



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

A Piano Inspires digital resource

Jordan Karrigan Presents:

Adagio in F minor by Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-George

Process and Practice

Fully present: tips for maintaining focus and engagement over time

- Sharing details about the composer's life, such as his virtuosity as a violinist, skill in fencing, and his decision to abandon an aristocratic lifestyle to fight for civil rights and racial equality in 18th-century France, can spark interest in the work.
- While a fast movement in a similar piece could help retain interest, putting this piece on hold and working on a similarly crafted slow movement in the classical style can help reinforce concepts while giving students variety.

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

- Piece is ABCA' with very little repetition in the B section. Material is often reused, however, and "taking turns" is an effective way to bridge these together. An example of this on p. 6, from the 3rd measure of system 1 to the 2nd measure of system 4; this is essentially the same as the material in F minor as was originally introduced in A-flat major on p. 4 from the last measure in system 2 to the 3rd measure in system 5.
- Phrase structure tends to be asymmetrical throughout and this irregularity should be emphasized. In the A section for instance, the 1st period is made up with a 5+6 bar structure and the 2nd period is with a 5+4 bar structure.

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

- Focus on the melody and downbeats by omitting passing tones and non-chord tones to help students understand the contrapuntal approach
- Emphasize how music can be composed predominantly using chord tones
- The accompaniment, made up of broken triads and simple arpeggiations, provides an opportunity to teach harmonic analysis and how these elements contribute to the overall structure of the piece.

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

- Teach the piece with an internalized sense of sixteenth and eighth note subdivisions to help the student navigate the slow macrobeat and maintain rhythmic clarity.
- Use brief pauses at the end of each phrase, whether "half phrases" or entire phrases, to help the student better understand and emphasize the individual musical ideas.

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

- As improvisation was much more common in this time period, students can include their own ideas regarding ornamentation where appropriate for more creative ownership.
- With the major-minor dichotomy and the cantabile melody, given programmatic music wasn't very common, students can make a type of student with a sequence of events or a series of moods that can be used to help play more imaginatively.

Deep knowing: tips for securing memory

- Simplify left-hand arpeggios by playing only the bassline and isolate the melody in the right hand by omitting other notes.
- Play left-hand chords as blocks while the right hand plays the melody to clarify coordination and hand positioning.
- Tie repeated notes in the melody into longer durations to simplify rhythm and maintain focus across both hands.

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

- Assign emotions to pivotal moments in the piece, as it was composed shortly after the Baroque era's focus on affects, to help the student connect emotionally and interpret the music more meaningfully.
- Use words or stories written in the score to guide the student's interpretation, pausing before each for reflection.
- Emphasize the challenge of maintaining delicacy on a grand piano and ensure the student practices on one if possible.