

First Steps of imagination - technical and emotional fluency (based on the music of Kabalevsky and Bailey from the syllabi)

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*Children are naturally spontaneous. They don't walk, they skip and jump and burst with enthusiasm, imagination and energy. Why is it when they sit at the piano that they become stiff and stilted as they grapple with the black and white monsters on the keyboard? Directing and developing this natural curiosity, enthusiasm and imagination of our students is the key to nurturing the physical, mental and emotional health of the next generation. As teachers of the next generation we have a huge responsibility to deliver a meaningful education to our students. As piano teachers we have an even greater responsibility to **capture** and **develop** the imagination of our students to bring them to a high level of technical and emotional fluency. This paper specifically looks at interpreting the ideas and mastership of the composers Kabalevsky and Bailey, to develop technical and emotional fluency based on a logical structure. It will explore these composers' ability to inspire young performers to connect with and unlock the unlimited fantasy inside the music they play through their own life experiences.*

What is imagination?

Imagination is the image forming power of the mind that modifies the conception, especially the higher form of this power exercised in art and poetry.¹

The Collins dictionary defines imagination as the faculty of making mental images of things not present,² in other words fantasy, the power of imagination.

Einstein said that the gift of fantasy meant more to him than his talent for absorbing positive knowledge.³

Why teach and direct imagination?

With fantasy everything is possible. Children have a natural ability to feel and understand fantasy. Children are full of energy and fantasy.

¹ Webster's reference Library, Geddes & Grosser 2006

² Collins English Dictionary, William Collins Sons & Co 1990

³ www.gurteen.com/gurteen/gurteen.nsf/id/X00002782/

Consider the games they play and the imaginary friends they have! They have no inhibitions as they run jump, skip and play with no effort.⁴

In studying music, children need to feel and understand that they are learning about life, and that music is life itself.⁵ When children are shown the motivation behind their movements on the piano and understand how to relate their natural response to the sound in the music, this freedom and spontaneity that occurs naturally in their play can be translated and cultivated in their music.

In his method, Jacques Dalcroze, Swiss composer, teacher and founder of *gymnastique rythmique*, embraced the idea of movement as a means of understanding musical art and Stravinsky, an influential composer of ballet insisted that music must be *seen* to be properly assimilated. On some analysis, Gardner, significant American developmental psychologist best known for his theory on multiple intelligences, noted that music itself is best thought of as an extended gesture – a kind of movement or direction that is carried out, at least implicitly with the body. He said that young children certainly relate music and body movements naturally, finding it virtually impossible to sing without engaging in some accompanying physical activity.⁶

Imagination educates us emotionally and teaches us to communicate.

A privileged place must be reserved for music, an emotional art above all others, which exerts an irresistible influence on man.⁷

If the player has imagination, then in one note he can express a variety of shades of feeling: tenderness and daring, anger ... and loneliness, emptiness and much more, of course, by imagining that that sound has had a “past” and has a “future”.⁸

“Emotions can have a powerful impact on how we perceive and react.”⁹

⁴ Neuhaus, H. (1997) *The Art of Piano Playing*; translated by Barrie and Jenkins Ltd; London: Kahn and Averill p99

⁵ Kabalevsky, D.B. (1988) *Music and Education: a composer writes about musical education*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers p 28

⁶ Gardner, H. (1993) *Frames of Mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. UK Fontana Press

⁷ Ibid p137

⁸ Neuhaus, H. (1997) *The Art of Piano Playing*; translated by Barrie and Jenkins Ltd; London: Kahn and Averill p 116

⁹ Goleman, D. (2005) *Emotional Intelligence*. USA. Bantam Dell. A Division of Random House, Inc. New York. P55

Engaging the imagination enables the child to connect with and represent their own emotional experiences physically and intellectually through the music. This is emotional fluency.

The more we cultivate this emotional culture through imagination, the more our students are free to listen to what they are playing, to hear what they see and to talk. Where these connections are not made students often become stiff and stilted as they grapple with the black and white monsters on the keyboard.

Imagination teaches the choreography of emotional movement, where we transport the ideas and intentions of the composer to the audience. This instrument of communication is more refined and subtle than words.

Technique

The word “technique” comes from the Greek word which means art.¹⁰

The first and main concern of every pianist should be to acquire a deep, full, rich tone capable of any nuance, with all its countless gradations.¹¹

Heinrich Neuhaus, renowned Russian/German pianist and pedagogue, believes that a clear grasp of what we call the *artistic image* i.e. the meaning of sounds, the poetic substance, the essence of music and being able to understand it in terms of theory of music is essential as early as possible. A clear understanding of the goal enables the player to strive for it, to maintain it and embody it in his performance; and that is what *technique* is about.¹²

Where technical and emotional fluency meet:

In many ways it is impossible to separate technical fluency from emotional fluency. As Neuhaus quite rightly states “everything is part of one whole”.¹³

¹⁰ Neuhaus, H. (1997) *The Art of Piano Playing*; translated by Barrie and Jenkins Ltd; London: Kahn and Averill p 2

¹¹ Ibid p 67

¹² Ibid p 2

¹³ Ibid p 53

To play with technical and emotional fluency, students need to understand the answers to the questions **what? why? and how?** The ‘what’, is the structure and the storyline, the ‘why’ is the imagination and the ‘how’ is the realization of the right answers. They need to understand the music in terms of the right time, the right place and the right notes. As Kabalevsky says, “Everything possible must be done to enable the pupils to work out the right answers for themselves.”¹⁴

As we travel through the composer’s texts, we need to educate our students, with enormous discipline, and respect, and inspire them to be intellectually and emotionally involved with the music.

Composers provide all the information that we need to be able to play their music as they intended. Elliot, Professor of Music and Music Education at New York University, stresses the importance of knowing what the musical score really intends. For it is only in the artistic performance of a musical composition that everything the composer conceived is actually decided.¹⁵

For this reason, Neuhaus believes that students should study a piano composition as a whole in the same way as a conductor studies a score.¹⁶

If we teach our students to respect, understand, to first translate and then interpret the music on a base of logical foundation, we can give them the freedom to travel through the music with unlimited imagination. The earlier the concept of *artistic image* is taught, the more natural it can become.

Kabalevsky and Bailey

While Kabalevsky and Bailey are from two different worlds, with contrasting climate, political environment, different language and culture, they both give us incredible equipment to use to create fantasy. Because of the political restrictions, Kabalevsky sought emancipation of the spirit, where as Bailey from a democratic social environment seems to cultivate the spirit of the modern child. The titles of Kabalevsky’s works such as *A little joke*,

¹⁴ Kabalevsky, D.B. (1988) *Music and Education: a composer writes about musical education*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers p 36

¹⁵ Elliot, D.J. (1995) *Music Matters: A New Philosophy of Music Education*. USA. Oxford University Press New York p166

¹⁶ Neuhaus, H. (1997) *The Art of Piano Playing*; translated by Barrie and Jenkins Ltd; London: Kahn and Averill p 21

Having Fun, Fairy Tale and Clowns and Bailey's works such as *Reflection, Serenity, Two part Intention* and *Elegant Simplicity* seem to confirm this. While their style of writing and approach is different, they both have a common aim and understand the need to develop children emotionally, intellectually and give them a perspective of technical fluency to express their fantasy from a very early age. This is demonstrated through the logic of the melody, harmony, rhythm and phrasing in their children's music which provides the necessary tools to teach children to understand the context and meaning of the music story and translate this to the audience in their performance.

This paper presents a selection of musical examples from Kabalevsky's *24 pieces for children Op 39* and *30 pieces for children Op 27* and Bailey's *Jazzing Around 1, Six Sketches* and *Triplet Falls*. Most of these pieces appear in the AMEB or ANZCA syllabi and specifically teach imagination.

The example stories and words used in this paper are tools to stimulate the imagination and help describe the character, mood, phrasing and articulation of these pieces. There are numerous stories that may be developed for many pieces, as these same pieces are introduced to a range of students with different life experiences.

Kabalevsky's music

Kabalevsky is one of the greatest teachers. His passion for music education is demonstrated in his pilot program in 25 Soviet schools where he taught children how to listen attentively to music and put their impressions into words. Further to this Kabalesky became a well known and respected music educator internationally through his enormous contribution to ISME as Honorary President and the papers he delivered at ISME Conferences including Perth in 1974.

Kabalevsky's love of childhood and children is clearly demonstrated in his children's works. His music reflects the restrictions of his surroundings, blended with the culture and experiences of the past. His music is classical, imaginative, technical and spiritual. He masterfully uses the playful exuberance of childhood experiences to blend the child's fantasy with their technical skills. He develops the emotional response to sounds, using sound as the medium to connect with a child's natural response to life experiences.

Musical examples from 24 Little Pieces Opus 39

1. Song

This song has a beautiful, uncomplicated story. The tempo marking *Andante* evokes a warm, peaceful character with a comfortable moderate walking speed.

Fig 1. *No 1 Song Opus 39*

The image shows a musical score for '1. Song' by Dmitri Kabalevsky, Op. 39. The score is in 3/4 time and marked 'Andante'. It features a simple melody in the right hand consisting of three notes: C, D, and E. The left hand provides harmonic support with a six-note hand position. The score is divided into four phrases, each two bars long. The first phrase ends on a minim D, the second on two minims D's, the third on two minims C's, and the fourth on two minims C's. Dynamics include *mf*, *p*, and *mf*. Fingerings are indicated for both hands.

Kabalevsky uses the simplicity of 3 notes C-D-E in the right hand melody as the medium through which to teach legato connection. This piece consists of four 2 bar phrases each beginning on an E. Here the use of words serves the purpose to reveal the articulation of the notes, the shape of the phrasing and the understanding of storyline. In the first phrase that finishes on a minim D, you can imagine a child asking, “Will you come and play with me?” The second phrase “Will you come **today please?**” ends with an added emphasis of two minim D’s. The piano and crescendo in the third phrase creates a sudden change of mood creating a different emphasis as if the child is pleading “**Will you** come and play with me?” repeating exactly the same notes as the first phrase. This is preparation for the final phrase that culminates on 2 minim C’s, “We can play together”.

The connection of the notes in the left hand is entirely dependant on the relaxation of the thumb. This is a wonderful example of the shifting of equal weight from two notes to another two closely connected notes. The harmonic pattern is tonic to sub-dominant, tonic to sub-dominant, tonic to sub-dominant finishing with dominant to tonic is in the left hand. This pattern uses a six note hand position that underpins the right hand melody with harmonic logic and support. The balance between the two hands is paramount. The art of fluency is accomplished when the logic of the rhythm, melody and harmony combine together as a unit, allowing the story to be represented by the choreography of the player.

2. Polka

This piece is an introduction to the dance style of a Polka. While not a true polka, it emulates the excitement and quick step nature of this dance

style. The Allegro used here describes a happy character that is tempered by the moderato.

Fig 2. *No 2 Polka Opus 39*

2. Polka Dmitri Kabalevsky
Op 39

Allegro moderato

Through the left hand legato melody based predominantly in C position, C-D-E-F-G, Kabalevsky develops the beautiful string sound of the piano. Again Kabalevsky is teaching the relaxation of the thumb. A simple yet effective exercise in developing this string tone quality consists of depressing all 5 notes simultaneously noting the equal pressure used on each note and relaxing the thumb. Listen to the blend of sounds then release all but one note C, again relaxing the thumb and listening to the string sounds. Repeat the exercise next releasing all but one note D etc until all notes have been covered.

The legato phrasing is very deliberate and precise showing the different emphasis of the harmony. The articulation of this phrasing is clearly shown with the following words. “I will come and dance with you”, (Tonic to dominant phrase 1); “dance with you”, (dominant phrase 2); “dance today”, (tonic phrase 3); “ I will come and **dance** with you” (Tonic to subdominant phrase 4); Notice the extra emphasis on the word dance affected by the introduction of the note A from the subdominant chord. The note also causes an extension of the thumb from the 5 finger pattern of the previous bars to a 6 note pattern. “we can dance together”, (the final phrase dominant to tonic) returning again to the original 5 note position.

The right hand supports the left hand melody with a clapping rhythm - not a heavy sitting clap rather an excited jumping clap. This very much reflects the energy and exuberance of children.

6. Scherzino (*Hedgehog*)

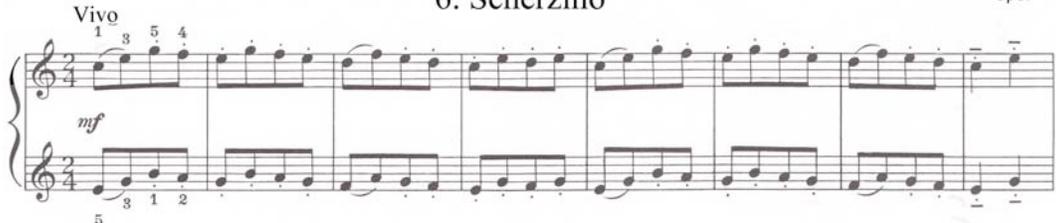
This piece develops the coordination of the hands working together in the same direction and the understanding of legato and staccato under a larger phrase.

It is a story dance that uses 10 note hand positions. The first 10 note position is unaltered in the first 8 bars beginning on the note E (E-F-G-A-B-C-D-E-F-G). By finding and pressing all these notes down at the same time, the child gains an understanding of position.

Fig 3. No 6. Scherzino Opus 39, bars 1-8

Dmitri Kabalevsky
Op 39

6. Scherzino



From bar 9 to the end, this 10 note position changes every two bars.
In bars 9-10 D-E-F-G-A-B-C-E-F-G;
In bars 11-12 C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C-D-E;
In bars 13-14 B-C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C-D; Finally the last 2 bars deviate from the previous rhythmic and harmonic pattern ending on the tonic C.

Fig 4. No. 6 Scherzino Opus 39, bars



Scherzino, as its name suggests is a lively (*vivo*) little joke. This joke is a story about a hedgehog. Hedgehogs have very sharp spikes that can prickle and bite you! An understanding of this sharpness will help a student hear and create the sharpness of the staccato required in this piece. Notice that this is very different staccato to the excited jumping staccato used in Polka No 2 and the Marcato staccato found in No7 The Little Twins (also

Opus 39). This introduction teaches students to discriminate between the different character touch and tone quality found in staccato playing.

Every child can joke differently. The fantasy of this piece will differ according to the imagination of each child. If this story is about a baby hedgehog it might be fast and energetic. If it is about a grandpa hedgehog, grandpa can still be lively and fun, but his movements will be much slower. With the understanding the motivation behind the movements children are making on the piano, they are free to achieve technical and emotional fluency.

12. Scherzo

In this lively playful piece one could imagine a young child horsing around. “Ha ha ha you can’t catch me” says the child to an adult. At the end of bar 8 the child pauses for a brief moment to see if the adult can catch him, then off he goes again taunting the adult until..... in the final bar he is caught!

This piece requires an understanding of the skeleton of the melody, the rhythmic pulsing and the 10 note position. All these elements are all essential to achieving the character of this piece.

Understanding the melody

The first note in each bar represents the skeleton of the melody. In order to gain an understanding of the shape and direction of the melody, it is useful to pick out this note and firstly play it as minim, while observing two 8- bar phrase patterns.

Fig 5. No 12 Scherzo Opus 39, bars 1-8 of

12. Scherzo Dmitri Kabalevsky
Op 39

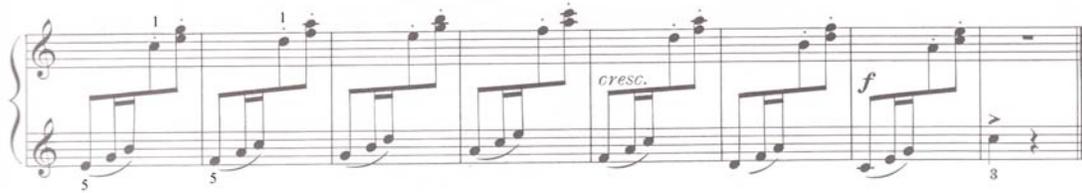
The musical score for No. 12 Scherzo, Opus 39 by Dmitri Kabalevsky, is presented in 2/4 time. The piece is marked 'Vivo' and 'mf'. The score shows the first 8 bars. The right hand plays a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, and a final chord. The left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. Fingerings are indicated with numbers 1-5. A final bar (bar 8) shows a different rhythmic pattern with a fermata over the final chord.

Understanding the rhythmic pulsing

The rhythm of bars 1-7 and 9-15 is identical. It may be useful for the student to play the one bar rhythmic pattern using the note E, (the starting note of the piece), then repeat this exercise playing this rhythmic pattern on

the first note of each bar (the melody note), again observing the 2 eight bar phrases.

Fig 6. *No 12 Scherzo Opus 39*, bars 9-16



The 10 - note position

It may be useful for the student to find the 10 - note position beginning on E (E-F-G-A-B-C-D-E-F-G) and press all the notes down at the same time. As the position changes in every bar, find the 10 note position for each bar.

With an understanding of the structure and character of this piece the student is now ready to experiment with their fantasy. Is the child in this piece younger or older? This may have a bearing on the tempo chosen. Is the child teasing or wild and out of control? This may affect the articulation of the notes. The emphasis of the fantasy should be with the context of relevance to the child.

13 Waltz

In *Waltz*, Kabalevsky is helping students to understand the connection of long phrases with the support of harmonic logic. This piece is also a wonderful introduction to the style of a waltz.

An understanding of the harmonic structure of the melody will help the student to understand the melodic direction, the connection of the phrasing, and the logic of the left hand which is very supportive, not mechanical. The first note of each bar outlines the harmonic structure of the melody. It may be useful for the student to play the first note of each bar as a dotted minim. First each phrase could be played to work out which chord is being used i.e. phrase one D-F-A-D representing the D minor chord.

The overarching structure of this piece is 2 longer phrases, a 15 - bar phrase and a 17 - bar phrase, with the end of the first long phrase modulating to the key of A major. It could then be useful for the student to

play each of these longer phrases, noting the harmonic development of the melody in bars 21-24 where the emphasis of the rise to the high C changes the emotional direction and tension. Again, play these two longer phrases still playing the first note as a minim, however playing the left hand harmony note also as a minim. With a knowledge and understanding of melodic and harmonic structure, the student is now ready to play the piece as it is written remembering the left hand accompaniment is soft and follows the melody in full support, not in competition.

16. *A Sad Story*

This piece can develop the communication in sound between the two hands, with the use of a long melodic phrase in the LH combined with the full harmonic support of the right hand.

In bars 1-8, the left hand melody based on 6 notes, suggests someone telling a sad story, perhaps an adult or a nanny telling a bedtime story. Help the child to develop words to tell the story. For example: “This is a story of a poor man, who tripped on his shoe and fell on his hand.” The right hand could represent the person listening to the story, most likely a child. The legato phrasing used here indicates a very supportive, connected harmony and is almost like a melody in its own right. The balance between the two hands is very important here as is the use of legato phrasing in both hands. Notice the left hand is piano cantabile and the right hand is pianissimo.

Fig 7. *A Sad Story Opus 39*, bars 1-8

Dmitri Kabalevsky
Op 39

16. A Sad Story

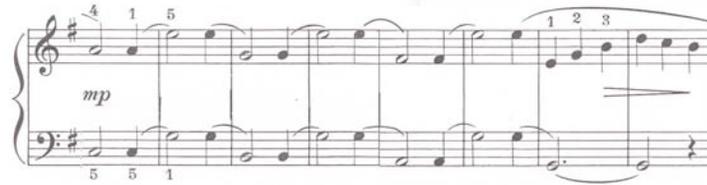
Andante

pp

p cantabile

During bars 9-16 the child becomes so involved in the story that the story teller, the story and the child all become one. The beginning interval of a fourth used in line one is developed and stretched during line two to a fifth, sixth, seventh then finally culminating on an octave before returning to a varied version of the first line.

Fig 8. *A Sad Story Opus 39*, bars 9 – 16



In bars 17 – 24 the parts return to their former functions in bars 1-8 with the melody of the story teller in the left hand and the child listening this time more intently and with sympathy shown by the addition of the high E in bars 18, 20 21 and 22 in the right hand. This is a wonderful introduction to ternary form.

Fig 9. *A Sad Story Opus 39*, bars 17 – 24



20. *Clowns*

The job of a Clown is to help us understand life and laugh about it. The lively (Vivo) jumping character of the left hand staccato quavers bouncing backwards and forwards between the tonic and dominant could represent the happiness and laughter of the audience. In the right hand there is the conflict between the major and minor chord which could represent the tragedy in the life of the clown. This happiness is interrupted in the fourth line with more serious, yet still playful introduction of chords before the return of the initial motive. *Clowns* finishes with a short sharp contrary motion passage in the final two bars.

Musical examples from 30 pieces for children Op 27

Pieces suggesting reflective dreamy stories

These pieces develop the understanding of a storyline and legato connections. The melody lines consist of small legato phrases inside a larger phrase with a harmony that is supportive and interconnected.

2. *A Little song*

A Little Song is a bedtime story. It is a great piece to wakes up a child's imagination in a story. The andantino serves to create a warm happy sense security in this story.

In bars 1-4, the right hand melody in 2 - bar phrases is supported by a very legato left hand. In bars 5-8 the roles of the hands are reversed with the left hand taking the melody and the right hand harmonically supporting. In bars 9-10, while the melody is a repetition of bars 1-2 the harmony changes showing a different harmonic direction.

In bar 13 the *subito piano* takes the story in a different direction. The child is very sleepy. In the left hand A G# G natural F# and the stretching of the melody in the right hand. And in bars 15 - 17 the story ceases as the child has fallen asleep.

4. *Night on the River*

This piece creates a special mood of relaxation and peace, reflecting the beauty of nature. Here we find 3 six bar legato phrases.

The first six bars the harmony centers around B. In bar 3 there is a movement away to the submediant and in the fourth bar to the subdominant before being drawn back to the tonic

Rhythmically the second phrase takes the same form as the first phrase. The changes in the melody and the bass line add interest. In particular the B flat in the melody in bar 8 creates a sense of questioning and the downward stepping motion of the bass line (B, B flat, A, G F) creates a sense of uncertainty and tension. This is further highlighted by the change in dynamic marking to piano and the more comprehensive use of the crescendo, decrescendo further adding to the sense of adventure and surprise.

In bars 13- 18 mood returns to the calm setting of the first 6 bars and the harmony again centres on the tonic note B. The final four bars fade away and come to rest in a place of contentment and peace.

Other pieces from Opus 27 that are reflective and dreamy include *No 6, A Sad Tale, No 9 A Little Fairy Tale, No 16 Ballade, No 20 A Short Story, and No 25 Novelette.*

Pieces suggesting joke- like characteristics

Kabalevsky's sense of fun and humor is clearly evident in many of his pieces.

5. Playing Ball

The lively exuberance of childhood play is paramount to the character of this piece. The clever combination of the *vivace* combined with the use of 3/8 time empowers the performer to imitate the fast, lively, pulsing sound of a bouncing ball through the repetitive rhythmic motive.

Notice the use of the *leggiero* (*vivace leggiero*). Kabalevsky requires the *leggiero* of a butterfly here which is quite different to the *leggiero* of an elephant often exhibited in this piece. The playful joking character of this piece can be achieved by using dropping or dancing fingers on the keyboard. The storyline is further developed in the body of the piece through the use of dynamics change and direction. Even the ending has a sense of whimsical humor with the dropping fortissimo and the quaver D.

Joke-like characteristics are found in many of Kabalevsky's pieces. Other examples include *No 10 Clowning Around* and *No 13 Little Joke* which are both from Opus 27 and *No 12 Joke, No 15 Riding* and *No 20 Clowns* from Opus 39.

Pieces suggesting a Military Influence

All the pieces covered to in this section have very characteristic military rhythmic motives and great possibilities for the child to develop their own story line.

12. Toccata

The lively, playful rhythmic character of this Toccata is supported by Kabalevsky's deliberate choice 2 time. The dancing staccato chords in the right hand completely support the very energetic driving military melody in the left hand. The flowing rhythmic affect of these dancing chords can be achieved through the combination of careful position preparation for each chord and the relaxation of the thumb allowing the chords to dance and glide over the keys.

The dynamics used through out the piece serve to create interest changing the emotional direction and character. The piece ends in the same organized and excited spirit that it began with three dropping fading crotchet staccato chords.

19. Warlike Dance

As its name suggests this is a military dance. It is fast, energetic and dramatic with a pulsing driving rhythm that is characteristic through out the piece.

The understanding and preparation of hand position which is clearly indicated by Kabalevsky's very deliberate fingering, is important to the technical fluency of this piece.

The *subito piano* marking in bar 19 changes the character suddenly portraying a sense of cautiousness. This tension is heightened with the suggestion of gun fire heard in the distance, represented by the moving crotchet and quaver figure in the left hand under the sustained F.

The last three bars end with familiar sentiments to the opening motive however this time fade quickly into the distance before finishing on a final quiet dropping chord.

29. The Rider

This is a very exciting story of a rider and a horse. This has a wonderful story to stir the imagination of students. The character of this piece is very similar to that of No 19 Warlike Dance and No 18 Sonatina from Opus 27, however the emotional story is happier and less insistent. The excited but controlled jumping staccato quaver passages are in full support of the melody line and indicate the movement of the rider and the horse. The melody line, with its strong rhythmic pulse represents the journey and the adventures that the horse and rider experience together.

The tenuto markings used in the middle section, make a dramatic emphasis on the melody notes in bars 26 -40 that serve to create tension and excitement allowing it to sing above the lively staccato quaver motive underneath it.

The return of the first motive occurs again in bars 44 -61 before a short sharp ending with three accented descending quaver chords.

3. Etude in A minor

for their musical quality, combining melodic and harmonic appeal, and I'm sure they will give pleasure to those who play them."¹⁷

Children of this generation have a similar experience of modern life to Bailey. They need the freedom to express themselves. Bailey skillfully brings them the visions of childhood through modern harmonies, teaching a respect of rhythm and discipline of organization while cultivating a free spirit of communication.

Reflection

This ternary form piece in a minor key, beautifully paints the picture of a reflection. Visually, the score in itself paints a picture and a story. Following is one possible vision of this piece. The static ostinato bass of the left hand represents the glass like appearance of very still water. The right hand represents the story of the reflection. The motive in the first eight bars presents a happy, reflective almost dreamy character of someone lost in their thoughts.

Fig 14 *Reflection* bars 1 -10

Reflection

Kerin Bailey

The musical score for 'Reflection' by Kerin Bailey, bars 1-10, is presented in three systems. The key signature is G minor (two flats) and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked 'Allegretto'. The piece is written for piano, with the left hand playing a static ostinato bass line and the right hand playing a melodic line. The score is marked 'una corde' and 'legato'. Dynamics include 'pp' (pianissimo) and 'mp' (mezzo-piano). The score is divided into three systems of staves. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The second system continues the melodic line with various ornaments and dynamics. The third system shows the end of the piece with a final melodic phrase and a sustained bass line.

¹⁷ Bailey, Kerin. *Six Sketches*, Australia: Kerin J. Bailey Music forward by Lance Dossor

This same motive continues again in the next 8 bars with slight variations from bar three of the motive accompanied by a moving pattern in the ostinato bass.

In bars 19-26, the movement of the left hand ostinato pattern and the introduction of a new syncopated melody in the right hand indicates movement in the water, perhaps a fish. The left hand ostinato pattern moves downward B flat, A, A flat, G flat before rapidly moving up C flat, D flat, E flat F and finally resting on G. Bailey adds further tension through the use of contrary motion passage in conjunction with the interval of a minor second in bars 25-26.

Fig 15 *Reflection* bars 19 -26

It seems, suddenly, a bird who has spied the fish, plunges into the water shown by the glistening of notes at the start of bar 27, causing ripples to radiate out from the disturbance. Each ripple is represented by eight repeated notes, the first of which begins on a very high C#. Each successive pattern begins an octave lower than the last (bars 27-28). Finally the ripples dissipate and the water becomes still again, shown by the contemplative pause on the low G.

Fig 16 *Reflection* bars 27 29

Once again the water is still and the left hand ostinato of the opening bars returns again. The reflection now however is slightly altered. The thoughts are similar but have a different meaning, direction and mood. The melody now an octave higher has a different inflection and a syncopated rhythm.

The repetition of the motive in bars 45-46 in bars 47-49 and the *molto rit* in bar 49 gives the sense that the person is lost in their thoughts.

The movement of the right hand in bars 50-53 (the coda) continues the idea of wandering thoughts or gentle ripples that give way to a feeling of contentment in the final chords found at the extremities of the piano.

Fig 17 *Reflection* bars 50 - 55

Toccatina

This rhythmically vibrant piece is more restricted and precise, in the style of a Toccata. Rhythmically and melodically the hands work together to support each other and combine as a unit. Through a light repetitive touch, where the staccato notes are danced rather than played, motivated movements are used to maintain a sense of energy and fun giving a clear sense of moving forward with precise rhythmic clapping.

The end of each phase is punctuated by a long note, through which rhythmic pulsing is clearly evident. Its function is twofold, serving both to intensify the direction of the driving pulse on these longer notes while allowing space and breathing before the next phrase continues.

Fig 18 *Toccatina* bars 1-4

Toccatina

Kerin Bailey

Rhythmic

The sense of drama is increased in bars 10- 17 with the change in the rhythmic motive used in the left hand.

Fig 19 *Toccatina* bars 10 -17

This rhythmic variation further intensifies in bars 27 - 34 where the left hand playfully and rhythmically transports the notes presented at the beginning of each bar to a register two octaves higher.

Fig 20 *Toccatina* bars 27 -30

While the sudden and unexpected silence in bar 35 which coincides with

A one bar change to 2/4 time provides a sense of space, the rhythmic pulse is still clearly alive. The final two bars maintain this vibrant rhythmic energy.

While the sudden and unexpected silence in bar 35 which coincides with a one bar change to 2/4 time provides a sense of space, the rhythmic pulse is still clearly alive. The final two bars maintain this vibrant rhythmic energy before ending on two extremes of the piano.

Fig 21 *Toccatina* bars 35 - 37



Triplet Falls

This beautiful Jazz Waltz in A minor is delightfully relaxed and imaginative. With the true sentiment of a jazz waltz, the emphasis is found on beat 2. The triplets almost suggest 9/8 time as they glide with ease, punctuated by an enticing undercurrent of jazz harmonies. The triplet figure of the melody paints the picture of showers of water gracefully cascading over the falls.

The middle section is more reflective decorated with the downward movement of jazz harmonies.

Then almost like a mirror image, the relaxed chords found in the introductory bars appear again, this time in a more extended format. Bailey entices us with a brief nostalgic remnant of the main melody before ending on a suspended A minor 7 chord.

Melinda's Mini March

This piece in binary form, is a happy children's march with a comic story. With the accent on the weak beat, this Polka march like tempo in duple time evokes the natural happiness and excitement of children using short quick movements.

Bailey uses three main ideas. The left hand consists of the repetition of a polka like quaver motive with the emphasis on the descending notes E, D sharp, D natural C# which extends to a minim C natural and B in bars 7 and 8. This is punctuated by a jumping D# E in the right hand, interspersed with a whimsical six- bar melody.

These three playful motives are developed in the second half of the piece before coming to rest on a questioning dominant 9th chord in bar 34. The piece ends with a finale of the jumping D#-E motive comically rising five consecutive octaves concluding with a surprise of extremities, the highest E of the piano followed by the lowest E.

In summary: What is technical and emotional fluency?

Playing music should be an extension of natural responses to life - connecting emotionally, physically and mentally to the story inside the music and technically responding to it. Students need to know what to do, why they are doing it and how to do it.

We are teaching students to be detectives, to come through all the little details of logic and direction, following all the composer's intentions, to achieve results. The more they do this, the more freedom they will have.

Our ultimate goal is unlimited imagination: the aim of every art.

About the Author

Jane has over 20 years experience teaching the piano. She graduated with a Bachelor of Education in Secondary Music. She currently teaches piano at Unley High School and at Scotch College and in her own private studio in Adelaide. She teaches students from beginners to advanced level. She regularly prepares students for concerts, competitions, AMEB exams and Year 12 Solo performance achieving high results.

Jane has studied with Mrs Eleonora Sivan, and continues professional contact with her. Mrs Sivan's inspiration has made Jane passionate about all aspects of the piano: teaching; concert pianism; accompaniment and ensemble and most importantly musicianship.

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