

Lorna Horan's Teaching Notes

Elementary

Out for a Walk

Ailbhe McDonagh

Key: C Major

While a tempo is not indicated at the start, the title of the piece indicates walking motion so aim for an *Andante* feel. The melodic line transfers between right and left hands so it is important to establish an even *legato* touch and a singing (*cantabile*) tone. Each bar must have four steady beats, though a small *rit.* in bars 8–9 will bring this to a gentle close. Dynamics will help to shape the line and add musical interest.

The New Puppy

Mary O'Keeffe

Key: G Major

For much of this piece the melodic interest is shared between the left and right hands. Think of it as a conversation between two hands, and similar to a good conversation, it is important for balance between both parties in this case the hands. Articulation is an important feature with a combination of *legato*, *staccato* and slurred notes; this detail will help to bring out the fun and mischievous character indicated. The *staccato* notes should be light and crisp to add vitality. In order to capture the playful character this piece needs a flowing pace. Bars 6–7 feature right and left hands at the same time. Even then, the right hand carries the melodic line so the left hand should be gentle. The composer has included dynamic markings to add greater detail and character.

Hopping Hands

Molly Murphy

Key: C Major

Staccato touch is an important feature of this piece and it should be short and crisp throughout. Look out for the longer note values: students often cut them short, but they need to be held for their full length; cutting short the minims here would lead to an unstable pulse and inaccurate rhythm, both of which are fundamental at this level. This piece has a cheeky character with dialogue passing between the right and left hands. In bars 3–4 the right-hand line should project over the left hand. The C major scale is the main feature of the final line. It can start quietly but *crescendo* all the way to the top. Student should enjoy this as it complements part of their scale requirement as well as being the same finger pattern. The final chords can be played *f* or *p*; it is a personal choice so the student can decide which option they prefer! Keep a nice steady pace all the way.

Up the Ladder

Tamara Niekludow

Key: F Major

In bars 1 and 5 the melody begins in the left hand but transfers over to the right hand. In these bars aim to match the tone of the left and right hands; also note the arpeggio figure here, which requires the line to be smoothly connected as it is divided between the right and left hands. Legato phrasing is indicated throughout and should be observed. The piece begins with a modest *mp* but by the start of the second line the dynamic level has moderated to *mf*; this tonal contrast will add character. *Andante* (at

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a walking pace) indicates a flowing tempo, but remember you are climbing up a ladder not falling down one; do not rush.

Raindrops

Ailbhe McDonagh

Key: C Major

A light *staccato* touch should be employed in this piece in order to sound like raindrops. Take note of the dotted minims though, some students may confuse dotted minims and *staccato* markings, or in this case, where there have been staccato notes, they may be less inclined to hold the minim for a full three beats (but it is important to give it its full value, while ensuring not to overhold). The quavers can be rhythmically tricky so take care to ensure that they are even and exact within the $\frac{3}{4}$ metre of the piece. It would be very worthwhile to begin by clapping through the rhythm of the piece a number of times to ensure the student is comfortable with it and the pulse. Aim for an even touch in the right and left hands. Although the melodic line is divided between the two hands it should sound like one continuous line; avoid any bumpy notes along the way.

Melting Snow

Mary O'Keeffe

Key: F Major

In this piece, the melody lies primarily in the right hand and a *legato* touch will work well up until bar 7 where *staccato* notes are introduced for the right hand. Count four steady beats in each bar and take care to lift the hands off where rests are indicated. The dynamics range between *p* and *mf* but within this range there is scope for *crescendo* and *diminuendo* to add further shape to the phrases. It is possible to include a small *rit.* in the final bar for a tasteful ending to the piece.

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Circus

Tamara Niekludow

Key: G Major

The character is cheerful and energetic which would be best portrayed by a flowing tempo. The contrast between *staccato* and *legato* phrasing is an important feature and will add contrast. Watch out for the accented notes in bars 3–4; these notes can be played with more emphasis but avoid a harsh tone. The left hand has the accompaniment while the right hand carries the melodic interest; let the right hand sing. Aim for four steady beats in a bar throughout and embellish the character further with dynamic detail.

Etude

Cornelius Gurlitt

Key: C Major

Tidy and even fingers are needed for the quaver passages here. Be careful not to have a heavy-handed touch however as this can create a laboured effect. The left-hand accompaniment plays a supporting role and should not overpower the right-hand melody. *Allegretto* (fast, but not as fast as *Allegro*) indicates that it needs to have a sense of movement and direction but it must also have a graceful character (another reason to avoid cumbersome fingerwork!). Aim for light, even quavers and a steady pulse. Add shape and dynamic detail to create a more colourful effect.

Royal Procession

Cuthbert Harris

Key: C Major

With $\frac{2}{2}$ as the time signature the tempo should not drag: *alla breve* (or cut-common time) means that there are two minim-beats in each bar, so a flowing pace is required. The top notes of the chords carry the melodic interest so avoid heavy thumbs in each of these chords. The *staccato* chords can be crisp, the left hand minims should help to keep a steady pace throughout but at the same time, avoid a dominant left hand. Dynamics will add character and colour and must be included. Keep it moving steadily without any *rit* at the end.

Marshmallow Bouncing

Alison Mathews

Key: C Major

A lively tempo is needed to capture the animated character of this piece. The relationship between crotchets and quavers needs care however, and it will be the pace of the quavers that dictate the overall speed. The crotchets in bars 1–4 and 11–12 should have energy and bounce. The right-hand quavers are *legato* and can be played with a light touch. The gymnastics begin at bar 6 where the left hand crosses over the right hand to play the 'high C' in the treble clef but it must move efficiently back down to the bass clef for the first beat of the following bar; this timing will need careful planning. The final note in the bass clef should be played an octave lower than it is written.

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Down Bonnie River

Lewis Dillon

Key: F Major

The metronome marking indicates a flowing tempo here, and *legato* phrasing is necessary for both right and left hands throughout. The left hand notes are gentle over which the right hand sings the melody, adding shape to each phrase. Dynamics are indicated to add colour. A small *rit.* in bars 14–15 will bring the piece to a gentle conclusion.

Sandcastles

Ailbhe McDonagh

Key: C Major

A lively pace and buoyant character are needed to bring this to life. The pulse must be steady until the introduction of *rit.* at bar 15 to bring the piece to a conclusion. Short, spikey *staccato* crotchets will add energy and the metronome marking (note minim beat rather than crotchet beat) indicates that there should be a feel of two in a bar so avoid a slow tempo. Aim to follow the contour of the line to add shape and colour.

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Arioso

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Key: G Major

A lyrical right hand melody is essential to this piece. Similar to a Minuet, the character is elegant, so a flowing but steady three beats per bar is necessary. The left-hand accompaniment should not overpower the right-hand melody, but the left-hand has its own interest in the form of articulation. The right-hand melody is *legato*, while the left hand *staccato* notes are to be gently detached. A singing tone is needed as well as delicate phrase-endings.

Little Piece

Béla Bartók

Key: A Minor

This composer is very specific with his instructions, so all details on the page must be carefully observed. *Andante* (at a walking pace) indicates that the pace should have direction and flow. The melodic line should be expressive, the phrase marks and dynamics will help to create the desired effect. The left-hand line is written in the treble clef throughout (students often equate the left hand with the bass clef). The chords in the left hand require a gentle touch and should be *legato*. Observe the tied notes in this piece and take care to hold them for their combined value each time. Be very careful of the counting on the last line; concentration is needed here to the very end!

A Little Journey

John McLachlan

The key is a little vague throughout but it ends firmly in the key of G Major.

The tempo marking (ambling gently) suggests movement so aim to let this flow. The piece begins on an upbeat which is tied across the bar line, this creates a syncopated rhythm and is a feature throughout the piece. You will notice that some of these tied notes have a *tenuto* [-] marking; lean on them to give them a little more emphasis, this will embellish the rhythmic shape of the piece. The left hand plays a particularly important role here as it provides rhythmic stability, but it should be gently played nonetheless. The right hand has a gently weaving melodic line: the piece meanders its way through different tonalities with quite a few accidentals along the way, but it arrives firmly in the key of G Major at its conclusion. While the dynamic level never reaches *f* there is scope to add shape to the phrases and explore different tonal colours to enhance the overall effect.

Youthful Cheer

Daniel Gottlob Türk

Key: C Major

$\frac{2}{8}$ is a time signature that we do not encounter very often; it indicates that there are two quaver beats in each bar. The piece is marked *allegro* (lively and fast) but not too much (*non troppo*) as it is important to achieve tidy and even semiquavers throughout the right-hand line. A light touch will suit this piece, the semiquavers are *legato* while the quavers are *staccato*. In the first two lines, the left hand reads the bass clef, but transfers

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to the treble clef for the last two lines. A lively character is needed to convey the 'youthful cheer' with adding colour.

Valsette

Cuthbert Harris

Key: F Major

The valsette is a graceful dance. Gentle slurs over the left-hand crotchets will add a lilt here, but be sure to lift off for all rests. Above this the right-hand melody must sing though the quavers can be a little lighter in touch. Bar 5 marks the climax of the melodic line after which there are *diminuendo* markings to help bring the piece to a gradual close, eventually dying away. Aim to lean on the notes marked with a *tenuto* [-] and add shape to the phrases according to the indications given.

Minuet

Alexander Reinagle

Key: C Major

An *andante* tempo is indicated meaning it will be steady and should not feel rushed.. There may be a tendency to rush the quaver passages, but they need to be steady and even. Articulation is suggested to add stylistic character, and dynamics will also add to the overall effect. The left hand accompaniment can be gentle, in particular look out for bars 5–6 and 13–14 where the quavers can easily become heavy-handed if not carefully worked on; aim for a light touch with these.

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Grade I

Allegro in C

Daniel Gottlob Türk

Key: C Major

The tempo marking *poco allegro* suggests that the piece should not be too fast, but lively nonetheless. The left hand transfers between the treble and bass clefs throughout, so pay careful attention to this detail. The right-hand semiquavers should be light, *legato*, and even to offer contrast with the *staccato* quavers. Left- and right-hand coordination can be tricky in bars 9 and 11 because of the dotted rhythm in the left hand; take care to ensure that the rhythmic values align in these bars. The left hand adopts the role of accompaniment while the right hand takes the melody. Listen to the balance between the hands and use the dynamic detail to add colour and shape.

A Toye

Anonymous

Key: G Major

This piece is elegant in character but sprightly nonetheless. The quavers must be light and even, but not too slow or it can become laboured. It is important to show contrast between the *legato* and *staccato* articulations; this will bring out the playful charm of the piece. Dynamics are indicated and although it never becomes too loud or heavy-handed there is plenty of room to display tonal colour and shaping to enhance the overall effect. Be sure to maintain a steady pulse to capture the $\frac{3}{4}$ metre though a small *rit.* in the final two bars will bring the piece to a tasteful close.

Marche Op. 62 No. 1

Cornelius Gurlitt

Key: C Major

To capture the regimental character of this march a steady pace is a must. In this case the tempo does not have to be too fast; although the indication is *vivace* it is followed by *ma non troppo* (lively, but not too much). It is important to observe the articulation markings to create character and energy. Avoid accenting the upbeats: the first beat of the bar is the strongest. Observe the *tenuto* markings in bars 9–16 [–] and lean on these notes a little to add definition.

Prelude in G

Johann Sebastian Bach

Key: G Major

Even and flowing quavers are necessary, and a light touch will suit the style and character here. Although marked *moderato* it is important not to interpret it as somewhat slowly or the quavers will drag. In order to help, aim for a feel of one-in-a-bar. It is a common mistake for the student to adopt a slower tempo at bar 9, where the two hands enter together for the first time. Watch out for this and make sure there is a steady pace all the way through. Observe the articulation markings and dynamic detail to add further dimension and musical shape.

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Grade I

Grumpy Gorilla

Barbara Arens

Key: G Major

Both right and left hands from the bass clef throughout (except for the very last chord of the piece). The low register helps the student imagine the growl of the grumpy gorilla. There is a lot of repetition in the left-hand chords and the use of consecutive crotchet notes will help to maintain a steady pulse throughout. Meanwhile the right-hand material comprises dotted rhythms, which should be exact to give the piece the definition and rhythmic shape it requires. The *staccato* chords of the left hand will help to keep the texture light as it might otherwise become too loud and overbearing. Aim for a lively tempo and remember to include pedal at the very end, it will add a little more colour to the final harmony.

Menuett in C

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Key: C Major

A flowing pace will benefit this elegant dance and help the overall musical shaping. A gentle left hand underlies the right-hand melody with slurs and *staccato* markings to enhance this accompaniment figure. Avoid bumping the second note of each slur, lean on the first note and gently release the second note. As with Mozart in general the melodic line must sing here; avoid heavy quaver movement. The quavers should be light with some shape to enhance.

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Grade II

Innocence

Friedrich Burgmüller

Key: F Major

This is a very good piece to focus on evenness of fingerwork, without doing so any bumps will stand out. At *moderato* the tempo should flow, but not too fast in order to allow time for the student to listen for the light, even touch that is required in the semiquaver passages. Be sure to count steadily to maintain a constant pulse. The dynamic detail will make it easy to create a musical shape. The left-hand accompaniment is gentle, but in bars 9–12 pay particular attention to the balance between both hands as left could become overpowering at this point. Observe the articulation detail throughout.

Ecossaise in G

Ludwig van Beethoven

Key: G Major

The tempo marking *allegretto* is not quite as fast as *allegro* but requires a lively pace nonetheless. The left hand uses a *staccato* touch for the majority of this piece, and a light *staccato* will suit the character well. The right hand carries the melodic interest and uses variety of articulation to bring the character to life. Take note of the off-beat accents in the right-hand melody (e.g. bars 2, 4, 6 etc.). These notes require extra emphasis to add punctuation and rhythmic charm. Where semiquavers occur, aim for evenness. Varied dynamics will add further character to this dance.

Fuzzy Wuzzy Jazzy

Barbara Arens

Key: It is not indicated in the key signature, but this piece is in the tonality of G Major

As the title suggest, a jazzy character is prescribed here, so instead of playing even quavers they need to be played with a swing. Despite this, a very steady pulse is necessary to capture the rhythmic shape. Watch out for the left-hand triplets in bar 13: triplets are often rushed by students, these will need a little extra care to ensure that they fit into the overall rhythmic flow. Take note of the right-hand accents at the end of bars 2, 4, 6 and 8: these notes need greater emphasis to capture the syncopated feel, they are also tied and must be held for the duration of each of the following bars (avoid releasing too soon). The chord in the final bar should be played with a tremolo effect.

Minuet in G minor

Christian Petzold

Key: G Minor

As with all music from the Baroque era, articulation plays an important role to convey the appropriate stylistic detail and character. The right-hand melody requires a singing line and the quavers should be approached with a light, but even touch and lyrical shaping. In this case the notes marked *staccato* should be played detached, but not necessarily too short or clipped as this will take away from the elegance of the dance. While the dynamic changes may be subtle there is still room for tonal colour and shape to all phrases.

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The Chirpy Robin

Elijah Thomas Burke

Key: G Major

A bright, vivacious character is necessary to portray the sound of this chirpy bird. The left hand switches between treble and bass clef, so watch out for these changes. The left hand has the accompaniment, so do listen carefully for balance between the hands. A steady tempo is necessary so that the syncopated rhythms of the right hand are clearly defined throughout. Avoid a heavy touch or this will become laboured and aim for a light, crisp touch on the *staccato* notes to add energy and character.

Soldier's March

Robert Schumann

Key: G Major

A lively, regimental pace is needed for this spirited march. The dotted rhythms are an important feature and should be exact; approach the semiquaver of the dotted rhythm with a light touch or it will become laboured and the piece will lose its spark. The *staccato* notes will add vitality and dynamics will bring contrast and colour. Aim to project the top notes of the right hand chords as these notes provide the melodic shape.

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The Moth

Samuil Maikapar

Key: D Minor

Delicate fingerwork is necessary to make this sparkle. Both right and left hands are written in the treble clef throughout, and the dynamic level does not rise above *mf* so the intention here is for the player to experiment with a dainty touch and soft tones to mimic the flitting of a moth. Keep the semiquavers light and even throughout. Detailed articulation is indicated, while dynamics are also suggested to enhance the character. Aim for a flowing pace, the lightness of touch is easier to accomplish at a quicker tempo.

Polonaise in G minor

Anonymous

Key: G Minor

A flowing pace and dignified character will suit this dance well. Rhythmic values should be exact in delivery in order to retain a steady pulse throughout. The suggested articulation markings will enhance the shape and communicate the spirit of the dance. Listen to and be aware of the balance between melody and accompaniment, follow the contour of each phrase and add shape and colour to enrich the performance.

Sonatina in C, 3rd Movement

Muzio Clementi

Key: C Major

While the time signature $\frac{3}{8}$ indicates that there are three quaver beats per bar, combined with the *vivace* tempo it should be felt as 1 dotted crotchet beat per bar. The steady quavers of the left-hand accompaniment will give stability to the pulse though a light touch will be necessary. The semiquaver passages must be even and tidy in delivery so that the fingerwork trickles neatly along. Introduce dynamic content to add further dimension and spirit to this capture the lively character.

The Sandpiper

Philip Martin

Key: C Major

A lively tempo and steady pace are essential to this rhythmic piece. There is interplay between the left and right hands throughout so it is important to listen closely to the balance between the hands to ensure that the appropriate line is always projecting. Clean and even semiquaver passages played with a light touch, crisp staccato notes, and dramatic dynamic detail will contribute to the energy and charisma of the piece. Count carefully through the final three bars of the piece and avoid cutting the rests short.

Little Reverie

John McLachlan

Key: A Minor

As the title suggests, the character is dream-like. A *cantabile* line is needed to ensure a lyrical left-hand melody, and a sense of *legato* is equally important to connect the notes of this line. *Comodo* indicates movement and the right-hand quavers will help to create a sense of momentum; they should be subtle in presentation however, otherwise they may overpower the left-hand line. The composer has indicated dynamics and a few

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subtle changes of tempo along the way; *legato-peddaling* is indicated to add further colour to the texture.

Arabesque

Johann Friedrich Burgmüller

Key: A Minor

A lively and playful character will bring this piece to life. The introductory chords of the left hand will set the tempo for the entire piece; avoid starting too quickly. Aim for light, crisp chords throughout. The semiquavers should have a light, even touch. Articulation and dynamics are indicated and will enhance the overall character, the ending can be dramatic!

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Ballade

Friedrich Burgmüller (1806–1874)

Key: C Minor

Relative Key: E flat Major

Dramatic dynamic changes and an energetic pace drive the character of the opening and closing sections of this piece. Light, crisp *staccato* quavers, busy, but even semiquavers, and rhythmic momentum all contribute to the dramatic tension. The middle section (bars 31–56) moves to the key of C Major and is more expressive in content. A *cantabile* approach is needed to express the melodic line, and each phrase needs to have shape and colour to enhance. The left-hand chords need to be delicate to avoid overpowering the melody. The original key (C Minor) returns at bar 57, as does much of the content from the opening section. Bars 87–90 have semiquavers in both hands as well as the same letter names, making it a less daunting task for the student. The delivery must be exact however, as any wobbles will be very noticeable. Dynamics in this piece range from *pp–f–sf* suggesting that a wide palette of dynamic colour is expected to help bring the character to life.

Toccatina

Dmitri Kabalevsky (1904–1987)

Key: A Minor

Relative Key: C Major

It is the right hand that adopts the role of accompaniment in this piece and it is important that these chords do not overpower the left-hand melody. That said, it is also important to ensure that every note in each chord sounds, with emphasis on the top note of the chord in particular; separate-hands work will benefit this area. An *allegretto* tempo is manageable and means that the changes of chord position for the right hand can be easily negotiated. The left-hand line must have a singing tone with shape to each phrase and a *legato* feel. Careful consideration of the dynamic markings will add to the overall effect. Take care to count the rests carefully in the final three bars, it is common for students to rush them, but the rests are important to bring the piece to a stylish ending.

On the Lake

Heinrich Hofmann (1824–1911)

Key: G Major

Relative Key: E Minor

A calm, fluid line will set the tone for this piece. The broken chords in the left-hand accompaniment should roll gently along while the right hand melody soars above. The $\frac{6}{8}$ time signature and *allegretto e comodo* tempo indication point towards a two-in-a-bar pulse that flows; if the tempo is too slow here it runs the danger of becoming sluggish and losing a sense of direction. Pedal markings are indicated throughout so that texture does not become blurred. Aim to shape the phrases and ensure gentle phrase-endings, tonal colour will also add expressive qualities.

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Sonatina in F, 1st Movement

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Key: F Major

Relative Key: D Minor

Allegro assai indicates a very busy character and lively tempo for this movement. Nimble fingers are necessary for the semiquaver passages to sparkle and light, crisp *staccato* quavers will provide suitable contrast. The right hand has the melodic interest so it is important to balance the left hand accordingly. Dynamics play an important role in terms of adding colour and character and will help with the overall shape of the work.

Little Prelude in F

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Key: F Major

Relative Key: D Minor

Clarity in the fingerwork and lightness of touch are two components that are essential to both the Baroque style and the character of this piece. It needs a lively pace and even semiquavers all the way. The quavers are detached throughout and can be played with a light touch; the pulse should be even and precise. Take care to ensure that the two hands play exactly together at all times; co-ordination issues and unwanted changes of tempo often compromise the exactness needed here if not worked on carefully. It is important to use tonal variety and shaping of phrases to add further musical interest. Both hands should be considered in terms of shape due to their interaction throughout. The squiggly lines beside the right-hand chords in bars 14–15 meant that the chords are spread, starting with the lowest note and holding on to each note of the chord as it is played. The top note of each chord should have a little more emphasis each time.

Little Flower Op. 205 No. 1

Cornelius Gurlitt (1820–1901)

Key: E Minor

Relative Key: G Major

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A lilting **8** tempo will give this piece a sense of motion and flow. The right-hand melody is expressive and should have a sweet, singing tone and *legato* phrasing. Pedal markings are included and will contribute to the sense of *legato* in this piece. The middle section, beginning at the upbeat into bar 9 begins softly and gradually builds to a climax at bar 14; aim to measure this build-up carefully for optimum effect. Take note that the left hand moves between treble and bass clefs throughout the piece; be care with bar 15 in particular where the left hand crosses over the right hand as this detail can be easily missed or misinterpreted. Dynamics will add colour and warmth.

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Sonatina Op. 36 No. 3, Finale

Muzio Clementi (1752–1832)

Key: C Major

Relative Key: A Minor

Dominant Key: G Major

A brisk tempo and sparkling fingerwork are necessary to communicate the desired effect here. The semiquaver passages will need extra attention to ensure an even and steady delivery, aim for a light touch as heavy fingers can cause the tempo to drag and the overall effect to become laboured. While the right hand takes the melodic interest, the left-hand accompaniment gives the harmonic support. The left-hand chords will help to maintain a steady pulse, the *staccato* chords should be very crisp to add energy and bounce to the character; but avoid a heavy left hand as it should never overpower the right hand here. Dynamic detail should be included to add further dimension to the character.

Gavotte (BWV 817)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Key: E Major

Relative Key: C sharp Minor

Dominant Key: B Major

This elegant dance requires a flowing pace; note the *alla breve* time signature $\frac{2}{2}$ meaning two minim beats in a bar. It is important for 2 beats to be felt in a bar (rather than thinking in 4 beats) in order to achieve the required sense of direction. Articulation is particularly important to music from this era so consider this detail carefully throughout. The piece begins on an upbeat with two consecutive crotchet beats in the right hand and a crotchet beat followed by a crotchet rest in the left hand. Because it is not the 'usual' one note, it tends to get overlooked. It is important to avoid placing an accent on the upbeat, doing so will turn it into a down beat and impact on the style. Aim to shape each phrase but although the dynamic level does not become loud, there is still plenty of scope to explore tonal colours to enhance the overall character.

Fairy Dance Op 12

Edvard Grieg (1843–1907)

Key: E Minor

Relative Key: G Major

Dominant Key: B Minor

Molto allegro implies a very lively pace which enables the fast fingers to scamper along with a lightness of touch (essential here) to convey the suggestion of fairies dancing. In places (e.g. bars 1–2, 9–10 etc.) the left-hand chords are written in the treble clef line; the left-hand notes are indicated with stems that point downward. Take care to balance these chords carefully, keep them nice and light and aim for a crisp *staccato* touch. The melodic line occasionally transfers to the left hand (e.g. bars 7–8) and it is important to project this melodic idea each time. Dynamic detail will add character and colour. The changes between *pp* and *f* can be quite dramatic, though be careful that the louder

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sounds do not become forced or aggressive; try instead to explore more of the softer tones of the piano.

Marche Op. 65

Serge Prokofiev (1891–1953)

Key: C Major

Relative Key: A Minor

Dominant Key: G Major

A regimental but sprightly pace is needed for this march, it has a vivacious character. Articulation plays an important role and the composer has been quite specific with his instructions so this detail should be carefully observed. The notes marked *staccato* can be very short and crisp as this will add spirit; the slurred notes are equally important and will add contrast. Dynamics are included and will add further enhancement. In bars 12–15 the left hand travels over the right hand to play notes in the higher register of the piano. It will take a little extra work to negotiate these transitions whilst maintaining a steady pace; it will be necessary to isolate these bars and slowly build up a steady and manageable speed. It is also important that the left hand does not overshadow the right hand in these bars. The right hand carries the melodic interest so be sure to balance the hands accordingly.

Mechanics Rag

Christopher Norton (b. 1953)

Key: E flat Major

Relative Key: C Minor

Dominant Key: B flat Major

The composer has indicated 'rag tempo'. A fast tempo is not essential here but rather a very steady pace to ensure rhythmical delivery. The rhythm must be played exactly as it is written (not swung, which can easily happen). The left-hand accompaniment comprises crotchet notes in the main which will help to stabilise the pulse throughout, they need to be light so as not to overpower the right-hand melodic detail. Watch out for the tied notes in the right hand in particular in certain bars (e.g. bars 1 and 3); these syncopated rhythms are important to the overall rhythmic shape and character of the piece. The second page should be no slower than the first page, but students mistakenly tend to change tempo here. It comprises broken arpeggios in the right hand that require tidy and even fingerwork and a light touch. Be sure to punctuate the accents in bars 23 and 24. Dynamics will help to enhance it musically. Remember to play the *Da Capo al Fine* and to enjoy this good-humoured piece.

Sweet Dreams

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)

Key: C Major

Relative Key: A Minor

Dominant Key: G Major

A lyrical melodic line which transfers between treble and bass clefs is the key component of this piece. It has an expressive character and the fingers must employ a *legato* touch. Take care with phrase endings to ensure well-shaped lines, without bumps. Pedal plays an important role, helping to connect the line but also to add colour to the

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changing harmonies; pedal changes have been added to aid the performer. Remember always to keep the right heel on the ground when pedalling. Avoid a slow pace or this will drag, a sense of flow is required throughout. The inner chords must be played gently: they form the harmonic support of the piece but should never interfere with or overpower the *cantabile* melody.

Notes

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Fantasy No. 1 in D

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767)

A brisk tempo is needed to bring the character to life in this piece. Although there are 3 quaver beats in each bar, aim to capture a feel of 1-in-a-bar to give this the energy and direction it needs. The notes lie quite comfortably under the hands and the melodic interest is in the right hand. The semiquaver passages need evenness and clarity; a light touch will be stylistically appropriate and will help the fingers to travel at greater speed. Mind the triplet passages (e.g. bars 19–20). Also, be mindful that the pulse remains constant and that the two hands are exactly co-ordinated to ensure a tidy and rhythmic delivery. Specific articulation has been offered for both right and left hand parts and this will add to the style and character of the piece. Some dynamic content has been included though this detail can be expanded on to add further musical interest and variety of colour.

2-Part Invention in A minor

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

As the title indicates, there are two separate lines in this piece. They share the same melodic idea whilst maintaining their independence; each is of equal importance: this is known as contrapuntal writing. The theme is introduced in the right hand and midway through the opening bar the same idea is taken up by the left hand. This dialogue continues throughout the piece so it is important that neither part dominates; each time the theme returns (in the treble or bass) this line should project. Unless otherwise indicated, the quaver notes can be played *staccato*, but not too short or abrupt. The semiquaver passages are *legato* and very even in delivery. A tempo indication is not given, but the slower this is played the more likely the tendency to assume a heavy touch, which is not suited to this style. Aim for a flowing pace, with lightness of touch. The *tenuto* markings above the notes (e.g. bar 3 in the right hand and bar 4 in the left hand) indicate that these notes can be leaned on with a little more emphasis as this rhythmic syncopation is an important feature. Aim to follow the contours of the lines to add shape and colour to enhance.

Sonata in G Op. 79, 2nd mvt

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

While the Sonata Op. 79 is in G Major, this movement is in G minor. The *Andante* tempo marking suggests movement (walking), so avoid a dragging pace. The $\frac{3}{8}$ time signature indicates 3 beats in a bar, so aim for some sense of flow. Legato pedal is indicated and is needed to sustain the lines and add colour; but be careful to avoid blurry pedalling and keep in mind that the overall texture should not be too heavy or dense. The left hand accompaniment is gentle throughout, particularly in the semiquaver passages from bars 10–20 as these can easily become laboured and overpowering. The right hand melodic line needs to have shape, while the phrases need breath. Aim to ensure that the top notes of the right hand chords sing out. The dynamics do not reach the level of *f*, the shapes and colours are more subtle in this movement. There is a *sf* marking in bar 21 however; avoid treating this too harshly as this would be out of character. The final two bars must be carefully counted, especially the rests, as it is

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important to keep the correct rhythmical shape to the very end. If the player is unable to turn the page without disrupting the pulse or the mood, then it is best to photocopy the third page to facilitate a more fluid delivery. A gentle ending will bring this to a tasteful conclusion.

Sonatina in C, Op. 19 No. 5, 2nd mvt

Jan Ladislav Dussek (1760–1812)

Sparkling finger work is essential to the character and style of this sonatina movement, so a lively tempo is needed here. Always be mindful of the balance between the hands to ensure that the melodic line is supported by the harmonic material beneath it, but that it is never overshadowed by chords or semiquaver passages that are too loud. Aim to bring energy to this from the very opening with a light and tidy triplet upbeat. The upper notes of the right hand chords are important to the melodic line, so treat these top notes with care. Articulation has been indicated and will help to add style and character to this, so aim to observe this detail. From the upbeat of bar 45 this moves to the relative key of A minor and should have a different character and colour. The *alberti* semiquaver accompaniment of the left hand in bars 49–55 will need to be extremely light and even. From the upbeat into bar 58 (this is a typo, it is in fact the upbeat into bar 57) the key becomes major again and the right hand becomes very busy with semiquaver work. This fingerwork really needs to be very even so it is important to establish a comfortable finger pattern and maintain it; build the speed up slowly and remember that lighter fingers will enable swifter movement. Dynamics must be included to enhance the character and give this greater musical appeal.

Mazurka in A flat, Op. 24 No. 3

Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849)

This piece must be pedalled and pedal work requires listening. While markings are indicated on the music to show where it is appropriate to change pedal, this technique is not robotic: the player must be able to adapt and adjust when necessary and to do this the player must listen. A Mazurka is a dance (Polish in origin) that is largely associated with Chopin (he wrote 59 of them!). Dotted rhythms are a known feature of this dance and these must be exact each time. For once, the upbeat in this piece can have more emphasis as this is a characteristic of the Mazurka. This piece needs to have a flowing pace, though there is room for *Rubato* in places which will allow for some “bending” of the tempo, but avoid overuse of this technique for it can distort the overall pulse and the piece might lose its overall rhythmic shape. The left hand accompaniment can be light, especially the chords (these can easily become heavy and tend to drown out the melody). The right hand melody needs to sing, though note that the composer frequently writes *dolce* and even *dolcissimo* where the quavers need to be much lighter and more gentle. Avoid striking the *sf* notes as this does not suit the *con anima* character indicated by the composer. At the end, the performance direction *perdendosi* (dying away) suggests that the notes gradually float away, but observe the pause over the final note and try not to end the piece too abruptly as this will kill the mood too quickly.

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Romance

Mike Cornick (1947–)

The rhythmic directions will need to be carefully observed at the start, but it is actually quite straightforward and the overall tempo is slow and the mood is quite relaxed and “bluesy”. The composer has written a lot of instructions on the score in relation to tempo, dynamics and phrasing, so if the player follows this detail carefully this piece is very easy to learn. It must have pedal to sustain the harmonies, but specific pedal markings are not written in so the player must listen, and change the pedal when necessary; blurry pedalling in this piece will sound like a mess! Also, be mindful of the balance between melody and accompaniment throughout.

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Sonata K11

Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757)

An *Allegro* character is the composer's intention, so this cannot move too slowly or it will become dragged and it is much more difficult to achieve a lively sense of character if the tempo is too slow. A detached touch for the quavers would suit the style well in this, while the semiquavers will be *legato* (but not heavy). Dynamics are not written on the score, but must be included to offer tonal colour and variety, and phrases must have musicality and shape. Note "MS", indicating where the left hand is to cross over the right hand to play the notes that have the upward-pointing stems (e.g. bars 5–10 etc). It is possible to adjust these hand-positions, but fingering will also need to be renegotiated to suit. Either way, it is the top line that must project, so always listen closely to the balance between the hands. Aim to keep the semiquaver passages light and even all the way.

Sonata in E

Marianne von Martinez (1744–1812)

While female composers have long been featured in our junior piano albums, we have noticed this has not been the case for the senior albums. For this reason, we are delighted to present a work by pianist, composer, and singer Marianne von Martinez (1744–1812). Among her many attributes she partnered with Mozart in the playing of his music for four-hands. This sonata movement is quite delightful; it requires a lively pace but by and large this lies quite comfortably for the hands. The crotchets are generally detached (unless otherwise indicated) and the triplets must be even and light to allow the fingerwork to really sparkle. Allow a little more emphasis on the *tenuto* marked notes (bars 1–4 etc) to let these notes speak. Always try to ensure exact dotted rhythms (bars 18, 24 etc.) Be mindful of the balance between the hands to ensure that the melodic line is always to the fore. Dynamic details are indicated and will enhance the character greatly.

Sonata in E flat K 282, 1st mvt

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

This is a very expressive and extremely beautiful sonata movement; in fact, the entire sonata is wonderful (the 2nd and 3rd movements have also been used in previous piano albums) and is both musically and technically fairly accessible, if a student were interested in learning the whole work. This first movement is slow (*Adagio*) but should not drag. As with many of Mozart's slow movements the influence of opera is never far away, and these lyrical phrases need to breathe. You will see from line two onwards that the left hand semiquaver accompaniment gives a sense of forward motion and continuity to the line which will help to give a feeling of movement. These semiquavers must be very even and light so as not to become weighed down and heavy (similarly the demisemiquavers must not be heavy). The right hand melody is expressive and needs a sense of *Cantabile* throughout, the articulation should be followed with care as it will enhance the stylistic frame but will also help to shape the phrases. Aim to follow the contour of the line to achieve an appropriate sense of rise and fall.

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Sonatina in A minor, Op. 88 No. 3, 3rd mvt

Friedrich Kulhau (1786–1832)

A spirited character and lively tempo is needed to convey the necessary energy of this piece. Fast, clean fingerwork is needed for the semiquaver passages of the right hand, while the left hand requires careful listening to keep the necessary lightness of touch; particularly in the repeated chords as these have can easily become laboured. In the opening bars (and in similar bars later on) be sure to hold the left hand first beat (minim notes) whilst lightly playing the chords that follow. The *staccato* notes can be crisp, the *acciaccatura* notes (e.g. bars 1, 5 etc.) can be quick and very light, literally crushed into the note that follows. The semiquaver work should be light and sparkling. Dynamics must be included to add charisma and colour throughout. The character changes on the second page and the material becomes more lyrical and *dolce* in character. This detail should provide contrast with the spikey *staccato* and playful personality of the outer sections.

Byrd in Blue

Michael Holohan (1956–)

This is quite a fascinating piece with two very contrasting influences at play: William Byrd 1528–1623 (English composer dating from the Renaissance period) combined with influences from the Jazz Age. The result is a piece that is harmonically interesting and appealing with a melodic line that is both wistful and expressive in mood. The rhythm and counting are not immediately straightforward and will need slow practice and careful counting at the learning stages to ensure accuracy and a steady sense of pulse; but in any case, the indicated tempo is not fast. The composer has given quite specific detail in relation to dynamics and tempo, these should be carefully observed. *Con pedale* at the start indicates that pedal should be used throughout. Specific changes of pedal are not indicated, so it is the responsibility of the performer to listen and judge the pedal changes appropriately. As indicated by the squiggly lines with the upward arrows, the chords should be spread from the lowest note to the highest. Listen carefully to the balance between the hands, follow the contours of the melodic line and let it sing.

Intermezzo from Aquarelle Op. 19

Niels Wilhelm Gade (1817–1890)

A flowing tempo with seamless transitions between the hands are intrinsic to the character of this piece. In $\frac{6}{8}$ time it is important to establish a feel of 2 in a bar; the semiquavers must flow but should never feel rushed as the phrases need to breathe and the melodic line must sing throughout. Legato pedalling is essential throughout as it is impossible to sustain the bass harmonies without it, and the pedal will also create a wash of colour as the harmony changes and develops throughout the piece. Where the right hand line divides into 2 parts the melodic line and inner chords need to be carefully balanced (for example bars 9–12 etc.) to ensure that the dotted-crotchet melody notes sing through. The dynamic level never becomes forceful, but every phrase needs shape and there is room to demonstrate a wide range of tonal colour to add to the expressive

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quality of the piece. Always aim to taper off the phrase-endings – these should never be abrupt and should be approached gently.

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Gigue in F minor HWV 433

George Frederic Handel (1685–1759)

This is a lively dance and needs to have a feel of 2 in a bar throughout; it is fiddly so avoid a rushed tempo. It cannot drag or the character of the dance will not be conveyed. There is a lot of imitation between the hands and it is important to highlight these passages at all times. For example, the left hand entry in the upbeat to bar 3 is an imitation of the right hand entry at the start of the piece. Articulation indications are not given, but it is an important feature of music from this period and should be considered. It would be stylistically appropriate to detach the quaver notes and play the semiquavers *legato*; most importantly the articulation should be consistent throughout. Pay close attention to bars 6–9 where the right hand line is divided into two voices (soprano and alto); the dotted crotchets must be held to contrast with the lighter semiquaver notes which fall in a sequential pattern (this idea returns again in bars 33–36 and bars 40–43). The score does not include dynamics, but it would add considerable musical interest to show a variety of tonal colours and shape to the phrases. Remember that the overall touch will be quite light, so the dynamic level will never reach extremely loud levels, and when one line takes the melodic interest the other line will become more understated. The tempo should remain steady throughout, though a slight *rit.* in the final two bars would bring this to a tasteful close.

Prelude in D Minor BWV 851

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Fast and light fingers are needed in this prelude and the triplet rhythm needs to be exact throughout, so while the left hand looks very straightforward, the right hand is tricky. That said, the left-hand quavers (to be played *staccato*) will help to anchor the tempo and keep a steady pulse throughout. The ascending and descending patterns of the left-hand line will also help to add shape to the phrases. Uncomfortable fingering can make this difficult to play and it can also impede fluency, so it is very important to establish a good finger pattern for the right hand from the start, and maintain this all the way. The semiquavers require a very light touch as this can easily become laboured and though the phrases need shape and tonal variety, this should never become heavy-handed or loud. The closing chords can be played as they are written or alternatively can be spread for stylistic effect.

Scherzo No. 1 in B flat D 593

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

The character here is playful and charming, the touch should never be heavy or forceful. The triplet upbeats should always be light with a feeling of going towards the 1st beat of the following bar. Much of this piece can be played without pedal, which will help to bring out the lightness and buoyancy of the staccato quavers, though touches of pedal would certainly enhance the legato phrases later on (e.g. bars 29–31). By contrast the Trio section needs pedal, particularly in bars 52–57, 59–64 and 73–78 in order to sustain the harmonies throughout these passages. That said, it is not solely the job of the pedal to create a legato effect, the fingers must connect the notes wherever possible. The tempo of the Trio can be ever so slightly more relaxed, and the melodic line requires a cantabile touch here. Listen carefully to the balance of the left-hand quavers in bars 67–

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71 against the right hand melody to ensure that these do not rise above a murmur, the melodic line must sing through. This section is more expressive in character, which will contrast well with the jauntiness of the outer sections. Please note that the *Da Capo* must be observed, but not the repeats within the piece.

Sonata in G K 283, 1st mvt

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

This sonata movement is packed with variety in terms of melodic content, rhythmic detail, vigorous fingerwork and articulation detail; this combination makes it hugely worthwhile to learn as it allows the performer to develop and display great contrast and character in their performance, but it is also immensely satisfying to play. A flowing tempo is required, the semiquaver passages will generally dictate the overall pace as there should be no variation in the pulse throughout the movement, so give due diligence to the fast passages (for both hands) and remember that lighter fingers will allow greater agility. Dotted rhythm is an important feature throughout, and should never be lazy. Broadly speaking the left hand gently supports the right hand melodic interest in this movement and requires a gentle approach, but the octave passages (bars 16–22 etc.) need energy and drive to add shape and direction to the line. By way of contrast the right hand legato phrases must be lyrical and expressive. Articulation markings are indicated and should be carefully observed as this detail will enhance greatly. This must have shape, and it needs tonal colour to bring the character to life. It is also important for the student to understand the structure of this sonata movement.

Tho' the last Glimpse of Erin

Michele Esposito (1855–1929)

In 2019 the RIAM will celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Local Centre Exams, so it seems particularly fitting to include a composition by Michele Esposito in this album: he was a member of the teaching faculty in the RIAM and the founder of the Local Centre Exam System. An Italian composer, conductor and pianist, Esposito came to Dublin in 1882 and for over 40 years immersed himself in all aspects of musical life in Ireland, and was dedicated to the fostering of music education.

I know that this piece will be loved by teachers and students alike for its reference to the much-loved melody, *The Coulin*, with its touchingly expressive qualities. Remember that this is a song, its character is sweet, gentle and simple and the shaping of the phrases should be treated similarly. Legato pedal is required throughout, but the pedal changes must be clean or this will result in blurred harmonies which would spoil the overall effect. The left hand must be very gentle so as not to impinge on the right hand melody. Where chords are introduced into the melodic line it is important to listen carefully to the top notes, and treat these with care. From the upbeat of bars 22–25 the right hand divides into two parts (soprano and alto), here the semiquavers must gently underlie the melodic line above. Use of rubato can be appropriate at times, but always be mindful of keeping a sense of flow and giving direction to every phrase.

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Blues

Philip Martin (1947–)

There are changes between $\frac{9}{8}$ and $\frac{6}{8}$ time signatures here, but the pulse remains the same throughout, so aim to keep a steady beat going all the way. It is impossible to sustain the left hand harmonies in this piece without the use of pedal so it is needed at all times, even if not always specifically marked. The left hand is responsible for adding the harmonic colour, but should never overshadow the right hand melodic detail, which should be warm in colour and “bluesy” in character. As always, Philip Martin has offered a lot of guidance on the score and it is important to consider this detail carefully; doing so will help achieve the desired effect. The harmonic colours are rich and varied so really try to listen and adapt to these changes to create a special sound world.

Notes

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Réamonn Keary