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The purpose of this study is to provide a pedagogical and performance guide for Lera Auerbach's *Images from Childhood*, Op. 52, a collection of twelve intermediate character pieces for the piano. This work, Auerbach's homage to Schumann's *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15, is her only intermediate-level work written for piano. The collection presents a valuable opportunity for the intermediate student to explore contemporary music, build pianistic skills applicable to a wide of range of styles, and develop artistry to play with expression.

Lera Auerbach (b. 1973) is a Russian-American composer and pianist whose international career is multifaceted in music, literature and visual arts. The cosmopolitan artist was born in the city of Chelyabinsk in Russia and immigrated to the U.S. in 1991. The young composer has already published over one hundred compositions, including thirty-six chamber music works. Her output in other genres includes two operas, ten ballets, twelve symphonic works, over a dozen concerti, solos for various instruments, choral and vocal music, and transcriptions. Auerbach has received widespread positive reception. Her works have been championed by leading performers, conductors, and choreographers including Hilary Hahn, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, the Tokyo String Quartet, and Charles Dutoit. Auerbach has written thirteen solo works for piano from 1986 to the present.

The first chapter consists of an introduction to Lera Auerbach and *Images from Childhood*. The second chapter includes Auerbach's biography and an overview of her solo piano works. The third chapter contains a pedagogical and performance guide for all twelve pieces in the collection. The last chapter concludes with a summary and recommendations.

PEDAGOGICAL AND PERFORMANCE GUIDE OF LERA AUERBACH'S
IMAGES FROM CHILDHOOD, OP. 52

by

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APPROVAL PAGE

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to provide a pedagogical and performance guide for Lera Auerbach's *Images from Childhood*, Op. 52, collection of twelve intermediate character pieces for the piano. This work, Auerbach's homage to Schumann's *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15, is her only intermediate-level work written for piano. I believe the collection presents a valuable opportunity for the intermediate student to (1) explore contemporary music, (2) build pianistic skills applicable to a wide of range of styles, and (3) develop artistry to play with expression, which will be discussed below.

First, *Images from Childhood* can be used to introduce 20th-century styles and techniques to an intermediate student. For the purpose of this study, "intermediate" level student is defined as someone who has mastered the basic fundamentals such as reading and playing simple rhythms including 8th notes, all notes on the grand staff, and understanding some dynamics and articulation. The intermediate level student might be studying easier pieces from the standard repertoire, such as Clementi Sonatinas, Op. 36 and Burgmüller 25 Progressive Pieces, Op. 100. The intermediate level spans a long range before the student is ready to play advanced pieces. A chart of difficulty level for

each piece in the collection will be provided in Chapter III, using Jane Magrath's number system in *The Pianist's Guide to Standard Teaching and Performance Literature*.

Through the study of *Images from Childhood*, students can learn about characteristics such as changing meters, tone clusters and bitonality relatively early in their study; they would be equipped and perhaps more receptive to tackle more advanced contemporary repertoire later. Charming and evocative titles such as "An Old Photograph from the Grandparents' Childhood" can appeal to the intermediate student to explore modern repertoire beyond the standards such as Kabalevsky's Op. 27 and Op. 39 and Bartók's *Mikrokosmos* and *For Children*. *Images from Childhood* features singable melodies that students can hold onto, making it approachable to students who have only studied common practice repertoire.

For intermediate students, studying repertoire that is satisfying is intrinsically motivating, which can sustain their study as they transition from beginner to intermediate level. Like Schumann's *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15, *Images from Childhood* is technically accessible to the intermediate student and sophisticated at the same time. It can be performed by students or mature artists in concert halls. Auerbach's skillful writing creates a complex sound with a limited number of notes, making it sound harder than it is, which is beneficial for the student's motivation. The pieces can be assigned to teenagers and adult students who need sophisticated but easier repertoire. In recital, a pair or group of contrasting pieces from the set would make an effective presentation. In addition, the brevity of the pieces, all of them one or two pages, is attractive for varying

levels of study. They can be used as a quick study for more advanced students, or pieces to be polished for early intermediate students.

Furthermore, due to the polystylistic nature of Auerbach's writing, rooted in tradition, studying *Images from Childhood* would help prepare the intermediate student to play music from different periods. The collection addresses developing important skills at the intermediate level, such as articulation, voicing, pedal, and tempo changes. For example, "Family Holiday" would be an excellent study in balancing left-hand melody, preparing students for pieces like Chopin's B minor Prelude, Op. 28 No. 6, and the "Cello" Etude, Op. 25 No. 7. The tempo changes in "What a Story!" and "An Old Photograph from the Grandparents' Childhood" would help students develop control of tempo, a crucial skill in preparing to pieces with extended ritardandos and tempo changes, such as Debussy's "Clair de Lune."

Finally, the imaginative writing in *Images from Childhood* can help the intermediate student develop tools to play with expression, such as dynamics, rubato, and shaping. The writing offers a wide range of moods from dreamy to stubborn, giving plenty of opportunities to work on projecting different moods through sound. By learning concrete tools such as the use of *una corda* and rubato, students can learn to decode how characters are expressed at the piano. In *Gramophone*, Pwyll ap Siôn writes about *Images from Childhood* that "her music fluctuates from light and playful to dark and menacing."¹

¹ Pwyll ap Siôn, "Contemporary Composer: Lera Auerbach," *Gramophone*, last modified March 14, 2017, accessed August 14, 2018. <https://www.gramophone.co.uk/feature/contemporary-composer-lera-auerbach>.

Pedagogue Frances Clark believed in complete musicianship at every stage of study. Even at the intermediate level, these character pieces can help students work on “projecting musical ideas and the artistic and convincing performance.”² While such ideas as playing artistically and convincingly can be elusive for intermediate students, they can learn concrete ways to communicate expression in this collection. The score of *Images from Childhood*, with a tiger with piano key stripes on the cover, is published by Sikorski and is widely available to students and teachers in the U.S.

Need for the Study

Auerbach’s unique creative voice is built on traditions of composers that came before her, not only in her writing, but also in the way she exists as an artist. Auerbach is a pianist-composer like Mozart, Beethoven, Liszt, and Rachmaninoff, composing and giving concert performances. Her contribution to the pedagogical repertoire speaks to the tradition of advancing pianists playing the repertoire of their time. Bach wrote for his children, and Chopin’s students studied his teacher’s works. Currently, many intermediate students in the U.S. do not study much repertoire written by living composers. Auerbach also continues the line of Russian composers who wrote pedagogical works for children, such as Tchaikovsky, Kabalevsky, Khachaturian, Prokofiev, Stravinsky, Gretchaninoff, Maykapar, Rebikov, and Shostakovich. The latest

² Frances Clark, *Questions and Answers: Practical Advice for Piano Teachers* (Northfield, IL: The Instrumentalist Company, 1992), 2.

inspiration might have stemmed from Auerbach's advocate Sofia Gubaidulina, who wrote *Musical Toys*, a collection of pieces for children, in 1969.³

Studying works of living composers can make the music community more vibrant and exciting for the student. In Anne Midgette's words, Auerbach "offers 18th-century forms and a 19th-century sensibility (that of the brilliant virtuoso) expressed in a 21st-century vocabulary."⁴ Her universalism and internationalism reflect the 21st-century landscape, including globalization. Auerbach was selected as a Cultural Leader by the World Economic Forum, and she has presented lectures on borderless creativity.⁵ I believe studying such a cosmopolitan artist is beneficial for an increasingly globalized musical world.

Auerbach, for her relative youth, has already received an extraordinary amount of scholarly attention. However, the literature on her piano work is still limited. There have been three dissertations written on her output for piano, all specifically on the 24 Preludes. *Images from Childhood* was composed in 2000, and there is little written about the work. Despite the lack of published commentary, it has already been commercially

³ Pwyll ap Siôn, "Contemporary Composer: Lera Auerbach," *Gramophone*, last modified March 14, 2017, accessed August 14, 2018.

<https://www.gramophone.co.uk/feature/contemporary-composer-lera-auerbach>.

⁴ Anne Midgette, "Review: At the NSO, a composer in delightful dialogue with Mozart," *Washington Post*, last modified November 13, 2014, accessed August 14, 2018. https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/music/review-at-the-nso-a-composer-in-delightful-dialogue-with-mozart/2014/11/13/dc112062-6bb1-11e4-b053-65cea7903f2e_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.e90cee6d37b2.

⁵ Lera Auerbach, "Full Biography," accessed March 31, 2018. <http://mediaresources.leraauerbach.com/index.php/short-biography/>.

recorded by three artists, Ksenia Nosikova, Eli Kalman, and George Michael Grau. In *Clavier Companion*, *Images from Childhood* was selected as “Reviewer’s Choice,” new music that may become part of the standard repertoire.⁶ The *San Francisco Examiner* commented, “The time for Auerbach’s presence on more Piano recitals is definitely overdue.”⁷ Although there has been a recent surge of interest in female composers, they still struggle to take their deserved space in concert halls. There is also reluctance to teach contemporary works past Debussy and Bartók on the part of many teachers. This reluctance may be due to the fact that they only studied what was considered the standard pedagogical canon when they were intermediate students. The paper would help to fill these voids.

Limitations

This document confines the research to Auerbach’s piano work, *Images from Childhood*. The collection was selected for its pedagogical benefit, musical appeal and accessibility for teachers and intermediate students.

Relevant Sources

Auerbach’s website and her publisher Sikorski’s website serve as the primary sources for her biographical information. Anna Katsnelson’s interview details Auerbach’s

⁶ Krista Wallace-Boaz, and Lynette Zelis, “Review of *Images from Childhood* by Lera Auerbach,” *Clavier Companion*, 1, no. 5 (September/October 2009): 60, accessed March 31, 2018, Education Source, EBSCO Host.

⁷Lera Auerbach, “Selected Press Quotes,” accessed August 14, 2018, <http://mediaresources.leraauerbach.com/index.php/selected-press-quotes/>.

move to the United States, Jewish identity, and being a multi-disciplinary artist.⁸ There are about thirty scholarly journals and almost two hundred magazine articles written about her and her work as a composer, pianist, poet or visual artist. Three commercial recordings of *Images of Childhood* exist by Ksenia Nosikova, Eli Kalman, and George Michael Grau. There have been reviews of *Images from Childhood* and its recordings in publications such as *Gramophone*, *Clavier Companion*, and *American Record Guide*.

Three dissertations have been written on Auerbach's piano music, all of which are about 24 Preludes, Op. 41. In "Polystylism and Motivic Connections in Lera Auerbach's 24 Preludes for Piano, Op. 41," written in 2016, Maily Mendez gives formal and stylistic analysis of all 24 preludes and discusses the motivic connections.⁹ In "A Piano Sonata and 24 Preludes for Piano: Old Form in the New Context," written in 2017, Tatiana Gordunova discusses the historical genre of prelude and features of the 24 preludes, including harmonic language, polystylism, motivic connections, and pedaling.¹⁰ In the paper, Gordunova also analyzes the piano sonata by Boris Tishchenko. In "Performance Guide for 24 Preludes for Piano, Op. 41 by Lera Auerbach," written in 2017, Elena Nezhdanova-Cunningham provides a theoretical and pedagogical analysis of selected

⁸ Anna Katsnelson, "Anna Katsnelson interviews Lera Auerbach," *East European Jewish Affairs*, 46 no. 3 (February 2017): 371-376, accessed August 19, 2018, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13501674.2016.1243025>.

⁹ Maily Mendez, "Polystylism and Motivic Connections in Lera Auerbach's 24 Preludes for Piano, Op. 41" (D.M.A. Thesis, University of Arizona, 2016).

¹⁰ Tatiana Gordunova, "A Piano Sonata and 24 Preludes for Piano: Old Form in the New Context" (D.M.A. Thesis, Florida State University, 2017).

preludes, focusing on the technical difficulties posed to the player.¹¹ There are two dissertations written on Auerbach's 24 Preludes for Violin and Piano, Op. 46 by Kimberly Hain and Joshua Luke Holritz. My document will provide a theoretical and pedagogical analysis for the performance and teaching of *Images of Childhood*.

Organization of the Text

The second chapter covers Auerbach's biography and an overview of her solo piano works. The third chapter contains a pedagogical and performance guide for all twelve pieces in the collection. Specific suggestions for assigning the piece are provided. For each piece in *Images from Childhood*, there are (1) a theoretical analysis and (2) a pedagogical guide. In the first part, I provide a formal and harmonic analysis of the piece. In the second part, I discuss the musical and technical skills students will develop from studying each piece, highlighting its usefulness. Practical practice suggestions are included for difficult passages and mastering skills in each piece. Pedagogue Francis Clark states that the primary goal of a piano teacher is "to become increasingly dispensable" to the students.¹² To encourage students to listen for themselves, there are guiding listening questions for students as Jane Magrath does in her practice guides accompanying her *Masterworks Classics* series.¹³ These questions will help the students

¹¹ Elena Victoria Nezhdanova-Cunningham, "Performance Guide for 24 Preludes for Piano, Op. 41 by Lera Auerbach" (D.M.A. Thesis, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2017).

¹² Francis Clark, *Questions and Answers: Practical Advice for Piano Teachers* (Northfield, IL: The Instrumentalist Company, 1992), 1.

¹³ Jane Magrath, *Practice & Performance: A Practice Guide for Students to Accompany Masterwork Classics, Level 6* (Van Nuys, CA: Alfred, 1984).

develop their ear to listen to details in music. The last chapter will conclude with a summary on the pedagogical value of Auerbach's *Images from Childhood* and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER II
BIOGRAPHY AND OVERVIEW OF WORKS

Biography

Lera Auerbach (b. 1973) is a Russian-American composer and pianist whose international career is multi-faceted in music, literature and visual arts. The cosmopolitan artist was born in the city of Chelyabinsk in Russia. In 1991, six months before the Soviet Union collapsed, she was performing on a concert tour in the U.S.¹⁴ A day before she was scheduled to fly back to Russia, she decided to stay in New York to pursue her musical study, later earning a bachelor's degree in piano performance and a master's degree in composition from the Juilliard School, under the tutelage of Joseph Kalichstein for piano and Milton Babbitt and Robert Beaser for composition.¹⁵ She spent a year in Germany, earning a post-graduate degree in piano at Hannover Hochschule für Musik (Hanover University of Music, Drama, and Media).¹⁶ The young composer has already published

¹⁴ Anna Katsnelson, "Anna Katsnelson interviews Lera Auerbach," *East European Jewish Affairs*, 46 no. 3 (February 2017): 371-376, accessed August 19, 2018, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13501674.2016.1243025>.

¹⁵ Pwyll ap Siôn, "Contemporary Composer: Lera Auerbach," *Gramophone*, last modified March 14, 2017, accessed August 14, 2018. <https://www.gramophone.co.uk/feature/contemporary-composer-lera-auerbach.>; Maily Mendez, "Polystylism and Motivic Connections in Lera Auerbach's 24 Preludes for Piano, Op. 41" (D.M.A. Thesis, University of Arizona, 2016), 27.

¹⁶ Lera Auerbach, "Selected Press Quotes," accessed August 14, 2018, <http://mediaresources.leraauerbach.com/index.php/selected-press-quotes/>.

over one hundred compositions, including thirty-six chamber music works. Her output in other genres includes two operas, ten ballets, twelve symphonic works, over a dozen concerti, solos for various instruments, choral and vocal music, and transcriptions.

Auerbach has received widespread positive reception. Her works have been championed by leading performers, conductors, and choreographers including Hilary Hahn, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, the Tokyo String Quartet, and Charles Dutoit. Her accolades include the Hindemith Prize, an endowed prize awarded to contemporary composers. Continuing the line of Russian composers, Auerbach is the youngest composer on the roster of international publisher Sikorski, which represents important Russian composers dead and alive, such as Prokofiev, Shostakovich, and Gubaidulina. The latter composer discovered Auerbach's talent as a composer.¹⁷ Auerbach has been composer-in-residence at such music festivals as the Verbier Festival and Marlboro Festival. Active as a creative voice and leader in the 21st century, she has had speaking engagements at World Economic Forum and Harvard University.

Overview of Solo Piano Works

Auerbach has written thirteen solo works for piano from 1986 to the present. *Fantasia* is a childhood work, written when she was thirteen, lasting about six minutes in performance. Auerbach references Beethoven in two of her piano works. *Ludwigs Alptraum* (2007) includes quotes and distorted fragments from Beethoven's Sonata Op.

¹⁷ Sikorski, "Auerbach, Lera," accessed March 31, 2018
http://www.sikorski.de/225/en/auerbach_lera.html.

27 No. 1. In *Ten Dreams* (1999), Auerbach parodies Beethoven's Fifth Symphony in the "Fifth Dream."¹⁸ The most studied work, 24 Preludes, Op. 41 (1999) is a cycle of virtuosic pieces organized in the same way as Chopin's preludes. Suite for Piano, Op. 41a (1999) is a collection of nine preludes selected from 24 preludes, including preludes No. 5, 8, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, and 24.

Auerbach wrote two piano sonatas in 2005-2006. The first sonata (2005) entitled *La Fenice* has six short movements, whereas the second sonata entitled *Il Segno* (2006) has four movements in slow-fast-slow-fast structure.

Many of Auerbach's works refer to memories and dreams. *Memento Mori* flashes back to childhood in the second movement, contrasted by more animated "Let's Play Grownups."¹⁹ *Sakura No Yume* (2016), which translates to "Dreams of Cherry Blossoms," was premiered in Tokyo. In this work, Auerbach's writing includes sharp contrasts between the innocent and charming against the dark and unsettling. Auerbach's expression of darkness is reflected in titles such as *Milking Darkness* (2011) and markings such as *adagio tragico* for the first movement of *Il Segno* and the 17th Prelude.

¹⁸ Pwyll ap Siôn, "Contemporary Composer: Lera Auerbach," *Gramophone*, last modified March 14, 2017, accessed August 14, 2018. <https://www.gramophone.co.uk/feature/contemporary-composer-lera-auerbach>.

¹⁹ Colin Clarke, Review of Auerbach – "La Fenice: (Piano Sonata No. 1); "Il segno"; "Mementomori"; Fantasia; "Images from Childhood" by Ksenia Nosikova, *Fanfare – The Magazine for Serious Record Collectors*, 31, no. 4 (March 2008): 62-63, accessed March 31, 2018. ProQuest.

Labyrinth (2018) is a massive work with frequent tempo changes, lasting fifty minutes. Auerbach gave the first performance in San Francisco in March, 2018. Auerbach herself recorded 24 Preludes, *Ten Dreams*, and *Chorale, Fugue, and Postlude*, Op. 31, the latter paying homage to César Franck's *Prélude, Choral, et Fugue*.

CHAPTER III
IMAGES FROM CHILDHOOD, OP. 52

Images from Childhood, Op. 52 is a set of twelve character pieces written for children. While Colin Clarke says that the collection offers “the utmost charm,”²⁰ it also has a “dark and menacing” side according to Pwyll ap Siôn.²¹

Some characteristic features of Auerbach’s writing emerge in this collection, namely the use of extended pedal with slower tempo to create a dreamy sound, and the contrasts between the marcato and the lyrical, and between charming innocence and darkness. In No.1 “Question,” No. 2 “What a Story!,” No. 3 “Dialogue,” and No. 5 “An Old Photograph from the Grandparents’ Childhood,” the pedal is held for an extended length of time. Combined with a ritardando or slower tempo, it creates a dreamy atmosphere. While some pieces are full of humor and charm, such as No. 9 “Stubborn” and No. 10 “E-Creatures,” some pieces are haunting and dark, such as No. 6 “After the War (The Field of the Dead)” and No. 11 “Shadows on the Wall.” In addition, the

²⁰ Colin Clarke, Review of Auerbach – “La Fenice: (Piano Sonata No. 1); “Il segno”; “Mementomori”; Fantasia; “Images from Childhood” by Ksenia Nosikova, *Fanfare – The Magazine for Serious Record Collectors*, 31, no. 4 (March 2008): 62-63, accessed March 31, 2018. ProQuest.

²¹ Pwyll ap Siôn, “Contemporary Composer: Lera Auerbach,” *Gramophone*, last modified March 14, 2017, accessed August 14, 2018. <https://www.gramophone.co.uk/feature/contemporary-composer-lera-auerbach>.

collection alternates between the marcato and lyrical, offering contrast. No. 4 “Quarrel,” No. 7 “Decision,” and No. 9 “Stubborn” offer great energy with marcato and loud music with repeated notes.

As far as tonality goes, there is a tonal center that unifies most of the pieces. Auerbach uses chromaticism to manipulate the implied tonal function, creating dissonances. The half steps or minor seconds are featured in several ways. For example, when chords are used, they move in step-wise motion, often with modified notes with accidentals. In the melody, the main notes are embellished and approached with minor seconds. Auerbach avoids the use of dominant chords to allow tonal ambiguity.

The collection varies in style, including neo-Classicism (No. 2 “What a Story!”), neo-Romanticism (No. 8 “Family Holiday”), clusters (No. 6 “After the War (The Field of the Dead)” and No. 9 “Stubborn”), polytonality (No. 10 “E-Creatures”) and toccata (No. 4 “Quarrel”). Auerbach’s style is often described as polystylism. Auerbach says this about polystylism, “Polystylism means the freedom to play with all musical eras and meanings in order to achieve your goal, and there are no limits to what you can do... I can draw from all sources, which I love, and integrate them into my own musical language.”²²

²² Lera Auerbach, email interview with Maily Mendez, September 17, 2012. Quoted in Maily Mendez, “Polystylism and Motivic Connections in Lera Auerbach’s 24 Preludes for Piano, Op. 41” (D.M.A. Thesis, University of Arizona, 2016), 35.

The fact that Auerbach draws from many sources is a tremendous benefit to the students who study the collection, as they can learn useful pianistic skills that can be applied to composers from the past and present.

Regarding the difficulty level of the collection, it is accessible to intermediate students. Written with young students in mind, the collection only has a few places where the player has to play an octave with one hand. When there are octaves, alternatives are offered for students with small hands. In No. 2 “What a Story!” there is an octave in m.36, but the upper note can be omitted, as suggested by the parenthesis in the score. In No. 5 “An Old Photograph from the Grandparents’ Childhood,” there are octaves, 9ths and 10ths, but they can be connected with the pedal. The difficulty level of each piece is detailed in the table below, using the grading reference from *The Pianists Guide to Standard Teaching and Performance Literature* by Jane Magrath. The pieces range in difficulty from level 4 to level 7 using this grading system (see Table 1). Level 4 is comparable to easier minuets in *Anna Magdalena Notebook* by J.S. Bach, and Level 7 is comparable to easier *Inventions* by J.S. Bach. The complete reference chart is available in Appendix B.

Table 1. Leveling of Auerbach's *Images from Childhood*

| No. | Title | Tempo | Tonal Center | Difficulty |
|-----|--|---------------------|--------------|------------|
| 1 | Question | Andante | E minor | 4 |
| 2 | What a Story! | Allegretto con brio | A minor | 7 |
| 3 | Dialogue | Andante | D major | 6 |
| 4 | Quarrel | Allegro molto | E-flat minor | 6 |
| 5 | An Old Photograph from the Grandparents' Childhood | Andantino | G# minor | 7 |
| 6 | After the War (The Field of the Dead) | Adagio | C/C-sharp | 5 |
| 7 | Decision | Allegro con brio | C minor | 4 |
| 8 | Family Holiday | Andantino | F major | 5 |
| 9 | Stubborn | With humor | G minor | 4 |
| 10 | E-Creatures | Vivace | D/D-flat | 4 |
| 11 | Shadows on the Wall | Andantino | C minor | 6 |
| 12 | Prayer | Adagio religioso | F-G | 5 |

1. Question

The first piece of the collection features a lyrical, expressive melody with simple accompanying chords underneath. To bring out the expressiveness, the player needs to project the melody and shape it with hairpins (crescendo and diminuendo). The piece presents a rhythmic challenge due to the changing meters. In addition to switching time signatures, the player needs to manipulate the tempo and pedal to bring out the sadness at the end of the piece.

Theoretical Analysis

The theme is repeated four times in the right hand, as if someone is ruminating on a question. The theme is seven beats long, with one measure of 4/4 and one measure of 3/4 (see Figure 1). Although the time signature changes frequently, it is not difficult to learn the rhythm because the rhythmic pattern of the theme stays the same as it is repeated. Underneath the repeated theme, the chords change with notes moving in stepwise motion, creating a new harmony in each measure. Most of the time, there is a common note between two chords. Over the course of the piece, the chords descend slowly.

The image shows a musical score for the first four measures of Auerbach's 'Question'. The piece is marked 'Andante'. The right hand (treble clef) plays a melody that is repeated four times, with a slur over the entire phrase. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4, then back to 4/4, and finally to 3/4. The left hand (bass clef) provides harmonic support with chords. The first measure is marked 'mf espr.' and the last measure is marked 'f'. Below the bass staff, there are annotations: 'Ped.' under the first measure, '8^{va} ↓' under the second measure, and an asterisk '*' under the third measure.

Figure 1. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 1 “Question,” mm. 1-4.

The piece centers around E with the right hand melody starting and ending on E. In the left hand, the first chord is E minor in root position, and the last note is E. However, in the penultimate measure, E and B are modified half step down to E-flat and B-flat, forming an E-flat major chord in first inversion instead of an E-minor chord. This

results in tonal ambiguity at the end, as if the question was not resolved. In addition, there is no dominant chord present, adding to the unsettled tonality (see Figure 2).



Figure 2. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 1 “Question,” mm. 10-12.

The pitch collection of the right-hand melody consists of only four notes: E, Eb, F#, G. The expressive leap up a diminished octave sounds like an embellishment to the repeated E’s. The F-sharp acts like an appoggiatura embellishing the G because it is placed on the downbeat. Furthermore, both F-sharp and G can be analyzed as embellishing the E. The harmonic movement at the beginning implies a simple progression from tonic to subdominant (see Figure 1).

Underneath the first statement of the theme, the harmony goes from an E minor chord in root position (i) to an A minor chord in second inversion (iv6/4). The second time the theme is stated, the order of the progression is switched, going from the subdominant to the dominant. In addition, the subdominant chord is modified chromatically with A-sharp and C-sharp, creating an A-sharp diminished chord in second

inversion. The tonic chord is also modified chromatically to an E-flat major chord with E-flat and B-flat, resulting in bitonality between E minor and E-flat major (see Figure 1).

The third statement of the theme uses the same A-sharp diminished chord but moved down to the first inversion. The second chord is also modified chromatically from an E-flat major chord with the bass moving down a half step to D, resulting in a G minor chord in second inversion. The fourth statement of the theme uses a C dominant seventh chord, which is created from altering the bass note chromatically by a half step from the A-sharp diminished chord in first inversion (see Figure 3).



Figure 3. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 1 “Question,” m. 7.

Then, as the right hand echoes the last part of the theme (F#-G-E), the left hand chords descend in a stepwise motion. From measure 8, the chord progression is $i\bar{6}$ - $iv\bar{6}/4$ - $ii^{\circ}6$ - bI . It hints at the tonic to predominant tonal function, but omits the dominant chord to avoid a cadence, creating tonal ambiguity (see Figure 4).



Figure 4. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 1 “Question,” mm. 8-12.

The dynamics follow an arc shape, starting *mf* and increasing more and more to the third statement of the theme. Then, it gets softer to *mp* in the last statement of the theme and dying down while it echoes the last three notes (see Table 2). The piece can be organized in two parts, from mm. 1-6 and mm. 7-12. The left-hand movement in measure 7 is similar to the beginning with the bass note E on the third beat (see Figure 3).

Table 2. Auerbach *Images from Childhood* No. 1 “Question” Statement of the Theme and Dynamics

| Measures | Right hand | Dynamics |
|----------|--|-----------------|
| 1-2 | 1st statement of the theme | <i>mf</i> |
| 3-4 | 2nd statement of the theme | <i>f</i> |
| 5-6 | 3rd statement of the theme | <i>più f</i> |
| 7-8 | 4th statement of the theme | <i>mp</i> |
| 9-12 | Echos of the last three notes of the theme | <i>dim. - p</i> |

Assigning

This would be a great selection to teach balance between melody and chordal accompaniment in a lyrical style. Other skills the student will gain by studying this piece include changing meters and pedal changes. The student can learn to inflect two-measure phrases with crescendos and diminuendos. Before learning this piece, students might

learn Bartók's piece No. 3 from *For Children*, which has two-note chords in the accompaniment (see Figure 5). "Question" uses triads in the left hand, requiring more technique to play them simultaneously and softly. After studying "Question," the student could learn Bartók's "Round Dance" from *For Children*, which has a more involved second section (see Figure 6).



Figure 5. Bartók *For Children*, No. 3, mm. 1-4.

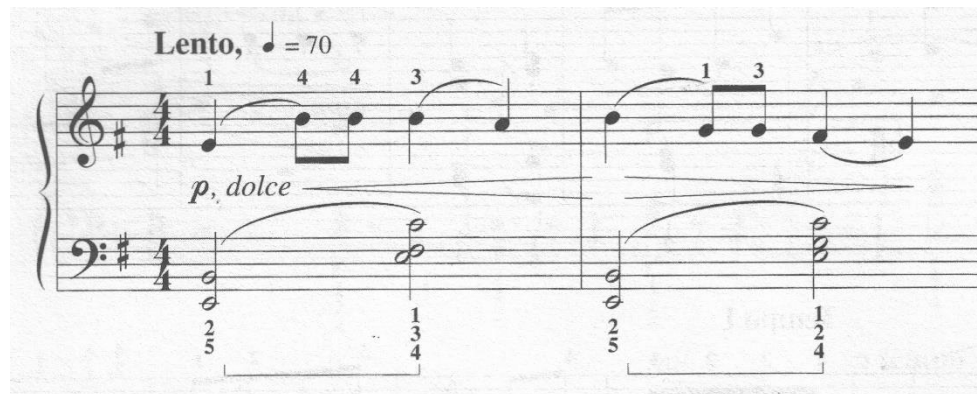


Figure 6. Bartók *For Children*, No. 17 "Round Dance," mm. 1-2.

Pedagogical Guide

Changing Meters

Internalize the rhythmic pattern of the theme. Be careful not to add an extra beat in the 3/4 measure.

1. First, tap and say the rhythm of the theme using rhythmic syllables to internalize the rhythm. Any system such as the Gordon or Takadimi systems that the student can do would be effective. For example, the student can vocalize saying, “ta-ta-titi-ta titi-ta-ah.”
2. Then, tap the rhythm and count the meter including subdivisions, “1-2-3&-4 1&-2-3. Counting the beats helps to apply the implications of the meter, such as the weight and pull of the downbeat. It might be helpful to write in the counting in the score because coordinating the tapping and counting aloud at the same can be difficult.
3. Finally, play and count the rhythm aloud.
4. The last four measures break the rhythmic pattern from the theme. The teacher can anticipate the student to miscount the last four measures, likely omitting beats from long notes. Apply the same steps as above early in the learning process to ensure success.

Harmony

1. Analyze the chords and write down the names. Notice the inversions.

2. Often, the next chord shares a common tone from the previous chord. Practice the left hand alone, noticing which notes stay the same and which notes change.

Pedal

1. For most of the piece, the pedal is changed once per measure. Practice changing the pedal clearly so that the sound is continuous without any break, but without blurriness or overlap between the harmonies.
2. In the last three measures, the pedal is held for three measures. Practice holding the pedal, listening carefully to the dynamics and balance. Holding the pedal down for an extended period compounds the accumulation of sound. Therefore, it is extremely important to adjust the voicing to achieve the desired dynamic effect.

Voicing

Listen carefully to the balance between the right-hand melody and left-hand chords. To practice voicing, play each chord with the melody note, making sure that the melody note is louder than the chord. The tone of the melody should be consistent to form a legato line.

Ritardando and Fermata

1. In the last three measures, the tempo slows down with poco a poco ritardando and the last note is held longer with a fermata. First, practice without adding any ritardando or fermata.

2. Then, add the ritartando, slowing down the tempo gradually and fermata, holding the last note longer. It might be helpful to slow down the tapping of your foot or counting aloud to control the tempo.

Listening Questions

1. Can you hear the swelling dynamic shaping in the melody?
2. Are the pedal changes clear?
3. Is the right-hand melody projecting over the left-hand chords?

2. What a Story!

“What a Story!” has some neoclassical elements. The dance-like A section shows Baroque qualities such as ornaments, which is contrasted by the marcato B section. The return of the A section features a brief bitonality, and the dream-like coda continues the fantastical sound that departs from the tonally safe beginning.

Theoretical Analysis

The form of this piece is ABA with a coda (see Table 3). The dance-like A section in triple meter resembles a minuet (see Figure 7). The use of varied articulation and ornaments shows Baroque qualities.

Table 3. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 2 “What a Story!,” Sections

| Measures | Sections | Time signature |
|----------|----------|----------------|
| 1-16 | A | 3/4 |
| 17-24 | B | 4/4 |
| 25-37 | A | 3/4 |
| 38-45 | Coda | 3/4 |

Allegretto con brio

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * *sempre*

Figure 7. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 2 “What a Story!,” mm. 1-4.

The A section uses the A melodic minor scale and diatonic harmonies. The dominant chord is used frequently to establish the key, which is avoided in the rest of the collection. The four-measure antecedent phrase ends in a half cadence, and the four-measure consequent phrase ends with an authentic cadence. In both cases, the dominant harmony is missing the fifth of the chord, B, which prevents the music from being firmly cemented in tonality (see Figure 7). The only note that is not in the A melodic minor scale pitch collection is D-sharp in measure 6 and 14. The D-sharp is substituted for E, creating a diminished seventh chord, vii° in E minor (see Figure 8). This is interesting to note because “Question” also features the same dissonant note D-sharp, enharmonic to E-flat.



Figure 8. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 2 “What a Story!,” mm. 13-14.

The marcato B section is contrasting to the dance-like A section. In the B section, the time signature changes to 4/4. The change in meter is not too difficult to master because the player can keep the steady quarter note beat as the piece transitions from 3/4 to 4/4 (see Figure 1.9).

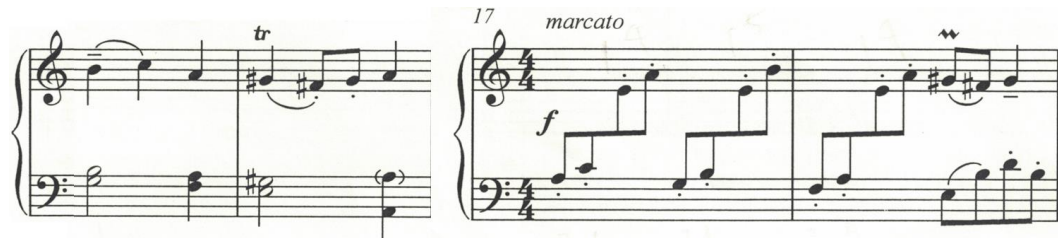


Figure 9. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 2 “What a Story!,” mm. 15-18.

The B section starts out diatonic, but from measure 20 becomes increasingly chromatic. The chromatic scale in the right hand works as a transition to the bitonality in the second A section (see Figure 10).



Figure 10. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 2 “What a Story!,” mm. 23-26.

In the second A section, the melody is transposed a half-step down to A-flat minor, giving the sense of bitonality. The left-hand chords now have full triads, which helps to establish the key in A minor and thus emphasize the bitonality (see Figure 10). The register change also creates more contrast between the right hand and left hand. The right hand is placed one octave higher and left hand two octaves lower than the opening. However, the bitonality only lasts for five measures before going back to an A minor pitch collection in the right hand. From measure 30, both hands descend in register, until the left hand reaches the lowest extremity on the modern piano, A0 (see Figure 11).



Figure 11. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 2 “What a Story!,” mm. 35-38.

The coda produces a dream-like sound with right hand in the high register, extended pedal, slower tempo, and gradual slowing down to the end. The opening theme is repeated in the coda, but in high register with held pedal (see Figure 11). It again descends in the last two measures, reaching the lowest A on the last note. The extended pedal blurs the harmonies together, obfuscating the clear tonality that was established in the beginning.

Assigning

Students learn a variety of touches including different articulations and ornaments, marcato playing, bitonality, and tempo changes. Playing “What a Story!” requires executing a variety of touches. Students who have practiced playing different articulations including two-note slurs and staccato are ready to play this piece. They may encounter similar articulations in Baroque and Classical pieces, as well as compositions by Bartók. In addition, students get more exposure and practice in playing grace notes and trills in this piece. Studying the articulation and embellishments carefully would take patience on the part of the student as well as the teacher.

The B section, in contrast, is a little study in toccata playing with constant staccato eighth notes. This section would prepare students to play toccatas such as Kabalevsky’s Rondo-Toccata, Op. 60 No. 4 (see Figure 12). In fact, the accompaniment pattern used in the B section from measures 21-24 in “What a Story!” is similar to the writing in measures 1-15 of Kabalevsky’s Rondo-Toccata. Learning to control the tempo

at the end of the piece would prepare students to play pieces with tempo changes, such as compositions by Debussy's "Clair de Lune."



Figure 12. Kabalevsky Rondo-Toccat, Op. 60 No. 4, mm. 1-4.

Pedagogical Guide

Articulation

The player needs to be able to execute different touches rapidly. To bring out the neo-classical characteristic of this piece, ornaments can be executed in the Baroque style. Ornaments can be played on the beat, and the trill can start from the upper neighbor note. In the toccata-like B section, the constant staccato eighth notes in both hands require some coordinated fingerwork.

A section – Practice the right hand very slowly, making sure to lift after each two-note slur and each staccato note. Use a down-up motion for the two-note slurs and bounce on the staccato notes. In measures 4, 12, 28, and 41, there are grace notes. Practice slowly, putting the first note of the ornament on the beat. It might be helpful to play the

measure first without the grace note and add it to make sure the rhythm is not being altered.

B section – Practice very slowly, lifting the fingers between staccato notes. Listen carefully to the space between each staccato note. As you increase the tempo, group notes together using fewer gestures, while still making sure that it sounds detached.

Meter and Tempo Changes

The piece requires the performer to be able to control the tempo in several ways. The meter changes from 3/4 to 4/4 in the B section. The meter change is a great opportunity for the student to practice keeping a steady beat. In the transition between the second A section and the coda, there is a fermata over a dotted half note. In the coda, the tempo slows down to andante from allegretto con brio. Subsequently, there is a poco a poco rit. al fine. The student will learn to keep a steady tempo, hold a long fermata, change the tempo, and slow down over an extended period of time.

1. First practice without changing the note values or tempo.
2. Then apply the tempo change, slowing the tempo for andante. Then, apply the ritartando by slowing down gradually from measure 41 to the end.
3. When you hold the fermata in measure 37, make sure that it's longer than three beats.

Pedal

The performer is called to add touches of pedal in the A section to achieve resonance and clarity. In the coda, the performer is instructed to hold the low A with the

pedal and keep the pedal down until the end, making a dreamy sound effect. The performer needs to listen carefully and adjust voicing to make this effect successful.

Character

To bring out the dance-like quality of this piece, play lighter on the second and third beats in the A sections.

Listening Questions

1. Do you hear the articulation clearly? Do the staccato notes sound crispy?
2. Would someone in the audience be able to hear the dynamic changes? Do the accents sound louder?
3. Is the tempo steady in the B section, without rushing?

3. Dialogue

“Dialogue” mimics a conversation between a high voice and a low voice. In addition to the difference in register, the high voice is soft, and marked dolce. The low voice is loud, and labeled cantabile e molto espressivo. The low voice is played with the right hand crossed over the left hand. The left hand has an ostinato pattern, alternating between a D major chord in root position and a G minor chord.

Theoretical Analysis

The dialogue alternates between the high voice and low voice as shown below in Table 4. The ostinato pattern alternates between the D major chord in root position and G minor chord in second inversion. It is unclear if the tonal center is D or G. The D major chord can be heard as the dominant to the G minor chord. Alternatively, the D major

chord can be heard as the tonic with a minor subdominant chord, using modal mixture (see Figure 13).

Table 4. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 3 “Dialogue,” Voices and Dynamics

| Measures | Voice | Dynamics |
|----------|--------|-------------|
| 1-3 | Treble | <i>p</i> |
| 4-5 | Bass | <i>f</i> |
| 6-9 | Treble | <i>p-pp</i> |
| 10-13 | Bass | <i>mf</i> |
| 14 | Treble | <i>pp</i> |

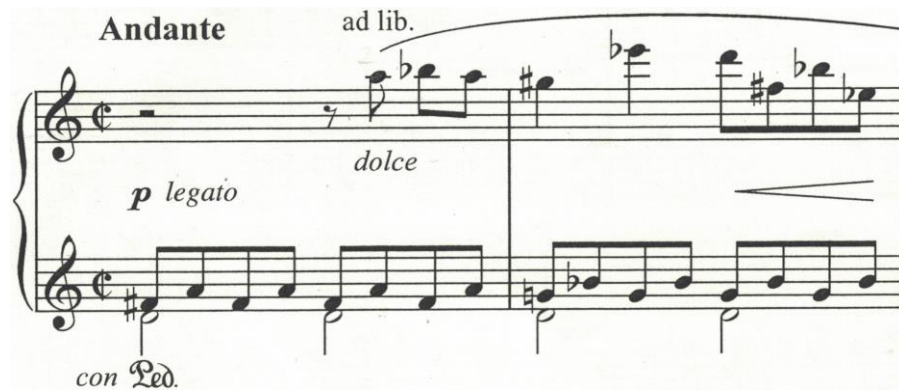


Figure 13. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 3 “Dialogue,” mm. 1-2.

The melody uses 11 chromatic pitches within the octave except for B. Using all but one pitch in the octave avoids establishing the home key. Throughout, the melody emphasizes A and D by starting and ending phrases with those pitches. Functioning as the dominant and tonic, it seems to center around the key of D. However, G and the chromatic alternate G# are also emphasized on the downbeat with the G minor chord. In

addition, the use of B-flat, E-flat, and F-sharp hints at the G harmonic minor scale. The two competing tonalities negate each other. In addition, the chromaticism helps to make the piece tonally ambiguous. In the last statement of the bass melody, the phrase ends on G-sharp, a raised 4th against the D major harmony. It creates a Lydian harmony used frequently by the film composer John Williams (see Figure 14).

These modified intervals may be explained by influences of Russian folk songs. According to Seaman, some Russian folk songs feature characteristic intervals such as a flattened sixth in the major mode and sharpened fourth in the major mode.²³ This would explain the presence of recurrent B-flat and G# in the key of D major.

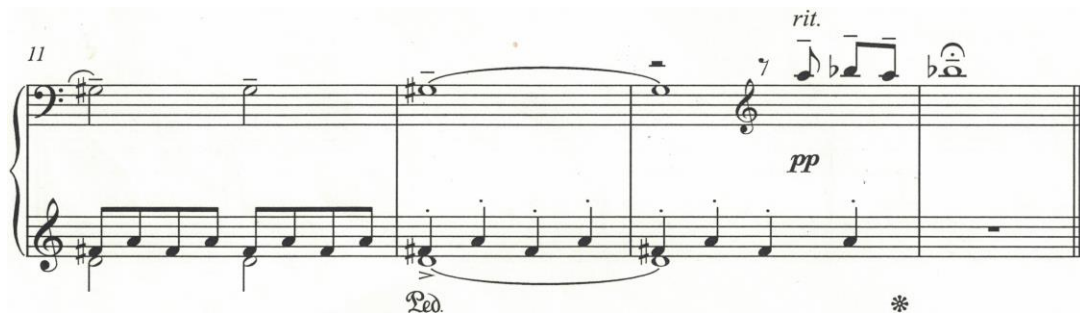


Figure 14. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 3 “Dialogue,” mm. 11-14.

Assigning

Dialogue is a great selection for a student who plays with sensitivity. The teacher can spark the imagination of the student by describing a dialogue between a child and a

²³ Gerald R. Seaman, *History of Russian Music Volume I: From Its Origins to Dargomyzhsky* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), 17.

grandparent or a bird and a hippo. It is an excellent way to introduce a cantabile melody in the bass clef without having to voice it with the left hand.

Pedagogical Guide

Crossing Hands

Playing crossed hands may be difficult at first. The player can experiment with different body positions to find comfortable movements. The player can try leaning forward, moving to the left, and playing with a high wrist to access the low notes with the right hand easily. Crossing hands creates large leaps to work out as well.

1. First, play the piece listening to the high-voiced melody, omitting the low-voiced melody.
2. Then, play the piece listening to the low-voiced melody, omitting the high-voiced melody. When you play hands crossed, experiment with adjusting your body position to find the most comfortable movements.
3. For accurate transitions between the voices, look at the key of the first note of the phrase as you play the large leap.

Cantabile

The melody has different dynamics while the ostinato left hand remains piano for the whole piece. The student can learn how to project the melody and inflect the phrases while controlling the balance with the accompaniment.

Rubato

The melody is indicated to be played ad lib. The student can learn how to play rubato with flexibility of tempo. The player can push and pull the tempo to create nuanced expression.

At the beginning of the phrase, start off slowly. Try moving through the eighth notes. Fast notes can move forward toward the next long note. At the end of the phrases, indicated by the slurs, try slowing down slightly to round off the phrases. In the middle of the hairpins, linger on the loudest note.

Accompaniment

1. To practice the left hand accompaniment, first play the chords blocked for the whole measure, playing all the notes together. Notice there are only two chords, D major root position chord (tonic), and G minor second inversion chord (subdominant in the minor mode).
2. Then, play the left hand accompaniment pattern as written, making sure to hold the bass note.

Accent

The accent in measure 12 is tricky because the player has to voice the 5th finger significantly louder than the upper notes. To practice, play the left hand third, angling toward the pinky. Then, add the right hand note, playing very softly.

Listening Questions

1. Is the melody projecting?
2. Do you hear the contrast in dynamics between the high voice and low voice?
3. Do you hear two big beats per measure?

4. Quarrel

“Quarrel” is a toccata-like piece full of repeated notes. The repetitions in the quick *allegro molto* present a technical challenge. The half-steps or minor seconds that are constantly present in this piece create dissonances or disagreements in the argument.

Theoretical Analysis

The piece is centered around E-flat minor. The first chord is E-flat minor in first inversion. The piece ends on a root position E-flat minor chord. The right hand features minor seconds, played with grace notes or together. On the accents, the right hand moves chromatically up a half step, and the left hand thirds move down chromatically down a half step (see Figure 15).



Figure 15. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 4 “Quarrel,” mm. 1-2.

The minor second of D and E-flat are present at the beginning of every measure except for the last three measures. The left hand plays thirds or chords, moving in half steps. From measure 5-7, the left-hand triads ascend from F major to G-flat major, then to G major (see Figure 16).



Figure 16. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 4 “Quarrel,” mm. 6-7.

The texture gets thicker as the piece progresses. In the opening, the left hand plays thirds, and right hand plays single notes with quick grace notes. From measure 3, the right hand minor seconds are played together, producing a more solid texture. From measure 5, the left hand plays triads, increasing the notes played simultaneously to five. Finally in measure 9, six notes are played together. The crescendo builds to a climax in measure 10, followed by a closing gesture in *andante* (see Figure 17).



Figure 17. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 4 “Quarrel,” mm. 9-10.

There is a metric modulation from measure 10 to measure 11. The half-note pulse becomes the quarter note pulse, slowing down the tempo by half. The tempo change is accompanied by subito piano, creating a contrasting ending to the marcato piece (see Figure 18).



Figure 18. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 4 “Quarrel,” mm. 11-12.

Assigning

This piece is a great selection for learning how to play toccatas. Technical skills to play repeated notes without accruing tension would be beneficial for playing advanced pieces such as Mussorgsky “The Market at Limoges” from *Pictures at an Exhibition*, Prokofiev *Diabolical suggestion*, Op. 4 No. 4, Toccata, Op. 11, and Sarcasms, Op. 17 (see Figure 19).



Figure 19. Mussorgsky *Pictures at an Exhibition*, No. 7 “Limoges. The Market (The Big News),” mm. 1-2.

Pedagogical Guide

Repeated Notes

Students can learn how to play repeated notes loud and marcato without accumulating unnecessary tension. In this piece, the notes do not alternate like some toccatas, meaning the player must repeat notes without any rest. It presents an excellent opportunity to discuss efficient movements for passages or pieces that have repetitive notes.

Group four eighth notes together. As you play four eighth notes, move slightly higher and forward. In the beginning, it might help to exaggerate the motion and practice slowly. Then, speed up the tempo until you can play the group effortlessly without unnecessary tension. This accomplishes two goals. It helps to feel the half-note beat and prevent strain from repetitive motion. Incorporate brief breaks or commas between the groupings to help with shaping. This will also help to keep the body relaxed.

Acciaccaturas

The first two measures have acciaccaturas or quick grace notes. They can be played on the beat with emphasis on the main note.

Playing Simultaneously

Whereas the acciaccatura notes should be staggered, seconds, thirds, and triads should be played simultaneously. Use a firm, balanced structure in the hand and find an angle where you can strike all the notes at the same time.

Tempo Change

At the end, the tempo changes to Andante. The half-note pulse becomes the quarter note pulse, which means the tempo is halved. Feel four quarter notes in the last two measures to slow down the tempo.

Crescendos

To achieve dynamic shaping, start soft at the beginning of crescendos in measures 5, 6, and 9. In measure 5, start soft, swell to the second beat, then come back down again. The diminuendo will help stay soft in measure six to build in measure 7. In measure 8, the repeated notes can start soft so that the crescendo is possible in measure 9, building to the accented fortissimo chord on the downbeat of measure 10. The pedal can be added in measure 9 to help accumulate sound.

Listening Questions

1. Can you hear the accents clearly? Can you hear the crescendo?
2. Do you hear the half-note pulse?
3. Do the notes sound together at the same time?

5. An Old Photograph from the Grandparents' Childhood

The exaggerated expressivity and dreamy sound with the pedal evoke a nostalgic feeling. The title might inspire a scene where the grandparents are telling a story about an old photograph.

Theoretical Analysis

The form of the piece is ABA with a coda (see Table 5). The same ostinato bass continues throughout the piece, alternating between the tonic and dominant seventh chords. The accompaniment pattern gently moves between G-sharp minor chord in second inversion and D-sharp dominant seventh chord in root position. Again, a strong dominant is avoided by omitting the third of the chord, F-double-sharp, which creates tonal ambiguity (see Figure 20). The B section is marked with exaggerated expressivity, filled with hairpins (see Figure 21). The second A section is identical in pitch to the first A section, but it is marked dreamily with a slower tempo, extended pedal, and una corda pedal (see Figure 22).

Table 5. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 5 “An Old Photograph from the Grandparents’ Childhood,” Sections

| Measures | Sections | Tempo | Marking |
|----------|----------|------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1-9 | A | Andantino | non legato |
| 10-21 | B | | legato, with exaggerated expressivity |
| 22-29 | A | Meno mosso | dreamily |
| 30-35 | Coda | | |

Andantino

p non legato

Ped. * *sempre simile*

Figure 20. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 5 “An Old Photograph from the Grandparents’ Childhood,” mm. 1-4.



Figure 21. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 5 “An Old Photograph from the Grandparents’ Childhood,” mm. 9-12.



Figure 22. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 5 “An Old Photograph from the Grandparents’ Childhood,” mm. 21-22.

Throughout the piece, bitonality is referenced by using the chromatically altered note in the melody against the ostinato. For example, in measure 7, A-natural and C-natural are played against A-sharp and C-sharp (see Figure 23). In measure 19 and 21, G-natural is played against the G-sharp (see Figure 24).



Figure 23. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 5 “An Old Photograph from the Grandparents’ Childhood,” m. 7.



Figure 24. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 5 “An Old Photograph from the Grandparents’ Childhood,” m. 19.

After the piece settles on G-sharp in measure 33, G-natural is played in the penultimate measure, unsettling the finality of the ending (see Figure 25).



Figure 25. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 5 “An Old Photograph from the Grandparents’ Childhood,” mm. 32-35.

Assigning

This piece is one of the harder selections of the set. The key of G-sharp minor with double-sharps can be tricky to read, especially for students who are weak in note-reading. With that said, it is an excellent choice for a precocious student with mature musicality. Even though this piece contains octaves, it can be played with young students with small hands because they can be connected by pedal. A successful rendition would require careful attention to details and sensitivity to phrasing.

Pedagogical Guide

Thirds

The thirds in the B section are excellent for learning voicing and shaping. The two-note slurs add complexities to the execution of the thirds. Students should also work on playing them together.

Practice just the thirds with the right hand in mm.9-13, voicing the top notes. Play each third until you hear the voicing that you like. Listen carefully, playing the upper note louder than the lower note.

Color Change

The second A section is an excellent example of color change. The markings such as *meno mosso*, *una corda*, and *dreamily* all help to make the color change tangible for the student. The extended pedal also adds to the dreamy sound.

Exaggerated Expressivity

When the theme from the beginning returns in m. 21, it is marked dreamily. This change in color or character is made possible by a few changes. The tempo slows down with the *meno mosso* marking. The dynamic is *pp*. The instruction in the footnote in the score says, “Keep *una corda* (left) pedal depressed from m.21 to the end. Pedal indications are for the damper (right) pedal.” Practice the pedal changes with your feet without playing. Keep the *una corda* pedal down with your left foot and move your right foot up and down on the damper pedal until you can do this comfortably.

Una Corda Pedal

The *una corda* pedal is depressed from measure 21 to the end. While the left foot is folding the *una corda* pedal, the right foot needs to operate the sustain pedal. To practice this, put down the *una corda* pedal with your left foot. With your right foot, go up and down on the sustain pedal without moving your left foot. Be sure to prepare your feet in advance so that both feet can go down at the same time in measure 21.

Exaggerated Expressivity

The B section calls for exaggerated expressivity. The performer can take liberties with the hairpins and lingering long on the first note of the two-note slur with the tenuto, more than what might normally be considered tasteful. It would be an excellent exercise in pushing the boundaries of interpretation.

Listening Questions

1. Can you hear the phrasing? Would the audience be able to tell how long the phrases are from hearing your performance?
2. Is the tone in the melody consistent?
3. Does the second A section sound dreamy?

6. After the War (The Field of the Dead)

The low cluster and very soft melody create an eerie atmosphere. The pedal is held for the whole piece, creating a sound effect. This technically accessible piece is a great starting point for learning about extended techniques. The teacher may introduce the students to pieces like Henry Cowell's *Banshee* and Krzysztof Penderecki's *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*, both of which also feature frightening sounds.

Theoretical Analysis

There are four melodic statements with the same rhythmic pattern. The rhythmic pattern repeats four times with different notes. The cluster starts very loud and gets softer with each strike, while the melody remains *ppp* (see Table 6).

Table 6. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 6 "After the War (The Field of the Dead)," Sections

| Measures | Sections | Dynamics of the cluster |
|----------|---------------|-------------------------|
| 1-3 | 1st statement | <i>ff</i> |
| 4-5 | 2nd statement | <i>f</i> |
| 6-7 | 3rd statement | <i>mf</i> |
| 8-10 | 4th statement | <i>mp</i> |

The melody sounds as if it is centered around C and C-sharp. The at the end of the first phrase, the melody steps up to the C, which sounds like (sol-la-ti-do) in a C major or C melodic minor scale (see Figure 26). Phrases two and four end on C-sharp, approached by a descending scale. These gestures hint at the typical melodic movement in authentic cadences in functional tonality. However, all twelve chromatic pieces in the octave are used in the melody. Paired with the low tone cluster, it takes away any tonal certainty. This piece may be influenced by a type of Russian folk songs, the lament. The chromaticism and the repeated rhythmic motive are characteristics of the laments of the far North.²⁴

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled "After the War (The Field of the Dead)" by Auerbach. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of three measures. The first measure is marked "ff" and "lunga". The second and third measures are marked "ppp" and "legato". The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass clef contains a low tone cluster. The tempo is "Adagio" and the performance instruction is "ad lib.". A pedal instruction at the bottom reads "Ped. (Pedal bis zum Ende halten / hold pedal to end of piece)".

Figure 26. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 6 “After the War (The Field of the Dead),” mm. 1-3.

²⁴ Gerald R. Seaman, *History of Russian Music Volume I: From Its Origins to Dargomyzhsky* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), 12.

The cluster, a group of adjacent notes played together, is indicated with square note heads.²⁵ The score instructs the player to play a cluster of lowest notes (see Figure 26). The player can cover and play the lowest white keys and black keys with the palm. The use of one pedal for the same piece also mixes all twelve pitches, creating a blur.

The atonality may suggest death. The cluster strikes at different beats, and the length of the cluster varies throughout. The randomness of the left hand creates a sense of destruction and lack of order that may be experienced after the war.

Assigning

This piece can be assigned to a student who enjoys experimenting with new techniques. Learning how to play clusters would be useful for playing pieces with clusters by composers such as Henry Cowell and Bela Bartók. According to Grove Music Online, clusters were first featured in Henry Cowell's *The Tides of Manaunum* in 1912.²⁶

Pedagogical Guide

Cluster

To practice playing the cluster, play the lowest notes with the palm of your left hand, covering white keys and black keys. Try varying the dynamics until you can create four different tiers of volume.

²⁵ *Grove Music Online*, "Cluster," accessed January 10, 2019, DOI: 10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.05992.

²⁶ *Grove Music Online*, "Cluster," accessed January 10, 2019, DOI: 10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.05992.

Ad Lib

Students can experiment with freedom of expression with the ad lib marking. The teacher can encourage the students to push the boundaries by playing with time. For example, the student may linger on chromatic movements using minor seconds or move through the short eighth notes to the long quarter notes. This exercise can be beneficial, especially for students who play too squarely.

Evoking an Image

Create a story of your own by playing a cluster of your liking and improvising a melody in the right hand.

Listening Questions

1. Does the melody sound *ppp*?
2. Does the left hand cluster sound softer and softer?
3. Do the notes with fermatas sound long?

7. Decision

The persistent rhythmic pattern adds to the uncompromising, decisive character. The marcato *ff* in allegro con brio is unrelating without any dynamic or tempo changes in the piece.

Theoretical Analysis

In the first half of the piece, there is a sense of bitonality. The right hand is centered around C, and left hand is centered a half step higher around D-flat (see Figure 27).



Figure 27. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 7 “Decision,” mm. 1-4.

The right-hand chords from measures 5-8 form a palindrome. It progresses in this order in measures 5-6: [GC-GAbC-GC-BbC]. In the following two measures, the order is reversed to [BbC-GC-GAbC-GC] (see Figure 28). In the second half of the piece, the left hand joins in with the right hand in C and ends together on a C minor chord.



Figure 28. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 7 “Decision,” mm. 5-8.

Like other pieces in this collection, the piece hints at the tonic to dominant movement, but the dominant harmony is never presented. It is always one note off by a half step. For example, in measure 10, the chord on the third beat is one chromatic note off from the dominant-seventh chord, with a D-flat instead of D-natural. It is a French augmented sixth chord, a substitute for V7 (see Figure 29).



Figure 29. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 7 “Decision,” m. 10.

The same chord with D-flat appears on the fourth beat of measure 13. It sounds like it is going to resolve to a C-minor chord on the downbeat of 14. Instead, the lowest moves to the leading tone, B, instead of C, prolonging the dominant function in the left hand, before settling finally on the C minor chord in the next measure.



Figure 30. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 7 “Decision,” mm. 12-16.

Assigning

This piece is a great selection for a student who likes to play loud and fast. Alternatively, it can be assigned to a student who can benefit from expanding the louder end of the dynamic range.

Pedagogical Guide

Marcato

The marcato and fortissimo marking requires the player to play loud throughout the piece. To get a strong sound on the chords, the player can employ the arm weight. To avoid accumulating tension, notes can be grouped together, and the player can relax on the long notes.

Group two eighth-notes and quarter notes together. Think or say “go-to-there” and move your hands forward and higher as you play. Stay relaxed and ricochet.

Voicing

To give a definite strike of the chords, the notes need to be played simultaneously and with voicing. Changing notes should be voiced louder than the repeated notes. For example, from measure 12 to the end, the outer voices change and the inner voices stay the same. The performer can bring out the outer voices to hear the note changes.

Pedal

There is a variety of specific pedal markings in this piece. In measures 1-4, the pedal is held for four measures. In other places, the pedal is changed with the chord changes. However, in measure 9, the pedal is held through the whole measure, even with the note change in the left hand. In measures 10-11, there is no pedal on the half-note chords starting on the third beat. The student would need to carefully work out the pedal to make sure it is being held and released as indicated.

In the first line, the pedal is held through. Practice holding the foot down for four measures. Your foot may be tempted to change. Listen carefully and adjust the voicing.

Listening Questions

1. Is the tempo steady? Is any part rushing?
2. Are the notes sounding together at the same time?
3. Does it sound loud and marked throughout?

8. Family Holiday

“Family Holiday” is a lyrical piece with a cello-like left-hand melody. The right-hand accompaniment creates a gentle lilt while the left hand sings sweeping melodies.

Theoretical Analysis

The structure of the piece is similar to ABA Coda (see Table 7). In the first four measures, the left hand melody sweeps up to G. This climactic moment is supported by a hairpin (crescendo and diminuendo). In the middle material, the E major chord serves as the secondary dominant chord (V of V), if in D minor, followed later by A major, the dominant chord in D minor. Consequently, the F major harmony on the downbeat of measure 8 sounds like a deceptive cadence (see Figure 31). Following the F major chord in the same measure, the opening melody returns, this time coming to a close.

Table 7. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 8 “Family Holiday” Phrases

| Measures | Phrases |
|----------|---------------------------|
| 1-3 | 1 Theme antecedent phrase |
| 4-5 | 2 Theme consequent phrase |
| 6-7 | 3 Contrasting material |
| 8-10 | 4 Theme |
| 12-13 | Coda |

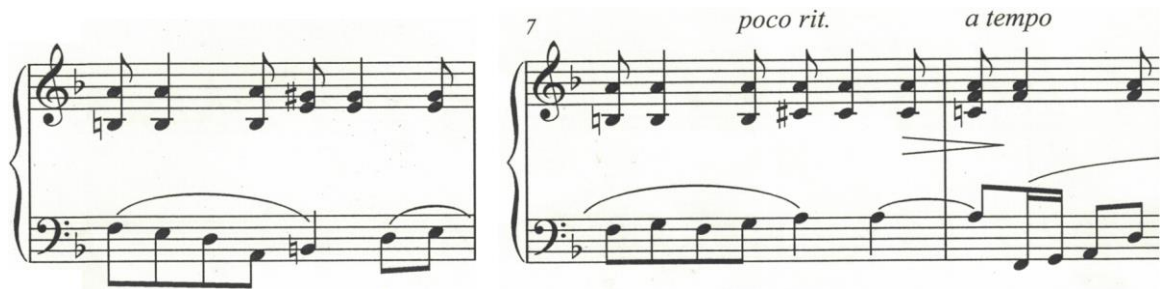


Figure 31. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 8 “Family Holiday,” mm. 6-8.

The key of F major is indicated in the key signature with B-flat. However, there is ambiguity about whether the piece is in D minor or F major. The piece ends with a complete F major triad in root position. However, the F major harmony does not appear until measure 8, which sounds like a deceptive cadence. It creates a modal elision where the F major chord functions as the mediant in D minor, but also as the tonic in F major retroactively because the key of F is established subsequently. In the beginning, the third in the right hand is missing the C to complete a F major triad. The theme delineates a D minor arpeggio, resulting in a D minor harmony with both hands (see Figure 32). The dominant chord in D minor appears in measures 5 and 7, which sets up the deceptive

cadence, taking the piece to F major, the relative key. According to Seaman, it is not unusual for a folk song to start in one mode and end in another, a feature called *peremennost* or mutation.²⁷

Figure 32. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 8 “Family Holiday,” mm. 1-3.

Like many other pieces in the collection, the dominant chord is avoided in the last cadence in measure 9. Instead of the dominant chord (C), the diminished vii chord (E^o) is used (see Figure 33).

Figure 33. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 8 “Family Holiday,” mm. 9-10.

²⁷ Gerald R. Seaman, *History of Russian Music Volume I: From Its Origins to Dargomyzhsky* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), 18.

In the coda, it mixes modes and borrows notes from the parallel minor, D-flat and E-flat, which are lowered scale degrees 6 and 7 (see Figure 34). Seaman suggests that the “simultaneous employment of major and minor” is a characteristic encountered in Russian folk melodies.²⁸



Figure 34. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 8 “Family Holiday,” mm. 10-13.

Assigning

“Family Holiday” is an excellent study in voicing the left-hand melody. Students can study this piece after they have studied easier etudes such as Gurlitt’s Etude, Op. 82 No. 65, and Schytte’s Etude, Op. 108 No. 12 (see Figure 35 and Figure 36).

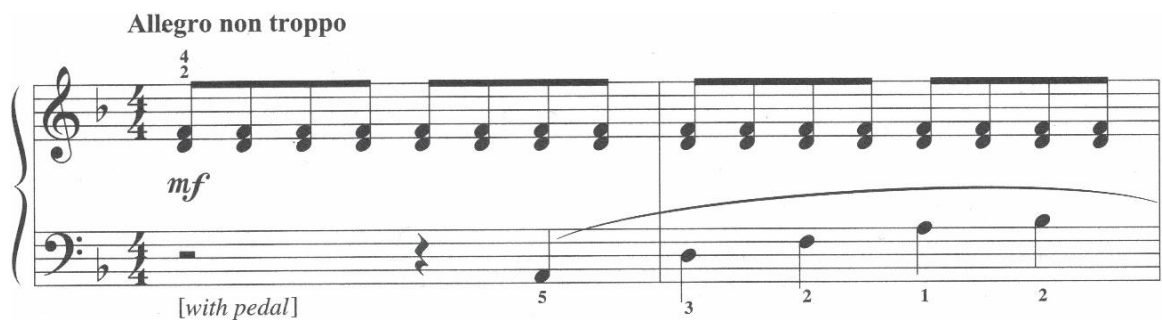


Figure 35. Gurlitt Etude, Op. 82 No. 65, mm. 1-2.

²⁸ Gerald R. Seaman, *History of Russian Music Volume I: From Its Origins to Dargomyzhsky* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), 18.

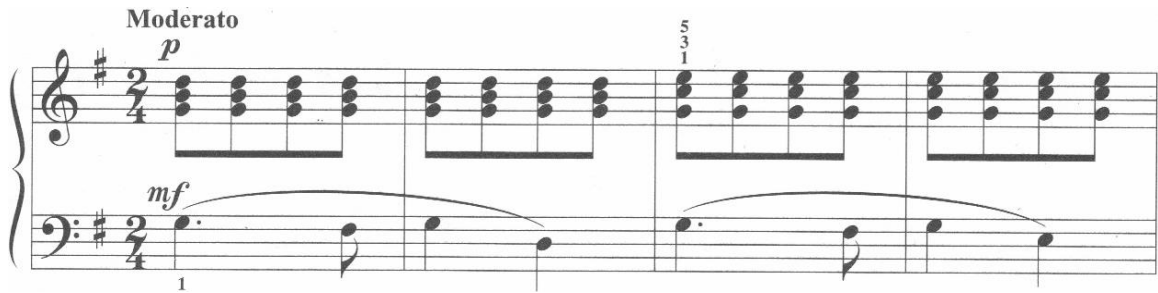


Figure 36. Schytte Etude, Op. 108 No. 12, mm. 1-4.

Developing the ability to sing out the left-hand melody and keep the right-hand accompaniment soft would prepare the student to play Chopin's pieces such as Prelude in B Minor Op. 28 No. 6, and Etude in C# Minor Op. 25 No. 7 (see Figure 37 and Figure 38).



Figure 37. Chopin Prelude in B Minor, Op. 28 No. 6, mm. 1-4.



Figure 38. Chopin Etude in C# Minor, Op. 25 No. 7, mm. 1-3.

The syncopated accompaniment pattern may be difficult to learn at first. It would prepare students to play pieces with similar syncopated accompaniment patterns such as Khachaturian “Ivan Sings” (Figure 39). In “Family Holiday,” the tempo is slower, making it easy to work out the rhythm and coordination between hands.



Figure 39. Khachaturian “Ivan Sings,” mm. 18-20.

Pedagogical Guide

Coordination

To practice coordination, tap the right-hand accompaniment rhythm counting 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &. Then, tap the left-hand melody rhythm counting aloud, making sure to subdivide the 16th notes. Then practice tapping both hands together, counting aloud. For tricky measures such as measure 5, it might help to say “together-right-left-right” to help with coordination.

Balance

At first, it might be difficult to play the left hand louder than the right hand. Imagine holding a silver spoon in the left hand and plastic spoon in the right hand.

Pedal

Listen carefully to pedal to figure out how often you need to change. When the left hand has the accompaniment, you may be used to changing with the harmony. However, when the left hand has the melody, you may need to change more frequently, when the harmony changes in the right hand and when the melody note changes in the left hand.

Listening Questions

1. Does the left hand have a singing tone that projects?
2. Does the phrase start and end gently without accents?
3. Is the pedal clear without muddy sound?

9. Stubborn

The repeated clusters in the left hand and melodies in the right hand show determined stubbornness. To bring out the humor, the player can exaggerate the accents, two-note slurs, and hairpins.

Theoretical Analysis

“Stubborn” uses tone clusters employed by composers such as Henry Cowell and Bela Bartók. Auerbach’s proponent, Sofia Gubaidulina uses similar four-note clusters in “Mechanical Accordion” from *Musical Toys*.²⁹ Unlike “After the War (Field of the

²⁹ Seong-Sil Kim, “A Pedagogical Approach and Performance Guide to *Musical Toys* by Sofia Gubaidulina” (D. M. A. Thesis, University of Iowa, 2015), 19.

Dead)” from the same collection, the tone clusters have defined notes, consisting of four adjacent half-step notes (see Figure 40).



Figure 40. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 9 “Stubborn,” mm. 1-2.

The phrases are organized in four measures (see Table 8). In the first four measures, it uses the cluster of F-sharp, G, G-sharp, and A (see Figure 40). In the next four measures, it uses the cluster of G, A-flat, A-natural, and B-flat (see Figure 41). In the variation of the theme, the melody alternates between low and high registers. The pitches remain the same; it is only the register that changes. In the coda, it reinforces the G, the tonal center of the piece.

Table 8. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No.9 “Stubborn,” Sections

| Measures | Sections |
|----------|---|
| 1-8 | Theme |
| 9-16 | Variation of the theme in different registers |
| 17-20 | Coda |



Figure 41. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 9 “Stubborn,” m. 5.

Throughout the piece, G harmonic minor scale and chromatic scale are used. The first cluster functions as the dominant chord. It sounds like a third with F-sharp (third of the chord) and A (fifth of the chord) with two chromatic notes filled in. In the beginning, the repeated D’s in the pick-up complete the D major harmony (see Figure 40). The second cluster serves the tonic function. Similar to the first cluster, it sounds like a third with the root and third of the G minor chord with two chromatic notes filled in. This cluster pattern refers back to “Dialogue,” where the ostinato pattern alternates between D major and G minor.

At the end, a strong tonic is avoided because the dominant cluster [F#, G, G#, A] remains through the end. If the tonic cluster [G, Ab, A, Bb] were used, it would sound more final. It hints at the gesture of an authentic cadence but avoids it by not resolving where it is expected (see Figure 42).



Figure 42. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 9 “Stubborn,” mm. 17-20.

Assigning

Students who have learned to play a combination of touches such as two-note slurs, staccato, and tenuto with simpler Bartók pieces would be equipped to play this piece. For example, they could study No. 1 “Children at Play” or No. 6 “Study for the Left Hand” from *For Children*, Volume 1 by Bartók before learning “Stubborn.”

Pedagogical Guide

Articulation

The melody employs a variety of touches such as staccato, two-note slurs, accents, and grace notes. It is a great companion to Bartók. The student learns to cross hands rapidly and how to manage large leaps. The teacher can help the student’s characterization by connecting stubbornness to playing marcato and with humor.

Crossing Hands

In the second half of the piece, the melody alternates between low register and high register, requiring hand crossing. The transition in measure 15 is particularly challenging because there is no rest in between like the other leaps in the piece.

To practice the leaps from measure 9 to 16, practice the movements silently without playing. Experiment with the angles of your body to find the most effective movements.

Cluster

To play all the notes in the cluster at the same time and staccato, make an O with your left hand and imagine you’re pecking like a woodpecker. Practice the right hand

very slowly, in groups, to realize all the markings such as staccato, accents, two-note slurs, tenuto, and grace notes.

Listening Questions

1. Can you hear the right-hand melody projecting? Adjust the balance of the clusters as you listen.
2. Can you make someone laugh with this piece?
3. Do the accents sound louder than the other notes?

10. E-Creatures

The title captures the imagination of the generation who grow up with computers. It sounds as if there are little creatures working to send signals over the Internet.

Theoretical Analysis

The polytonality is evident in the key signatures. There are no sharps or flats for the right hand, and there are five flats for the left hand. The right hand plays white keys, and the left hand plays black keys. The right hand is centered in D, and the left hand in D-flat (see Figure 43).

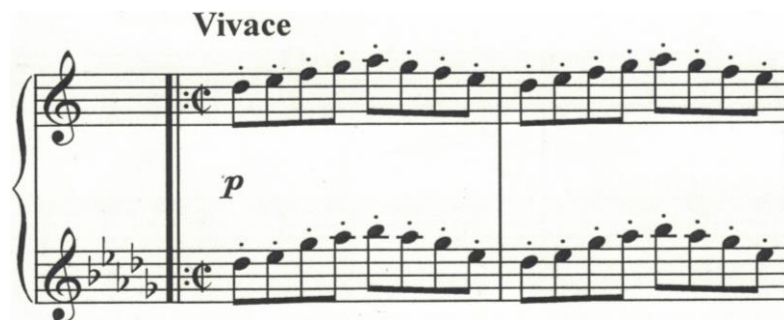


Figure 43. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 10 "E-Creatures," mm. 1-2.

The right hand uses all white keys except for measure 13 where the melody descends chromatically. Being centered around D, the scale used is Dorian. The left hand uses the pentatonic scale, using only five notes for the entirety of the piece: D-flat, E-flat, G-flat, A-flat, and B-flat.

Table 9. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 10 “E-Creatures,” Sections

| Measures | Sections | Features |
|----------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| 1-5 | A | Staccato eighth notes |
| 6-13 | B | Two-note slurs over quarter notes |
| 14-18 | A | Staccato eighth notes |

The form of the piece is ABA (see Table 9). The A section has constant staccato notes in both hands. The right hand and left hand are always a minor second or half step apart. The B section features two-note slurs throughout. The right hand and left hand stay close together, playing half step apart for most of the time (see Figure 44).



Figure 44. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 10 “E-Creatures,” mm. 5-9.

Assigning

This piece can be assigned after students played staccato simultaneously in both hands with pieces such as Kabalevsky Op. 39 No. 6 “A Little Joke,” No. 4 “A Fable,” or No. 17 “Folk Dance.”

Pedagogical Guide

Leggiero

The piece is technically harder than it looks. It requires the performer to play rapid staccato notes simultaneously in both hands, while the left hand is placed over the right hand. It is an excellent study for leggiero playing. In the quick tempo, the student needs to execute detached notes with fingers without too much movement. If the student bounces too much, feeling two beats per measure would be difficult to achieve. The B section is an etude in two-note slurs. The student can group notes together and play lighter between the big beats.

To play staccato light and fast in the A section, stay close to the keys. Listen carefully to make sure all notes sound detached.

Two-note Slurs

To play two-note slurs in the B section, use down-up motion, going down with weight on the first note and playing lightly on the second note. Listen carefully to make sure there is a lift after each two-note slur.

Cut Time

Feel two beats per measure. To practice this, accent beats 1 and 2 and play lightly in between. This will help increase the tempo easily.

Listening Questions

1. Do the staccato notes sound light and detached?
2. Do you hear the lift after each two-note slur?
3. Do you hear two beats per measure?

11. Shadows on the Wall

Chromaticism creates darkness in this lyrical piece. To create smooth legato in the right hand and left hand, the performer needs to let the phrases ebb and flow.

Theoretical Analysis

The key signature indicates C minor, and it does not stray far from the key (see Figure 45).



Figure 45. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 11 “Shadows on the Wall,” mm. 1-2.

There is a complete dominant seventh chord on the last beat of measure 8, although the tonic note is avoided in the right-hand melody in the resolution, as not to complete a perfect authentic cadence (see Figure 46).



Figure 46. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 11 “Shadows on the Wall,” mm. 7-9.

At the end, the right hand again creates ambiguity by lingering on the leading tone instead of going to the tonic (see Figure 47).



Figure 47. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 11 “Shadows on the Wall,” mm. 15-16.

The form of the piece is ABA Coda (see Table 10). Each section is organized in four measures. The A section has an accompaniment pattern that ascends and descends with alternating broken thirds. Chromaticism is sprinkled throughout, with chromatic notes in the accompaniment pattern and chromatic scale in the right-hand melody.

Table 10. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 11 “Shadows on the Wall,” Sections

| Measures | Sections |
|----------|----------|
| 1-4 | A |
| 5-8 | B |
| 9-12 | A |
| 13-16 | Coda |

The accompaniment pattern changes in the B section, providing a richer texture with chords and quarter-note bass. The B section is dominant oriented because the dominant, G, is repeated in the bass. Also in the right hand, G is prominent, being embellished with chromatic neighbors F-sharp and A-flat (see Figure 48). In measures 7-8, there is modal mixture, using E-natural, A-natural, and B-natural, from the parallel C major (see Figure 46). The second A section is identical to the first, followed by the coda. Strong tonic is avoided by shading the harmony with G-flat instead of G-natural in the left hand (see Figure 47).



Figure 48. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 11 “Shadows on the Wall,” mm. 5-6.

Assigning

After learning pieces with legato melodies over accompaniment patterns such as Schumann's Op. 68 No. 1, 3, or 5, and Tchaikovsky's "Rêverie," Op. 39 No. 21, students can learn this piece. The alternating accompaniment style in Schumann's Op. 68 No. 1, 3, and 5 is similar to the A section. The accompaniment in Tchaikovsky "Rêverie," Op. 39 No. 1 is similar to the accompaniment style in the B section. The presence of 16th notes present a more complex rhythmic challenge for the pianist, getting them to figure out the subdivisions.



Figure 49. Schumann "A Little Piece," Op. 68 No. 5, mm. 1-4.

Musical score for Tchaikovsky's "Rêverie," Op. 39 No. 21, measures 1-4. The tempo is marked "Andante" and the time signature is 3/4. The score is in piano (*p*) dynamic. The right hand plays a melody with slurs and fingerings (2, 5, 1, 2, 2, 5, 1, 2). The left hand plays a complex accompaniment of 16th notes with slurs and fingerings (4, 1, 2, 4, 3, 4). The right hand is labeled "r.h." in the fourth measure.

Figure 50. Tchaikovsky "Rêverie," Op. 39 No. 21, mm. 1-4.

Pedagogical Guide

Legato

Students can develop their legato playing over various accompaniment patterns. In addition, they can learn how to shape legato lines with crescendos and diminuendos while balancing melody and accompaniment. To inflect the two-note slurs, students can study flexible up-down movements with the wrist, which would require contrasting motions between right hand and left hand.

Coordination

Carefully work out where the right-hand and left-hand notes align. It might be helpful to write in the subdivisions for the 16th notes and put a line where right hand and left hand play together. Practice very slowly to coordinate the hands.

Practice the hands separately to work out the accompaniment pattern in the left hand and articulation in the right hand. Practice hands together slowly, keeping the left hand accompaniment smooth and showing inflection in the right hand.

Voicing

Listen carefully to the voicing so that the right-hand melody is projecting over the left-hand accompaniment. In the B section, keep the off beats in the left hand very soft so as not to overpower the right-hand melody.

Listening Questions

1. Can you hear the shaping with crescendo and diminuendo?
2. Imagine you're in the audience. Would you hear the melody projecting over the accompaniment?
3. Do you hear four beats per measures, rather than eight?

12. Prayer

After much charm and darkness, the collection ends with a prayer marked *adagio religioso*. Just like the opening “Question,” the piece ends ambiguously without coming back to the tonic chord from the beginning.

Theoretical Analysis

The style is a four-part chorale. The range of the four voices is high. The lowest bass note is G3, just a fourth below middle C. The left hand notes are written on the treble clef. This high range may represent a high voice of a child or a children's choir (see Figure 51).



Figure 51. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 12 “Prayer,” mm. 1-2.

The piece starts with an F-major chord, but ends on a G-major chord, resulting in tonal ambiguity at the end of the collection. It is a characteristic of Russian folk songs to conclude on a different degree than the tonic, a feature known as *peremennost*.³⁰ Before the final G major chord, the dominant chord is weakened by altering the fifth of the chord half step higher to B-flat instead of A (see Figure 52).



Figure 52. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 12 “Prayer,” mm. 17-20.

This piece progresses in an arch form (see Table 11).

Table 11. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 12 “Prayer,” Phrases

| Measures | Phrases | Tonal Center |
|----------|--------------|--------------|
| 1-8 | A Theme | F |
| 9-10 | B Transition | |
| 11-14 | C Theme | G |
| 15-16 | B Transition | |
| 17-20 | A Theme | F-G |

³⁰ Gerald R. Seaman, *History of Russian Music Volume I: From Its Origins to Dargomyzhsky* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), 18.

The opening theme starts in F major, followed by a descending tertial chord progression (see Figure 51). During the transition in measure 10, the D7 chord serves the dominant function, leading to the statement of the theme that starts with a G major chord (see Figure 53).



Figure 53. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 12 “Prayer,” mm. 9-12.

In the second transitional material in measure 15-16, there is a circle of fifth movement, going from G7 to C7, which leads to the last statement of the theme starting with an F major chord (see Figure 54).



Figure 54. Auerbach *Images from Childhood*, No. 12 “Prayer,” mm. 15-16.

The repeating rhythmic pattern (half-note, half-note, dotted half-note, quarter-note) creates a gentle lilt. In the transitional material in measures 9-10 and 15-16, there is

more rhythmic activity. The hairpins in both transitions prepare for the following statements of the theme (see Figure 53 and Figure 54).

Assigning

This is an excellent selection for teaching chordal playing using a contemporary piece. The skills developed in this piece would be comparable to pedagogical benefits of learning Romantic standard pieces such as Tchaikovsky “Morning Prayer,” Op. 39 No. 1 and Schumann “Chorale,” Op. 68 No. 4 (see Figure 55 and Figure 56).

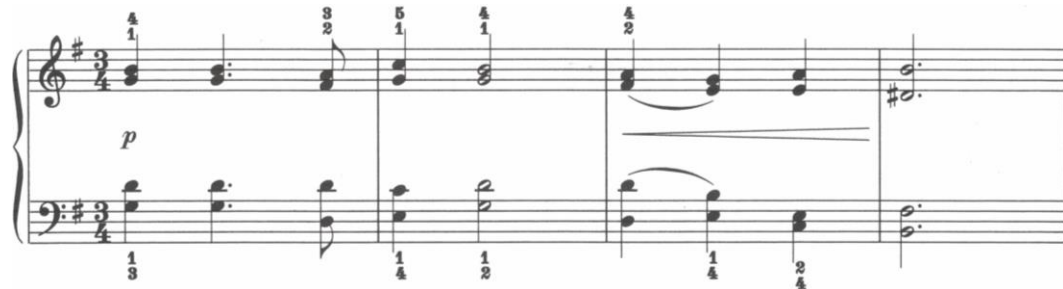


Figure 55. Tchaikovsky “Morning Prayer,” Op. 39 No. 1, mm. 1-4.



Figure 56. Schumann “Chorale,” Op. 68 No. 4, mm. 1-8.

Pedagogical Guide

This is an excellent piece for learning to play adagio. It challenges the pianist to inflect phrases in slow tempo. It presents an opportunity for students to practice counting long notes. Students can learn how to play all notes in chords simultaneously and how to voice them. They can listen carefully to pedal and work on the timing for syncopated pedal.

Adagio

It is easy to rush while playing long notes. Practice counting aloud with the metronome to make sure the tempo is not rushing. Feeling the beat physically by tapping the foot or nodding the head may help to keep a steady tempo.

Voicing

Listen carefully to the voicing, playing the top note louder than the other notes. Play each chord until you hear the voicing you like.

Pedal

Listen carefully to the pedal changes. Changing the pedal too early can break the sound or make the transition blurry. Changing the pedal too late can also make it muddy. Also, make sure that your foot goes high enough to clear the sound from the previous chord.

Listening Questions

1. Can you hear smooth legato and inflected phrasing? Try going to the long note (the dotted half note).

2. Do you hear the top note voiced consistently so that it sounds legato?
3. Is the pedal clear and smooth?

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY

My aim for undertaking this research was to expand the research on Auerbach and pedagogical piano works by composers active in the 21st century. My hope is that my research will be helpful for students and teachers interested in actively engaging in new music.

Auerbach's *Images from Childhood* presents unique benefits to the intermediate students. The accessibility, polystylism, and imaginative writing allow the students to explore contemporary idioms, develop pianistic skills and grow artistically. Auerbach's profile as a living, cosmopolitan artist rooted in tradition connects with the students studying classical music in the 21st century.

Images from Childhood offers tremendous pedagogical value because it provides opportunities to develop a variety of pianistic skills at an intermediate level while being exposed to contemporary music. Most of the pieces can be divided into lyrical or marcato style as indicated below. Two styles often alternate throughout the set.

Lyrical: No. 1 "Question," No. 3 "Dialogue," No. 5 "An Old Photograph from the Grandparents' Childhood," No. 8 "Family Holiday," No. 11 "Shadows on the Wall"

Marcato: No. 2 "What a Story!," No. 4 "Quarrel," No. 7 "Decision," No. 9 "Stubborn," No. 12 "Prayer"

In addition to lyrical and marcato playing, students can practice leggiero playing in No. 10 “E-Creatures.” Within these different styles, students develop a plethora of touches, including two-note slurs, staccato, tenuto, and accents, especially in No. 2 “What a Story!” No. 5 “An Old Photograph from the Grandparents’ Childhood,” No. 9 “Stubborn,” and No. 11 “Shadows on the Wall.” Other pianistic skills students can gain from studying the set include pedal technique such as syncopated pedal and una corda and manipulation of tempo such as ritardando and tempo changes. To perform these pieces convincingly, players need voicing and rubato, which are critical skills for advancing students.

Furthermore, students are introduced to contemporary techniques such as tone clusters in No. 6 “After the War and Stubborn,” and polytonality in No. 10 “E-Creatures.” This exposure is significant because most students may not encounter contemporary pieces using polytonality or clusters until they reach an advanced level. It is also possible to find graduate-level pianists who have never used extended technique. Indeed, the amount and variety of pedagogical benefits packed in this twelve-minute collection is remarkable.

Equally important is its musical appeal to the performer. Although the collection has a pedagogical purpose, it is far from pedantic. Expert writing matches the imaginative titles, and Auerbach’s signature style permeates throughout the set. Her unmistakable sound in dreams and darkness appear beyond the influences of composers that came before her. In the same sophisticated way that Schumann’s *Kinderszenen* appeals to both

younger students and skilled artists, *Images from Childhood* deserves study and performance by novice and seasoned players. Especially for concert pianists, the performance of the entire set makes a fine presentation. For younger students, playing one or several pieces from the set would be effective in performance. Due to the ambiguous tonal language, memorization can prove difficult. Even though the notes on the pages do not appear dense overall, performing the pieces successfully requires technical facility and nuanced sensitivity. Hence, it can be a perfect selection for a precocious student who cannot yet play octaves comfortably.

In conclusion, *Images from Childhood* is a worthy addition both to the standard teaching repertoire and concert repertoire. As Lera Auerbach continues to gain more prominence, *Images from Childhood* not only prepares the student to play advanced works by composers of the standard canon, but it can also serve as a friendly introduction to Auerbach's growing oeuvre including the 24 preludes. The present treatise may also lay the groundwork for the scholarly exploration of other aspects of Lera Auerbach's style, such as the amalgamation of Russian folk songs, bitonality, and programmatic imagery.

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APPENDIX A

SOLO PIANO WORKS LISTED CHRONOLOGICALLY³¹

FANTASIA (1986)

Duration: 6'

cd: pH 07064 · Ksenia Nosikova

MEMENTO MORI (1992)

1. Requiem – Canon – Requiem

2. Back to Childhood – Let's Play Grownups – Childhood

3. Adulthood – Memento mori

Duration: 12'

cd: pH 07064 · Ksenia Nosikova

CHORALE, FUGUE AND POSTLUDE, Op. 31 (1994/2003)

Commissioned by and dedicated to Brigitte Feldtmann

Duration: 10'

First performance: 29 March 2008, Cologne Lera Auerbach

score: sik 8569

cd: LYRICRECORDS 101 (Lera Auerbach – only Fugue and Postlude of the 1994 version) · bis cd 1462 · (Lera Auerbach) [This recording was awarded the prize “Choc de la Musique 2007”.]

SUITE FOR PIANO, Op. 41a (1999) Nine preludes from Op. 41

1. Andantino (No. 5)

2. Allegretto (No. 14)

3. Presto (No. 8)

4. Grave (No. 18)

5. Allegro moderato (No. 21)

6. Misterioso (No. 20)

7. Moderato – Allegro ma non troppo (No. 16)

8. Adagio (No. 17)

9. Grandioso (No. 24)

Duration: 15'

First performance: 12 July 2001, Lockenhaus Lera Auerbach

³¹ Sikorski, “Work List,” accessed January 14, 2019, https://www.sikorski.de/media/files/1/12/190/222/225/13565/auerbach_werkverzeichnis.pdf.

TEN DREAMS, Op. 45 (1999)

Commissioned by Tom and Vivian Waldeck

1. Allegro ma non troppo
2. Andante
3. Andante misterioso
4. Allegro ma non troppo
5. Tempo di un lamento
6. Lento assai
7. Allegro assai
8. Moderato
9. Vivo misterioso
10. Allegro moderato

Duration: 16'

First performance: 13 July 2008, Plön Lera Auerbach

score: sik 8612

cd: bis cd 1462 · (Lera Auerbach –This recording was awarded the prize ‘Choc de la Musique 2007’.) crc 3441 · Eli Kalman

TWENTY-FOUR PRELUDES FOR PIANO, Op. 41 (1999)

Dedicated to Tom and Vivian Waldeck

Co-commissioned by Tom and Vivian Waldeck and the Caramoor International Music Festival

1. C major Moderato
2. A minor Presto
3. G major Moderato
4. E minor Appassionato – Nostalgico
5. D major Andantino sognante
6. B minor Chorale
7. A major Andante
8. F-sharp minor Presto
9. E major Allegretto
10. C-sharp minor Largo
11. B major Misterioso
12. G-sharp minor Allegro bruto
13. F-sharp major Andante
14. E-flat minor Allegretto
15. D-flat major Moderato
16. B-flat minor Allegro ma non troppo, tragico
17. A-flat major Adagio tragico
18. F minor Grave
19. E-flat major Adagio religioso
20. C minor Misterioso
21. B-flat major Allegro moderato
22. G minor Andante
23. F major Allegretto
24. D minor Grandioso

Duration: 39'

First performance: 23 July 1999, New York Lera Auerbach

score: sik 8536

cd: bis cd 1462 · (Lera Auerbach – This recording was awarded the prize ‘Choc de la Musique 2007’) crc 3441 · Eli Kalman

IMAGES FROM CHILDHOOD, Op. 52 (2000) Twelve character pieces for piano
Dedicated to Page and Elisabeth Johnson

1. Question
2. What a Story!
3. Dialogue
4. Quarrel
5. An Old Photograph from the Grandparents' Childhood
6. After the War (The Field of the Dead)
7. Decision
8. Family Holiday
9. Stubborn
10. E-Creatures
11. Shadows on the Wall
12. Prayer

Duration: 11'

First performance: 8 April 2001, Boston

score: sik 2405

cd: pH 07064 · Ksenia Nosikova crc 3441 · Eli Kalman txa 15068 · Georg Michael Grau

LE FENICE (Sonata for Piano No. 1) (2005)

Commissioned by Ksenia Nosikova

1. Anzi che introduzione Moderato
2. I cavalli di San Marco Allegro ma non troppo
3. Riflessioni L'istesso tempo
4. La prigionie di Casanova Moderato ma con moto
5. La Fenice Andante
6. Corale per la chimera Adagio religioso

Duration: 20'

First performance: 8 October 2007, Lawrence Ksenia Nosikova

cd: pH 07064 · Ksenia Nosikova

IL SEGNO (Sonata for Piano No. 2) (2006)

Commissioned by Deutschlandfunk, Cologne

1. Adagio tragico
2. Toccata Allegro
3. Grave
4. Allegro – Molto meno mosso

Duration: 17'

First performance: 3 July 2006, Bonn Lera Auerbach

cd: pH 07064 · Ksenia Nosikova

LUDWIGS ALPTRAUM (2007)

Commissioned by Deutsche Telekom for the Second International Beethoven Competition for Piano Bonn 2007

Duration: 7' First performance: 11 December 2007, Bonn

score: sik 8559

cd: sacd 0701 · Keiko Hattori (recorded live from the Second International Beethoven Competition) txa 15068 · Georg Michael Grau

MILKING DARKNESS (2011)

Commissioned by ARD Music Competition 2011

Duration: 10'

First performance: September 2011, Munich

score: sik 8694

SAKURA NO YUME (2016)

Dedicated to Yukihisa Miyayama

Duration: 4'

First performance: 27 March 2016, Tokyo Lera Auerbach

LABYRINTH (2018)

Inspired by The Book of Imaginary Beings and other writings by Jorge Luis Borges

Commissioned by San Francisco Performances

1. A Bao a Qu (the Tower of Chitor) Adagio, sognando libero · $q = 60$ · Poco meno mosso ($q = 52$) · Stretto e più agitato · (Poco meno mosso) Traumwanderer: First Passage L'istesso tempo, libero ($q = 60$) · Agitato, poco più mosso ($q = 69$) · Stretto lametoso ($q = 80$) · Tempo I ($q = 60$) attacca
2. Simurgh (The Bird Parliament) Con brio ($q = 76$) · Allegretto sognando, libero molto ($q = 100$) · Poco meno mosso · Tempo I · Poco più mosso, agitato molto · Poco meno mosso, misterioso ($q = 80$) Traumwanderer: Second Passage $q = 72$ · $q = 96$
3. The Norns Misterioso ($q = 72$) · Adagio I ($q = 48$) · Più agitato ($q = 56$) · (poco meno mosso, ad lib.) Traumwanderer: Third Passage $q = 60$ 56 solo works labyrinth [c o n t i n u e d]
4. The Chord of Fenrir Misterioso libero · Allegro moderato, marcato ($q = 92$) · Meno mosso, libero · Furioso ($q = 112$) · poco meno mosso, pesante · Misterioso libero · Allegro subito, pesante attacca Traumwanderer: Fourth Passage Allegro ossessivo · (più agitato) · (Meno mosso)
5. Swedenborg's Angels Con moto, libero ($q = 84$) · Meno mosso, sognando · (Tempo I) Traumwanderer: Fifth Passage (Swedenborg's Demons) $q = 60$ · $q = 72$ · più mosso ($q = 84$) · più mosso ($q = 100$) · $q = 60$ (poco a poco più stretto) · Lamentoso I ($q = 84$) · Stretto agitato ($q = 96$)
6. The Kilkenny Cats Furioso scherzando ($q = 96$) · Poco meno mosso, libero · Tempo I, furioso · più agitato · Vivo furioso · Più stretto Traumwanderer: Sixth Passage (The Squonk Mourns the Kilkenny Cats) $q = 90$ · $q = 116$ · Libero
7. Haniel, Kafziel, Azriel and Aniel Allegro moderato, con brio ($q = 132$) · Moderato ($q = 80$) · Con brio ($q = 132$) · Pesante ($h = q$) · Sognando ($q = 56$) · Poco più agitato ($q = 63$) · Misterioso · Tempo I, con brio ($q = 132$) Traumwanderer: Seventh Passage $q = 66$ · meno mosso ($q = 86$) · Tempo di valse ($q = 100$)
8. An Afternoon of a Minotaur Umoristico ($q = 168$) Traumwanderer: Eighth Passage Grave funebre ($q = 54$) · Meno mosso ($q = 42$)
9. La liebre lunar L'istesso tempo, libero molto · (Poco più mosso) ($q = 56$) · $q = 60$ · (Tempo I) · ($q = 50$) · (Poco agitato) ($q = 60$) · Meno mosso
10. El aplanador Largo pesante ($q = 60$) Traumwanderer: Ninth Passage (El golem) ($q = 56$) · (Poco agitato) ($q = 69$) · Tragico ($q = 60$) · (Tempo I)
11. Bahamut poco a poco accelerando · Agitato ($q = 120$) · (Poco meno mosso) · ($q = 100$) · Andante
12. The Library of Babel ($q = 63$) · Poco meno mosso ($q = 52$) · (più stretto) · Adagio libero · ($q = 58$)

Duration: 50'

First performance: 27 March 2018, San Francisco Lera Auerbach

APPENDIX B

LEVELING OF LITERATURE

from *The Pianist's Guide to Standard Teaching and Performance Literature*
by Jane Magrath³²

Reference Chart for Grading

Levels 1-10, Beginning to Early-Advanced Levels

| | |
|----------|--|
| Level 1 | Bartók <i>Mikrokosmos</i> , Vol. 1 |
| Level 2 | Türk <i>Pieces for Beginners</i> |
| Level 3 | Latour Sonatinas; Kabalevsky <i>Pieces for Young People</i> , Op. 39 |
| Level 4 | <i>Anna Magdalena Bach Notebook</i> ; Gurlitt <i>Album for the Young</i> , Op. 140; Tchaikovsky <i>Album for the Young</i> , Op. 39 |
| Level 5 | <i>Anna Magdalena Bach Notebook</i> ; Sonatinas by Attwood, Lynes; Menotti Poemetti |
| Level 6 | Clementi Sonatinas, Op. 36; Burgmüller <i>25 Progressive Pieces</i> , Op. 100 |
| Level 7 | Kuhlau and Diabelli Sonatinas; Bach easier <i>Two-Part Inventions</i> ; Bach <i>Little Preludes</i> ; Dello Joio <i>Lyric Pieces for the Young</i> |
| Level 8 | Moderately difficult Bach <i>Two-Part Inventions</i> ; Beethoven easier variations sets; Field Nocturnes; Schumann <i>Album Leaves</i> , Op. 124; Schubert Waltzes; Turina <i>Miniatures</i> |
| Level 9 | Easier Bach <i>Three-Part Inventions</i> ; easiest Haydn Sonata movements; easiest Mendelssohn <i>Songs Without Words</i> ; easiest Chopin Mazurkas |
| Level 10 | Bach <i>Three-Part Inventions</i> ; easiest Chopin Nocturnes; Beethoven Sonatas, Op. 49, 79; Mozart Sonata, K.283; Muczynski Preludes |

³² Jane Magrath, *The Pianist's Guide to Standard Teaching and Performance Literature* (Van Nuys, CA: Alfred, 1995), xi.