

CHARACTERISTICS OF BAROQUE STYLE

Successful performance of keyboard works from the Baroque era requires an awareness of contrapuntal textures, and ability to convey the sense of dialogue between voices in imitative passages; variety in touch, with clearly defined articulation patterns highlighting thematic material; and inclusion of ornamentation as appropriate. Given the absence of detailed markings in the score from composers, the onus is often on the performer to discover the underlying “affect” or character of the music.

Considerations to keep in mind when studying music from the Baroque era include:

- understanding of the genre-specific character
- projection of the main affect or mood expressed
- awareness and control of the contrapuntal texture
- characteristic sound, with awareness of the instruments used in the era
- variety in touch (articulation); often determined by the performer
- ornamentation, both as indicated in the score and added by the performer

In interpreting music from the Baroque era, it is also helpful to be aware of the following terms and concepts. These will be referenced in the descriptions of pieces from the *Celebration Series*® that follow.

Doctrine of the Affections (or Doctrine of Affects) 音乐情感理论

The Doctrine of the Affections was an aesthetic theory held in the Baroque era whereby music can express the affections, or passions. It is a valuable exercise when playing Baroque music to determine the affect of a piece or phrase and interpret the piece by bringing out the particular musical emotion that it expresses.

Style brisé 布里斯风格

Style brisé literally means “broken style,” and is a characteristic associated with 17th-century lute music whereby the musical texture is arpeggiated. This is often applied in keyboard music.


Notes inégales (or inégalité) 演奏习惯





Notes inégales refers to a performance practice cultivated throughout the Baroque era, mainly associated with French music, whereby notes of equal written value are to be played in an uneven manner; for example assuming the rhythmic pattern of “long-short-long-short.” There is a modern-day parallel in this stylistic device in jazz with its “swinging” eighth notes. The effect of this practice was meant to add beauty or interest to a passage.

Galant Style

The galant style, fashionable in the 1720s to the 1770s, values freshness and charm, in contrast to the more “learned” style of the late Baroque. In musical terms, the galant style is evident in an emphasis on singable melodies, more homophonic textures, and short, periodic phrases.

Ornamentation 装饰音

Trill <i>Tremblant</i>		The trill in Baroque and early Classical music begins on the note above the ornamented note and is a quick alternation between the two adjacent notes. It may be the freest of all ornaments, taking into consideration its many variations in duration and speed.
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Mordent <i>Pincé</i>		The word <i>mordent</i> is derived from the Italian <i>mordere</i> , meaning “to bite.” The mordent is a quick ornament, starting from the main note, playing down a note, and then back up again. Mordents are performed very rapidly to add brilliance and accentuation to the rhythmic gesture.
Turn <i>Double</i>		The turn is also a free ornament; it is generally up to the performer to determine its speed. The “turn” consists of beginning with the note above the ornamented note, proceeding down two steps, and then returning back to the main note. Turns can be understood as short trills with terminations.
Appoggiatura <i>Port de voix</i>		The name <i>appoggiatura</i> comes from the Italian <i>appoggiare</i> , meaning “to lean.” Appoggiaturas introduce a dissonance to the melody; they are used to indicate suspension before a final resolution. They should always be played on the beat.
Arpeggio <i>Arpegé</i>		Arpeggiation is simply spreading out the notes of a chord instead of playing them all together. The arpeggio is not so much an ornament as a style of playing in the Baroque era. During a time when the harpsichord was the main keyboard instrument, breaking chords was necessary to prolong harmonies and to add expressive variety; arpeggiation was a very common “ornament.” Arpeggiation was often not notated because it was understood that performers were to arpeggiate chords at their discretion.

As C.P.E. Bach states in his *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, “no one disputes the need for embellishments.” Musical ornaments, both notated and improvised, were an integral vehicle for heightening expression in music of the Baroque and Classical eras. The following is a compendium of the ornaments that can be found in the intermediate repertoire:

Ornaments that are indicated in the music by the composer or added by the performer should be played carefully on the beat, aligned with the other notes in the musical texture, and not before. Encourage students to play ornaments in both ways, on the beat and before the beat, so that they can distinguish the difference between stylistic ornaments and later practices where the timing and notes of grace notes and trills, to name just a few examples, became freer.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CLASSICAL STYLE

Performances of works from the Classical era should convey an awareness of the formal structure; the required clarity of texture and balance; rhythmic discipline and control of tempo; and the projection of thematic material with contrasting musical characters clearly defined. Careful attention to the detailed markings provided in the score becomes an important factor that leads to successful presentation of music from this era.

Aspects that require attention in the study of works in the Classical style include:

- clarity of texture and balance

- structural awareness
- rhythmic discipline
- contrast in thematic/musical character
- application of detailed markings in the score, including articulation, phrasing, and dynamics; often specified by the composer

The following terms and concepts will be referenced in the descriptions of *Celebration Series*® pieces from the Classical era:

Alberti bass 阿尔贝蒂低音 5-1-3-1

Alberti bass describes an accompaniment pattern frequently used in keyboard music of the Classical era. A triad is played in broken form, generally in the left hand, following the pattern of root–fifth–third–fifth (or lowest–highest–middle–highest.)

Rocket theme

A rocket theme is a melodic motive based on an ascending broken chord. Rocket themes were frequently used to create a dramatic opening, particularly in orchestral works by composers of the Mannheim school.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ROMANTIC STYLE

Although imagination and expression are important in the performance of all music, with Romantic style this aspect comes to the forefront. Many of the works from this period have descriptive titles that assist in this regard, and projection of the character suggested by the titles becomes an important aspect of successful performances. As richer harmonies develop, a greater awareness of chord structure, understanding of musical tension and release, and sensitivity to interesting and unusual harmonies is required. In piano repertoire, the thicker textures bring the need for careful voicing, and a flexible approach in timing and pacing which plays an important role in the most expressive performances.

The main characteristics associated with Romantic style include:

- personal expression and imagination
- flexibility in timing—tasteful use of *rubato*
- refined use of pedal
- phrasing and sensitivity to harmonic progression
- projection of descriptive, programmatic elements

The following terms and concepts will be referenced in the descriptions of *Celebration Series*® pieces from the Romantic era:

Bel canto 美声唱法

An Italian term for “beautiful singing” or “beautiful song,” *bel canto* was a vocal style that originated in Italian opera and persisted throughout the 18th and early 19th centuries. It featured beautiful tone and florid embellishment that singers were known to add; for example, in the repeated section of *da capo* arias. This singing style is an important feature in much of the piano music written in the 19th century.

Fioritura 旋律线条装饰

Fioritura is the Italian word for “flourish” or “flowering.” In musical terms it refers to the florid embellishment of a melody, either notated or improvised.

Hemiola 赫米奥拉 三对二

A hemiola is a shifting melodic or rhythmic pattern that blurs the overall pulse of the music. Often music in duple meter is made to sound as if it has three beats of equal value in the time of two, and vice versa.

Tempo rubato 弹性速度

Literally meaning “robbed time,” *tempo rubato* is an interpretive technique of expressive and rhythmic freedom characterized by speeding up and slowing down of the tempo in a phrase. It is often associated with 19th-century Romantic music and composers, such as Frédéric Chopin, Clara and Robert Schumann, and Johannes Brahms.

CHARACTERISTICS OF 20TH- AND 21ST-CENTURY STYLE

It is often the case that students connect most directly with music composed in their lifetime—and not just popular styles. The music of contemporary composers often speaks to young performers and becomes their “favorite” pieces. These compositions are often well annotated, with detailed messages from the composers to the students—sometimes using the English language rather than Italian or German. It is therefore important to encourage our students to pay close attention to the markings in the score, treating them as clues that help to uncover the composer’s intentions. Contemporary music often brings opportunities to explore new tonal harmonies, textures, rhythms, and sonorities as well as innovative approaches to notation. Many teachers encourage their students to select pieces by living composers from their own community or region.

As 20th- and 21st- century music encompasses a wide range of trends and styles, it is difficult to generalize, but the following considerations are usually applicable:

- the importance of fidelity to the score
- new and innovative styles of notation
- rhythmic variety and complexity, including changing meters and irregular groupings
- discovering, projecting, and communicating within a new musical language

The following pages highlight the pieces contained in the intermediate levels of *Celebration Series*,[®] *Sixth Edition*, Levels 5 to 8. Select a title to read a description and to hear a recording of the opening measures. As you read the descriptions, consider how the different musical features might be used to build a balanced program for one of your intermediate-level students.

As you explore the repertoire and etudes, keep your *Celebration Series*[®] books on hand, so that you can easily refer to the music as you read—or better still, go to the piano and play through the selections that capture your imagination!

LEVEL 5

LEVEL 5 REPERTOIRE

For Level 5 examinations, students are required to present three repertoire selections and two etudes:

- **List A:** Baroque Repertoire
- **List B:** Classical and Classical-style Repertoire
- **List C:** Romantic, 20th-, and 21st-century Repertoire
- **Etudes:** two technically contrasting etudes

Select any piece to learn more about it.

List A: Baroque Repertoire

Little Prelude in C Major, BWV 939 by Johann Sebastian Bach

This lovely little prelude by J.S. Bach is one of the most accessible of his teaching pieces. While the piece incorporates some contrapuntal writing, including moments of imitation between the left- and right-hand parts, it is arguably most valuable as a vehicle for helping students understand various concepts related to keyboard harmony.

Teachers might help their students find and label both the broken and blocked chord constructions throughout the piece, including secondary dominant chords. The piece also provides an opportunity to introduce the concept of pedal points, as pedal points are included on both the tonic and the dominant notes in the key of the piece, C major.

The mordents that decorate the G pedal point starting in m. 9 require careful preparation to ensure perfect coordination between the hands, while attention to the fingering in m. 14 is vital for facilitating rhythmically even and fluid sixteenth notes. For a musically engaging presentation, students would do well to incorporate some dynamic shading and shaping, aiming to feel and point out the tension within the dominant harmonies and listening attentively and reacting accordingly as each moves to its respective tonic chord.

Fantasia in E flat Major, TWV 33:35: Second Section by Georg Philipp Telemann

In Telemann's Fantasia in E flat Major, students can refine their playing in a two-part imitative texture that promotes hand independence. Teachers and students will relish the many choices for creativity and an artistic performance, including articulation, voicing, shaping, dynamics (terraced/echo effects), and embellishments (both printed and added) which will need careful attention in terms of their realization and technical preparation. Students will enjoy listening to the dialogue between the two voices to bring out the imitative motives in each hand. Harmonic and registral awareness can be encouraged by playing each sequential gesture using a different dynamic level, according to the upward or downward motion of the musical motives.

Deux rigaudons by Jean-Philippe Rameau

The rigaudon is a lively and popular French dance set in duple meter, characterized with an upbeat. In Deux rigaudons, by Jean-Philippe Rameau, the composer adopts a ternary structure with the first rigaudon repeated once more to end the piece. Rigaudon I is written in a two-part imitative texture, promoting independence of the hands. Students can be encouraged to play with two different touches for the two predominant rhythmic values, providing contrast and textural clarity (*legato* for eighth notes and non-*legato* for quarter notes). The dance needs to be felt in two beats per measure, in cut time. Rigaudon II is in the parallel major key and presents a more rhythmic, contrasting texture. Students can consider using *inégalité* in this rigaudon to add to the liveliness and swing of the major tonality.

Angloise in D Major by Johann Christoph Friedrich Bach

This charming Angloise in D Major by Johann Christoph Friedrich Bach features a more homophonic texture demonstrating the galant style, with balanced four-measure phrases and periods. The title refers to the English country dances popular in the 18th century. Students can be encouraged to play with a light and bouncy touch to convey the character of this dance. The piece is written in a predominantly two-part texture with prominent consonant thirds, sixths, and tenths on the main beats. The left hand provides rhythmic motion with constant eighth notes, mostly by leaps. The Trio section is in the subdominant key, permeated by one main rhythmic motive. The piece uses predictable and easy-to-listen-to harmonies throughout, evoking the simple progressions and melodies of a lively country dance.

Sonata in D Minor, K 34 by Domenico Scarlatti

The Sonata in D Minor, K 34, is one of Domenico Scarlatti's more approachable sonatas, featuring a "minuet" feel with a lean on the first beats. There is often a special poignancy to the pacing as well as the musical gestures in Scarlatti's D minor sonatas. In this characteristic example, encourage students to vary their articulation to add contrast and clarity to the musical texture. In the unexpected harmonic and melodic moments in mm. 11 and 27, teachers can discuss the musical effect of this intentional chromaticism. Written mostly in a regular, four-measure phrase structure, an added expressive effect in the sonata is the echo/terraced effects with the left hand jumping up an octave in the repeated motives. A variety of written ornaments provides the opportunity for students to work on realizing embellishments, both printed and added.

Allegro in C Minor by José António Carlos de Seixas

Early 18th-century Portuguese composer and virtuoso performer José António Carlos de Seixas wrote highly original and creative harpsichord sonatas. The Allegro in C Minor from his Sonata No. 12 features a two-part texture in binary form. The sonata is written in a brisk triple meter, inviting performers to play with one big beat per measure. The right hand mostly plays the melody in emphatic and clear rhythm while the left hand plays in a sort of walking bass. Technical challenges include playing the frequently occurring right-hand triplet figure with clarity and evenness, as well as some hand-crossing technique with the left-hand crossing over the right in a playful and rhythmic gesture. In the frequently written appoggiaturas, encourage students to listen for the dissonance and resolution. Stylistic considerations in the interpretation of this sonata movement include articulation, ornaments, and dynamics.

Fuga (Sonatina) in G Major, HWV 582 by George Frideric Handel

Although not strictly a fugue, the Fuga (Sonatina) in G Major, HWV 582 is a fitting introduction to various fugal devices. It is contrapuntal and imitative, written in a mostly two-part texture. A challenging selection, this piece provides students with the opportunity to sing and play the different parts separately for a more detailed study of the musical lines. The variety of note values invites a discussion about articulation. Students can learn to recognize imitation in the two-part writing and add dynamic contouring to highlight this contrapuntal device. Handel uses asymmetrical phrases and phrase elision; encourage students to find the cadential points and to take time to breathe between phrases. The marked dynamics are not Handel's, but they provide some effective cues for an expressive performance. The Fuga can also provide an opportunity for adding ornaments; the long notes might benefit from some decoration or elongation.

List B: Classical and Classical-style Repertoire

Allegro moderato in F Major by Leopold Mozart

This playful and highly energetic piece by Leopold Mozart features quick jumps across the keyboard registers and almost perpetual sixteenth-note rhythms. Pianists will need to navigate the technical challenges with accuracy, including hand crossings with the right and left hands jumping over each other to play in extremely spaced registers. Invite students to play the bouncing melodic quarter notes with sparkling articulation, moving quickly and deftly between the octaves. The accompanying hand plays continual sixteenth-note Alberti-bass figurations that remain relatively static to allow for maximum freedom in the moving hand; encourage students to listen to the lightness, clarity, and evenness of these figures. In the sixteenth-note figuration in the right hand of m. 31 onward, students can follow the detached articulation in the left-hand eighth notes. Keep in mind that smaller hands may not be able to reach these intervals using a *legato* touch.

Sonatina in G Major, op. 168, no. 2: First Movement by Anton Diabelli

This charming and lyrical movement from the Sonatina in G Major, op. 168, no. 2 by Anton Diabelli is a fine opportunity to practice and realize many elements of Classical style. Students can cultivate smoothness in both the right and left hands here, creating shape and direction in the slurred *legato* melodies, and playing the left-hand Alberti-bass accompaniment seamlessly. Students will enjoy developing their harmonic sensitivity by shaping the phrases towards the more dissonant chords and playing softer, lighter phrase resolutions. Encourage rhythmic playing and steadiness in the perpetual eighth-note accompaniment and listen to the voicing between the hands, projecting the melody over the quieter accompaniment.

Sonatina in F Major, Anh. 5, no. 2: First Movement attr. Ludwig van Beethoven

The first movement from the Sonatina in F major, Anh. 5, no. 2 by Ludwig van Beethoven is a fine introduction to the composer's musical style while also providing an opportunity for students to read and interpret many details of Classical articulation. Students can learn how to realize notes without a slur using a detached articulation, the nuances of short and longer slurs, and extended passagework played with melodic direction. The opening of the piece bursts forth with a *forte* dynamic marking and it quickly traverses extreme, Beethovenian dynamic contrasts. Students can learn to hear and identify more expressive and dissonant harmonies, playing through the harmonic progressions with expressivity and growing tonal intensity (mm. 35–43) before the return of the major key tonality and more extroverted character of the opening.

Minuet in C Major, Hob. IX:8, no. 1 by Franz Joseph Haydn

Minuet in C Major, Hob. IX:8, no. 1 by Franz Joseph Haydn, is a representative example of this graceful and aristocratic dance, played at a moderate tempo in triple meter. The pianistic writing features strings of two-note slurs that add nuance to the right-hand melodies. Encourage students not only to realize the articulation but also to continue to shape the overarching phrases to avoid chopiness. To achieve this, students can practice shaping the melody using a *legato* touch at first. Once the melodies are smoothly shaped, with melodic direction, students should reincorporate the slurs with only a slight lift in between (avoiding an overly *staccato* "hop" on the second notes). Haydn has written dynamic and character contrasts in the trio: opening with a lyrical and gentle section that contrasts with the *forte* chordal writing to follow. Students will enjoy bringing out the contrasting characters and creating an overall elegant and dignified affect with this piece.

Sonatina in C Major, op. 36, no. 3: Third Movement by Muzio Clementi

The third movement of Muzio Clementi's Sonatina in C Major, op. 36, no. 3 is a cheerful, light-hearted, and accessible piece inspiring liveliness and pianistic virtuosity. Demonstrating the Classical ideal of contrasting characters, this movement features ample dynamic and tonal contrasts and melodies. Cultivate steady, rhythmic playing and clarity in the brilliant sixteenth-note passagework while listening for evenness and melodic contouring. Encourage students to play the opening left-hand, eighth-note accompaniment with a light and crisp *staccato* touch, avoiding excessive heaviness in the opening theme. Students can strive to bring out the contrasting character at m. 17 with a more expressive touch in the melody as another example of the many and quickly changing dynamic and character contrasts.

Sonatina in G Major: Third Movement by Jean Théodore Latour

The third movement from the Sonatina in G Major by Jean-Théodore Latour provides an apt introduction to the theme and variation form, featuring a charming and gentle theme and two variations. Beginning with a theme marked *dolce*,

accompanied by undulating eighth notes, the subsequent variations continue in successively faster rhythmic values (triplets and sixteenth notes), creating drive and momentum to the end. Amid the smooth slurs and steady rhythmic playing of the theme, students must learn to hold the left-hand half notes as they simultaneously play the moving eighth notes in the accompaniment. Suave triplet rhythms ensue in Variation 1, inviting students to realize the echo effects here for dynamic variety and tonal nuance. In Variation 2, students should strive to ensure that the sixteenth notes passing between right hand and left hand sound steady and uninterrupted.

List C: Romantic, 20th-, and 21st-century Repertoire

Harvest Song (*Ernteliedchen*), op. 68, no. 24 by Robert Schumann

Album for the Young, op. 68 by Robert Schumann is a collection of musical vignettes with programmatic titles depicting themes of childhood. Students will learn to identify and follow German expressive musical terms (including *mit fröhlichem Ausdruck*, *Langsamer*, and *Im Tempo*). *Harvest Song* features a frolicking and “rustic” rhythm in compound time. Performers should shape the melody with smoothness without creating accents caused by the rhythm. Teachers may encourage practicing phrasing first with an even eighth-note pulse to achieve an overarching shape before adding the quarter note–eighth note rhythm to the melody. A musical performance will feature light *staccato* notes and “leaning” on the melodic accents in an expressive, singing way. Technical challenges here include learning to connect chords using syncopated pedal.

Polka, op. 39, no. 10 by Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky

Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky's *Album for the Young*, op. 39 is a set of twenty-four charming pieces with accessible themes and titles geared towards younger piano students. Polka, op. 39, no. 10 is a lively and characteristic example of a popular, fast-paced dance that originated in the 19th century. The characteristic polka rhythm (two sixteenth notes followed by an eighth note), marked with three-note slurs in the melody, pervades the piece first in the right hand before migrating to the left hand. The accompaniment is written in a detached articulation throughout, beginning with chromatic writing in the left-hand *staccato* chords, which adds to the lively, hopping character of this dance. A characteristic performance will feature lightly articulated *staccato* notes and rhythmically leaning into the three-note slurs (with added grace notes in the right-hand melody). In the middle section, the left hand has the melody with the right hand taking over the jumping eighth notes; there are some wide leaps in the broken chordal writing. Students will enjoy adding direction and shape following the dynamic and expressive markings in the music. This is a charming and pedagogically important piece for control of articulation, hand coordination, independence, and mirroring of technical challenges in both hands.

Pierrot and Pierrette, op. 25, no. 4 by Amy Beach

Pierrot and Pierrette, op. 25, no. 4 is a light-hearted waltz taken from the programmatic suite entitled *Children's Carnival*, op. 25. Written by the prominent American composer Amy Beach, it features a characteristic waltz rhythm and lilt with a sustained, singing melody. Students have the opportunity to learn to project their right-hand melody over the left-hand accompaniment in a smooth and seamless way. In the sinewy melody, students should create an overarching shape that soars across the bar lines. Encourage students to play with uninterrupted pedal changes in this texture. Students will enjoy playing this attractive and accessible piece, imagining the entertaining turn of a carnival carousel.

Dusk by Nkeiru Okoye

The evocative and atmospheric writing in *Dusk* by Nkeiru Okoye encourages a creative exploration of sound and register. The writing in abundant fourths and fifths creates an airy feel with an open sound. The piece features ample dynamic and expressive markings, and most notably the use of register as an expressive device. The writing features short phrases with musical stops and *fermatas* written into the score; encourage students to experiment, taking time for pacing and “breathing” in the music. Okoye calls for the full dynamic range as well as the use of pedal. Students will enjoy learning to play with tempo flexibility while interpreting the *rubato* marking. Musical imagination can be ignited by reflecting on their feelings at the end of the day during the period of dusk, recalling events possibly with a slight melancholy because they are remembered in the past.

Lyric Piece, op. 27, no. 16 by Dmitri Kabalevsky

Dmitri Kabalevsky's *Lyric Piece*, op. 27, no. 16 creates the opportunity for students to play with singing, smoothly shaped melodies in a modern harmonic language. The piece begins and ends with a unison descending melody before the main theme and characteristic left-hand accompaniment enters. An expressive performance will follow the specific interpretive markings written in the music, such as pedal markings and articulation signs, including slurs and *portamento*. The piece also features long slurs that demand careful control of dynamic gradation and nuance to be played smoothly. Encourage students to play the repetitive left-hand accompaniment motive delicately. There is

mirroring in the left-hand *dolce* melodies that begins at mm. 12 and 27, where the left hand should take over the suave melody with smoothness and dynamic control.

***Petite pièce pour piano no. 2* by Nadia Boulanger**

Nadia Boulanger's reputation as one of the most famous and influential pedagogues of the 20th century is well established. Her composition, *Petite pièce pour piano no. 2*, is mysterious, ambient, and harmonically daring despite the simplicity of compositional materials. The piece features a repetitive left-hand accompaniment rhythm, with unexpected accents written into the melody. Syncopations as melodic surprises and agogic accents abound in this piece. Despite this compositional detail, students should play the piece focusing on the rhythm and with a smooth, flowing touch. Encourage students to voice between the hands so the left hand does not play too heavily. Students can practice nuance in their syncopated pedal technique, listening to the chromatic notes in the melody before depressing the pedal to connect the left-hand chords.

***Quietude* by Dennis Alexander**

In *Quietude* by Dennis Alexander, students will find the opportunity to play a piece in an evocative and accessible idiom and style of writing. In this graceful, flowing piece, encourage students to use seamless pedaling throughout. An expressive performance will interpret the ample dynamic and expressive markings written in the music. Both hands share the melodic material; when the left hand has the melody, the right hand plays clusters in a higher register, adding harmonic and textural nuance. The piece undergoes many modulations and opportunities for reading with accidentals for students, while remaining natural and easy to listen to. An attractive feature is the flowing writing with slurs joining the gestures between the hands. In this technical challenge, teachers can encourage students to practice dynamic and technical seamlessness in the transfer between the hands.

***Sidewalk Chalk* by Christine Donkin**

In this lively and energetic piece, students can develop their facility playing primarily on the black keys of the piano keyboard. Students' confidence can be buoyed in playing a piece with six flats in the key signature by encouraging them to keep in mind the only note that is not flat—F natural—when learning the notes. The piece begins with an articulated left-hand melody and a rhythmic right-hand accompaniment. This is followed by a mirroring of the keyboard writing, with the right hand taking over the melody while executing additional hand crossings over the left hand. Students will also become accustomed to playing the full G flat major scale pattern in this piece and they will enjoy realizing the ample dynamic and expressive markings, inspiring a sensitivity to the different registers of the piano.

***The Spice of Life* by Tom Gerou**

In this upbeat and swinging piece, *The Spice of Life* by Tom Gerou, students can immerse themselves in jazz-inspired harmonies and chromaticism. The rhythms in the piece feature swinging eighth notes as distinct from the even triplets. Students can be encouraged to play the opening triplet figure with a shape that leads up to the highest note and then trails off dynamically, following the direction of the chromatically descending chords. Technical challenges in the writing in the middle section include leaps in the left hand while the right hand has articulation variety with short slurs and *staccato* notes leading up to chromatically changing chords. The piece provides an opportunity for students to not only develop their rhythmic groove, but also their shaping of harmonic chromaticism.

***Little Sparrows* by Alexina Louie**

Alexina Louie's *Little Sparrows* features music written in a modern musical idiom and offers an opportunity for creative listening. Students will enjoy finding the bird "chirps" and "pecks" within the musical texture and bringing out their sonic characteristics. They can extend their listening to the creative use of the damper pedal, including using long pedal effects and an extended dynamic range with the introduction of the *una corda* pedal. Students will expand their confidence in reading and playing in extended registers and they will enjoy the rhythmic challenges of this atmospheric and original keyboard texture and writing.

***Melancholy Reflections* by Mike Schoenmehl**

Melancholy Reflections by Mike Schoenmehl features a wistful ambiance with ample opportunity for pianistic expression. In the opening, shape the right-hand melody following the direction of the notes as they ascend and descend, cultivating sensitivity to the wider expressive leaps. Students have the opportunity to use syncopated pedaling here, waiting until the more held moments in the melody to depress the pedal and add a resonant cloud of sound to the harmonies. Encourage students to listen to the voicing and shaping in the upper melody during the chordal playing beginning in m. 7. An appreciation for the expressive chromaticism in the harmonies matched by a sinewy seamlessness in the *legato* playing in both hands can be developed to fully express the melancholy, reflective character.

***Winter Rose* by Ailbhe McDonagh**

Winter Rose by Ailbhe McDonagh features a popular and expressive musical idiom. Bringing out the bass-note resonance is important for the harmonies here; encourage students to lean into the left-hand bass notes and enjoy the unfolding dissonance in the harmonic language. McDonagh writes ample dynamic and expressive markings, presenting many opportunities for individual interpretive choices. From m. 9 onward, students should project the right-hand

melody in the upper register. This piece invites subtle use of the damper pedal, listening for the harmonic moments to depress the pedal and lifting it during the more scalar passages.

Sunset in Rio by Mike Springer

Mike Springer's *Sunset in Rio* features abundant syncopated Latin dance rhythms. Students will enjoy navigating the syncopated rhythms while at the same time playing with smooth and suavely shaped slurs in the right hand, mimicking an entire band, including an accompanying rhythm section and melodic instruments. A polished performance will include sensitive dynamic shaping and direction; invite students to practice their *legato* contouring and dynamic control. Students will enjoy the challenging syncopated rhythms in the climactic chordal moments to demonstrate dynamic and rhythmic control within a dancing groove.

Little March by Talivaldis Kenins

Little March by Talivaldis Kenins features a strong and emphatic rhythm, typical for the character of a march. Students can practice marching themselves to feel the appropriate tempo for their steps. Encourage students to play with rhythmic precision, interpreting short and crisp staccato notes as well as even and accurate triplet rhythms. The quick double-note triplet repeated notes must be executed with lightness and rhythmic accuracy. The repeated single notes played quickly (including on black keys) invites practicing the technique of repeating notes and changing fingers for more rapid repetition. The piece features mirroring of challenging rhythms, written for both right and left hands. Reading and realizing the dynamic and expressive markings faithfully will lead to an effective performance.

LEVEL 5 ETUDES

Etudes

Prelude, op. 39, no. 19 by Dmitri Kabalevsky

Feature:

- contrasting articulations in scale and broken-chord figuration

Little Piece No. 13 by Marko Tajčević

Feature:

- varied articulations in melodic and chordal figuration

Etude in C Major, op. 718, no. 7 by Carl Czerny

Feature:

- left-hand triplet figuration with slower-moving right-hand double notes and chords

Dance of the Dragonflies, op. 76, no. 7 by Eduard Rohde

Feature:

- continuity of line over left-hand slurs

Dragonfly Scherzo by Anne Crosby Gaudet

Feature:

- precise coordination of hands in changing meters and shifting figuration

Harmony of the Angels, op. 100, no. 21 by Johann Friedrich Burgmüller

Feature:

- broken-chord triplet figuration with alternating hands

Joyous Etude by Melody Bober

Feature:

- melodic projection in varying textures and patterns

***Little Dragon* by Vincent Ho**

Feature:

- scalar figures in alternating hands across the keyboard

***Etude on a Pentatonic Scale* by Edward Han Jiang**

Feature:

- melody shared between the hands with repeated-note and broken-octave accompaniment

***Elves* by Ernest Bloch**

Feature:

- musical imagery with alternating hands and a long-breathed melodic line

***Staccatoville!* by Dennis Alexander**

Feature:

- staccato–chromatic figuration with triads and alternating hands

***A Summer Day* by Christopher Norton**

Feature:

- jazz-waltz style with shaped right-hand melody, orchestral texture, and coordinated pedaling

***Chromatic Monochrome* by Naoko Ikeda**

Feature:

- right-hand jazz “licks” with swing rhythm and supportive walking-bass accompaniment

***The Black Pony* by Lajos Papp**

Feature:

- musical imagery with alternating-hands figuration building facility on the black keys

LEVEL 6

LEVEL 6 REPERTOIRE

For Level 6 examinations, students continue to present three repertoire selections and two etudes:

- **List A:** Baroque Repertoire
- **List B:** Classical and Classical-style Repertoire
- **List C:** Romantic, 20th-, and 21st-century Repertoire
- **Etudes:** two technically contrasting etudes

Select any piece to learn more about it.

List A: Baroque Repertoire

Little Prelude in D Minor, BWV 926 by Johann Sebastian Bach

Of the many pedagogical pieces that J.S. Bach wrote for his children and students, the Little Prelude in D Minor, BWV 926 stands out as a multi-faceted gem. The time signature (3/4) is slyly misleading; Bach's opening patterning suggests 6/8, which then results in an exciting hemiola effect in m. 10. Still later (m. 21), the right hand and left hand seem to "disagree" on which meter is the true one. Besides working to internalize this metrical complexity, the student will have a rather thorough crash-course in Bach's ornamentation practices. Mordents and trills are explained in helpful footnotes, but the student will observe that not every instance of each decoration is identical since rhythm affects execution, as in m. 16. Yet another attractive feature of this piece is its virtuosic and improvisatory *cadenza*-like episode from mm. 39–43. Pacing and rhythmic flexibility are important to consider, particularly in the cadential m. 44.

L'indifférente by Jean-Philippe Rameau

The descriptive title of Rameau's melancholy piece *L'indifférente* invites a conversation with the student—what does the word "indifferent" describe? The entwined scalar contours throughout might suggest birdsong, or a flute duet. Working to recreate these timbres can be an exciting way to explore this piece, while the formula patterning in technical work will also prove beneficial. The keyboard works of the French Baroque period are famous for ornamentation, which is often really "baked into" the melody, such as in the organic execution of the left-hand ornament in m. 3. Students might work to find different and effective fingering combinations to execute the ornaments throughout. In the repeats, those who feel comfortable may even experiment with adding their own embellishments. Finally, Rameau's most distinctive use of harmonic color is a wonderful moment at m. 25—students will enjoy finding ways to pace this surprise for the listener.

Giga in G Major by Elisabetta de Gambarini

This spirited and athletic movement by English composer Elisabetta de Gambarini provides a wonderful introduction to the liveliest of the typical Baroque dances. Its compound meter promotes a propulsive undercurrent—students may highlight the characteristic eighth-note pick up that occurs throughout. Articulation is an important topic for discussion, and the sound of the harpsichord, for which this piece was originally written, is worth invoking. The energetic leaps are sometimes enormous, including the ascending tenth in the very first measure. These leaps demand a detached approach, and detached articulations support dance-like spirit elsewhere as well. Opportunities to create interest in articulation occur organically in the music; for instance, in the repeat of the opening consequent phrase in m. 18, where de Gambarini cleverly alters the left hand. Tastefully bringing out small details like this will contribute to a memorable, convincing interpretation.

Polonaise in B flat Major by Johann Christian Bach

In the hands of Johann Christian Bach, this Baroque dance movement is given truly aristocratic treatment. A stately and dignified tempo is appropriate, taking into consideration the dance's original ballroom setting, complete with wigs and gowns. Students may enjoy relating either hand to a pair of dancers and develop ways of communicating the implicit counterpoint in a responsive, back-and-forth manner. For instance, the student might practice only the sixteenth-note contours in mm. 1–2, developing a dialogue between the hands. Rhythmic interplay is an equally rich topic for focused study, especially in such a spot as the last system, where the dotted rhythm is charmingly, if unpredictably, exchanged between the hands.

Aria in G Major by Georg Philipp Telemann

The spaciouly lyrical character of this beautiful piece provides a wealth of learning opportunity, of pianistic skills both universal and style specific. The opening indication, *mf cantabile* is an invitation for students to cultivate a truly singing style of melodic playing, in which the "soprano" line is balanced luminously above the supportive "basso continuo," and in which each tone is played into the resonance of the one before. A convincing treatment of the melodic contour will pace and distribute the tone needed to sustain longer notes; in particular, in such a place as the opening measure. Where the soprano line needs a "breath," such as in the conspicuous rests in m. 9, the student may first practice the line in a *legato* fashion, then incorporate these small punctuations. The title and era would also assume an embellished repeat in both sections, and students may explore a myriad of possible ornamentations.

Sarabande in D Minor by George Frideric Handel

Handel's many keyboard suites comprise an invaluable and often highly accessible compendium of Baroque harpsichord music. This movement is a fantastic introduction to the sarabande, the slowest and often most serious of the standard Baroque dances. Its triple meter emphasizes the second beat; in this case Handel highlights it even more by adding a pause before the third beat. The opening section's repetitive structure leaves room for, and even invites, expressive engagement and serves as a reminder that in the Baroque era, composers generally preferred to leave more of the detail up to the performer. A convincing performance of the first variation will project a well-developed contrapuntal dialogue that provides careful carriage of the inner voice particularly. Practicing each texture separately is

a wonderful way to approach this. The final variation features a mobile walking bass that may be played with detached articulation.

Sonata in B flat Major, K 440 by Domenico Scarlatti

Scarlatti's hundreds of keyboard sonatas are bursting with personality and invention, and it is no less evident here, where he chooses to adopt the most standard Baroque dance, the minuet. What begins in a deceptively simple manner has, by the end, turned more than a few risky corners: the tightly knit scalar contours in m. 17 that demand a light left-hand articulation; the unexpected bass extension at m. 44; and the waterfall arpeggios that close the piece. Students will undoubtedly have fun navigating these slightly daredevil details while simultaneously sculpting an elegant sense of articulation. While most of the score necessitates a detached left-hand approach, students could be encouraged to also practice the left hand connected, to provide a horizontal underpinning. Ornaments are limited to the trill throughout, but in quarter-, half-, and dotted half-note examples that provide a wonderful learning opportunity for rhythmic execution.

List B: Classical and Classical-style Repertoire

Viennese Sonatina in C Major: Fourth Movement (Finale) by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Mozart's six Viennese Sonatinas were transcribed to the keyboard from original woodwind settings, but nonetheless feature many characteristics associated with the composer's most mature and masterful works for the keyboard. The finale of the sixth sonatina is a charming movement, bursting with energy and humor. Students exploring this work will find much to enjoy in Mozart's variety of materials, from the rocket-like figures of the opening to the more nuanced, slightly amusing chromatic counterpoint of the second thematic group. Throughout the exposition, comfortable navigation of many double-note textures is an important key to mastery, particularly the right hand's thirds. Similarly important is an attention to the elegance of phrasing throughout, and the development of a well-controlled, Classical sense of balance between the hands. Students may also explore ways of bringing out the charm and humor in each phrase, particularly with dynamic nuance.

Sonatina in E flat Major, op. 4, no. 7 by Samuel Wesley

This stately *maestoso* sonatina by English organist Samuel Wesley provides a rich landscape for stylistic intersection and exploration. The dotted rhythms and characteristic ornaments relate it distantly to a symphonic French overture, and its *da Capo* structure to the Baroque aria, in which the repeat of the opening section would be ornamented. Similarly, dynamics and counterpoint play important roles throughout, in a way that sometimes suggests the organ. An example of this can be observed in the frequent sequential passages beginning at m. 5, which the teacher might relate to a different organ registration/manual. A convincing performance will exhibit control of counterpoint in such places as the left hand at the cadence in m. 13, and in sensitively lifting implicit melodic contours out of otherwise Classical figuration, as in m. 28. The rich contrapuntal dialogue that closes the middle section requires balance and sensitivity. Here the student might be encouraged to initially practice only the melodic sixteenth-note textures.

Sonatina in G Major, op. 19/20, no. 1: First Movement by Jan Ladislav Dussek

Dussek's inventive music for keyboard is well-represented by this attractive sonatina movement. Many musical materials that feature prominently in Classical-era music are present here: Alberti bass, melody lines based on scale passages, ascending rocket figures, as well as lightly articulated discourse (from m. 17). In addition to studying these materials, students will have the opportunity to explore the first movement of a sonatina that introduces two contrasting themes within a structure that combines elements of sonata and rondo form. The opening phrase-group offers the chance to work on rhythmic focus: sustaining a consistent pulse is crucial here, while also executing the various rhythmic patterns within a stable tempo. While navigating the longer lyrical contours (from m. 5 in the right hand), students may work towards developing an appropriate sense of balance and sensitive phrase-shaping. Even where textures are thicker, a successful performance will tread lightly and delicately, taking every possibility to highlight the detail in the music.

Sonata in F Major, Wq. 55/5: Third Movement by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach

The musical spontaneity of this charming movement underlines C.P.E. Bach's improvisational mastery. Students approaching the music of this son of J.S. Bach for the first time might find it illuminating to compare works of both C.P.E. and his father side-by-side. Navigating this movement's almost restless rhythmic, registral, and dynamic shifts is an area for special focus. In many instances, the keyboard athletics that result require study and preparation. One such example is the outward leap in m. 6. This challenge will become more manageable when the left hand prepares its octave; and "ghosting" practice (playing the left hand "silently" on the surface of the keys) may be used to great effect

here. A similar trouble spot occurs at the end of both sections (mm. 14–16, and later mm. 35–37). Here the student might be encouraged to map out each position by blocking each group of four sixteenth notes. The delightful series of two-note slurs throughout may be treated as long connected phrases with punctuation, avoiding inadvertent accents on the second note of each group.

Sonatina in A Minor by Georg Anton Benda

The variety of musical materials in this sonatina movement contribute to a distinctive, satisfying musical canvas that provides many fun challenges for students looking at Classical-era keyboard works. The opening virtuosic flourishes hint at the figuration Benda will develop later (m. 17). In each instance, a successful execution will unify the hands in one ten-finger collection, where the hands pass off the gesture with seamless continuity. At the same time, the right hand's back-and-forth registral gymnastics must be nimble and well-choreographed. The lyrical episode from mm. 5–6 is a break from the surrounding acrobatics but contains its own challenges as the phrase markings in either hand are at odds. Finding a tempo at which the student may comfortably navigate the incredibly fun (if hazardous) pitter-patter hand-crossings from m. 17 requires disciplined preparation from the very opening of the piece. Students might be encouraged to check the consistency of the tempo by practicing the start of each section.

Sonata in G Major, Hob. XVI:G1: First Movement by Franz Joseph Haydn

Many hallmarks of Haydn's charming approach to sonata form are evident in this piece: the signpost that marks out structural areas (here in the form of thirty-second-note pentascales), the overall economy of materials, and some cheeky musical repetitions which almost overstay their welcome. Students encountering these procedures for the first time might be encouraged to listen to another of Haydn's opening sonata movements, identifying where the same kinds of processes occur. Such economical writing as we encounter in this piece demands a vibrant and well-developed palette of expressive character; sudden dynamic shifts like the one from mm. 14–15 must be navigated with a "twinkle in the eye." Playing with the listeners' expectations is surely one of the most enjoyable aspects of Haydn's music. Impulsive scalar athletics require rehearsal (mm. 22–24), as do the pairs of slurred sixteenth notes throughout (mm. 65–69).

As Swift as a Deer by Daniel Gottlob Türk

Türk's athletic piece *As Swift as a Deer* provides a wonderful opportunity for students to invent descriptions and a narrative to underpin the music. For example, the clear and consistent use of imitation throughout suggests not one but two deer! The piece is brisk, with scalar contours and broken chords comprising principal textures, but, cleverly, Türk creates a lilt with these materials by inserting small melodic leaps and distinctive half steps. Students might be encouraged to try mapping out each position and identifying which scalar fingering will be most efficient (for instance, the left hand's opening descending D major scale will likely work best if played as an A major scale missing its G sharp). Equally important is the development of a fluent seamlessness in navigating these musical materials, particularly in places such as m. 11, where the right-hand thumb must quickly prepare the second scale.

List C: Romantic, 20th-, and 21st-century Repertoire

Waltz in A Minor, op. posth., B 150 by Frédéric Chopin

Polish composer Frédéric Chopin is a perennial favorite among piano students, teachers, and recital audiences. Many of the most distinctive of Chopin's characteristics are present in this youthful piece: melancholy, *bel cantol*yrism, with memorable melodic contours; harmonic shading that is rich and just piquant enough; and an invitation to explore flexibility in timing with tasteful *rubato*, while still maintaining the dance character. Students might be encouraged to develop comfort with the large spans of the left hand's waltz patterning—the large-motor choreography here might be rehearsed with eyes closed. The absence of dynamic markings does certainly not presuppose a monochrome palette. Additionally, Chopin's generously repetitive phrasestructure provides the student with abundant opportunities to shape phrases, and harmonic adventurousness may inform dynamic approaches, as in m. 31, where the dynamic temperature could be raised to underpin the unexpected direction. The lone moment of characteristic decorative filigree at m. 21 will provide an interesting and not-too-daunting way to introduce Chopin's famous *fioritura*, developed so brilliantly in his nocturnes.

Spanish, op. 55, no. 5 by Agathe Backer Grøndahl

The amount of music Norwegian composer Agathe Backer Grøndahl's wrote for piano is vast, and this captivating waltz is a great place to start for students who are interested in exploring this appealing repertoire. Cast in an ABA structure, the student will have many opportunities to refine combinations of articulation in the outer sections, and to work on synthesizing this with nonchalant flair. While the phrase structure is symmetrical, planning ahead is

important—for instance, to anticipate the left hand's prominent melodic contour in m. 13. One of the most appealing aspects of this piece is its inner episode, in which many surprises await the student. The invitation to use pedal requires thought and harmonic sensitivity, particularly in such an astonishing moment as m. 27. Grøndahl's use of planing technique, often associated with Debussy, is also an opportunity to practice chordal voicing.

Of Foreign Lands and Peoples (Von fremden Ländern und Menschen), op. 15, no. 1 by Robert Schumann

This atmospheric piece, which opens Robert Schumann's poignantly nostalgic cycle *Kinderszenen*, op. 15, is well-loved for good reason. The dream-like, innocent character can be fragile if control of texture is not completely mastered. Particularly important is balance of the interior triplet texture which is shared between the hands. Rather than "hands separately," students may do well to practice "textures separately:" the bass, triplet accompaniment, and soprano melodic contour. This is also a wonderful piece for encouraging students to explore the possibilities of *rubato*, especially in such moments as mm. 12–15. This transitional passage also contains some thorny counterpoint, and might be singled out for detailed study without pedal; in particular, the fingering substitutions require agility to sustain each texture. In such a richly recorded piece as this, students might find inspiration in listening to a variety of performances.

Fairy Tale, op. 27, no. 20 by Dmitri Kabalevsky

The Neo-Classical nostalgic atmosphere of Kabalevsky's *Fairy Tale* leaves a haunting impression. Its synthesis of nursery-song simplicity with harmonic adventure is memorable and can be magical. To highlight the impact of this, students might be encouraged to play the right hand alone, adding a "standard" harmonization, and then trying again with Kabalevsky's traveling left-hand *ostinato* in solid chords, listening to how it colors the melody. Relating the harmony to something pictorial and/or descriptive may guide students towards unlocking the dramatic, narrative potential of the music, especially in such a striking moment as m. 15, where the unexpectedly dark key of C sharp minor is revealed. This piece demands an exceptional sense of dynamic depth and control; students must both inhabit a large and nuanced range of dynamics (from *pp* to *f*) and adeptly control the pacing of each crescendo and *diminuendo*.

Dance of the Tiger Cubs by Vincent Ho

Dance of the Tiger Cubs comes from Vincent Ho's set of twelve descriptive pieces on the Chinese Zodiac. As with Ho's other keyboard music, the pianism is often as descriptive as it is idiomatic, and the playful feline fun is almost palpable. Students taking on this breathlessly energetic romp will likely find the frequent meter shifts more exciting than daunting, but they might prepare by tapping or counting the basic beat from one meter to the next, and by tapping the rhythm of each hand. The double-notes that occur throughout remain within a comfortable hand span, promoting development of chordal technique. Students may carefully practice playing these fourths as a unit with the "whole hand," keeping a flexible wrist, and avoiding an approach using only the fingers.

Running for the Bus by Alexina Louie

Alexina Louie's descriptive piece *Running for the Bus* provides a fantastic way for students to experience and explore some of the most practical notational innovations of the 20th century. The graphic notation in m. 22 is a highlight of this score and offers a chance to create a convincing sense of pacing. This is also an effective piece to teach hemiola, control of rhythmic cross-currents, and fluency of black-and-white-key patterning. While Louie provides a sketch of the musical narrative through such directions in the score as "out of breath!" and "running again," students could be encouraged to fill in some of the blanks. For example, what else could the music illustrate (weather, landscape?); and what might the music be describing in key transitional points such as mm. 19–22? These creative descriptions may assist in developing a sense of musical "ownership" as well as musical individuality and more specific decision making.

Air de ballet, op. 123, no. 11 by Cécile Chaminade

The transparent delicacy of Cécile Chaminade's *Air de ballet* provides many opportunities for students to develop their keyboard choreography. The marvelous opening area gracefully tiptoes from phrase-to-phrase, until reaching a climactic point (mm. 7–8) in which the physical reach is organically folded into the tempo's elasticity. The elegant rests that punctuate this opening necessitate a nimble and generally light-footed approach to pedaling; practicing the gentle overlap and release of each texture creates a beautifully gestural character in which the waltz-rhythm remains an implicit underpinning. The area from m. 37 requires special attention and planning; the student must balance a three-part texture, with perhaps the most difficult contour occurring in the middle. A successful performance will create fluency where this part is passed back-and-forth between the hands.

Miimii (Mourning Dove) by Barbara Assiginaak

Barbara Assiginaak's haunting piece *Miimii* recalls the sounds of the *pipigwan*. Chromatic inflections throughout, particularly like the right hand's in m. 2, seem to distantly imitate the liquid tone-bending of this Anishinaabe cedar flute. As such, developing a convincing and flexible application of tone color is crucial. Before playing the double-note pulses, students might be encouraged to work against tendencies to play vertically by practicing through these textures in a sustained manner, with each horizontal change articulated melodically. The through-composed nature of this music at times brings it near quasi-improvisation; while different meters are gently suggested by surface-level patterning, the

student must work to welcome the music into **44** rather than asserting the idea of strong and weak beats on the music. Here, the detailed markings in articulation and dynamic shape are essential guides.

***Jasmine Flower* Chinese folk song, arr. Edward Han Jiang**

The appeal of Edward Han Jiang's arrangement of *Jasmine Flower* is multi-faceted. Rich and pianistic, it seamlessly synthesizes the spirit of Chinese folk music with a Romantic sensibility. The piece provides a wonderful opportunity to internalize two-against-three polyrhythms. Students might rehearse these passages in groupings that allow physical comfort and rhythmic focus; for example, isolating m. 5, beat 2, then beat 3. Controlling the undulating arpeggiations of the left-hand accompaniment requires balance and fluency. Most of the patterning fits nicely under the hand, although students might be directed to give special care to the wide spacings of m. 10. For moments where the mostly unfettered melody is interspersed with chords, as in mm. 11–12, students may be encouraged to practice the melodic thread alone, and then add in the chord tones as a path to refine the voicing.

***Sweet Mister Jelly Roll* by Valerie Capers**

A celebratory, fun-loving spirit is palpable in this homage to the great jazz pianist Jelly Roll Morton by Valerie Capers. Delivering the many surprises within this piece takes not just comfort, but total mastery in navigating syncopated rhythms. Similarly, quickly changing articulations, such as in the right hand of m. 3, require absolute control. To promote this control and highlight the pop and punch of *staccato* touches throughout, a close-to-the-keys approach might be developed. Ability to synthesize patterning with a contrary metrical underpinning is crucial in places like m. 9. Where this musical idea is made more difficult by the addition of double notes in m. 13, applying special articulation approaches in practice will aid in execution; for instance, the lower part could be practiced *staccato* while the upper part remains connected.

***Gentle Breeze* by Joanne Bender**

The transparent, atmospheric character of Joanne Bender's *Gentle Breezes* maximizes learning opportunity with remarkable economy. The harmonic world of this piece is wonderfully accessible, with major–major 7th chords that saturate the harmonic landscape, and the most adventurous move to the warmly lit key of C major in the middle episode. Given the consistency of this harmonic patterning, the student might be encouraged to develop a sensitive balance of texture, where each melodic contour is given a different tone-color to contrast with its surroundings; for example, in m. 2 where the last two notes emerge melodically out of the sixteenth-note accompaniment. In the spots where the figuration is varied with contrary motion patterns (mm. 8–14) there is an opportunity to create longer lines and to explore new colors and increased intensity within the denser texture.

***Happy Time Jazz* by Martha Mier**

Martha Mier's *Happy Time Jazz* is a delightful choice for students interested in exploring jazz styles. In swung eighths throughout, the piece is spunkily upbeat and not without a punchy sense of humor! A detailed, energetic approach to articulation will go great lengths towards making this optimistic spirit palpable. Both hands need a nimble, almost gymnastic mobility in navigating some quick “foot-work”—particularly the left hand in m. 3. Students might be encouraged to experiment with a variety of fingering, as some hands may fit more easily into a different, more intuitive grouping. In the piece's middle section, the right hand's broken octave riff (m. 19) might be practiced with the lower note held, and the upper notes “exchanged,” so that comfort with quickly replacing finger 5 on a new key is promoted. These also could be practiced initially as solid octaves.

***Whirlwind* by Dennis Alexander**

Dennis Alexander's exciting piece *Whirlwind* combines dramatic, pianistically satisfying writing with rhythmic surprises and dynamic pacing. Navigating rapidly changing registers in either hand creates a fun challenge. Wherever possible, where one hand leaps, the other might be practiced in a grounded way to develop security: this approach may be utilized in the very first measure where the D minor position remains consistent in the right hand, while the left hand leaps. The exciting swell from mm. 13–16 requires a patient pacing and an ironclad rhythmic underpinning to communicate the surprise in store at m. 16. Rhythmic control is similarly crucial in the passage from mm. 29–32; encourage students to make the big surprise in m. 33 as exciting as possible by committing to the metric ambiguity that precedes!

***Little Nocturne* by Jakub Metelka**

The clever opening of Jakub Metelka's *Little Nocturne* clearly references one of the most famous piano nocturnes of all: Chopin's op. 9, no. 2, in the same key. A successful navigation of both pieces' spacious lyricism will voice the melodic thread with tonal warmth and an organic sense of phrase, in which each note is played into the resonance of the one before. Application of a sensitive, tasteful *rubato* would not be out of place, and the development of a deep palette of tone-colors will support a convincing performance, particularly in the momentary harmonic diversion at m. 21. Throughout, the left hand's accompaniment canvas requires practiced choreography; if possible, students might be encouraged to “shorten the journey” by taking the upper two chords within one position.

LEVEL 6 ETUDES

Etude in A flat Major, op. 139, no. 51 by Carl Czerny

Feature:

- cantabile tone, balance and coordinated pedaling

Solfeggio in D Major by Johann Christoph Friedrich Bach

Feature:

- evenly spaced broken chords divided between the hands

The Goblin and the Mosquito by Florence B. Price

Feature:

- musical imagery with *staccato* and slurred figuration divided between the hands

River City Blues by Martha Mier

Feature:

- blues-style melody with a stride-bass accompaniment

Heartache, op. 32, no. 2 by Robert Fuchs

Feature:

- clarity and inflection in *legato* double notes and discreet *ostinato* accompaniment

Miniature, op. 62, no. 6 by Theodor Kirchner

Feature:

- continuity of line and voicing of chordal figures divided between the hands

Moto perpetuo by Tom Gerou

Feature:

- widely spaced broken chords with embedded melody in irregular meter

Moonbeams by Alexina Louie

Feature:

- musical imagery with broken-chord and cluster figuration divided between the hands

Dancing Scales by John Burge

Feature:

- *staccato* scale patterns over a slower-moving *ostinato* accompaniment

Courting Counting by Evelyn Glennie

Feature:

- melodic line with syncopation and hemiola over perpetual-motion accompaniment

Etude in F Major, op. 88, no. 18 by Hermann Berens

Feature:

- syncopated *staccato* figuration with discreet chordal accompaniment

Math Whiz by Bradley Sowash

Feature:

- rock-style beat with clear rhythmic definition in evolving melodic patterns and punctuating triads

Jazz Piece No. 2 by Oscar Peterson

Feature:

- projected melodic line with syncopated chordal accompaniment

Etude in E Minor, op. 29, no. 14 by Henri Bertini

Feature:

- facility in rapid triplet figuration with *legato* double notes and *staccato* chords

Malfunction! Malfunction! by Nancy Telfer

Feature:

- musical imagery with irregular rhythms, changing meters, and evolving patterns

Game of Patience, op. 25, no. 2 by Génari Karganov

Feature:

- precise coordination in slur and *staccato* figuration divided between the hands