

# Lorna Horan's Teaching Notes

## Elementary

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### **One Magpie**

**Melanie Brown**

Key: D Minor (without key signature)

A tempo marking is not specifically indicated, though “lonely and sad” suggests an unhurried pace. The introduction of quaver-movement from bar 5 is an important consideration in the overall tempo choice, as the pulse must be steady and even across both lines of the piece. Aim to establish an even tone as the melody transfers from one hand to the other and connect the notes with a *legato* touch. From bar 5 the crotchets break into quavers and it is important to maintain a steady beat and also to ensure an even flow of quavers. The student will benefit from clapping the rhythm to begin as a way of reinforcing the note-groupings. Dynamics are indicated and will certainly enrich the shape of the line. A gradual *rit.* will bring the piece to a suitable close.

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### **Allegro**

**Alexander Reinagle**

Key: C Major

The meaning of *Allegro* is ‘fast and lively’ and it is important to explain this to the student so that they can bring the character to life. This needs a steady flow, and crisp *staccato* notes will add energy to the overall effect. The quaver-patterns must be even, a lighter touch can be employed for these notes and a *legato* touch will provide variety of articulation. The right hand carries the melodic line and should project over the left hand minims. Dynamic levels ranging from *p* to *ff* will offer the performer plenty of scope to add colour and vitality to this piece.

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### **Haymaker's Song**

**Cuthbert Harris**

Key: G Major

In this piece the unison melody of the right and left hands will allow opportunity to pay particular focus to the development of a *legato* touch (in both hands), ensuring that each note is connected to the next. The central bars (bars 5–8) see a divide between the hands and it is important that the repeated chords of the left hand are gentle, so as not to overpower the continuation of the melody in the right hand line. Aim to taper off the phrase-endings and consider a small *rit.* in the final two bars to bring the piece to a tasteful finish.

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# Lorna Horan's Teaching Notes

## Elementary

### **Tic Tac Toe**

Key: C Major

**Ailbhe McDonagh**

A playful character and lively pace will be needed to convey the energy of this piece. The melodic line moves between the two hands so it is important to achieve an evenness of touch as one hand transfers to the other. The *staccato* notes can be short and crisp. The slurred-notes will offer contrast and it is important to connect the first note of the slur to the second note, and then lightly release the second note. Aim to achieve contrast between *f* at the start and *sub p* at the upbeat to bar 5 (*sub* is short for *subito*: 'suddenly'). The second line of the piece should gradually build up to *f* in the final bar and it is important to measure the *crescendo* carefully to achieve an effective climax in the final bar. Aim to count carefully to ensure a happy relationship between quavers and crotchets, and keep four steady beats in every bar.

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### **Cliff Diving**

Key: C Major

**Mary O'Keeffe**

With four beats in a bar and the suggestion of a lively character this piece will need a flowing tempo. It is important to listen to the balance between right and left hands so that the shape of the right-hand melody (line 1) is accompanied by a gentle left-hand accompaniment. The left hand responds with an answering melody (line 2) and balance of hands will need to adjust accordingly. The dynamics and articulation markings should be carefully observed as they will add variety and colour to the performance. The articulation instructions are varied with occasional *staccato* notes, slurred-notes and also *legato* and it is important to show this variety. The accented notes in bar 4 (left hand) can have more emphasis, but avoid hitting these notes. The second line begins softer (*mp*) but should have an effective build-up to *f* in the final bar, followed by a gentle *p* in the right hand.

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### **Basketball**

Key: C Major

**Melanie Brown**

There are many rests throughout this piece and it is essential to the overall metre of the piece that these rests are counted carefully throughout to ensure three steady beats in every bar. As indicated at the start this requires a lively pace and the *staccato* notes can be short, like the bouncing of a ball. The slurred-notes will add variety and the dynamic indications (ranging from *p* all the way to *ff*) should allow for lots of colour. The accents in the final bar will provide added emphasis, but avoid hitting these notes...the aim is not aggressive, but robust!

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# Lorna Horan's Teaching Notes

## Preliminary

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### **Rugby Training**

**Melanie Brown**

Key: While there are a lot of accidentals in this piece the key is C Major

This is a good exercise for learning to play chords as there are only two chord patterns interspersed throughout the piece, consequently the hands should learn to adjust easily from one hand position to the next. It is important to sound all three notes of each chord so a firm touch can be used but ensure that the wrists remain loose and relaxed to avoid an aggressive sound. The melodic phrases need a *legato* touch. The metre does not vary so be sure to measure the minims and crotchets carefully to give this a well-rounded rhythmic shape. The use of pedal will add a little extra colour and depth to the sound of the closing chord, but it is optional and may be omitted. Observe the pause mark at the end and hold this final chord for longer...

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### **Moderato**

**Wilhelm Moritz Vogel**

Key: C Major

A sprightly pace will help to convey the regimental character of this piece. The opening left-hand statement should be played with a confident tone with articulation closely observed. The answering right-hand phrase is further developed, and it is important to achieve evenness in the quaver activity of the bars that follow. Steady left-hand crotchets will help to maintain a stable pulse here. It is also important to adopt a light touch and a crisp *staccato* in the left hand to ensure an appropriate balance between melody and accompaniment. Dynamic details are suggested on the score and will help to add shape to the phrases and variety of colour throughout. A *crescendo* to the end will bring the piece to a triumphant close.

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### **Snow White**

**Leslie Fly**

Key: C Major

Be sure to observe the tied-notes of the left hand, these should not be replayed but must be held for their full value. The right hand carries the melodic interest here and requires a *legato* touch to connect the notes into musical phrases. Listen closely to the balance between melody and accompaniment. From bar 9 the left hand takes over the lyrical line and it is important to gradually build a *crescendo* through the following bars to reach a rich *f* tone on arrival at bar 13. Be sure to count the closing bars carefully to give each bar the appropriate value.

# Lorna Horan's Teaching Notes

## Preliminary

### **The Curious Cat**

**John McLachlan**

Key: A lot of accidentals, but it is based around the tonality of C Major

The technique of playing slurred notes is central to the successful performance of this piece. The connection of the first note to the second is important, followed by the light release of the second note. To accomplish this technique it is important to have loose wrists in order to avoid a tense, brittle tone. The melodic line travels between the left and right hands throughout the piece, like a dialogue moving mysteriously from one hand to the other. The composer has indicated a lot of dynamic variety to add to the dramatic effect, watch out also for the tempo instructions along the way as these will add a further layer of interest and intrigue.

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### **Donkey Race**

**Mary O'Keeffe**

Key: C Major

A lively pace will be needed to capture the capricious spirit. There are lots of ideas at play here and variety of articulation will add energy and interest. The right hand takes the melodic lead to begin and should be balanced with a light left hand. Slurred notes appear from bar 4, (maintain loose wrists as the first note transfers to the second note of each slur). The *staccato* notes should be short and bouncy to add to a playful character. Count the rests carefully in bar 9 and hold the semibreve for its full value in the final bar. The accent mark indicates a little more emphasis on this final chord, but avoid hitting...keep the wrist loose.

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### **The Huntsman**

**Leslie Fly**

Key: G Major

This piece will should be animated in character and will need a lively tempo to convey that effect. Some of the right and left-hand crotchets (bars 1–2, 5–6) have a *tenuto* marking and it is important to lean more on these notes as this will help to add rhythmic punctuation and also contribute to the musical effect. It is important that both notes of the left-hand chords sound together, but not loud enough to overpower the right-hand melody in these bars. The right-hand *staccato* notes can be crisp and energetic.

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# Lorna Horan's Teaching Notes

## Primary

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### **Tarantella**

Key: C Major

**Frederick Scotson Clark**

This is a good workout for all five fingers of the right hand. Gradually the tempo can build up to accomplish the *Con spirito* character and a feel of 2-in-a-bar but it is important to first achieve steady, even quavers. The fingers should become lighter as the tempo increases, otherwise it runs the risk of becoming heavy and laboured. Note that much of the left hand is written in the treble clef and does not move to the bass clef until bar 13. Be sure to observe the rests in the left hand and aim to adopt a light touch throughout. Remember that a  $\frac{6}{8}$  time signature (Compound Duple time) means 2 dotted-crotchet beats per bar, this will help to give a lilt to the piece and bring out the lively character of the tarantella dance.

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### **A Walking Shadow**

This piece is based around the key of A minor

**John McLachlan**

Although there are 3 beats in a bar to begin it is important to note the change of time signature at bar 17 and adjust to counting 4 beats in a bar from there on. While there is a change of time signature, the pace of the crotchet beat always remains the same. The left hand takes the melodic lead throughout the piece and the right hand adopts a gentle roll with subtle chordal changes. It is important to observe the tied notes in the right hand, hold these notes for their value but do not replay them. A *legato* touch is necessary to achieve the appropriate effect. The tempo is slow, but the counting must be accurate.

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### **Gotcha!**

Key: F Major

**Elaine McCabe-Cudden**

A confident tone is necessary to give this piece the vigour and assertiveness it requires, and a lively tempo is a must. As indicated at the start, the quaver rhythm should be evenly delivered. The tied-notes play a crucial function throughout the piece as they create a syncopated rhythmic effect, with this in mind the tempo must remain very steady throughout. There is scope to demonstrate a broad dynamic range and this, along with the articulation detail will really help to bring the character to life.

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# Lorna Horan's Teaching Notes

## Primary

### Graceful Dance

Key: G Major

Cuthbert Harris

Elegance of character, a *legato* line and a lilting pace are the necessary elements to create the desired effect in this dance. Remember that  $\frac{6}{8}$  time (Compound Duple time) indicates 2 beats per bar and in this piece the left hand will help to maintain that steady, lilting pulse. Observe the tied-marks in the lower notes of the bass line and be sure to hold these notes for their value, this left-hand accompaniment should gently support the more prominent right-hand melodic line. Aim to shape each phrase of the melody, and taper off the phrase endings. Hold onto the final chord for a little longer than its value, as indicated by the *fermata* (pause mark).

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### Hunting Horns

Key: C Major

Theodor Oesten

While this piece shares the same time signature as the previous piece ( $\frac{6}{8}$ ), a rousing character and brisk tempo will be needed to capture the spirit here. The articulation markings should be carefully observed to add energy and variety, the dynamic indications will also add colour and vitality. Avoid an accent on the upbeat each time, the first beat of the bar is the strongest. There are occasional changes of hand position for both hands and these will need careful planning (at a slower tempo) to ensure that the fingers arrive on the correct notes each time.

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### Alexander March

Key: F Major

Carl Czerny

The title of "march" immediately signposts a regimental pace and *Allegro* indicates a lively tempo here. The steady beat of the left-hand crotchets will help to maintain a strict pulse, these *staccato* crotchets can be crisp and light so as not to overpower the content of the right-hand melody. The articulation of the right hand is a significant feature, take care also to keep the quavers even throughout. A light touch will suit the overall character.

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# Lorna Horan's Teaching Notes

## Grade I

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### **Time for Action**

**Cornelius Gurlitt**

Key: D Minor

The intention of the title is immediately reflected in the tempo indication here: *Con moto* (with movement) suggests an assertive character and a busy pace. While the left-hand crotchets help to uphold a steady beat throughout it is the right-hand material that carries both the melodic and rhythmic substance, so it is important to listen and balance the two hands. Avoid a heavy approach to the quaver-movement as this can create a laboured effect and potentially cause the pace to drag. There is some repetition here, which happily cuts down on the amount to learn. Aim to display a wide dynamic range, as indicated on the score.

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### **Left Alone**

**Paul Zilcher**

Key: A Minor

A singing tone and *legato* touch are crucial to the melodic line in this expressive piece. The left hand takes the melodic lead and every phrase needs to have shape. Generally we are accustomed to the right hand having the melody so it is important to listen carefully to ensure that in this case the right-hand chords do not get in the way of the left-hand line. Take care also to lift off for all rests in the right-hand part. In bars 17–20 the roles temporarily reverse and the right hand takes over the melodic interest so be careful to adjust the balance as needed. The tempo indication is *Poco lento* (a little slow) but it is important to keep the line moving so that it does not drag. A *ritardando* and *diminuendo* in the closing bars will bring the piece to a suitable conclusion, *morendo* (dying away).

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### **Frog Choir**

**Tamara Niekludow**

Key: A Major

This quirky little piece is playful in character. Except for the final two bars the left hand is written entirely in the treble clef though it is the right hand that controls the melodic pattern. The tempo does not have to be very fast here, the *staccato* articulation and the *acciaccatura* notes (also known as 'crushed' or 'grace' notes) will give this piece the energy it needs. These crushed notes (the notes written in tiny print) are played directly before the main notes. Initially play the grace note concurrently with the main note. Later on the notes can be separated slightly, but the idea is that the two notes are played almost together, adding a slight jolt to the melodic note. The quavers must be even in delivery each time and the inclusion of dynamic detail will really bring this to life.

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# Lorna Horan's Teaching Notes

## Grade I

### **Menuet in A minor**

Key: A Minor

**Johann Krieger**

For music dating from this period (Baroque) articulation was an essential expressive tool. Today it still plays an important role and the articulation detail should not be overlooked. A Menuet is a stately dance, with that in mind the *staccato* notes do not have to be very short, but detached nonetheless. Lean a little more on the *tenuto* notes (-) as these notes give direction to the melodic line. The counting of dotted rhythms in bars 5, 7 etc. needs careful attention, it is always a good idea to encourage the student to clap out the rhythm before playing it, to ensure that the value of each note is understood.

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### **Lame Duck**

Key: C Major

**Maria White**

Although this duck is lame, the pulse should be quite steady and even here. A quick tempo is not necessary, it is the rhythmic detail, the quirky grace notes and the articulation markings that will help to capture the character of this piece. The rests can be easily mis-counted, so take care to have 4 full beats in every bar, and watch out for the full-bar rest in bar 13. The composer has also offered dynamic detail to bring this to life.

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### **The Millwheel**

Key: C Major

**Cornelius Gurlitt**

Left and right-hand co-ordination must be exact here, as any unevenness will be exposed in this piece. With this in mind it can be useful to practice the two hands *legato* in the early stages, as it can be easier to control and co-ordinate the fingers using this technique to begin. The tempo is just *Moderato*, so no great speed is necessary. After graduating to a *staccato* touch the fingers can be light and crisp. For the middle section (bars 9–16) the right-hand fingering may look unusual but this fingering will enable the student to play the slurred notes successfully, with the first chord connecting to the second and the second chord lightly released. This section also sees the left hand move to the bass clef, but it returns to the treble clef at bar 17. The opening material is repeated from bar 17 on, but observe the dynamic detail and vary it accordingly.

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# Lorna Horan's Teaching Notes

## Grade II

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### **Allegretto**

Key: F Major

**Béla Bartók**

While *Allegretto* is not as fast as *Allegro* this piece should be lively and energetic. Bartók was known for his detailed markings, so it is important to follow the guidelines he has given as they will contribute to the shape of each phrase and the overall direction of the piece. Lean on the *tenuto* notes (-) and hold them for their full length in order to achieve optimum contrast between these notes and the crisp *staccato* quavers. Listen throughout to the balance between left and right hands to achieve the appropriate blend of sound. The dynamic detail will add a further layer of musical interest and colour. Observe the *fermata* (pause mark) on the bar line between bars 26 and 27, but be sure to play the final bars *a tempo*. You will notice a bracket surrounding the lower note of the left hand chord in bar 28; this octave may be too stretchy for smaller hands and the lower note can be omitted if necessary.

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### **Elegy**

Key: E Minor

**Carl Reinecke**

*Andante* (at a walking pace) suggests that the tempo should not drag, *con anima* (with feeling) tells us that the piece needs an expressive quality. The left-hand chords (written in the treble clef) provide harmonic support throughout, it is the right hand that provides the melody with a *cantabile* (singing) tone. This melodic line requires a *legato* touch to ensure that the notes of each phrase connect together. Observe the tied notes in the right hand (eg. bars 1–2, 5–6 etc.) as these create a syncopated rhythm and it is important to hold them for their full value, but also to lean a little more on the notes marked with a *tenuto* (-) to achieve the desired rhythmic effect. Aim to follow the contour of the notes in each phrase to add shape. The title of the piece suggests a reflective, perhaps mournful character and the dynamic level does not reach above *mf* so use this piece as an exercise in exploring more of the soft tones on the piano.

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### **Study in C**

Key: C Major

**Franz Hüntten**

The tempo is not too fast but a  $\frac{6}{8}$  time signature implies a lilting pace nonetheless. This must have a feel of 2-in-a-bar or it will become laboured. Light and even quavers will ensure clarity and fluidity of line, which will help to give direction to each phrase. It is important to observe the articulation of the left hand in order to achieve a contrast between the *staccato* and *legato* phrases, this detail will contribute to the overall character. Dynamics are suggested to add colour and shape.

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# Lorna Horan's Teaching Notes

## Grade II

### **The Bumblebee's Escape**

**Maria White**

Key: A Minor

The title suggests a busy character and the quantity of notes on the page confirms this. Take note of the time signature: Simple Duple (also known as 'Cut-Common') time indicates that there are 2 beats in a bar, this also suggests that the piece needs direction and drive. Slow and careful work will be needed at the start to help build up the strength and independence of the fingers for the quaver-passages, but the fingerwork should become lighter as the tempo increases. The composer has been quite specific with both dynamic markings, articulation detail and tempo indications. All of these details will contribute to the overall character so it is important to consider these carefully. While *accelerando* is marked on the last line, this will need to be carefully measured out so that the player does not lose control. While there are a lot of ledger lines written in bar 29 the notation is actually straight-forward, essentially bars 28 and 29 are the notes of the 'A harmonic minor' scale in an ascending line across 4 octaves. The notes are simple, but be careful to ensure that co-ordination between right and left hands is accurate and that the rhythmic detail is clear.

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### **Gavotte, HWV 491**

**George Frideric Handel**

Key: G Major

A flowing, but steady pace will suit this dance and the constancy of the left hand crotchets will provide stability throughout. Although these left-hand notes are marked *staccato*, avoid a spiky or clipped touch and aim instead to gently detach these notes to keep in line with the elegant character of the dance. For the right-hand melodic line avoid accenting the upbeat and lend direction and emphasis to the 1<sup>st</sup> beat of the bar instead. Slurred notes are a feature throughout the melodic line, take care to release the second note of the slur lightly each time. Dynamics are suggested to offer colour and shade to the musical line.

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### **Russian Polka**

**Michael Ivanovich Glinka**

Key: D Minor

A bright, steady left-hand accompaniment will support the melodic content of this dance. The tempo is only *Allegretto* so not too fast, but lively nonetheless. The left hand content will help to maintain a steady pulse and crisp *staccato* work will enhance the buoyant character. Avoid heavy fingerwork for the right-hand semiquavers, these notes require a light touch to enable them to move efficiently. Pay close attention to the articulation markings for the right hand, as these details will add to the character and the accented notes will add punctuation.

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# Lorna Horan's Teaching Notes

## Grade III

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**Un poco vivo**  
Key: D Major

**Johann Wilhelm Hässler**

*Un poco vivo* (a little lively) suggests a tempo not too fast, but with enough movement to add a little sparkle to the fingerwork. Articulation is an important feature of expression for music of this style and needs careful consideration. The notes of the left-hand crotchets in bars 1, 3, 9 and 11 can be played slightly separated from each other or *legato* – this is a personal choice. Keep the semiquaver-work clean and light, aim to shape each phrase throughout.

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**There you go George...**  
Key: G Major

**Réamonn Keary**

Rhythmic drive and precise fingerwork are needed to capture the 'boogie woogie' character here. There is a lot of repetition in the left-hand part to allow for more focus on the right-hand line, which lies quite comfortably under the hand though there are some shifts of position to negotiate along the way. It is important for the tempo to remain strict until bar 12 where the pace slows down quite a bit. The closing bars are a tribute to composer, George Gerschwin with a quote from his famous 'Rhapsody in Blue'. Be careful to avoid a heavy touch as the piece could easily become laboured. The left hand in particular should be light and crisp so as not to overshadow the right-hand content. Pay close attention to the *slurred/staccato* notes as this detail is precise in its layout. By contrast, the closing bars adopt a *legato* feel as the notes gradually fade out.

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**At the Smithy**  
Key: B flat Major

**Samuil Maikapar**

Both right and left-hand parts are written on the treble clef staff for the opening 6 bars, and again at various stages throughout the piece. The notes are cleverly spaced so that the two hands do not overlap, though efficiency of movement is needed to ensure that the hands don't get in each other's way or cause any awkwardness. Observe the time signature ( $\frac{6}{8}$ ) and be sure to have a feel of 2-in-a-bar from the outset, the accented notes will help to copper-fasten this metre. Much of the material in the opening and closing sections is chordal and is intended to imitate the constant clanging work of a blacksmith. To achieve precise results it is important to adopt a firm, fixed finger position for each chord. The middle section (bars 21 – 33) does not vary in tempo but the melodic content changes and a lighter touch will be needed for the semiquaver passages. There is a dialogue between the right and left hands and it is important to listen carefully and adjust the balance as one hand responds to the material of the other. Pedal changes need to be clear as this can easily become muddy and blurred.

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# Lorna Horan's Teaching Notes

## Grade III

### **Allegro**

Key: G Major

**Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach**

Although this is a lively piece it should also be played with elegance and poise. Again here articulation plays an important role in lending shape and direction to both the treble and bass lines. The right hand has the melodic interest and each phrase needs shape and colour to enhance. Avoid heavy fingers where there is semiquaver content, a light touch is more appropriate to the style and character.

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### **Melody for K**

Key: F Major

**John McLachlan**

The continuous quaver-movement of this piece gives it a natural momentum, and while there are a number of *Rall* signs throughout these should be subtle and not compromise the overall flow of the piece. Legato-pedal is essential and must be used throughout, but the pedal changes are very straightforward, a clean pedal change at the beginning of each bar will suffice. This piece is not loud or overbearing, *leggiero* (light) and *Con anima* (with feeling) suggest a gentle character with delicate shaping. On the final line *meno mosso* (less movement) and *smorzando* (dying away) indicate that both tempo and dynamic level fade away to the very end. The repeat is not required in exam performance.

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### **Goblin's Dance**

Key: A minor

**Tamara Niekludow**

The word 'goblin' conjures up the image of a fast and light-footed mythical creature that is usually up to some kind of mischief, and this is exactly the character that needs to be portrayed in this piece. The composer has cleverly used a variety of articulation to enhance the quirky character. The *staccato* notes can be light and impish to contrast with the slurred notes, and the accented crotchets will add punctuation to these longer note values. Both hands travel across different registers of the instrument, and slower work will be needed at the start to ensure that hand positions are carefully planned and securely executed. The speeding up of pace will come later and dynamic detail will greatly embellish the cheeky character.

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# Lorna Horan's Teaching Notes

## Grade IV

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### **'Vivace' from Sonatina Op. 136 No.4**

**Carl Reinecke (1824–1910)**

Key: A Minor

Relative Key: C Major

A lively tempo will be needed to capture the spirited character of this movement. The treble line leads with the melodic outline and each phrase needs to have shape and direction. ]While clarity is needed in the semiquavers it is also important to keep these light and even. The left-hand accompaniment crucially provides harmonic support to the right-hand melody, but should never overpower the melodic content. While he dates from the Romantic period, Carl Reinecke preserved many Classical traditions in his compositions, consequently articulation is important to the overall style, for both treble and bass parts. While this movement is in the key of A Minor, it has an unexpected finish in A Major!

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### **The Little Brook**

**Elijah Thomas Burke**

Key: G Major

Winner of the Local Centre Composition Competition

Related Key: E Minor

Take note of the time signature here, it is important to establish a feeling of 2-in-a-bar as this will really help with the counting of the triplet figures that are an important rhythmic feature throughout the piece. This requires pedal throughout and clean pedal changes are necessary to avoid blurred harmonies. Also take care to keep the left-hand chords light as they should not dominate the right-hand melody. This needs to move at a flowing pace, and lightness of touch will help to portray the idea of a babbling brook...

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### **The New Doll**

**Pyotr Ilich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)**

Key: B flat Major

Relative Key: G Minor

Note that the left hand is written in the treble clef, and does not move to the bass clef until bar 41. Each hand follows a distinct pattern in this piece, the repeated chords of the left hand establish momentum throughout while the right-hand melodic line soars with long *legato* phrases. From bar 18 the melodic idea moves in a new direction, and the slurred notes are an important feature as the melody scampers in different directions. Although the left-hand chords are light in touch it is still important to add shape and direction within this context. The piece needs a lively pace, the tone is never forced but should 'rise and fall' with the contour of each phrase.

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# Lorna Horan's Teaching Notes

## Grade IV

### **Jig**

Key: G Major

Relative: E Minor

**Thomas Arne (1710–1778)**

A bright and lively pace will add energy and buoyancy to the character of this dance and will help to give it a feel of 2-in-a-bar ( $\frac{6}{8}$  time). Clarity of fingerwork is needed, and careful attention to the intricate articulation detail will add variation to the line, as well as enhance the overall style. From bars 9–15 (and later in bars 46–52) the left and right hands share a series of broken arpeggios and it is important that the sound is evenly matched from the passing of one hand to the other in order to create a seamless effect. For exam purposes the student can make a photocopy of the first page to avoid an awkward page turn mid-way...

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### **Aubade**

Key: E Major

Relative: C sharp Minor

**Cécile Chaminade (1857–1944)**

Here the left hand introduces the lyrical line and a *cantabile* touch is essential to bring depth and richness to the sound. Take care to balance the right-hand chords carefully so as not to overpower this line. As the melodic line moves to the right hand (bar 17) it is important to listen closely to the balance between the hands to ensure an appropriate transfer of weight to the top line, all the time observing the *dolce* indication. This piece is a good exercise to explore a softer range of dynamic colour, even the brief reference to *f* at bar 13 should not be forced in tone. The indication of legato-pedal throughout will add colour to the overall effect, and will help to connect notes where the hand cannot physically stretch the distance (eg. bar 29).

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### **Study in A Minor Op. 47 No. 3**

Key: A Minor

Relative: C Major

**Stephen Heller (1813–1888)**

Both treble and bass lines are busy throughout this study and clarity of line is essential to the overall effect. Touches of pedal will enrich the harmony, but should be used only where indicated as it is important to demonstrate the *staccato* and *legato* articulation. The accented notes and dynamic markings will also create layers of colour to add to the musical landscape. The tempo is not particularly fast but needs to move enough to give a feel of 2-in-a-bar ( $\frac{6}{8}$  time), otherwise this can easily become heavy and laboured.

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# Lorna Horan's Teaching Notes

## Grade V

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### **Gavotte Op. 123**

**Cécile Chaminade (1857–1944)**

Key: A Minor

Relative: C Major

Dominant Key: E Minor

An *Allegretto* tempo marking suggests a manageable pace, not too fast. Clarity of fingerwork is a must, and precise attention to articulation detail will be necessary to capture the character of this dance. Avoid giving a false accent at the start, the piece begins on an upbeat. The composer has stayed true to the original style of this dance and the dynamic indications offer a clear outline of the musical intention.

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### **Variations in G Op. 42**

**Friedrich Kuhlau (1786–1832)**

Key: G Major

Relative: E Minor

Dominant Key: D Major

Again, with an *Allegretto* tempo marking this is not an exercise in speed, but tidy fingerwork and clarity of line is of great importance. The opening theme is simple in its content, but the subsequent variations are more active and it is important to select a pace that can be maintained throughout. The semiquaver passages of scales and broken arpeggios create a busyness that can easily become overpowering and it is important to listen to the overall balance and adapt accordingly. The melodic content weaves between the treble and bass lines throughout, the dynamic detail will add further musical interest.

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### **Old Christmas Carol**

**César Franck (1822–1890)**

Key: G Minor

Relative: B flat Major

Dominant Key: D Minor

Although it is marked *Poco lento* (a little slowly) it is easier to shape the phrases when there is a gentle flow to this piece. The lyrical melodic line requires a *legato* touch throughout and the sustained notes of the accompaniment line must also be connected. It is an expressive piece and requires a *cantabile* tone, dynamic indications are suggested to give shape and direction to each phrase. Take care to adjust the left / right hand balance at bar 16 where the melody shifts to the bass line. Legato-peddalling will add extra colour, but take care to ensure clean pedal changes throughout. The closing phrase slows down, gradually dying away (*morendo*) to the end.

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### Three-Quarter Blues

George Gerschwin (1898–1937)

Key: C Major

Relative: A Minor

Dominant Key: G Major

This is quite a straightforward piece to learn, both in terms of the notes and the musical shape. It can be played at the pace of a gentle waltz and the repeated crotchet notes of the left hand will help to maintain a steady pace, but it is important that these notes do not overpower the content of the melodic line. Legato-pedal is indicated and is necessary throughout. The suggested dynamics range from *pp* to *ff* so there is plenty of scope to explore a wide variety of colour to enhance.

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### Tarantelle Op. 46 No. 7

Stephen Heller (1813–1888)

Key: E Minor

Relative: G Major

Dominant Key: B Minor

A lively pace and busy fingers are essential to the theatrical spirit of this dance. While the fingerwork is occasionally tricky, these finger patterns are repeated throughout and the overall learning content is fairly minimal. The piece must have a feel of 2-in-a-bar ( $\frac{6}{8}$  time) and the sudden dynamic changes are important to the overall colour and drama. Touches of pedal, the contrast of *legato* and *staccato* and the accents will all further embellish the frenetic character.

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### Entrée

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)

Key: G Minor

Relative: B flat Major

Dominant Key: D Minor

The tempo is lively, but not too rushed as the overall character is poised and elegant. While the quavers are marked *staccato* they can be gently detached, rather than spiky. Dotted rhythms crop up throughout this piece, they are straightforward in execution but care is needed to ensure that these rhythms are co-ordinated exactly with the corresponding material of the opposite hand (eg. bars 3 and 4). Lightness of touch and clarity of fingerwork are both necessary to the overall texture, the melodic content requires shape and colour to enhance.

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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.

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### **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.

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### **Sonata in G Op. 79: 2nd movement**

**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 time signature indicates 3 beats in a bar, so aim for some sense of flow. Legato pedal is indicated and is needed to

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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 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.

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### **Sonatina in C Op. 19 No. 5: 2nd movement**

**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.

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### **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

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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.

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### **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.

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### **Sonata in E flat K 282: 1st movement**

**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

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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 movement**

**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.

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### **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

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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.

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### **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 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 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.

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### **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.

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### **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 upbeat 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 67–71 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.

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### **Sonata in G K 283: 1st movement**

**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.

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### **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.

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