and register
- Experience the changing meters and rhythmic patterns away from the piano first

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

- Create drills to work on the multi-voice and chordal texture in the right hand
- Practice hand-crossing exercises
- Practice repeated-note exercises
- Prepare trills through a variety of exercises:
 - Slow and staccato

- Double staccato
- Varying rhythms
- Accenting different notes
- “Trill” scale (i.e., CDC-DED-EFE-FGF, etc. with fingers two and three)

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

- Listen to the piece together and guide the student to describe the mood and atmosphere
- Encourage the student to interpret the piece using varying artistic methods:
 - Writing a short story
 - Drawing a picture
 - Adding text to melodies
 - Choreographing a dance
- Explore Distler’s well-known choral works and discuss how the vocal style/influence is present in his piano compositions (for example, the frequent use of melismas and the concept of word painting)
- Sing the melody and draw the contour with your hands to understand the direction and shape of the phrase

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

- Practice first without pedal, especially in legato passages; the student should perform smoothly and expressively without pedal and not rely on the pedal to “connect” the notes
- Develop confidence in ornamentation drills, so that students can perform the ornaments in this piece with a “vocal” style (not rushed or frantic)
- Work on transitions between phrases and sections that require “stretching” or rubato—ensure phrase coherency while being expressive
- Practice slowly and detailed to refine articulation, ornamentation, repeated notes, voice, and pedaling