



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

A Clavier Companion subscriber-exclusive digital resource

Hannah Roberts presents:

Five Scottish Folk Songs: I. "Land o' the Leal," V. "Eilidh Bhan" by Helen Hopekirk

Process and Practice

Fully Present: tips for maintaining focus and engagement over time

- Explore the musical characteristics that define Scottish folk music, defined in Hopekirk's introduction to *Seventy Scottish Songs*. Identify these elements within the score.
- Imagine interpretive ideas that are significantly different from the student's current interpretation. Try playing these and discuss why or why not these ideas might be appropriate.

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

- Practice each stanza independently, taking care to depict a unique character for each one.
- Practice the RH alone, focusing on melodic voicing, articulation, and phrase shaping.
- Practice the leaping LH passages alone, checking for efficient fingering and position shifts.

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

- Outline the phrase structure for the piece, searching for repeating motives and phrases.
- Pay attention to countermelodies. Shape and voice these thoughtfully.

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

- Conduct the piece while singing the melody, exploring how to pace the ritardando and tempo markings. Translate this to the piano by playing the melody in the RH and conducting with the LH.
- Experiment with the pacing of crescendos and diminuendos, searching for natural and coherent phrasing.
- Before starting the piece, look ahead to the entrance of the folk melody. Sing the melody silently; then, be sure to match the tempo of the introduction to the desired tempo of the melody.

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

- Set the given lyrics aside and imagine personalized lyrics for each song.
- Explore various inflections of chromatic lines and inner voices.

Deep knowing: tips for securing memory

- Sing or hum the melody while playing only the accompaniment.
- Create a mental map of important harmonic progressions and cadences.
- Perform the piece on different pianos to practice adapting to the touch and sound of each instrument.

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

- Revisit the original lyrics from Hopekirk's Seventy Scottish Songs. Is the final interpretation still true to the piece's meaning?
- Explore Hopekirk's vocal arrangements of these folk songs.
- Perform for friends and family. Ask what imagery or emotions the piece evokes for them.