Canadian contemporary music and its place in 21st century piano pedagogy

Christine Tithecott

University of Iowa

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CANADIAN CONTEMPORARY MUSIC AND ITS PLACE IN 21st CENTURY PIANO PEDAGOGY

by

Christine Tithecott

An essay submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in the Graduate College of The University of Iowa

December 2015

Essay Supervisor: Professor Alan Huckleberry
This is to certify that the D.M.A. essay of

Christine Tithecott

has been approved by the Examining Committee
for the essay requirement for the Doctor of Musical Arts
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I would like to thank the Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects, specifically Jill Kelman and Sandra Pisani for allowing me to collaborate on this project. I would also like to thank the publishing companies: Debra Wanless Music, Frederick Harris Music Company, Mayfair Music and Red Leaf Pianoworks. Without their resources, support and collaboration, I would not be able to share and discuss the wonderful compositions that were part of this essay. Particular thanks to all the composers whose works are the backbone of this whole project: especially Debra Wanless, Martha Hill Duncan, Susan Griesdale, Beverly Porter and Remi Bouchard, for their guidance and input.

This journey would not have been possible without the continued support and encouragement of my friends and family. I would also like to give a special thanks to my advisor, Alan Huckleberry for his guidance and support throughout the duration of completing this essay. Most importantly, I would like to thank my mom, Elizabeth Tithecott, for inspiring me to become the person, musician, pianist and teacher I am today.
The Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) is the leading Canadian music education organization whose curriculum sets and supports standards in music education across the nation. In addition to the RCM, there are other Canadian organizations with similar standards and curriculums. The popularity and nationwide acceptance of these conservatories and examination systems demonstrate the importance and benefit of standardized leveling and sequencing in music education. The syllabi of these conservatories place a heavy emphasis on the inclusion of 20th and 21st century Canadian music. This is further supported and supplemented by other organizations including the Alliance for Contemporary New Music Projects (ACNMP). The ACNMP has a more detailed syllabus of Canadian new music that are supplemental to the RCM and other conservatory curriculums.

The immense support and encouragement of promoting and performing Canadian contemporary music makes it possible for students to enrich their musical experience by playing a new and avant-garde piece in every level of their development. Including contemporary music in any piano curriculum is something about which I feel very passionate. It is important to support present-day composers and their music and give students the opportunity to interact with living composers. Contemporary music provides students with unique creative opportunities and encourages experimental approaches to the instrument, thus enhancing all other areas of their pedagogical function.

This essay will discuss the twelve levels of the RCM examination system from preparatory through advanced levels and what a student should achieve upon the completion of each level. Through close involvement with the ACNMP, I was asked to help update their syllabus by inputting new compositions. I was given a list of over one hundred compositions from a variety
of composers, levels and contemporary idioms. I graded all of these works and placed them in the appropriate level. Between two and four compositions were selected from each level and discussed in detail with regard to extended techniques, pedagogical challenges and unique characteristics.
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INTRODUCTION

Contemporary music is alive and thriving in the Canadian classical music scene. Canada is a country that is very supportive of its teachers, performers and composers. This in turn encourages the overwhelming popularity of Canadian music within the country. This popularity comes from a variety of factors, the most influential of which are the various organizations that have been active in the 20th and 21st centuries. These organizations have helped to perpetuate the composition and performance of Canadian music in a variety of educational settings, whether it be music lessons, community choirs, or in the classroom.

The importance of Canadian music in music education has been researched in academic studies. Patricia Martin Shand surveyed teachers about their experience with Canadian music. Her field study working directly with music teachers reveals a variety of opinions that shed light on the Canadian classical music scene. One teacher noted that a “‘sense of community is important and I introduce my kids to the music of Toronto for this purpose. What we have right here, is some of the finest music and musicians anywhere.’”1 Another admitted to teaching Canadian music because “‘It’s good. Quality of the repertoire is important,’”2 and “‘the students enjoy it and make a connection to it.’”3 With a strongly supported pedagogical function, the distinctiveness of Canadian music has become something that is vital to any Canadian student’s musical development.

Canada has a well-established tradition of conservatory systems and certificate programs in place. Each of these has a logically sequenced and well-paced course of study for students learning an instrument. There are many Conservatory Certificate Programs from which to choose. The most

1 Patricia Martin Shane, “Canadian Music in Music Education: Sounds Like Canada” in Critical Perspectives in

2 Shane, 44.

3 Shane, 44.
prevalent program is the Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) in Toronto, “one of the largest and most respected music education institutions in the world.”

Up to this point, few documents have been written that give a thorough overview of what is to be accomplished throughout each level of study in each of these certificate programs, particularly in the RCM examinations. The Conservatory has published a syllabus that gives an overview of theoretical, technical and performance requirements for each level, as well as a list of appropriate repertoire. They have also published a teacher’s handbook, which goes into more detail about each level and the associated repertoire, giving suggestions for repertoire sequencing, practice techniques and other supplemental material. These excellent resources are geared toward teachers who use the RCM curriculum. I chose to make a detailed document outlining specifically what each level of the RCM Certificate Program entails, in order to further clarify the requirements of each level for those unfamiliar with the Certificate Program. This essay will help make these resources more approachable to those unfamiliar with the RCM curriculum, and allow all interested teachers to better understand the pianistic and musical goals of each level.

Creating a document discussing each of the RCM’s twelve levels came very naturally to me. I was raised in a very musical family, and my mother was a piano teacher who taught in the home. With many of her students following the Royal Conservatory of Music’s curriculum, I was exposed to the repertoire and exam model from a very early age. As a result, the core values of my musical upbringing were centered on the Royal Conservatory’s curriculum. I achieved my Associate Diploma in Piano Performance (ARCT) at the age of 16. After going through the RCM’s Certificate

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Program as a student, I began teaching and experienced it from a different perspective. I later completed an ARCT in Piano Pedagogy, studying the elementary, intermediate and advanced levels from a pedagogical standpoint. I use the RCM’s curriculum in my teaching and have prepared students for exams at all levels. Consequently, I have experienced the progression from level to level from the perspective of both student and teacher.

It is my hope that with a detailed list of guidelines, teachers from around the world can gain a better understanding of the conservatory system and what elements of piano repertoire make it suitable to a particular level. The level-by-level breakdown I have compiled will enable teachers to approach unfamiliar contemporary repertoire. This will give them a better understanding of where particular compositions fit in a student’s development and musical journey, based on the formula devised by the RCM and other Canadian Conservatory systems. To make this level-by-level breakdown of Canadian contemporary music, I have graded and compiled a database of contemporary compositions from which examples will be demonstrated. Each example demonstrates a different facet of the very broad spectrum of Canadian music.

The central focus of this paper is to discuss Canadian repertoire from my database of compositions, and explain how each piece was assigned a level based on the standards currently in place by the RCM Conservatory curriculum. To give context, Chapter 1 will begin by discussing Canadian music as it exists across the nation. A number of Canadian Conservatory examination curriculums will be described, as well as other organizations, which promote and support the composition and performance of new music. Chapter 2 will discuss contemporary music and its place in piano pedagogy. This chapter will also outline key features of 20th and 21st century music that were consulted while choosing repertoire to examine for this project. Chapter 3 explains the
conservatory\textsuperscript{7} systems and their level-sequenced course of study. This chapter uses the Royal Conservatory of Music examination system as a model to discuss, in detail, each of the standard twelve levels of study. Each of these levels is represented by two or three pieces taken directly from my database of compositions\textsuperscript{8} that are discussed in detail with regard to level placement and specific contemporary elements.

\textsuperscript{7} Though colloquially referred to as ‘conservatories,’ the term conservatory refers to the organization rather than the college or building itself.

\textsuperscript{8} See Appendix II
CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND ON CANADIAN MUSIC

Canadian National Conservatories

Canada has numerous conservatories that support a standardized national curriculum for music education. Of these, the most widely recognized is the Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM).9 Founded in 1886 by Edward Fischer, it was the first organization of its kind in Canada. The Royal Conservatory is one of the world’s largest music education institutions and provides “the definitive standard of excellence in curriculum design, assessment, performance training, teacher certification and arts-based social programs.” 10 Its mission is “to develop human potential through leadership in music and the arts, [which] is based on the conviction that the arts are humanity’s greatest means to achieve personal growth and social cohesion.”11 With its national base in Toronto, The Conservatory offers training for young artists through the Glenn Gould School and the Phil and Eli Taylor Performance Academy for Young Artists. The RCM’s curriculum for piano examinations is divided into twelve levels: from beginner through advanced certification as an Associate of the Royal Conservatory of Music (ARCT)12. Examination sessions take place four times per year, in over 300 centers across the country. For examinations, students prepare between four and seven contrasting pieces from a balanced range of musical periods and are also tested on technical, aural, theoretical, historical and sight-reading skills. The amount of time spent studying each level varies from student to student. Generally speaking, a student will spend approximately one year in the beginner, and intermediate levels, and approximately two years in the advanced levels.


11 Ibid.

12 The ARCT performers diploma is the highest academic standing awarded by the RCM.
Successful completion of RCM exams at late intermediate and advanced levels can provide students credit for high school coursework requirements. These requirements vary from province to province throughout the country. In Ontario, for example, if a student completes a Level 7 Practical Examination and an Intermediate Rudiments Examination in music theory with the RCM, they will receive a Grade 11 music credit at their high school. The full high school accreditation for the province of Ontario is outlined in the table below. (Table 1.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument(s)</th>
<th>RCM Examinations Level</th>
<th>Receive Credit for...</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any music instrument that is examined, including Voice, but does not include Speech Arts &amp; Drama.</td>
<td>Grade 7 Practical + Intermediate Rudiments</td>
<td>Grade 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any music instrument that is examined, including Voice, but does not include Speech Arts &amp; Drama.</td>
<td>Grade 8 Practical + Advanced Rudiments</td>
<td>Grade 12</td>
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Table 1.1. High School Accreditation for Ontario.

Achievement in advanced levels of the RCM’s examination system also plays an important role in acceptance into Conservatory, College and University music programs.13

Most other Conservatories and their associated examination systems are similar to the RCM, though each has its own distinct syllabus and requirements. Conservatory Canada (ConCan)14 is another music education institution whose examinations fuse classical and popular elements. ConCan’s roots lie in the London Conservatory (London, Ontario). The organization was established in 1891. Taking on a variety of names throughout its evolution, it was known as the Western Ontario Conservatory of Music (WOCM) Examination board for the greater part of the 20th century.

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It officially became ConCan after WOCM and the Western Board of Music, two national examining bodies, merged in 1997.

ConCan conducts approximately 4,500 examinations annually\(^\text{15}\) for performance, theory, music history and pedagogy. As indicated through their mission statement, they promote “achievement in music through a comprehensive program of study, evaluation and recognition for teachers and students. [Their] aim is to foster the development of musical talent and potential.”\(^\text{16}\) Through the ConCan examination systems, improvisation and lead sheet reading are tested in addition to technique, ear training, sight-reading and repertoire. The curriculum boasts a wide variety of Canadian content and also integrates viva voce\(^\text{17}\) requirements into examinations from an early level. What makes this organization unique is its emphasis on new, progressive and innovative programs that break down the barrier between teacher, student and examiner. For example, students are given the opportunity to have a ‘mini-lesson’ with the examiner following the completion of their practical exam.

The Canadian National Conservatory of Music (CNCM)\(^\text{18}\) is a newer organization, only having been in place since 2002. Giving a new approach to music lessons and examinations, it is currently one of the fastest growing music conservatories in Canada. CNCM is unique in that its syllabus places an emphasis on contemporary, particularly Canadian contemporary music. Each level requires the performance of a 20\(^{\text{th}}\) or 21\(^{\text{st}}\) century work in addition to a Canadian composition. This emphasis on music written by Canadian composers reflects the high value that is given to Canadian music by


\(^{17}\) An aural examination.

Canadian performers, students and teachers. CNCM aims to establish an examination system that takes place in a “positive environment … conducted with openness, honesty and moral integrity.”

**Canadian Music Organizations**

Rapid growth in the development of Canadian music within the last 75 years has lead to the founding of many significant and influential organizations in support of Canadian music. One of the earliest organizations to emerge was the Canadian League of Composers (CLC), established in 1951. This organization was “a phenomenon of a dawning of a new era in Canadian culture,” as its early members aimed to establish themselves on the national circuit and communicate the music of their nation with the rest of the world. First established by a mere handful of composers, the organization has grown quickly with over three hundred members to date. The CLC offers professional development for composers, programs concerts with strictly Canadian new music, facilitates the composition of new music and advocates for “an environment in which Canadian art music is highly valued.”

The establishment of the Canadian Music Centre (CMC) in 1959 was one of the most significant events for Canadian music to this day. The founding of the CMC was inspired in part by compositions created through the work of the Canadian League of Composers. Many of these compositions were unpublished, and the original function of the organization was to collect and catalogue compositions and make them available for loan worldwide. The CMC still maintains a library system, while also making scores, recordings and biographies of their associate composers

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available to download online through their website. Presently, the CMC has regional centers in Calgary, Montreal, Sackville, Toronto and Vancouver.

Though the CMC and the CLC promote the composition and performance of new music, their function is often tailored more to the composer than to the teacher or performer. The Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects (ACNMP) bridges this gap, through their continued support of commissioned works and Contemporary Showcase. Contemporary Showcase is a non-competitive music festival founded in 1972. It takes place at various centers across the country and allows students to receive adjudication and hands-on work with any contemporary Canadian piece. The adjudicator is often a composer who gives students the opportunity to work directly with his or her own compositions. The festival takes place during “Canada Music Week,” a tradition that takes place across the country during the last week of November. With over twenty centers across Canada, Contemporary Showcase plays a significant role in the early studies of many musicians. Having a week every year where Canadian music is celebrated and performed, demonstrates the emphasis that is placed on the performance and overall importance of Canadian music.

While Contemporary Showcase caters to students at the beginner, intermediate and early advanced level, the Eckhardt-Gramatté Competition caters to advanced students and emerging artists. What makes this competition unique is its emphasis on Canadian music. All competitors must prepare two recital programs of music composed after 1950, at least half of which must be Canadian. The competition also supports new composers, as the semi-finalists must prepare a newly commissioned work written specifically for the competition.

These organizations, festivals and competitions demonstrate a support of Canadian music that spans all levels of a pianist’s music education. Having such a strong connection between composer and student is what makes contemporary Canadian music so unique and valuable. Students are able
to become familiar with the music and the composers of their nation and grow with it as they move throughout all levels of musical study.

*Canadian Classical Music*

Canadian classical music reflects the multicultural nature of the country, as Canada has been one of the world’s foremost immigrant-receiving societies since the turn of the 20th century. With many early settlers arriving from various areas of Europe as early as the 17th century, Canadian classical music was influenced by a wide variety of styles and traditions rooted in Western classical music. Influences of other ethnicities can also be seen including Indian and Asian classical music. Since the nation is vast in size and diverse in culture, there is a wide variety of traditional folk music. This also helps contribute to the uniqueness of Canadian music. Some of these styles include Inuit music, music of the Aboriginals, Celtic music of the Maritimes, French-Canadian music and Canadian fiddle music. With such a wide variety of musical, cultural and ethnic influences it is no surprise that “Canadian music” is difficult to define. To this day, many composers aim to achieve a distinctively Canadian flavour in their compositions; however, “composers were, as they still are, divided on whether this is a desirable or even a possible [feature].”

If there is a generalized characteristic of Canadian music, it relates to nature and the north. There is certainly truth to composer, music educator and environmentalist R Murray Schaefer’s strong belief that “[t]he Canadian Song is still there in [the northern] mountains, forests and plains.” Though the theme of nature is recurrent in the compositional style of many composers, it is not something that is necessarily true of all Canadian composers or in all genres of composition.

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Sir Ernest MacMillan was a renowned and internationally recognized Canadian composer, conductor and performer, who placed a strong emphasis on music education and played a large role in the development of Canadian music. He believed “for us in Canada, it is a matter of public duty to cherish what we have and foster the development of what we need … we must give every reasonable encouragement to our younger composers.”

This nation-wide emphasis on composers who support and promote one another and nurture the next generation of composers demonstrates the cumulative goal: to promote the music of the nation. The defining characteristics of Canadian music lie not necessarily in the music itself, but in the organizations that support it.

Immersing Canadian students in the music of their native country begins at the earliest levels of piano study. The music that students grow up with becomes the music they return to throughout their studies. To quote Dmitry Kabalewsky:

“It refer to a circumstance which troubles us all: the repertory underlying musical education is neither rich nor versatile enough, especially for the most real and noble task of inspiring children’s interest and love towards the people of the world, telling them about the characteristics of these peoples’ culture… And still I can but repeat: there is too little music imbued with good thoughts, kind feelings and the great truth of life, which could contribute to mutual relations and mutual enrichment of the children of different counties.”

Kabalewsky’s passion for the importance of teaching and incorporating contemporary music into early music studies is something that stands true to date. Not only should students be immersed in contemporary music, they should also give particular attention and support to the music of their native country at an early age to ensure that they return to these roots at later stages of their music education. The same is true for studying the works of any great composer. A student who has never grown up learning J.S. Bach’s small-scale works is unlikely to have a positive experience learning a

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complex fugue or suite. Consequently, the overwhelming support for students learning Canadian music at a young age leads to many advanced and accomplished performers who continue to enjoy performing and promoting works by various Canadian composers.
CHAPTER 2: DEFINING CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

The Importance of Contemporary Music in Piano Pedagogy

Contemporary music is an area that is often under-represented in the repertoire of many pianists. It is a challenging enhancement to any students’ music education. Many students or teachers shy away from approaching contemporary music because they do not like it. In most instances, this dislike is due to a lack of understanding or familiarity with the musical style. Elissa Milne, one of Australia’s leading composers and pedagogues, maintains a highly successful blog that gives insight into many facets of musical study, including issues surrounding contemporary music. In a blog entry outlining common mistakes pianists make, Milne touches on two specific points that relate directly to the apprehension many experience in exploring contemporary music. The first is the mistake of not exploring possibility and the second is the mistake of fear.26

Not exploring possibility, directly relates to how deeply a student connects with a particular piece of music. Contemporary music is one of the greatest mediums for students to explore a variety of musical possibilities. These include, but are not limited to tone production, approach to the instrument and overall creativity. Encouraging this involved exploration of new music from the earliest years of study makes it less intimidating when students advance to more challenging contemporary repertoire. Teacher’s involvement in student’s musical exploration will allow for them to establish a deeper connection with contemporary music, thereby minimizing any sense of discomfort or unfamiliarity with the repertoire. This element of unease is something that is often manifested in fear, which leads to the other point Milne raises in her blog post. By stepping out of a narrow range of musical possibilities in early years of study, fear of the unknown can easily be

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overcome. This can yield a great musical reward for both students and teachers, in terms of their experience with contemporary music.

20th and 21st century compositions span an incredibly large realm of tonal and atonal possibilities. Following the Romantic era and the dissolution of tonality, composition branched out in many directions including polytonality, atonality, Serialism, Impressionism, electronic music and Minimalism, to name a few. Contemporary music, therefore, can be defined in a number of ways and need not necessarily be a daunting twelve-tone composition. There are many different contemporary styles with which students can experiment, so they can ultimately discover what type of compositions speak to them.

As a harpsichordist and retired faculty member from Hunter College, Evelyn Kugler is a music educator who promotes contemporary music and believes that one must “begin early [to] succeed early!”27 It can be challenging to engage students at an advanced level who have no previous experience with 20th or 21st century music. Including contemporary music early on in repertoire selections will help to ensure this success that Kugler refers to. Dale McGowan is a music theorist who gives a fresh perspective to approaching contemporary music with students, through his experience as an author, speaker and philanthropist. His article “Teaching Modern Music” outlines an eight-step process to use for approaching modern music. McGowan makes an important point in regard to getting students engaged with the repertoire. He suggests “ask[ing the] students to approach the music on its own terms [and] not expecting it to be or do something else.”28 Contemporary music, for example, cannot be approached the same way as Baroque music. When


teachers and students are prepared to approach 20\textsuperscript{th} and 21\textsuperscript{st} century music on its own terms, its benefits truly begin to emerge.

Often rhythmically complex, one of the benefits of contemporary music is its ability to assist pianists in their development of internal rhythmic pulse. Contemporary music is also beneficial in terms of musicality and self-expression. This is particularly true in music written within the last few decades. When students are able to approach compositions for which no previous recording exists, they are required to develop their own interpretation.

Frequently, students connect on a deeper level with contemporary music. This is because they are given the opportunity to experiment with non-traditional and extended techniques outside of their comfort zone and other traditional piano techniques used in standard repertoire. Some of these unique and extended techniques include:

- **Glissandi** – allowing young students in particular to explore the range of the keyboard, and increase familiarity with keyboard geography.
- **Chord clusters** – students can experiment with different hand shapes and approaches into the key, as well as new timbres and percussive tones.
- **Playing inside the piano** – encourages students to further explore the nature of the instrument.
- **Pedal** – new pedaling techniques are employed in contemporary music and often create different timbral effects.
- **Detailed markings** – new music demands attention to detail, as composers become increasingly specific in their markings.
- **Non-traditional elements** – speaking, humming, knocking on the instrument, stomping the foot or clapping during a composition are just a few of the ways students can have fun trying out different contemporary techniques.

Experimenting with these new and unfamiliar elements provide an appealing challenge for students to explore as they continue to develop as pianists and find their own unique voice with the instrument.
The connection between composer and student is one, which should not be ignored. J.S. Bach used his own compositions to teach his students, as did Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Frédéric Chopin, Béla Bartók, and countless other composers spanning various compositional periods. In present day, the role of teacher and composer is not as synonymous as it once was. As a result it is important for students to interact with composers, as they can become familiar with their intentions and overall style. Composers can also give students ideas of how to approach their compositions. Interacting with the composer is an experience unique to contemporary music and is a memorable experience for students.

This social connection between composer, teacher and student is something that is taken a step further in present day society. With the growth of online presence in music education, the social element of music making is expanded into the world of social media. The use of online resources such as YouTube and Facebook, allow young students to upload recordings of their performances. Since most new music has few or no recordings available as resources for students, they can upload their own creative interpretation of a piece for which no alternate recording may be available. The use of social media websites such as Linkedin and Facebook, allow for increased ease of communication between student, teacher and composer. This removes some degrees of separation between performer and composer, making the performance of new music more approachable and accessible. Finally, many composers have an online presence whether through a personal website, a Facebook fan page, a YouTube channel or a Twitter account. Since social media and the Internet play a strong role in present day culture, teachers can and should use it to their advantage while working with new music.
What Constitutes “Contemporary Music” For This Essay

‘Contemporary music’ is a very broad term and must be narrowed for the scope of this essay. Following the rise of Serialism and the dissolution of tonality, composers went in a variety of directions. As a result, contemporary music can be used to define anything from Serialism and electronic music, to popular styles such as jazz, country or rock. For the scope of this essay, only contemporary styles that can be defined as modern forms of art music will be considered. The music presented in this study presents uniquely contemporary elements.

Popular, Neoclassical and other harmonically traditional tonal compositional styles including traditional folk tunes are not included. Method books contain repertoire that generally fall into one of these harmonically traditional categories of composition. Though methods are a huge source of music written in recent years, their content is not generally avant-garde or experimental, therefore these types of compositions are not considered. Jazz is a very broad genre that is difficult to define on its own. This study does not generally consider pieces written entirely in a jazz style, specifically charts, lead sheets, or improvisational works. Works with jazz, blues, or swing elements incorporated into an experimental musical approach may be included.

What, then, is considered ‘contemporary?’ Harmonically, it must employ chromaticism, dissonance, atonality, bitonality, modality, or some other complexity that breaks out of the traditional norm. It should also employ at least one of the unique or extended techniques discussed earlier. This is including, but not limited to: chord clusters, dissonant chords, glissandi, extended pedal technique, or any other non-traditional type of performance practice. Minimalism, aleatoric music and other experimental 20th century compositional techniques will also be considered. Finally, for the purpose of maintaining current, only compositions written within the last twenty years will be used.
Standardized piano curricula are used in many countries across the world and are beneficial to students, parents and teachers in a variety of ways. First and foremost, they create a national standard by which all students can be equally assessed. By providing clear structure and objectives, conservatories and examination systems work to ensure consistency in assessment so that all students progress toward a common goal. Once this national standard is in place, students can progress through the levels at their own pace, regardless of where they live, who their teacher is, or how old they are. Teachers also benefit from a national standard, as they are given a solid foundation for teaching. They are also given the opportunity to network with other teachers across the country who are familiar with the system in they teach. Finally, a national standard truly encourages a “focus on high standards and achievement [enhancing] the overall benefits of music study and [validating] the teacher-student-parent partnership”\textsuperscript{29}

Standardized piano curricula such as the Royal Conservatory of Music in Canada take a multi-tiered approach to learning. The RCM’s twelve levels allow students to move from elementary through advanced repertoire at a logical and graduated pace. Examinations that take place at the end of each level ensure that each student has attained the skills necessary to move forward in their piano studies. For those who are unfamiliar with the concept, piano examinations can be likened to other extracurricular activities. Parents send their children to swimming or dance lessons with the assumption that badges or levels must be achieved before moving to the next. The same is the case for music lessons. Each level has a variety of goals, which each student must achieve before progressing to the next stage in their education.

Goal setting is very important in standardized piano curricula. Any conservatory curriculum sets clear long-term goals, through the eventual attainment and mastery of an advanced level, namely, the ARCT with the RCM. Students also have a goal of achieving the requirements for each particular level. These clear long-term goals encourage students to seek out their own short-term goals to work toward completion of a particular level in terms of repertoire, technique, theory, history, or ear training. With a teacher’s assistance, the development, progress and attainment of these goals help build skills that carry forth in other aspects of life. A level-sequenced education in piano helps students in terms of focus, motivation and long-term goal preparation. Along the way, students are able to understand their strengths and weaknesses and use input from teachers, examiners and fellow students to help become the best musician possible.

*Canadian Repertoire in the RCM Curriculum*

The remainder of this chapter will discuss each level of the RCM curriculum in detail. Specific information regarding technical, sight-reading, aural, and theoretical requirements for each level can be found in Appendix I. Each level will feature two or three pieces from my anthology of graded works. Selected repertoire from each level will be examined in terms of contemporary elements. Components of each piece that make it suited to a particular level will also be discussed.

The decision on the repertoire I chose to include, was based on a number of factors. I was given approximately 250 pieces to grade. I chose to do an in-depth analysis of the 29 selected pieces because in my opinion they best represented the requirements of each level. The works of some composers appear more often than others, and this is because they fill a niche within each level. I wanted to maintain a balance between different contemporary styles and techniques and tried to

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30 The requirements of each level are based primarily on the 2008 RCM Piano Syllabus.

31 See Appendix II.
represent as many of these as possible. Balance with regard to styles and techniques in repertoire were prioritized over balance with regard to composers or publishing companies.

It is my hope that this anthology will serve as an inspirational point of departure for teachers and students in their experience with contemporary music. The best way to promote the music of living composers is to perform it. Hopefully, the enjoyment that comes out of experimenting with the small fraction of Canadian compositional output this paper presents, will inspire teachers to connect with composers in their own community and continue to support the composition of pedagogically valuable 21st century music.

All musical examples are used with permission of the composer and publishing company for the sole purpose of this document. Further photocopying is strictly prohibited.

Preparatory Level

The Preparatory Level is a post introductory level functioning as a transition out of method books. The intention of this Preparatory Level is to ensure that students are fully prepared for Level 1 by bridging the gap between method book and late beginner level repertoire. The Preparatory Level combines simple pieces with technical exercises to aid in the development of basic musicianship, technique and coordination. It fosters the reinforcement of basic concepts of note reading, theory, sense of overall pulse, basic rhythmic relations, aural awareness and keyboard geography.

The Preparatory Level contains a mixture of contemporary traditional pieces taken most often from high-level method books and combines them with pieces in a more contemporary style. It mainly deals with five-finger patterns, rarely moving outside of pentascale positions. Students most often stay in one or two basic positions throughout the course of a piece. Broken sixths are used on occasion, though there are very few instances where a stretch beyond a fifth occurs. The hands most often play separately and any hands-together playing is very basic. Preparatory Level repertoire
contains very few solid\textsuperscript{32} harmonic intervals and little to no solid chord playing. This is a direct reflection of the coordination and finger strength of students at this level. Note values are comprised primarily of quarter, whole and half notes.

Preparatory Level repertoire encourages creative thinking to reinforce new and old concepts, and contains at most two main challenges per piece. Elementary musical imagery and storytelling is nurtured through short character pieces with simple titles that stimulate highly imaginative interpretations. These pieces are named after things with which young children would be familiar, such as animals, characters, or toys.

\textit{Remi Bouchard “The Gray Wolf”}

Remi Bouchard’s collection \textit{A Chorus of Critters} contains twenty solos in a variety of contemporary styles. Each piece is a musical representation of a different animal, bird, or insect. “The Gray Wolf”\textsuperscript{33} evokes a spooky atmosphere and an eerie quality through its sparse texture, use of the whole tone scale, long sustained pitches and wide dynamic range. To help create this element of mystery, Bouchard writes “Woooo, Woooo” below the title of the piece, suggesting that the music should imitate the howling of a wolf. (Figure 3.1)

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{gray_wolf.png}
\caption{“The Grey Wolf” from \textit{A Chorus of Critters}, (mm. 1-4)}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{32} Solid is equivalent with the term “blocked,” used in the United States.

Bouchard carries out a literal representation of the wolf’s howl through a descending passage. (Figure 3.2)

![Figure 3.2. “The Grey Wolf” from A Chorus of Critters, (mm. 13-19)](image)

Other contemporary elements of the piece include the use of damper pedal. In the first measure, it is indicated that the performer must hold the damper pedal throughout without clearing. This creates a cloudy atmospheric tone quality, allowing the performer to experience the effect of the damper pedal. Bouchard uses very specific dynamic markings throughout. This demonstrates the common practice of detailed musical markings in contemporary music.

The melody in the opening “The Grey Wolf” is based on the whole tone scales, and is repeated throughout the piece. (Figure 3.3)

![Figure 3.3. “The Grey Wolf” from A Chorus of Critters, (mm. 1-4)](image)

The whole tone scale creates an ambiguous tonality, which introduces the elementary student to this quality commonly found in contemporary music.

This piece is in the Preparatory Level due to its straightforward approach to simple contemporary elements. It is primarily written for a single-lined melody. Though there are times when the hands play together, it is predominately written for the right hand (RH) in eighth notes.
When the left hand (LH) is used, it contains a slow-moving accompaniment of whole notes. The piece is very repetitive and the use of pedal uncomplicated. Finally, the entire piece is written without moving out of a five-finger hand position.

Karen Rowell “The Haunted Basement”

While making use of only the lower register of the piano, Karen Rowell’s “The Haunted Basement” allows for the exploration of an eerie and ghostly tone quality. The contemporary technique utilized throughout this piece is the silent depression of a chord cluster in the RH, held for the duration of the piece. (Figure 3.4)

![Figure 3.4. “The Haunted Basement” from Cornucopia 1 (mm.1-5)](image)

While the student sustains the silently depressed keys, the corresponding strings vibrate creating sympathetic vibrations. The registral placement of the LH allows for further depth and resonance to the reverb. The LH stays in the bottom register of the keyboard throughout, alternating between playing either one or two octaves below the pitches notated in the bass clef. (Figure 3.5)

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Use of the piano’s low register allows students to explore the creation of spooky and dark sounds, while meeting Rowell’s demand for particular attention to detail in terms of articulation.

“The Haunted Basement” is an excellent example of an isolated difficulty appropriate for a student at the Preparatory Level. The piece is challenging for the LH in terms of finger independence, attention to articulation and dynamics. Furthermore, it allows elementary level students to explore moving out of a five-finger position without having to worry about coordination between the hands. Hand position changes in this piece happen infrequently and are in familiar scale-like patterns as is evident in m. 5, 6 and 10. (Figure 3.6)
Though these hand position changes sometimes include difficulties such as thumb under crossings (see Figure 3.6, mm. 5-6) they occur and remain only in one hand during hands separate playing. This in combination with the moderate tempo marking, make the piece suitable for a Preparatory Level student. The descriptive title and focus on the LH allows students to explore their creativity while experimenting with timbres in the low register of the piano.

*Debra Wanless “Garter Snakes”*

Chromaticism is explored in this charming musical representation of a slithering snake. “Garter Snakes”\textsuperscript{35} is based on two musical components: glissandi and the chromatic scale. Chromatic scales throughout the piece cover the span of a tritone, further exploiting its chromatic and dissonant nature. (Figure 3.7)

![Figure 3.7. “Garter Snakes” from *Country Characters* (mm. 14-17)](image)

The way these chromatic scales are repeated and manipulated are appropriate for a Preparatory Level student. Though the chromatic scale is a technical requirement for Level 1, it is a scale that many students at the Preparatory Level will already be familiar with. The small range of the chromatic scale and its hands-together presence in contrary motion make it an attainable challenge.

The other main component of Debra Wanless’ “Garter Snakes” is the use of glissandi and corresponding written descriptive text. The glissandi used are purely on the black keys. Though black key glissandi are more challenging than white key glissandi, the printed text in the score gives the performer the freedom to make them any length that is appropriate and comfortable. Written text

is not a common occurrence in most printed music. In this instance, its clever presence throughout the work encourages individuality and creativity while students develop their own unique interpretation of the piece. (Figure 3.8)

![Musical notation](image)

**Figure 3.8. “Garter Snakes” from Country Characters (mm. 10-17)**

As the beginning-level student is continuing to develop strength and control in their fingers, the glissandi in this piece are an excellent opportunity for them to experiment with the ability to play lightly on the surface of the keys.

The simplicity in terms of technical content of this piece make it appropriate for the Preparatory Level through focus on two technical elements: the chromatic scale and the glissando. The exploration of hands-separate playing and limited hands-together playing make it very accessible. The musical imagery is very literal and appropriate for a beginning student.

**Level 1**

Level 1 signals the shift away from method books. Students are to prepare two styles of repertoire: a list A in the Classical or Baroque style, a list B character piece, as well as list C
Invention and a study. List A repertoire contains simple binary and ternary dance forms appropriate for the elementary student including minuet, bourrée and march. Hands-together playing is demanded frequently and requires sensitivity with balance between melody and a basic accompaniment set in regular periodic phrase structure. List A pieces demand hand independence, with hands often using contrasting articulations. Students in this level must have mastery of the two-note slur, as many repertoire selections feature this challenge. Students should be encouraged to sing their melodies to aid in creating beautifully shaped lyrical lines, as many pieces contain melody and accompaniment style playing.

List B repertoire facilitates exploration of the pedal, with more advanced use than just sustaining throughout an entire piece for effect (ie. Starfish at Night by Anne Crosby from the Preparatory Level). Use of extreme registers is often exploited, as is evident in Clifford Poole’s Spooks. Poole begins the piece in the low register of the keyboard. (Figure 3.9)

Here, students can experiment in the low register of the keyboard for an eerie effect. Hand position shifts also become frequent in Level 1 and are often extremely patterned as in Anne Crosby’s Robots. Throughout the piece, the student’s hand position is constantly changing. As Figure 3.10 demonstrates in mm. 9-10, the broken fifths follow the same pattern as they ascend. (Figure 3.10)

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Furthermore, in mm. 10-11 (see Figure 3.10), the ascending sixteenth-note passage is just a series of blocked clusters with white notes in the LH and black notes in the RH. This type of pattern-based movement is typical of Level 1 repertoire.

Different tone qualities are explored, including the contrast of percussive and lyrical. Level 1 first introduces students to the concept of ostinato and its simple repetitive presence most often in the bass line. The Inventions of list C are canons that aid in the independence of hands required for Baroque selections in later levels. Studies are short technical etudes that require control of basic touch and rhythmic elements, focusing on one challenge per piece.

Overall, students in Level 1 are exposed to key signatures with up to three sharps or flats, basic modes (Dorian and Lydian) and pentatonic scales. Rudimentary simple and compound time signatures are used freely. Straightforward hands-together playing often features a slow harmonic rhythm rarely utilizing more than one chord per measure. Students are expected to demonstrate facility in five-finger passages in any key and begin to move freely outside of these basic positions. Solid intervals up to a fifth (rarely larger) are used to reflect hand size. Hand crossings are frequent.
to gain familiarity with keyboard geography and are typically pattern based. The \( \frac{3}{4} \) rhythm is used often, most frequently appearing in folk tunes that students should be familiar with. This type of introduction to the rhythm implies the idea of enforcing rote, aural and kinesthetic learning before becoming comfortable with the notation.

*Remi Bouchard “The Bluebird”*

Written in the Dorian mode, “The Bluebird”\(^{38}\) introduces students to the exploration of modes and the unique characteristics of each one. The Dorian mode’s minor quality helps to create a haunting effect in the LH melody. Since the melody is centered around the 6th note of the Dorian scale, it prevents the tune from being too dark, like its closely related counterpart the Aeolian mode. This helps keep the bluebird’s tune from sounding sad or gloomy. The use of damper pedal held throughout helps add depth and richness to the overall tone colour.

This piece’s technical focus is on balance between melody and accompaniment. It contains a melody that is played by the LH, while the RH carries out chromatic grace notes in the upper register that suggest the chirping of a bird. (Figure 3.11)

![Figure 3.11. “The Bluebird” from A Chorus of Critters (mm. 1-4)](image)

Level 1 is a time when students are still working on the basic skill of effectively balancing a singing melody line with a simple accompaniment pattern. Bouchard’s piece places this focus of melodic balance to the LH throughout the entirety of the work. The challenge of balancing LH over right is

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made appropriate for a Level 1 student by the use of a RH accompaniment that is repetitive and rhythmically consistent throughout. The chirping grace notes only occur on beats one and three and never change pitches.

The singing melody in the LH is of a small range, contained within an octave. Though primarily based around five-finger positions, finger crossings and stretches outside of basic positions are included to help facilitate the span of the melody. (Figure 3.12)

Through the focus on balance of melody and accompaniment, “The Bluebird” helps Level 1 students develop hand independence and comfort in projecting melody lines that branch out of the five-finger positions that prevailed in earlier years of study.

Anne Crosby “Ocean Spray”

Based on the G-flat pentatonic scale, Anne Crosby’s “Ocean Spray” uses only black keys throughout. As is the case with many elementary pieces based on the pentatonic scale, it is very patterned based. This allows students to move freely around the keyboard while remaining rooted in

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the familiar pattern of the black keys. This is evident in the RH of the opening four measures. (Figure 3.13)

![Figure 3.13. “Ocean Spray” from Fuzzy Beluga (mm. 1-4)](image)

As the piece progresses, the performer is able to exploit registral and dynamic extremes through patterned movement in a free and improvisatory style. (Figure 3.14)

![Figure 3.14. “Ocean Spray” from Fuzzy Beluga (mm. 21-28)](image)

“Ocean Spray” is impressionistic in nature, through its pentatonic roots and use of damper pedal. These two elements, in combination with the piece’s evocative title allow the performer to experiment with evoking an oceanic scene. The performer is encouraged to create washes of sound, an effect often used by Claude Debussy. This makes “Ocean Spray” an excellent precursor for later works by Debussy and other Impressionist composers.
Comfort with legato pedal technique is required for this piece. The frequency with which the legato pedaling occurs is what makes it appropriate for a Level 1 student. Pedal changes are required once every four bars, at the beginning of each new phrase. Sensitive balance between melody and accompaniment is also required. Since the melody line always moves much faster rhythmically than the accompaniment, the sensitivity required to balance the melody and accompaniment is suitable for a Level 1 student. Finally, though the piece explores the full range of the keyboard and requires fluidity and comfort moving around a large range, it is extremely patterned. The use of only black keys make this piece in an improvisatory style a suitable selection for a Level 1 student.

_Anne Crosby “Risser’s Romp”_

A playful and energetic piece, “Risser’s Romp” encourages the performer to use their imagination. Crosby feeds a student’s creativity through her clever tempo marking: With puppy-like energy \( \text{♩} = 152-160 \). The performer can let the spirited character of the piece come across through musical elements such as tempo, articulation and dynamics. Additionally, the lively character can be brought to life by elements specific to contemporary music including attention to highly detailed articulation markings and meter shifts.

Crosby is very specific in her markings, using grace notes and articulation markings including staccatos, slurs, staccatos with accents and staccatos under a slur. (Figure 3.15)

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All of these detailed markings require careful examination of the score in the early stages of learning, and must be consistently reinforced by the teacher. In addition to the articulation markings demonstrated in Figure 3.15, Crosby integrates meter shifts between 4/4, 3/4 and even 5/4. The quick tempo that the piece demands, suggests that the student could feel the overall pulse in 2 rather than 4. This sense of a larger beat would give students the opportunity to feel the meter alternating between triple and duple subdivisions.

Though this piece moves freely around the keyboard and doesn’t always follow a set pattern, it remains appropriate for a Level 1 student because it only ever requires one hand to change positions at a time. There are very few instances when the hands play together and when they do it is in unison. Crosby demands the ability to move comfortably between open fifths, five-finger positions and chromatic scale passages. This is a challenge too great for a student in earlier levels.

**Level 2**

Considered late elementary, this level contains three repertoire pieces and two studies. This is an increase from the single study required in Level 1. List A exploits the facility students have
developed from preparing hands-together scales in Level 1. In these Baroque and Classical selections, hand position changes are frequent. The LH often projects a disjunct line requiring control of hand independence. Balance becomes more of a challenge with increasingly difficult LH lines. Students are introduced to different dance forms including ecossaise, mazurka, and the waltz.

They are able to start applying musical knowledge of basic phrase structure through adding basic harmony and cadences.

List B continues the exploration of different Romantic and Contemporary styles with increased use of pedal and overall expressivity. Character pieces become more abstract in subject matter and require advanced musical storytelling, as in Linda Niamith’s *Autumn Leaves*. Niamith uses constant flowing eighth notes in the LH accompaniment to evoke an image of leaves rustling in the wind. (Figure 3.16)

Impressionistic and contemporary styles evoke music of other cultures and tonality is often expanded to include a wider modal vocabulary. The inventions of list C feature popular ‘jazz studies’ that truly challenge students in experimenting with blues scales and swung rhythms. List C pieces in more traditional styles feature challenging counterpoint, use of chromaticism and faster-moving melodies requiring further refinement of hand independence.

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In Level 2, students are required to carry out compound rhythms frequently. Pieces also employ an increased harmonic rhythm, often demanding two or more chord changes per measure. Technique from Level 1 prepares Level 2 students for frequent use of solid chords, as well as the ability to change freely between different articulations in each hand. Simple three-voice textures add richness to compositions and thicker textures lead to a large variety of chord figuration and inversions. Refined use of pedal requires comfort with small touches of pedal as well as syncopated pedaling. Formal variety is increased to include binary, rounded binary, ternary and rondo forms. Students are challenged in terms of advanced articulation and dynamic contrast. Shifting accents in one or both hands in the early works of Bartok require refined control. This level also features challenges in hands-together playing. The hands are not always moving in parallel or contrary motion, as is evident in *Melodie* by Schumann from opus 68. (Figure 3.17)

![Figure 3.17. “Melodie” from *Album für die Jugend*, op. 68 (mm. 1-4)

Annie Crosby “Sand Castles”

“Sand Castles” is perhaps the most challenging piece in Crosby’s collection *Fuzzy Beluga*. This is due, in part to its notational challenges. Hands are often required to move freely between the clefs, through split-hand notation and hand crossings. (Figure 3.18)

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Rolled chords are also included (see Figure 3.18, m. 4) and require the performer to roll upwards or downwards, depending on the notation. It is important to note that though these four-note chords cover a relatively large span, they are rolled with the use of damper pedal. As a result, the student need not have the finger strength and technique to carry out a solid four-note chord, as they do in later levels. The student must, instead use forearm rotation to help in the performance of these rolled chords.

This piece is a challenging selection for a Level 2 student. “Sand Castles” requires the student to move freely about the keyboard, as its range is over 5 octaves. Furthermore, this piece is a demanding in terms of rhythm and pulse. Within the first phrase, the performer must have a clear underlying pulse to move steadily between eighth notes and sustained dotted half notes. (Figure 3.19)
The second phrase is comprised of only quarters, half notes and dotted half notes. (Figure 3.20)

The third contrasting phrase returns to the original eighth note subdivision. (Figure 3.21)

Maintaining and internalizing a steady pulse throughout is difficult for any Level 2 student and is particularly evident in this work since Crosby continuously alternates between different rhythmic values. Metronome practice, counting out loud and other rhythmic activities are essential for a successful performance of this work. Though rhythmic challenges are significant, “Sand Castles” is quite short and only 20 measures long. After the student has mastered the opening three phrases, the
final two phrases are repetitions of material that has already been played. This makes the difficulties approachable for a Level 2 student. It would be challenging only in the early stages of learning the piece. The short length and lack of varied material make this piece too simple for a Level 3 student.

_Beverly Porter “An Army of Ants”_

In “An Army of Ants,” Porter challenges the expectations of what one anticipates hearing in a march. The piece’s title helps fuel the performer’s imagination. An army suggests militaristic music with a full and grand instrumental texture, however ants suggest something small and restrained in dynamic. Porter maintains the rhythmic quality of a march and writes the piece from an observer’s perspective. You can hear the army of ants approach from afar, arrive and depart through dynamic markings that create the effect of a large crescendo and decrescendo.

Musical juxtaposition also occurs in the interaction between two different themes that dominate the piece. The first in mm. 5-6 demonstrates a fanfare style melody with a traditional accompaniment pattern and the second in mm. 7-8 demonstrates unison playing with syncopation, alluding to ragtime influences. (Figure 3.22)

“An Army of Ants” is suitable for a Level 2 student due to its tempo and use of the dotted eighth/sixteenth note rhythm in parallel thirds and fourths. In order to cleanly execute this rhythm in the fast tempo that Porter demands, the student must have established finger strength and a good sense of rhythmic subdivision. The use of syncopation is another musical element that makes this

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piece appropriate for Level 2 as opposed to Level 1. This piece certainly lies on the cusp between Level 1 and Level 2, however it is these two rhythmic and technical difficulties that categorize it as Level 2.

_Karen Rowell “Thunder Clusters”_

Rowell’s musical representation of thunder is one that gives the performer great liberty in terms of musical interpretation. “Thunder Clusters”\(^{45}\) contains no melody in the traditional sense and instead uses washes of sound, rhythmic manipulation and damper pedal in order to create an overall effect. The performer is able to experiment with different timbres and percussive types of tone quality. The damper pedal is held for the duration of the work. This allows the overarching crescendo from _pp_ to _ff_ to create a sound-mass effect. The use of glissandi in the final measures helps to bring the piece to a dramatic conclusion. Importance of individual notes is minimized and the emphasis is on dynamics, timbre and texture to help establish the overall shape and gesture. This work falls into the category of sound-mass composition and helps introduce young performers to concepts, which may later reappear in advanced works of composers such as Ligeti, Xenakis and Stockhausen.

Rowell bases the entire composition on a four-note whole-tone descending motive, first heard in its complete form in m. 6. (Figure 3.23)

\[\text{Figure 3.23. “Thunder Clusters” from Cornucopia 1 (mm. 6-7)}\]

A rhythmic accelerando is created through the gradual increase in note values, from quarter notes spaced out a measure apart, to regular quarter notes, to eighth notes to sixteenth notes. (Figure 3.24)

![Figure 3.24. “Thunder Clusters” from Cornucopia 1 (mm. 16-17)](image)

It is imperative that the student maintains a steady pulse in order for this effect to successful. The motive is gradually expanded and split between the hands. (Figure 3.25)

![Figure 3.25. “Thunder Clusters” from Cornucopia 1 (mm. 20-21)](image)

This new type of notation provides a visual challenge, though technically it is quite simple to achieve.

Aside from the obvious difficulties presented by a piece that has no clear-cut structure or melodic theme, this piece challenges the late elementary level student in terms of rhythm and endurance. It is two pages in length and takes approximately a minute and a half to play. This is quite lengthy in comparison to other pieces in Level 2. This piece is also challenging in terms of rhythm and overall sense of pulse, as it requires students to move comfortably between different subdivisions within common time. The opening requires careful attention to detail in counting rests. (Figure 3.26)
Once the rhythmic values increase, the performer must be able to move comfortably between any subdivisions of the beat. This is particularly challenging when shifting from sixteenth notes to whole notes. (Figure 3.27)

This piece is on the upper edge of difficulty appropriate for a Level 2 student. Though significant rhythmic and musical challenges are present, it contains no hands-together playing. This allows the performer to focus on the difficulties at hand, in a simpler musical context. Memorization and pattern recognition are essential for a successful experience with this challenging but rewarding composition.

*Level 3*

Bridging the gap between late elementary and early intermediate, Level 3’s repertoire features a Baroque list A, Classical list B and Romantic or Contemporary list C. The Baroque selections feature a dance or other simple two or three-part form. The LH in these Baroque selections requires complete independence, with counterpoint between the hands frequently shifting between contrary
and parallel motion. LH lines are often more complex, containing irregular rhythms and a range spanning over an octave. Level 3 is where most students have their first exposure with the sonatina form. Harmonic vocabulary is expanded to recognize cadences in closely related keys. In addition to knowledge of harmony, these sonatinas require fluency in terms of scales, cadences, “zigzag” patterns and different accompaniment patterns. The mastery of Alberti bass balanced under a moving melody line proves to be quite a challenge for many students. The Romantic and Contemporary pieces in list C introduce new forms, textures and sounds. This level marks the introduction of the optional ‘popular repertoire’ list. This popular selection can be substituted for any piece in list C. Unfamiliar jazz techniques and syncopation appear frequently. Their presence in contemporary and popular repertoire, continue to challenge student’s refined rhythmic ability.

Triplets are used often, requiring students to move freely between duple and triple. Other forms of polyrhythm do not appear until later levels. Time signatures become more complex and new demands appear in terms of touch, multi-voiced textures and accompaniment styles including countermelodies. Phrases become longer, thereby requiring students to listen very carefully to shape and taper long lines, while using a richer and fuller singing tone.

_Funny Doolittle “Scurrying”_

Based on the chromatic scale, Emily Doolittle’s “Scurrying” is an ideal representation of its title through music. There are two motives that recur throughout the piece: the descending chromatic scale split between the hands in m. 5 and the extended descending chromatic scale in mm. 7-8. (Figure 3.28)
Figure 3.28 also demonstrates the typical contemporary notation that Doolittle utilizes throughout this piece, of reading both hands in one clef. Adjusting to reading both hands out of a single clef and splitting moving notes between the hands based on beaming is a challenge. Students are more familiar with traditional melody and accompaniment style writing in two staves. In the early stages of learning, it may be helpful to visually distinguish between RH and LH playing in the score with colours, or some other marking.

This piece is heavily pattern based and not difficult in terms of musical and technical content. The main challenge of this piece that makes it appropriate for Level 3 is the requirement of familiarity and facility with the chromatic scale. The tempo marking is: *as fast as possible* (at least J. = 200). This requires the performer to have chromatic scales comfortably under their fingers so that the necessary speed and facility to effectively carry off this piece can be achieved.

**Emily Doolittle “Turning”**

Emily Doolittle’s “Turning” is an excellent example of how contemporary character pieces make the move from literal to abstract musical representations as repertoire approaches an intermediate level. The music itself is uneasy and the composer describes it as “someone [looking] for something they have lost or trying to remember something they have forgotten.” This anxious feeling is represented in the music through lack of a dissonance and lack of a tonal center.

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The piece begins by outlining a sense of tonal ambiguity between melody and its relation with the LH accompaniment. The melody and accompaniment in the first bar suggest the key of e-minor. This implication dissolves by the third bar with the g-sharp in the LH and d-natural in the RH. (Figure 3.29)

![Figure 3.29. “Turning” from Playing 1 (mm. 1-4)](image)

This tonal ambiguity is maintained throughout the piece, as each four-measure phrase begins with an implied tonality of e-minor and quickly moves in another direction. Doolittle muddles with the listener’s expectation by including frequent dissonances. The harmonic interval of a tritone is used often, as is evident on beat 3 of m. 1 and beat 1 of m. 3 (see Figure 3.29). This constant state of tension and release, with extreme dissonance often occurring on important beats, helps to create a feeling of unease.

Another contemporary element of “Turning” is the use of parallel fourths and fifths. Most evident in the contrasting middle section, these parallel intervals stray far from the traditional rules of voice leading. (Figure 3.30)

![Figure 3.30. “Turning” from Playing 1 (mm. 9-12)](image)

Reminiscent of horn calls, the grace notes add a quirky flair to these parallel fourths.
The use of counterpoint and demand for hand independence is what makes this piece appropriate for Level 3. The melody and accompaniment move relatively fast in relation to one another. This requires coordination that an elementary level student does not possess. The accompaniment is contained within five-finger positions, which makes this challenge approachable. The use of two-note slurs in the RH against the smooth legato LH accompaniment is another challenge in terms of coordination. (Figure 3.31)

![Figure 3.31. “Turning” from Playing 1 (mm. 1-4)](image)

Effectively carrying out overlapping slurs is a skill that many students in Level 3 are working to master particularly in their list A, Baroque and Classical repertoire. This makes “Turning” an excellent opportunity for students to further refine the skill.

Karen Rowell “Paul E Tonality”

“Paul E Tonality” is a clever pun on the tonal concept of polytonality. This piece is an excellent preparation for the later more advanced works of Ives, Stravinsky and the Bagatelles of Bartok. The LH is rooted in the key of D-major and the RH is rooted in the key of B-flat major. (Figure 3.32)

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Seemingly bitonal by the two contrasting keys dominant throughout, Rowell has a clever take on the third ‘tonality.’ She uses contemporary notation and percussive effects as the third tonality. The “x”s are \( \text{♩} \) raps or knocks on the fallboard of the piano and the solid triangles are slaps on the piano with an open hand or stomps of the foot. (Figure 3.33)

Rowell gives the performer freedom in their interpretation of the triangle and “x” markings, which allows for a heightened element of creativity.

Making use of percussive contemporary effects within an otherwise melodic context requires students to think ahead. The challenging elements of “Paul E Tonality” require a student who is comfortable moving freely about the keyboard and is able to quickly orient themselves in different keys simultaneously. Both D-major and B-flat major are familiar keys for Level 3 students, making this task feasible. The use of note against note counterpoint and melodic lines that stray far from five-finger positions, add to the challenge of coordination between melody and accompaniment. The piece is two pages long and takes approximately one minute to perform. This is a testament to the
increasing demand for endurance of students as they progress through the levels. The moderate tempo and repetitive nature of this piece make these difficulties approachable and appropriate for a Level 3 student.

**Level 4**

Level 4 reaches the core of intermediate repertoire and begins introducing a wide variety of well-known pieces that allow students to experience great musical and technical growth. Dense two-part counterpoint and ornamentation require clarity of articulation in Baroque repertoire. Sonatinas require further control of accompaniment patterns. These now include broken octaves and increased speed and control of prolonged Alberti bass sections against extended passagework and scalar passages. Sonatina movements demonstrate contrasting themes, true substantial development sections and advanced terms including appoggiaturas and Picardy thirds. The Romantic repertoire focuses on expressive melodies, balance in chordal textures and waltz style accompaniments. Contemporary pieces offer exposure to advanced notation, challenging rhythms and the study of rhythmic cells as in the music of Bartok including *Play* from ‘For Children.’

Technical demands are increased, with larger chords and three-voice textures requiring control of balance between and within hands. Complex rhythms and shifting meters challenge each student’s sense of pulse. Istvan Szelenyi’s *Changing Bars* is an excellent example of this challenge, with few bars that stay in a consistent meter.  (Figure 3.34)
Students are also exposed to frequent sixteenth note passages in repertoire. Many quick changes of hand position require familiarity with keyboard geography while maintaining smooth rhythmic flow. By Level 4, students should have acquired the knowledge to complete basic analysis on their own, both formal and harmonic.

*Emily Doolittle “Dancing”*

The overall character of Emily Doolittle’s “Dancing” is established through constant meter shifts. A sense of unpredictability is created as the meter moves back and forth between simple triple, simple duple and irregular meter. A student approaching this piece should be comfortable with maintaining a steady pulse while alternating between duple and triple beat subdivisions. A student learning this piece should also spend a considerable amount of time with the score away from the piano, analyzing the meter shifts, tapping and counting out loud.

The true challenge in this piece lies in the time signatures Doolittle has chosen: 3/2, 2/2 and 5/4. (Figure 3.35)

![Musical notation](image)

Figure 3.35. “Dancing” from *Playing 2* (mm. 6-13)

Metrical subdivision throughout the piece switches between half notes and quarter notes. This requires the performer to keep the quarter note even throughout while feeling the overall pulse in

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larger beats of 2 or 3, as is indicated in the tempo marking: fast and lively (ideally at least) \( \dot{\text{=}144} \)
\( \dot{\text{=}96} \). This difficulty, challenges the Level 4 student in terms of pulse and subdivision.

Whenever 5/4 is used, the subdivision consistently follows a 3 + 2 pattern, keeping the difficulty of this irregular meter appropriate for a Level 4 student. The overall feeling of unpredictability throughout gives the dance a raw and folk-like character and prepares students for later compositions by Bartok including his Sonatina and Bagatelle no. 12.

Written in A-major, this piece has the added challenge of reading with the three sharps in the key signature in addition to frequent accidentals. In “Dancing,” we begin to see compositional and technical elements that are appropriate for an intermediate level student with an increased harmonic vocabulary. Though seventh chords are not introduced in technique until Level 5, students in Level 4 become familiar with these chords as simple extensions of basic triads. A seventh chord is outlined in the melody many times such as in m. 20. (Figure 3.36)

![Figure 3.36. “Dancing” from Cornucopia 3 (mm. 18-20)](image)

The use of these broken seventh chords also requires a larger span of the hand and a larger stretch between fingers.
“Arctic Voices” is an expressive and majestic piece that presents an abstract musical representation of the vast openness of the Arctic. The tempo marking is indicated in brackets as a suggestion (♩=56). Griesdale specifies that more importantly, the performer should take a speed that is “slow, expansive, barren and stark.” Furthermore, in a footnote to the score she notes “timing should be very free.” The performer should “play with [their] ears, slowly, unhurried, phrase by phrase.” This pace reflects the haunting quality of Arctic landscapes with icebergs floating on crystal water and large glaciers towered over by gigantic snowy mountains.

The piece is dominated by slow sustained rhythms consisting primarily of open fifths, helping to suggest the native culture and landscape of the Arctic. (Figure 3.37)

![Figure 3.37. “Arctic Voices” from Arctic Voices (mm. 19-23)](image-url)

This slow-moving harmonic rhythm helps contribute to the free timing throughout “Arctic Voices,” that requires an advanced sense of pacing and control over the overall musical flow.

Griesdale makes use of feathered beaming notation to incorporate faster-moving notes. (Figure 3.38)

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52 Griesdale, p. 5.

53 Griesdale, p. 5.
This gradual change in the speed of notes requires sensitivity with regards to pacing. This is an adequate challenge for a Level 4 student based on the number of notes under the beam. In the early stages of learning these feathered beam notations, it may be best for the student to give each of the notes equal value and later experiment with changes in tempo. In order to successfully carry off the underlying pulse of “Arctic Voices,” the performer must have a good internal sense of pulse and maintain comfort with the constant shifting meters throughout.

Another difficulty in this piece lies in effectively communicating the large dynamic range used throughout. Frequent sudden dynamic shifts, large crescendos and decrescendos and expressive sforzandi are some of the dynamic challenges presented. In the following figure, we see dynamic markings ranging between $f$ and $ppp$ occurring within just one bar of one another. (Figure 3.39)
These demands in dynamic extremes test the performer in achieving new sounds on the instrument, perhaps softer than any dynamic they have experienced before. This raises the question of key speed in relation to tone production and other technical issues appropriate for a late intermediate level student to explore in detail, including use of arm weight in louder $ff$ passages.

Technically speaking, “Arctic Voices” is not an overly demanding piece. It is relatively short, falls comfortably under the hands and can easily be learned at a very basic performance level. The true value of this work and others like it lies in the challenges it presents musically and interpretively. If prepared at a high level, the performer will be heavily and actively involved in their musical interpretation of this abstract landscape and atmosphere. The sense of pulse, pacing and dynamic range requires a performer who listens and adjusts very carefully based on the instrument, acoustic and other factors that affect each performance of the work.

Joyce Pinckney “Locrian Lament”

Modal compositions are frequent throughout the 20th century. There is one particular mode, however, that is often dismissed. The Locrian mode is not used very often due to the heavy influence of the tritone, particularly in its tonic chord. It is a minor sounding mode that is similar to the Phrygian mode, but is more dissonant. “Locrian Lament” is written in B Locrian, meaning that the tonic chord is a diminished chord with b as its root. This overwhelming sense of dissonance adds to the dark and ominous character of the mode. The minor second between the first and second scale degrees also add to its overall abrasive quality.

Pinckney bases the composition on the movement between broken and cluster chords on the tonic (m. 14) and leading tone (m.16). (Figure 3.40)

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These dissonant chords and clusters play off of the dissonant nature of the scale and help fuel the sorrow and passion that this musical lament demands from the performer.

The chords used throughout “Locrian Lament” are thick and rich. Most of them use at least four notes either solid or broken. This requires the technique of a student who has mastered solid and broken triads and is ready to extend their technique to four-note chords. “Locrian Lament” truly breaks the barrier into intermediate repertoire, through its challenges in terms of technique, pacing and interpretation. Rubato should be used to effectively shape each phrase. (Figure 3.41)
Pinckney includes specified musical rubato through use of tempo changes, pauses and textual descriptions.

**Level 5**

As students delve deeper into intermediate level repertoire, they are exposed to varying types of ornaments with extended mordents and trills in list A Baroque selections. Counterpoint becomes more advanced requiring finger facility. Level 5 is where students are first introduced to the ‘Little Preludes’ of J.S. Bach and new mature dance forms including the allemande and rigaudon. List B features extended passagework often spanning several measures against an accompanimental line of increased complexity and sophistication. Challenging sixteenth note passages in this level often require extensive spot practice to attain complete clarity. List C repertoire includes advancing chromaticism and rich harmony. By this point, pedal is rarely notated and students are expected to incorporate it as they see fit, under the guidance of their instructor. Modern pieces include an introduction to advanced language featuring bitonality and twelve-tone theory.

Pieces are of an increased length, generally over a minute long. They also use a variety of different forms. Harmony often involves seventh, mixture and secondary dominant chords. Musical vocabulary expands in terms of form, effects such as ostinato or extended sequences, ornamentation and use of expressive signs including *rubato* and *portando*. Finally, students in Level 5 should have a heightened understanding of varying types of meter.

*Emily Doolittle “Rollicking”*

Emily Doolittle’s “Rollicking” is written for the LH alone. It is appropriate for an intermediate level student, working on advancing the technical development of their LH. In most two-hand piano music the demands on the RH exceed the difficulty on those for the LH. LH alone

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55 Emily Doolittle, “Rollicking” from *Playing 2* (Holland Centre, Ontario: Debra Wanless Music, 2006).
music helps to balance out this emphasis that is usually placed on the RH. The use of the LH alone allows for showmanship and virtuosic display of its capabilities. It also helps prepare intermediate level students for later and more advanced repertoire.

“Rollicking,” meaning exuberantly lively and amusing, is characterized through wide intervallic leaps and jumps. The LH jumps between the treble and bass clef and requires efficiency and precision of movement. (Figure 3.42)

Figure 3.42. “Rollicking” from Playing 2 (mm. 33-43)

The fast and rhythmic nature of this piece doesn’t leave any time for error. This makes precision in quick movements important. As a result, it is essential to keep an extremely steady eighth note pulse throughout.

This piece is challenging in terms of pulse and subdivision, through its frequent changing meters. Further heightening this difficulty, Doolittle inserts measures containing only rests between changing meters. (Figure 3.43)

Figure 3.43. “Rollicking” from Playing 2 (mm. 24-27)

Accurately counting rests, especially those spanning an entire measure, is a challenge for musicians of any level. In order to effectively convey the rhythm and shifting meter that occurs in “Rollicking,” one must have an excellent sense of inner pulse that comes across through both notes and rests.
This piece is also demanding in terms of technique, as it helps refine finger independence between third and fifth finger. Parallel moving fifths with accents require the performer to move quickly and smoothly while developing facility in moving between the third and fifth finger. (Figure 3.44)

![Figure 3.44. “Rollicking” from Playing 2 (mm. 14-18) from Debra Wanless, “Nightfall” from In the Mood for Modes Book 3 (Holland Centre, Ontario: Debra Wanless Music, 2013).]

The sustained thumb (seen in Figure 3.44) further complicates matters in order for the performer to effectively carry out two voices in one hand. The need for strength and clarity in the weaker fingers becomes greater as repertoire moves from intermediate to advanced levels and “Rollicking” serves as an excellent exercise in developing this skill.  

*Debra Wanless “Nightfall”*

Written in the Lydian mode, “Nightfall”\textsuperscript{56} conveys the image of dusk, twilight and the coming of night. Use of the Lydian mode gives it a distinctly major quality, with a bright contemporary sound stemming from the augmented fifth between the first and fifth scale degree. The Lydian mode is often used in improvisation. Wanless evokes this improvisational quality in “Nightfall” through her treatment of the melody in the context of a modal framework that lacks clear harmonic structure. The constant rise and fall of the melodic line creates an irregular contour that helps contribute to the overall improvisational quality. (Figure 3.45)

\textsuperscript{56} Debra Wanless, “Nightfall” from *In the Mood for Modes Book 3* (Holland Centre, Ontario: Debra Wanless Music, 2013).
The use of large intervals within the melodic line (see Figure 3.45, mm. 1-2), demand sensitivity with regards to pacing. In a piece such as this, students begin to experiment with timing in shaping a melodic line. Students begin to understand that intervals spanning a larger distance require time in their pacing to be effective both aurally and musically. The melody throughout “Nightfall” contains a variety of simple syncopations and demands use of rubato. These syncopations contribute to the overall improvisational quality of the piece.

The accompaniment pattern also contributes to the smooth and placid quality of “Nightfall.” Wanless uses an accompaniment pattern that spans an octave and uses only the root, fifth and occasionally seventh of a chord. This lack of a third makes the major or minor quality of each changing harmony unclear and creates an underlying pattern that is hypnotic and ambiguous. This accompaniment pattern is technically challenging, as it requires forearm rotation and a hand span that is large enough to accommodate an octave. These requirements are appropriate for most Level 5 students.

This piece is challenging with regards to balance between the hands, due to the active accompaniment pattern and its steady flow of quarter notes. The melody, comprised of quarter and eighth notes, must be controlled and sensitively projected against each note of the accompaniment pattern, particularly when syncopations occur. (Figure 3.46)
Figure 3.46. “Nightfall” from In the Mood for Modes (mm. 5-8)

The demand for precision of rhythmic syncopation in conjunction with the need for delicate sensitivity with regards to balance, make this piece appropriate for a Level 5 student.

Level 6

By Level 6, students have reached a late intermediate level. List A pieces feature two or three-part preludes or dances by J.S. Bach. Sonatinas require advanced command of pulse as their length and overall scale continues to increase. By this point students have played enough sonatinas that they can begin comparing approaches to form, character of themes, key relationships and modulations of different composers. List C repertoire requires free use of rubato, control of voices, intricate balance and melody projection, often within a multi-voiced texture. Students are challenged to communicate mood and style while exploring a larger and more diverse harmonic palate. Contemporary music contains a variety of rhythmic challenges, including irregular rhythm groupings, complex shifting meters, and polyrhythms, namely two against three.

Overall, students must be comfortable moving rhythmically between a variety of pulse subdivisions. The famous transition to the recapitulation of Kuhlau’s C-major Sonatina op. 20 no. 1\textsuperscript{57} is an excellent example of this. (Figure 3.47)

Nancy Telfer’s Fantasie exemplifies extended pedal techniques including flutter pedal and half pedal, which are also required of students at this level. (Figure 3.48)

This is a level where it is particularly important for students to incorporate technical exercises to help the development of advanced technique. As pieces increase in length, time needed for effective practice sessions will become an issue and students will need to be organized in planning productive practice schedules. Students should begin to consult various recordings and explore multiple editions to critically consider editorial markings. Brief octave passagework demonstrates the need for a hand that can reach an octave, and large stretches and leaps in chords demonstrates the

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58 Nancy Telfer, Fantasie” from Celebration Series Repertoire 6 (Toronto, Ontario: Frederick Harris Music Company, 2008).
need for use of the full arm. Level 6 is where students are first introduced to frequent two against three rhythms in isolated, repetitive or pattern-driven passages.

Remi Bouchard “You Know”

Upon first listening to this piece, I was curious about the meaning behind its title. From speaking with Remi Bouchard on the telephone, I learned that its origin was actually quite clever! He said: “I was listening to the radio and there was an interview on. There was a lady talking for about 10 minutes. She was very well educated and a specialist in many areas. She kept repeating ‘you know,’ after every sentence. She must have said it about 20 times! It’s sort of a silly thing, you know.”

The piece begins with a ♪♩♩ rhythm, meant to mimic the rhythm of ‘you know’ in speech. The rhythm continues to appear sporadically throughout the work, meant to recall this quirk he heard from a woman on the radio.

Boasting a placid and tuneful melody throughout, “You Know” contains an accompaniment that alternates between consonance and dissonance. Bouchard achieves this mainly through his use of seventh chords. Dominant and diminished chords are still a fairly new concept to students at Level 6, as they are only first introduced in solid and broken form in Level 5. The accompaniment for “You Know” is made up of all types of seventh chords including major, half-diminished and diminished. This gives students the opportunity to expand their knowledge of seventh chords. Though moving freely between these different types of seventh chords may be difficult, the consistency with which their pattern is maintained prevents the challenge from being too overwhelming for a Level 6 student. The accompaniment always begins on the root of the chord, moves upward and includes the fifth and the seventh as a solid interval. (Figure 3.49)

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60 Remi Bouchard, “You Know” from Pianorama (Late Intermediate) (Holland Centre, Ontario: Debra Wanless Music, 2013).
Figure 3.49. “You Know” from *Pianorama* (*Late Intermediate*) (mm. 1-4)

Bouchard also outlines seventh chords in the melody, adding embellishment and moments of tension. (Figure 3.50)

Figure 3.50. “You Know” from *Pianorama* (*Late Intermediate*) (mm. 13-16)

Overall, the abundant use of seventh chords within a deceivingly tonal framework makes for interesting dissonances and unexpected harmonies. Bouchard uses accidentals in the melody that create tension when heard against the seemingly unrelated seventh chords in the accompaniment. (Figure 3.51)

Figure 3.51. “You Know” from *Pianorama* (*Late Intermediate*) (m. 9)

The use of accidentals, and wandering accompaniment pattern lacking any true tonal center help contribute to the sense of unpredictability throughout this piece.

Bouchard utilizes a key change in the middle of this piece, which moves from C-major, to D-major. The relationship between these two keys is distant. Considering the unpredictable harmonic
rhythm Bouchard has set up, this key change is not representative traditional harmonic guidelines. Though there are two sharps in the key signature, seventh chords containing flats are used quite frequently. The following passage presents a series of different distantly related seventh chords. (Figure 3.52)

![Figure 3.52. “You Know” from Pianorama (Late Intermediate) (mm. 31-34)](image)

This presents a challenge that exists in the early stages of learning the piece. Here, it would be helpful for the teacher to lead the student in a basic harmonic analysis to aid in the learning process. This will make it easier for the student to adjust to reading chords and accidentals that do not necessarily fit within the context of the ‘key signature’ in which they are reading.

Finally, “You Know” includes the rhythmic challenge of coordinating triplets against straight eighth notes. Two against three is a rhythmic complexity that appears in Level 5 in specific isolated contexts, in few repertoire selections. By the time students have reached Level 6 they should be in command of the cross rhythm and be able to carry it out in longer passages. Bouchard has the melody line moving freely between straight duple and triplets, against steady eighth notes in the accompaniment pattern. (Figure 3.53)
This difficulty in the melodic line and adds to the intricacy of Bouchard’s composition. The inclusion of triplets is in a consistent pattern, making the challenge more approachable for a Level 6 student. The complexities in terms of harmony, chordal structure and rhythm are what make this piece appropriate for a late intermediate student who is on the cusp of studying advanced level repertoire.

*Emily Doolittle “Floating”*

Emily Doolittle’s “Floating” is an expressive piece that encompasses an entrancing and dreamy quality. As a researcher, her recurrent interests lie in folklore and musical storytelling. These research interests are accurately represented in “Floating.” The piece presents a number of challenges for late intermediate level students, namely in terms of meter, dissonance and pacing.

Doolittle alternates between two meters: a traditional compound 6/8, an irregular 7/8 and an atypical asymmetrical subdivision of 8/8. (Figure 3.54)

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61 Emily Doolittle, “Floating” from *Playing 2* (Holland Centre, Ontario: Debra Wanless Music, 2006).

Constantly shifting between a duple and triple subdivision of the beat helps to create a dreamy atmosphere through its hypnotic effect. The accompaniment pattern in the LH creates a barcarolle-like quality. The irregularity of the meter throughout prevents the barcarolle-like quality of the accompaniment from being too overpowering and the overall meter from becoming too regular.

“Floating” is filled with dissonance, unexpected harmonies and expressive chromaticism. Doolittle most often uses these moments of dissonance expressively, to allow the student to experiment with timing, pacing and use of rubato with their delivery. (Figure 3.55)

On beat 4 of m. 17 we see the G-flat of the LH against the F of the RH, as well as the G of the LH against the A of the RH on beat 1 of m. 16 (see Figure 3.55). These unprepared and unresolved dissonances require a sensitive ear to carry across effective phrasing.

As a researcher, Doolittle’s interests also lay in the relationship between music and animal songs and the relationship between music and nature. Though this piece doesn’t have any literal quotations from nature, it certainly evokes imagery and scenes of nature. This allows the performer

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to communicate the idea of floating, which is particularly true in the closing ascending passage. (Figure 3.56)

![Figure 3.56. “Floating” from Playing 2 (mm. 28-31)](image)

Passages such as these, give students the opportunity to experiment with using different approaches into the key in order to create different types of sound. A flatter finger, for example, may help to achieve the delicacy of tone required in this ending. The vastness of the accompaniment pattern spanning a ninth requires a certain refinement and sensitivity with regard to pacing. If performed effectively, this ending conjures up the feeling of simply floating away into the distance.

**Level 7**

This level marks the transition to advanced material, which fosters musical growth and begins to develop abstract musical thinking. List A repertoire includes some of J.S. Bach’s simple two-part Inventions. It also first introduces students to challenging movements from J.S. Bach’s suites that require technical facility in basic ornamentation. The Classical repertoire of list B requires technical and rhythmic fluency and begins to replace sonatina movements with sonata movements. Irregular phrase lengths are frequent, encouraging students to think beyond the norm. List C requires pedaling in challenging chromatic passages throughout simpler pieces of Chopin (Prelude in e-minor op. 28
no. 4) and Grieg (Album-leaf op. 12 no. 7). Extended melody lines require unity in long phrases against fast-moving bass lines such as Mendelssohn’s *Venetian Boat Song*.64 (Figure 3.57)

![Figure 3.57. Venetian Boat Song from Lieder ohne Worte, op. 19b no. 6 (mm. 6-11)](source: International Scores Music Library Project, http://imslp.org/wiki/Lieder_ohne_Worte,_Op.19b_(Mendelssohn,_Felix))

Advanced modality, polyrhythm and dynamic range are needed in list C 20th century works. Virtuosic ‘show pieces’ including forms such as the toccata and toccatina appear, featuring extended sections of challenging rhythms with multiple beat subdivisions. Natural flow and organic pacing is needed in improvisatory passages and long melodic lines.

Overall, both hands must be comfortable playing scales in octaves, as is reflected in the technical requirements. Use of large chords require frequent use of the full arm and students must be able to switch quickly between dynamics ranging from *ppp-fff* leading to many discussions between student and teacher about wrist, arm and forearm technique. Two against three rhythms are present in faster flowing passages and require students to move freely in and out of these rhythmic challenges. They are no longer present as an isolated difficulty. Students should begin to consider musical organization of works such as the BWV numbers of Bach, or the Opus numbers of Chopin.

*Martha Hill Duncan “Dry Spell”*

“Dry Spell”65 is taken from the set *Precipitations*, a set that contains different pieces inspired by the weather. The piece is an abstract musical representation of a prolonged period of dry weather,

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resulting in shortage of water, crop damages and other negative consequences. Duncan’s music raises emotions of uncertainty that are felt during a dry spell while waiting for precipitation. She goes about achieving this musically through manipulation of various motives.

A variety of contrasting musical ideas are used throughout, with complex connections tying them together. The opening motive plays off of the difference between simple and compound time and sets up an unclear sense of meter. (Figure 3.58)

This unsettling feeling of uncertainty in terms of rhythm, harmony and meter in the opening continues as the motive evolves to include syncopations, further distorting the overall meter. (Figure 3.59)

The abrupt change to steady sixteenth notes indicates another new musical idea, contrasting from the others preceding it. These sixteenth notes create an ostinato that is chromatic in nature through the disjunct and fragmented melody that must be projected in the LH. (Figure 3.60)

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Following an extended passage built on these virtuosic sixteenth notes, the opening placid yet unsettling motive returns.

The next new musical idea is highly expressive through obsessive chromatic triplets in the melody and sweeping gestures in the accompaniment. (Figure 3.61)

This fiery passionate section ends abruptly, and returns to a slower, more placid mood recalling the character of the opening. The final motive of the piece displays Duncan’s manipulation of motive as a vehicle for musical expression and formal construction, in a truly contemporary context. Through the fast-moving sixteenth notes, rhythmic displacement of the triadic figure in the RH and the overall ascending contour, this material recalls many of the earlier motives. (Figure 3.62)
Duncan concludes the piece with the influence of chance music, allowing the performer to improvise and explore a variety of endings, based on material introduced earlier in the piece.

There are many technical challenges present throughout this piece that make it appropriate for a Level 7 student. Rhythmically, the piece demands the ability to move freely between a variety of beat subdivisions ranging from sixteenth note and eighth note triples, to dotted quarters that skew the overall sense of pulse. Technically, a certain amount of facility is necessary to control an even tone in the sixteenth note passages. Practicing these passages in isolation with a variety of technical approaches is necessary. A student could practice these passages (see Figure 3.62) in dotted rhythms, staccato articulations, two-note slurs, or even in different dynamic levels to improve their comfort and overall facility with the fast-moving notes.

Interpretively, a student working on this piece must be able to quickly change moods and characters when moving from one motive to another. All of these components are included in a relatively short piece, at a manageable tempo, that is repetitious, making it well suited to Level 7 repertoire.
“Shall We Dance” is a lively dance tune that brings to life the Celtic music culture of Canada’s east coast. The melody line throughout the piece is meant to evoke Celtic fiddle music. I chose to discuss piece, because of its creative approach and new perspective on Canadian folk music in the tradition of composers such as Bartok and Kabalewsky.

The piece opens with a simple eight-measure melody that is embellished upon throughout. The tune is quite simple and triadic in nature, which makes it easy to vary by filling in large intervallic leaps. (Figure 3.63)

Figure 3.63. “Shall We Dance” from Pianorama (Late Intermediate) (mm. 1-11)

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Figure 3.63 shows the beginning of the second phrase (mm. 8-11). Here, the triadic melody is filled in with quicker moving sixteenth notes, embellishing upon the opening tune. The melodic variation that occurs throughout the piece is typical of Celtic music, particularly in the virtuosic nature of fiddle tunes.

Another component of “Shall We Dance” that is typical of Celtic music, is the accompaniment pattern. An expressive and showy melody is the top priority. This results in an accompaniment pattern that serves merely to support the melody. It is consistent in terms of shape and style and contains a strong sense of traditional harmonic and cadential structure. The opening few phrases are supported by open fifths, and they help to mimic the sound of bagpipes. Though the accompaniment begins moving mainly stepwise (see Figure 3.63), it quickly becomes more challenging through large leaps of fourths and fifths. (Figure 3.64)

These large leaps in the LH in conjunction with the fast-moving melody line are challenging to carry out effectively.

As more embellishments are added to the RH and the LH accompaniment is varied, coordination between the hands becomes a greater difficulty. (Figure 3.65)
The third phrase introduces a new accompaniment pattern that fills out the basic harmonic progression introduced in the first two phrases. This fast-moving accompaniment allows for the performer to experience counterpoint against the melody, particularly in mm. 43 and 47. (Figure 3.66)

![Musical notation]

Figure 3.66. “Shall We Dance” from *Pianorama (Late Intermediate)* (mm. 16-19)

The quick and lively tempo, requirement for independence of hands and demand for ability to control accompaniment and melodic figuration that spans a large distance of the keyboard is what makes this piece well suited to Level 7 repertoire.

**Level 8**

Level 8 marks the entry to early advanced repertoire and an introduction to the ‘masterworks’ and core repertoire of many pianists. It is essential to thoroughly prepare this level before moving on to Level 9 and 10 due to the demand for increasing command of texture and stylistic refinement. List A repertoire is based around the 2-part Inventions of J.S. Bach. The Classical list B repertoire demands students to command a wide range of the instrument through thick chords, extended runs and arpeggios. List B repertoire also contains colourful changes of tonal centers and a need for detailed sonata-allegro form analysis (including bridges/codas, transitions, various themes, etc.) List
C now covers only the Romantic era and requires abstract thinking, particularly in terms of mood and key associations. Romantic repertoire requires command of the thick chordal style of Schumann as is evident in An Important Event from Kinderszenen. (Figure 3.67)

![Figure 3.67. An Important Event from Kinderszenen, op. 15 no. 6 (mm. 1-3)](http://imslp.org/wiki/Kinderszenen,_Op.15_(Schumann,_Robert)

Romantic repertoire also explores the expressive lyrical romanticism of Liszt (Consolation no. 1).

Students are now required to learn a fourth repertoire selection: a list D piece. This selection focuses on 20th and 21st century music. This modern repertoire includes polyrhythms, complex patterns, quartal harmonies and intervals larger than an octave. Large spans in accompaniment patterns require flowing hand movement and control of rolled chords imitating the harp or guitar. The two studies are now repertoire pieces, serving to further enhance musical growth. They are no longer merely exercises.

Students in Level 8 often feel frustration over slow development and progress as they spend a longer period of time learning repertoire. Musical interpretation is challenged in terms of imaginative and atmospheric abstract concepts. It is important for teachers to encourage students to record themselves to hear progress and constantly remind themselves of their significant musical and technical growth.
Remi Bouchard “Cracked Sound Board Blues”

The soundboard on a modern piano acts as an amplifier. After a note is played and a hammer strikes a string, the consequent vibrations are eventually transferred to the soundboard to further project the tone. If there are large cracks in the soundboard, this can cause a buzzing sound in the amplification process. Remi Bouchard’s “Cracked Sound Board Blues”\textsuperscript{67} pokes fun at these buzzing sounds in a swung, slow blues style.

The opening gesture presents a loud and fast virtuosic chromatic scale passage that requires fast finger work and facility typical of advanced level student (Figure 3.68)

![Figure 3.68. “Cracked Sound Board Blues” from Pianorama (Advanced) (m.1)](image)

This chromatic passage that is introduced in the opening, serves as a motivic seed for figuration throughout that helps to create the effect of a “Cracked Sound Board.”

The piece exemplifies many standard blues characteristics throughout. It follows a traditional 12-bar blues pattern through the outline of the bass notes in the accompaniment. The accompaniment pattern of consistent quarter notes reinforces a rhythm that is maintained throughout. This helps to establish the overall groove. Blues notes are used frequently and are emphasized within the melody line. What makes this composition unique is the way in which Bouchard manipulates the chromatic scale and uses it as figuration within the otherwise typical blues form.

Sets of two or more grace notes often adorn the melody, in a chromatic fashion. (Figure 3.69)

\textsuperscript{67} Remi Bouchard, “Cracked Sound Board Blues” from Pianorama (Advanced) (Holland Centre, Ontario: Debra Wanless Music, 2013).
Figure 3.69. “Cracked Sound Board Blues” from *Pianorama (Advanced)* (m. 6-11)

Their speed and unexpected presence emulates the effect of a buzzing and cracked soundboard. The performer should therefore aim to keep these grace notes quick and crisp, with the help of the wrist. This requires a certain level of clarity and technical facility that a Level 8 student should have.

The accompaniment throughout also presents a challenge that makes this piece appropriate for a Level 8 student. A stride bass accompaniment is used. This is an accompaniment pattern that alternates between single bass notes and chords, often with large leaps between. Mastering it requires the performer to be comfortable enough with keyboard geography and various chord positions to move around freely, quickly and efficiently without continuously looking down at the LH. When included alongside the melody, stride bass accompaniment must be steady, rhythmic and smooth sounding. This is a skill that an advancing pianist should be able to control.

The melody utilizes a multi-voiced texture on the second repetition of the 12-bar blues pattern, for elaboration and additional variation. Being able to control two RH voices simultaneously, tackle the rhythmic complexity and effectively voice the melody is quite a challenge, particularly against the stride bass accompaniment that has been established. (Figure 3.70)
The challenge of hand independence and balance is brought to the next level by requiring the performer to control two voices within one hand, a skill appropriate for a Level 8 student who is mastering the two-part Inventions of J.S. Bach. Breaking apart the music phrase by phrase and practicing with different combinations of voices will help in achieving overall clarity in these difficult passages.

Figure 3.70 also shows the use of octaves and large rolled chords in the LH accompaniment. This is a skill appropriate for a student with a larger hand. Level 8 is the first instance where solid octave scales are present in technical requirements, thereby justifying this variation on the opening tune. Though this piece includes many significant challenges, it is all set within a slow blues tempo that makes the obstacles possible for an early intermediate student to overcome.

_Martha Hill Duncan “Dolorosa”_

_Zarzamora_ is a set containing five pieces loosely based on Spanish street names. “Dolorosa,” meaning distressing, painful or grievous, is the third piece from this set. Duncan’s bittersweet

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interpretation of the Spanish word ‘dolorosa’ is reflected in the overall character of this piece. She represents longing and sadness musically through her treatment of rhythm and metric ambiguity.

The piece begins in a four-voice texture with a simple melody and accompaniment that hints at a hemiola figure in the melody. (Figure 3.71)

![Figure 3.71. “Dolorosa” from Zarzamora (mm.1-4)](image1)

This tension between simple and compound time is a typical characteristic of Spanish rhythm. It prevails throughout the work.

As the piece continues and builds in dynamic, texture and overall excitement, the rhythmic hemiola is used to help set up the use of dissonant chords as an ostinato in the RH. (Figure 3.72)

![Figure 3.72. “Dolorosa” from Zarzamora (mm. 25-28)](image2)

The melody in the LH (see Figure 3.72, m. 26-27) gradually develops into the ostinato established in the RH. When the repeated note ostinato is taken over by the LH, the dissonant chords of the RH become melodic rather than accompanimental. The RH chords are used along with the opening hemiola to bring the piece to its climax. (Figure 3.73)
Figure 3.73. “Dolorosa” from Zarzamora (mm. 29-35)

Here, the meter becomes truly skewed. The opening hemiola is transformed into a 3 + 3 + 2 pattern, outlined in Figure 3.73. The tension it creates helps highlight the climatic point it serves formally in the music.

This piece has many challenges that make it suitable for Level 8 and the early advancing pianist. The four-voiced texture that continues throughout the piece is demanding in terms of coordination and balance, both between the hands and within the hands. Duncan includes very specific dynamic markings, as is evident in the soprano line in the opening four measures. (Figure 3.74)

Figure 3.74. “Dolorosa” from Zarzamora (mm.1-4)

Throughout the work, the melody spans a large range and is intertwined between various voices. The multi-voiced texture and sweeping melody line demonstrate the need for finger transfers and other advanced methods of finger legato required to keep the line smooth. Teachers may consider using this suggested fingering to keep the soprano line legato. (Figure 3.75)
The large harmonic intervals interspersed in the melody demonstrate a need for hands that can comfortably reach large intervals with fingers other than the thumb and fifth finger.

The rich harmonies, use of various seventh chords and accidentals including a mix of sharps, flats and double flats also make this piece a challenge to learn and memorize. The use of syncopation and figuration spanning large distances on the keyboard add further complexity to the piece. (Figure 3.76)

Figure 3.76. “Dolorosa” from Zarzamora (mm. 46-49)

Figure 3.76 also demonstrates how this piece is prevented from being categorized as a higher level of difficulty, namely through repetition. The chromatic grace notes are both a technical and musical difficulty. They help add depth and character to the work. Though the challenges in terms of harmony, rhythm and texture are great, the presence of patterned-based movement and use of repetition make it very approachable and lessen the overall difficulty of the piece.
Level 9

This level requires a thorough knowledge of music history, composers and their personal styles within a larger stylistic period. Here, smaller movements of advanced works are included beyond individual sonata movements. List A introduces J.S. Bach’s 3-part Inventions and adds the challenge of hearing three concurrent voices, while maintaining a delicate sense of balance and control of each voice. Students at this level must also deal with detailed issues of performance practice. List B includes substantial movements of major sonatas. These large-scale movements demonstrate phrase construction as the manifestation of language in Classical music in terms of sentences, punctuation and inflection. Students are required to differentiate between instrumentation and stylistic tendencies, between Beethoven and Mozart for example. This requires a refinement of stylistic knowledge and raises important questions that influence small and large-scale interpretation. How do you get to the climax of a phrase? Is it through melody, rhythm or harmony? How long is the phrase and how many small units is it made up of? Students should begin exploring these concepts on their own, based on studies at previous levels.

List C pieces introduce challenging waltzes and mazurkas that demonstrate new challenges for the hand in terms of facility and control. Harmony includes frequent use of secondary and applied dominants that are paralleled with an intensity of feeling and emotion. More passionate dissonances and distant modulations occur. Students advance to the expressive works of Chopin. His nocturnes first appear here, and present challenges in terms of aligning flowing virtuosic passages with broken chord accompaniments. Character pieces are often titled Intermezzo or Ballad, presenting added difficulty in terms of abstract thinking and interpretation. List D pieces present advancing harmonies and depth in texture including the transparency and advanced tone colours of Ravel (“Menuet” from Le Tombeau de Couperin). Technical studies, or ‘technically challenging repertoire pieces,’ include
a variety of difficulties that occur simultaneously. Level 9 creates an overall challenge for the ear, hand and mind in terms of harmony and form. The careful preparation of previous levels in terms of balance, voicing, scales and arpeggios among other technical challenges will allow students to approach this advanced repertoire with ease. Difficulty in repertoire becomes increasingly subjective. Repertoire should be selected based on the challenges of each student. Students at this level should begin regularly consulting recordings and gaining an appreciation for a variety of interpretations, placing a heavy involvement on the importance of listening assignments.

Independent thinking and decision making should be encouraged based on previous knowledge, for example, in selecting articulation in Baroque pieces or pedaling markings in Romantic repertoire. Overall, students should begin to think critically about how they can best give a representation of what each composer is expressing through music and truly go beyond the notes printed on the page.

Martha Hill Duncan “Zarzamora”

This driving and energetic piece was inspired by Duncan’s experience learning to drive on the streets of San Antonio, TX, where the lanes are narrow and bumpy and the curved roads jut back and forth. The title for “Zarzamora” came from the name of one of these streets. This piece creates an unsettling quality that is evident through a variety of elements including the use of syncopated figures, augmented chords and specific dynamic markings.

“Zarzamora” begins with syncopation and an irregular metric subdivision. The syncopated melodic figure in the RH creates tension against the LH broken accompaniment. (Figure 3.77)

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The LH goes against the typical subdivision of the quarter note pulse and the duple subdivision of the RH to create an asymmetrical 3 + 3 + 2 grouping. (Figure 3.78)

This 3+3+2 grouping is derived from a variation on the Habañera rhythm, a syncopated dance rhythm outlined below. (Figure 3.79)

The use of this Habañera rhythm in the accompaniment in juxtaposition with the RH melody continues throughout the work. The combination of these two challenging elements requires a student with an excellent sense of pulse and understanding of complex rhythms.
As the opening motive persists, the texture thickens to include augmented chords. In mm. 13-14, the interval of the minor second from the opening melody (see Figure 3.78) becomes the outline of an augmented major seventh chord. In m. 15, the interval of a major second becomes the outline of a French augmented sixth chord. (Figure 3.80)

![Figure 3.80 “Zarzamora” from Zarzamora (mm. 1-3, 13-15)](image)

The tension presented in these two-note slurs help establish the overall mood and character of the piece. This is further enhanced through the dynamic markings. When looking at the dynamic markings (see Figure 3.80), it is evident that Duncan is very specific with regards to dynamic levels, crescendi, decrescendi and hairpin markings in the accompaniment. Detailed markings such as these continue throughout the work and require attention to detail and independence of hands in coordinating different melodic shapes. These demand an advanced student who can effectively carry the detailed markings off within the context of each musical gesture, without sounding monotonous or forced.

Another challenge in “Zarzamora” is its tempo changes and demand for frequent use of rubato. In addition to the need for a natural sense of rubato to effectively shape the melodic line, there are places where the composer makes specific tempo indications such as “broadening” and “expansive, with rubato and sweep.” (Figure 3.81)
Markings such as these require an early advanced student with an established sense of pulse who has the ability to carry off subtle nuances within the overall musical pacing.

With the entire piece derived from the opening syncopated motive in the RH melody (see Figure 3.77), there is room for melodic variation and expansion on this interval of a second. This occurs in many forms, including advanced technical challenges such as repeated notes and full thick chords. (Figure 3.82)

This figure demonstrates the need for large hands and advanced technique in terms of controlling large chords.

Duncan makes use of various multi-voiced passages throughout the work that exploit chromaticism, specifically in challenging voice leading. The following passage demonstrates this
challenging voice leading with no consistency or regular pattern moving from beat to beat, making it difficult to master. (Figure 3.83)

The technical challenges present in “Zarzamora” demonstrate the need for an expanding hand span, as well as advanced finger and chordal technique. Mastering these technical challenges within the overall musical texture is what makes “Zarzamora” appropriate for a Level 9 student.

Susan Griesdale “Glaciers”

In “Glaciers,” Griesdale creates a musical setting that accurately represents the vast, open and expansive qualities that are associated with glaciers. Formed from the accumulation of snow over many years or even centuries, a glacier is “a persistent body of dense ice that is constantly moving under its own weight.” Griesdale recreates this weighty and impenetrable feel in the opening through the use of open fifths and octaves, pedal and a slow-moving harmonic rhythm. (Figure 3.84)

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The narrow range and contour of the outer voices also help contribute to the musical representation of the weighty and slow-moving glacier.

Griesdale utilizes an overall arc-shaped form. This arc-shaped form is represented through a variety of musical elements including rhythm, texture and range that gradually build and recede. The gradual expansion from half notes and whole notes used in the opening few measures (see Figure 3.84, mm. 1-2) develops into sixteenth notes and triplets in the middle section. The ending eventually settles back into half notes and whole notes as the piece unwinds. As the underlying rhythm changes, so does the texture, register and range of the keyboard. A series of *agitato* flourishes mark the shift into triplets and the gradual approach to the climax of the piece. (Figure 3.85)

![Figure 3.85. “Glaciers” from *Arctic Voices* (mm. 10-11)](image)

This transition into the middle section of the piece helps demonstrate a shift in time, suggesting a change from the picturesque setting of the vast open landscapes, to a musical representation of the formation of the glaciers themselves. The musical flourishes (see Figure 3.85) mimic glacial surges and depict the image of water crashing around them.

The musical representation of these abstract images in an atypical through-composed form require a student who is able to think critically about how they can best recreate the composer’s programmatic intentions through music. This requires a student who is truly able to go beyond the notes on the page. Though “Glaciers” is not a virtuosic technically-demanding work in comparison
with other repertoire in Level 9, it is musically and conceptually demanding and invites students to experiment with timing, pacing and creating different tone colours on the piano.

“Glaciers” demonstrates compositional manipulation with regards to meter. This is another challenge appropriate to an early advanced level student. The piece begins in simple time, shifting between 3/4, 4/4, 5/4 and 6/4. As momentum builds, Griesdale uses compound meter, shifting between 6/8, 9/8 and 12/8 and eventually settles back into a variety of simple time signatures. This constant shift in meter in triple and duple subdivisions requires a student with an excellent internal sense of pulse and understanding of different metrical subdivisions. A Level 9 student should possess this skill.

Written in a thick texture that often uses 3 or more voices, “Glaciers” is an excellent repertoire selection for any student working to improve their voicing. Since students at this level are often studying Bach’s 3-part Inventions, the projection of inner voice melodies helps to reinforce the development of this skill. (Figure 3.86)

![Figure 3.86. “Glaciers” from Arctic Voices (mm. 16-18)](image)

The thick texture used throughout the piece often reveals itself in the form of large chords, usually spanning an octave. (Figure 3.87)
In addition to the obvious demand for a large hand, the overall dynamic range requires a student who has developed power and strength with use of the full arm in large chords. It is these technical demands, in combination with musical, conceptual and rhythmic challenges that make this piece a valuable learning experience for early advanced students in Level 9.

**Level 10**

Level 10 is the highest graded level that students can achieve in the Royal Conservatory examination system. Technical requirements are extensive, and require all major and minor keys of scales, chords, and arpeggios, with the addition of scales in thirds, sixths and tenths. If taking an examination, students must achieve a 75% overall grade to pass, or a minimum of a 70% in each individual requirement. This is the equivalent of a B in Canadian grading systems.

Level 10 repertoire consists of advanced pieces of considerable length. The difference between Level 10 and ARCT is that students are still not prepared to put together in a full recital programme. Technical facility is a requirement, but mental and physical endurance required to successfully complete a full recital is not yet fully developed.

List A repertoire is comprised entirely of J.S. Bach’s works in 3-4 voiced textures through Preludes and Fugues and multiple movements of dance suites. Students should begin to analyze subjects, motives and themes and have a good understanding of J.S. Bach’s craftsmanship. List B repertoire contains multiple movements of sonatas, including Beethoven op. 14 and Mozart K. 282,
or longer-scale single movements such as the Mozart Fantasia in c-minor K. 396. Further differentiation between the contrasting styles of Mozart, Beethoven and Haydn is required. List C pieces contain extreme technical and interpretational challenges through extended passagework against active accompaniment patterns, intricate melody lines requiring extremely fast tempi, large extensions, intricate broken chord patterns, complex meters and challenging figurations. The virtuoso pianist is highlighted and modulations to remote keys require subtle variations in tone quality and pedaling, paralleling the development of the modern-day piano. List D features nationalistic works that utilize chromaticism and a new refined quality of tone colours. List E is reserved for contemporary repertoire, featuring advanced harmony and a variety of modern procedures including atonality, Neoclassicism, 12-tone, ragtime and extended techniques.

Overall, students must build a repertoire of contrasting style periods that yield fruitful discussions between student and teacher. These discussions consequently increase musical enjoyment and technical facility. The division between list C, D and E repertoire requires a mastery of each individual style. The technical studies are approaching the level of Chopin’s etudes and include a variety of difficulties including challenging accompaniment figures, fast alternating hand passages, large broken chords, extensions and contractions of the hand and rhythmic complexities among others. There are a variety of simultaneous technical challenges present to help achieve overall growth.

*Jack Behrens “Rag Für Elise”*

*Rag Für Elise*73 shows Behrens’ contemporary take on a piece taken from the standard piano repertoire. He keeps many elements of one of Beethoven’s most popular compositions including: key, form, melodic figuration and thematic material. Behrens takes all of these musical components

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73 Jack Behrens, “Rag Für Elise” (Holland Centre, Ontario: Debra Wanless Music, 2013).
and intertwines them with rag elements such as a stride bass accompaniment, syncopated improvisatory riffs and polyrhythms. The result is a ragtime-style composition that is humorous, topical and Neoclassical in terms of harmony and form. This combination of musical styles is an excellent learning opportunity for an advanced student who has completed advanced music history studies in a variety of genres.

I was originally undecided on whether to label this a Level 9 or Level 10 piece. The length of the piece is relatively short, many musical elements repeat themselves and the technical demands are restricted to rhythm and coordination of stride bass accompaniment. Furthermore, this piece does not demand a high level of technical facility with regard to passagework. The reason I chose to classify this piece as Level 10 is due to the challenges it presents in coordination between the hands, fluency of stride bass accompaniment against highly syncopated melodies and challenging rhythms. Most importantly, to carry off all of these musical elements in tempo indicated by the composer (♩= 88-96), a highly skilled performer is required. Thirty-second notes appear throughout and can be difficult to control at this speed. A student in Level 9 could likely perform this piece slightly undertempo, however, it truly requires the fluency and facility of a more advanced student to bring the character across effectively.

The thirty-second note passages throughout often gain their difficulty from challenges in terms of texture, rhythm and coordination. The following example demonstrates a deceivingly simple descending chromatic scale in the RH. The true challenge lies in the juxtaposition of a quick two against three established between the hands. On a larger rhythmical scale, there is an asymmetrical beat subdivision happening in the LH accompaniment. (Figure 3.88)
Being able to effectively carry off this passage without being overcome by the small-scale rhythmic complexities is imperative. The LH reveals an underlying 3+3+2 subdivision that establishes the larger pulse and character of the rag. In early stages of learning, it would be best for the student to focus on the correct execution of two against three between the LH and RH. As the student becomes more comfortable with the cross rhythm, they can begin to feel the Habañera rhythm as outlined in Figure 3.79.

*Rag Für Elise* contains a variety of melodic elements taken directly from “Für Elise” that are fragmented and embellished upon. This passage shows a variation on the opening theme that is fast moving, disjunct and spans a large range, against the stride bass accompaniment. (Figure 3.89)

This demanding passage requires clarity in ornamentation and offbeat accents in the melody.

There are a wide variety of accompaniment patterns used throughout *Rag Für Elise*, with stride bass being used most frequently. Stride bass accompaniment is extremely challenging for a variety
of reasons. It requires the LH to outline two voices: a bass line and an inner voice of chords. As a result, the LH is required to jump around at a quick speed that requires impeccable accuracy. Stride bass accompaniment is something that students are often not introduced to until late intermediate or early advanced repertoire and exists primarily in Romantic style waltzes or ragtime pieces. For many students, this may be only the second, or even first time experimenting with this accompaniment style. This is an element I factored in while labeling this as a Level 10 piece. Other accompaniment patterns include variations on broken chords, which help add variety to the texture. (Figure 3.90)

![Figure 3.90. Rag Für Elise (mm. 35-38)](image)

Further technical challenges with regards to accompaniment style are revealed in the tied notes (see Figure 3.90, mm. 36-37). These ties are challenging to read and coordinate, particularly because the technique they require is so different from the disjunct stride bass accompaniment that predominates the rest of the piece.

*Remi Bouchard* “A New Path”

“A New Path” is taken from the three-movement set: *Mayfest* for advanced pianists. It was written for the Mayfest event, an annual May celebration organized in Bouchard’s home community of Neepawa, Manitoba. The first movement, “Mayfest” serves as a fast, dramatic and passionate opening to the suite. The second and third movements, on the other hand, are slower in tempo and more solemn and reflective in nature. “A New Path” is the second movement in a moderate tempo that is expressive through its chromatic nature.

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On the surface, “A New Path” is a deceivingly simple piece. This may lead teachers or students to believe that this is an easy repertoire selection for Level 10. After examining it in closer detail, it contains a variety of technical and artistic challenges that make it both a demanding and rewarding musical experience. The first challenge lies in the passages containing double fourths and fifths. In the early stages of learning, students must experiment with different fingerings to determine what fits best under their hands. The piece begins with non-legato parallel fourths and thirds. They continue throughout, and the articulation later demands legato. The suggested fingerings in the following figure helps prepare students for the legato articulation that is required later in the piece.

(Figure 3.91)

Students at this level are required to play legato scales in parallel double thirds and sixths. “A New Path” from *Mayfest* would serve as an excellent continuation on this technique, challenging students to learn chromatic scales in double fourths and fifths combined in parallel and contrary motion.

The use of double note passages throughout “A New Path” presents notational challenges, particularly when Bouchard uses three staves instead of two to show clarity of voicing. This multi-layered texture recalls the music of Debussy and challenges students to constantly shift their focus between the three parts. Within a triple-stave notation, the double fourths and fifths have progressed from non-legato to legato and show the need for advanced fingering techniques. The performer will need to explore techniques such as finger substitutions or irregular finger crossings (ie. crossing the
fourth finger over the fifth) to effectively create a smooth and flowing line. Teachers may consider consulting this suggested fingering (Figure 3.92)

![Figure 3.92. “A New Path” from Mayfest (mm. 22-24)](image)

The crossing of the fifth finger over the fourth in the RH descending passage (see Figure 3.92 m. 22) requires the student to maintain legato with the inner voice, whereas the crossing of the fourth finger over the fifth in the RH ascending passage (see Figure 3.92 m. 23) requires the student to maintain legato with the upper voice. The selected fingering is complementary between the hands, which makes coordination a lesser challenge.

Legato scales in octaves also play a central role in the melodic content of “A New Path.” These extended passages present challenges in terms of hand size, span and legato fingering. (Figure 3.93)

![Figure 3.93. “A New Path” from Mayfest (mm. 16-18)](image)
Students with a large hand-span may be able to use the suggested fingering to achieve legato octaves. Those with smaller hands will need to use frequent five-to-four finger substitution for the legato octaves.

As demonstrated in previous examples (see Figures 3.92 and 3.93), legato fourths, fifths and octaves are a recurring feature in “A New Path.” They are manipulated in a variety of ways throughout the composition and are placed in a variety of musical settings. In Figure 3.94 we see the continuation of legato fourths, now flowing above a broken eighth note accompaniment. (Figure 3.94)

![琴谱](attachment:figure394.png)

This broken chord accompaniment provides a completely different texture from the rolled chords (see Figure 3.83) and solid octaves (see Figure 3.84) that were used earlier in the piece. Since this new faster-moving accompaniment (see Figure 3.94) is all based on the same four notes (G-C-D-F), the repetition prevents the legato fourths in the RH from being overwhelmingly challenging to coordinate between the hands. This provides momentary relief from the challenges of double notes in both hands, which has prevailed through a vast majority of the composition.
Interpretively, “A New Path” requires the performer to communicate a rather abstract concept with their audience. The idea of starting a new path or journey in life involves change, self-awareness and maturity. The performer of this piece must use the technical challenges it presents as a starting point for their own interpretation of the piece. What do the chromatic double scales mean? Perhaps they are musically representing anguish, sadness, or restlessness. How does the shift in accompaniment to a broken chord pattern affect the overall emotional character of the work? Could its predictability and tonal familiarity communicate a sense of comfort or ease, or does it hold some other interpretational meaning? These are just a few questions that the advanced student can explore while studying this piece and lead to a higher level of musical communication.

*Associate of the Royal Conservatory of Toronto (ARCT)*

This level contains only repertoire and is intended to result in a sixty-minute concert level performance. Students are expected to present themselves with confidence, communicate the essence of the music, show stylistic and structural understanding all while demanding full command of the instrument. The examination is marked like a recital and memorization is mandatory. It requires maturity and a very advanced level of difficult note reading, virtuosic technical facility as well as mental maturity and endurance. It is a big step for students to concentrate during long works, such as complete sonatas or multi-movement pieces and demonstrate understanding of both small and large-scale structure. This level spans a huge range of difficulty and could easily be studied for many years. A student could play J.S. Bach’s 5th French Suite, or his C-minor Toccata. Beethoven’s op. 2 no. 3 and op. 111 are both on the syllabus as a possible List B repertoire selection. A student could also choose between playing Bartok’s Sonata and his Sonatina. This wide variety in repertoire makes the level approachable for students in high school, University and beyond.
Students at this level are expected to control and communicate all the intricacies of the music, without focusing on the technicalities of notes and rhythm. It is a high level of musicianship that few will achieve and is an internationally recognized certification for performance that is often considered on par with an undergraduate degree in performance, or Artist Diploma. Students at the ARCT level are expected to give many public performances and show their love and passion for an art they have spent many years cultivating.

**Remi Bouchard “Mayfest”**

Repertoire at the Associate level varies with regards to content, length and level of difficulty. As a result, I have chosen two pieces that contrast greatly with regards to these musical factors. The first, “Mayfest”\(^{75}\) from the *Mayfest* suite by Remi Bouchard is an example of an ARCT level piece that is appropriate and approachable for a younger student with less performing experience. This is likely to be a student who is in high school or has not studied music at the University level. As is the case with all ARCT level repertoire, there are a large number of technical demands in each musical selection. In my discussion of Remi Bouchard’s “Mayfest” I will point out only a few technical challenges I feel are the most significant and tie together a number of musical elements.

“Mayfest” is a brilliant and virtuosic work that requires command of the full instrument through thick chords, octaves and difficult passagework. Its *brilliante* tempo marking calls for a fast tempo to reflect the brilliant nature of the work. Approximately 3 minutes in length, this piece quite short for the ARCT Level. It is only 7 pages long. Seemingly Neoromantic in nature, it is also highly expressive. Bouchard changes tonal centres often and primarily utilizes g-minor, G-major and A-major. Though on the surface these keys are somewhat closely related, they are manipulated in a way that is unique to 21\(^{st}\) century music.

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\(^{75}\) Remi Bouchard, “Mayfest” from *Mayfest* (Holland Centre, Ontario: Debra Wanless Music, 2013).
An example of this occurs later in the piece, with a modulation from A-major to g-minor. Bouchard makes a brief modulation to A-major, without ever fully establishing the key. While in the key of A-major, Bouchard avoids the use of cadential-driven motion. This is evident through the series of deceptive progressions in mm. 56-58. (Figure 3.95)

![Figure 3.95. “Mayfest” from Mayfest (mm. 56-61)](image)

Figure 3.95 demonstrates an abrupt transition to g minor through b VII of A-major in m. 59. The treatment of these complex harmonies requires a student with an advanced grasp of harmony and music theory. “Mayfest” demands the performer to navigate and memorize a piece that moves freely between a variety of keys through nontraditional means.

The predominant technical challenge in “Mayfest” is that of fast repeated notes. They first occur in the opening motive, in octaves. (Figure 3.96)

![Figure 3.96. “Mayfest” from Mayfest (m. 1)](image)
These repeated octaves require a combination of forearm drop and wrist bounce while using a free and relaxed arm. Though on a small scale in their duration, these octaves are excellent preparation for other challenging repertoire students may later encounter such as Schubert’s Erlkönig and Liszt’s Hungarian Rhapsody no. 6. The repeated notes prevail throughout and are present as both single note as well as octaves. Here, we see single repeated notes being expanded over a two-octave range.

(Figure 3.97)

To effectively carry off these repeated notes, the student should use 4-3-2-1 fingering and slide the fingers across the key, similar to a scratching motion. The fast brilliant tempo that “Mayfest” demands, requires the performer to carry out these repeated notes cleanly and also to move smoothly and evenly throughout the registers.

Throughout “Mayfest,” Bouchard combines a variety of technical challenges and expressive musical elements that help demonstrate his demand for virtuosity and brilliance. Large solid chords in the RH juxtaposed with accompaniment spanning a large range in the LH, require a performer with great facility and command of the instrument. (Figure 3.98)
Figure 3.98 also shows the need for advanced pedaling technique. Here, the student should use flutter-pedal or half-pedal techniques between the bass-line driven pedal changes on beats one and three (see m. 16 of Figure 3.98). Other advanced techniques used throughout “Mayfest” include double-octave passages (see Figure 3.96), rolled chords spanning a tenth (see Figure 3.95) and double thirds. These challenging elements combined with a great variety of tempo and expressive markings including con mosso, con appassionato and molto espressivo, give the piece a powerful and passionate foundation upon which advanced performers can eagerly explore.

*Heather Schmidt “Night Rainbow”*

*Night Rainbow* was written as a test piece for the Eckhardt-Gramatté Competition. This dense score with many changes in tempo, texture and mood yields a work that is approximately seven minutes in length. This is considerably longer than Bouchard’s “Mayfest.” Program notes indicate that the term ‘Night Rainbow’ is inspired from two different sources: the literal night rainbow also known as a lunar bow or moonbow and the ‘spirit rainbow’ from Hawaiian culture. The piece is improvisatory in nature and serves as a musical representation of the two meanings that were relevant to Schmidt’s inspiration of the piece. Overall, it is an excellent opportunity for emerging performers to experiment with different contemporary techniques while creating a dreamlike atmosphere that evokes the mysticism of the natural phenomenon.

Throughout this work, Schmidt utilizes a variety of musical tools to suggest the feeling of wonder and awe one would experience while seeing the rare natural occurrence of a night rainbow. On the most obvious level, she uses arch shaped formal organization to mimic the contour of a rainbow. However, the connection runs much deeper than this. The presence of a night rainbow is

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77 See p. 10 for a detailed description of the Eckhardt-Gramatté Competition.
unpredictable and on the rare occasion that it can be seen, it is not always visible with the naked eye. Schmidt uses this element of uncertainty and builds in anticipation formally, dynamically, motivically and texturally. She gradually reduces the texture back to a nearly inaudible single line of music that gives the effect of fading away or disappearing. These advanced formal techniques are ideal for students at the ARCT level, based on their extensive studies in theory, analysis and contemporary music.

The improvisational nature of the composition is evident in the opening recitative section for LH alone. The sweeping gestures often span multiple octaves and require sensitivity in terms of tempo and pacing. (Figure 3.99)

![Figure 3.99. Night Rainbow (m. 1, unmeasured recitative)](image)

It is tempting for the performer to split each gesture between the hands. In order to achieve the vocal quality Schmidt desires, the performer must use only the LH to create an organic and expressive recitative-like effect. If the performer uses two hands to split up the recitative, the timing in the large intervallic leaps can become contrived and lose the organic sense of pacing that should result from being played by the LH alone.

As the unmeasured opening recitative continues, the single-line melody is expanded to include two-part counterpoint. It also utilizes expressive elements including frequent tempo changes. (Figure 3.100)
To carry off a convincing performance of this opening recitative, a mature sense of pacing is required, along with a well-developed LH technique.

The single-voiced texture of the opening section gradually evolves into a three-voiced texture that uses both hands and spans the full range of the keyboard. Immediately following the opening recitative, the texture thickens slightly by the addition of accompaniment to the semi-improvisatory RH melody. (Figure 3.101)

Schmidt’s use of a small range and high register allow this passage to give off a reflective quality. In a sense, it is transitional. The opening material is recalled while slowly shifting to a thicker texture and wider range both in terms of keyboard register and dynamic quality.

The use of a three-voiced texture begins in the low register of the instrument and gradually ascends as the piece builds toward its climax. In the following passage Schmidt places the most important line of music in the inner voice. This is a challenge line to balance based on its rhythmic content and underlying passagework in the bass. Figure 3.102 outlines the four voices: bell tones in the soprano voice, cantabile melody in the alto voice, leggiero passagework in the tenor voice, and resonant tones in the bass voice. (Figure 3.102)
Students need to approach the voicing in the passage above as they would in a prelude and fugue. The alto voice requires arm weight and a cantabile touch, as does the bass voice. The tenor and soprano voices require a lighter touch with less arm weight and a slower key speed.

As the piece continues to grow towards the climax, Schmidt makes use of a range spanning the extreme registers of the keyboard. As the following figure demonstrates, the performer is required to highlight chords that are dissonant. Schmidt uses seconds in m. 41 and augmented chords in m. 42. (Figure 3.103)
These chords need to be brought out of the dense three-voiced texture, with the bass notes as the lowest voice and the thirty-second note octaves split between the hands as the inner voice. Attaining utter clarity in a passage such as this requires slow practice, with a supple arm and very quick horizontal movement between registers.

At the climax of the piece and subsequent pique of the formal arc shaped structure, Schmidt uses chords in the sweeping thirty-second note passages. (Figure 3.104)

Here, the performer must have an excellent command of balance, voicing and half-pedaling to effectively carry off the passage. Use of the full arm is necessary, especially in large chords (see Figure 3.104). Here, the student must use full arm weight in the RH chords, while sensitively controlling the left-hand passagework to ensure it doesn’t overwhelm voicing of the melody.

The detail this piece requires with regards to control of pedal, passagework, balance, clarity, pacing and interpretation, is an excellent example of what ARCT-level students should be aiming to achieve. This piece requires sensitivity in musical shaping as well as well-developed virtuosity and is an excellent repertoire selection to consider for recital programming.
CONCLUSION

The inclusion of contemporary music throughout a student’s music education is beneficial on a multitude of levels. It enhances a student’s musical experience by encouraging creativity and experimenting with extended techniques and distinctive timbres. Students have the opportunity to get out of their comfort zone and form unique interpretations for new compositions that have never been performed before. Introducing contemporary repertoire at an early age allows students to be exposed to a variety of 20th and 21st century techniques. In turn, students will become more comfortable with approaching avant-garde compositions in later years of study.

Exploring contemporary music also benefits teachers as it encourages them to actively seek out quality compositions written in recent years. Studying these pieces can be a valuable experience for both student and teacher. Teachers are a key factor in the performance and promotion of contemporary music. In essence, teachers bridge the gap between student and composer. Through teachers’ support of new music, composers are able to continue experimentation and push boundaries while contributing new compositions of value to the 21st century piano oeuvre. This leads directly to the continued support of Canadian organizations such as the ACNMP and CMC, which continue to amalgamate ‘serious contemporary music’ with ‘music of a pedagogical function.’

Just as J.S. Bach did in the 18th century, teachers in the 21st century should incorporate contemporary music in their student’s music education. It is important to consider that at one point or another, all music was contemporary. It’s very easy to forget that even when J.S. Bach was teaching and composing, his music was considered ‘new music.’ In order to continue the composition of this pedagogically valuable music, we must continue to support our contemporary composers. As Alex Ross points out in a recent article discussing the difficulties in appreciating modern classical music, “Listeners who became accustomed to Berg and Ligeti will find new
dimensions in Mozart and Beethoven. So, too, will performers. For too long, we have placed the classical masters in a gilded cage. It is time to let them out." By supporting contemporary music, we create a market for it. This in turn enables composers to continue writing pedagogically valuable compositions for beginning and intermediate level pianists. This cycle and network between composer, teacher, student can only continue if all three pursue active participation in the field and continue to nurture and encourage new music.

It is my hope that this essay will help give piano teachers a greater understanding of contemporary music and specifically new music written by prominent Canadian composers. From this essay, one will gain a deeper understanding of how to assess and evaluate new music through my brief but succinct anthology as a point of reference. Though there is only a handful of repertoire discussed in detail, it is representative of the scope of this essay. I hope this in-depth study of Canadian contemporary music will inspire other teachers to incorporate such music in their own student’s plan of study.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Preparatory Level</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technic</strong></td>
<td>• HT five-finger scales</td>
<td>• keys of C/a, G/e and F/d</td>
<td>• expands to include B-flat/g, and melodic minor scale</td>
<td>• adds the key of D/b</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• broken chords</td>
<td>• two-octave HS scales and HT one-octave scales: major, natural/harmonic minor</td>
<td>• one-octave formula pattern (a scale including parallel and contrary motion)</td>
<td>• all scales and chords are played HT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• HS one-octave legato scales</td>
<td>• HS solid and broken chords</td>
<td>• full-octave chromatic scales</td>
<td>• identify challenging rhythms including ♩♩ in varying articulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ear Training</strong></td>
<td>• clapback in simple time using eighth, quarter, half and whole notes</td>
<td>• clapback including ♩♩ rhythm</td>
<td>• increased frequency of shifts between basic dotted rhythms</td>
<td>• interval identification: M3, P5 and P8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• melody playback in a 3-note range</td>
<td>• melodic playback in a 3-note range, based on tonic triad, 4 notes in length</td>
<td>• playbacks require free movement within full range of five-finger position</td>
<td>• melody playback includes ♩♩ (only previously featured in clapbacks)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sight Reading</strong></td>
<td>• familiarity with five-finger positions</td>
<td>• HS playing in the key of C, G or F (four measures long)</td>
<td>• HS, includes extensions on the five-finger position</td>
<td>• HT, with LH outlining a slow harmonic rhythm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• comfort with rhythms in any simple time signature</td>
<td>• clapback based on same premise as prep, but with increased length and difficulty</td>
<td>• basic rhythmic syncopations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Level 4

| **Technic** | • introduces two-octave formula pattern  
• chords conclude with a simple perfect (V-I) cadence  
• HS two-octave arpeggios first introduced |
| **Ear Training** | • clapbacks in compound meter, including some form of 7
• interval identification: M/m3, P4, P5 and P8  
• length of melody playbacks increased to six notes  
• melody playbacks include dotted rhythms |
| **Sight Reading** | • playing equal to difficulty of a Level 1 piece  
• clapping includes challenging dotted rhythms, eighth and sixteenth notes |

### Level 5

| **Technic** | • extended to keys with up to four sharps and flats  
• adds V₇/vii³, chords HS, solid and broken |
| **Ear Training** | • clapback in simple/compound meter that includes 7 rhythm  
• clapback exploits the contrast between 3/4 and 6/8  
• melody playbacks extended to an octave range  
• interval identification: adds M/m6 |
| **Sight Reading** | • playing equal to difficulty of a Level 2 piece  
• increased harmonic rhythm and faster-moving accompaniment patterns  
• use of dotted rhythms  
• hands no longer align primarily on main beats  
• clapping requires mastery of ties, syncopation and irregular rests |
| **Theory** | • additional theory requirements beginning at this level  
• Preliminary Rudiments theory examination  
• covers compound/simple time, intervals, scales, triads, terms and transposition |

### Level 6

| **Technic** | • keys of D-flat/g-sharp introduced  
• triads expanded into four-note chords  
• HT arpeggios in inversions |
| **Ear Training** | • clapbacks with extended sixteenth-note passages  
• interval identification: adds M2  
• chord identification: M/m chords in root position  
• melody playback includes all notes within a one-octave major scale  
• melody playback may begin on the tonic, mediant or dominant  
• melody playback includes one large leap with an otherwise scalar contour |
| **Sight Reading** | • playing equal to Level 3 piece, and includes key signatures up to three sharps/flats  
• rhythm clapping requires students to move between triplets and eighth notes |
| **Theory** | • required: Intermediate Rudiments examination  
• includes irregular rhythm groupings, double sharps/flats and enharmonic pitches  
• identify whole tone, blues and pentatonic scales  
• label perfect, imperfect and plagal cadences |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Level 7</strong></th>
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</table>
| **Technic** | • keys of B/b-flat introduced  
• scales in sixths and broken octaves  
• HT four-note chords  
• V₇/vii₇; arpeggios introduced |
| **Ear Training** | • clapbacks alternate between duple and triple meter  
• interval identification: adds m2/M7  
• chord recognition: adds V₇ chords  
• melody playbacks are 9 notes long, and in keys with many accidentals  
• melody playbacks are multi-directional, require close attention to contour |
| **Sight Reading** | • playing equal to a Level 4 piece  
• features a melody line moving conversationally between the hands  
• employs alternating textures and contrasting articulations between hands  
• uses multi-layered voices and simple modulations/accidentals  
• rhythm clapping require students to master the reverse-dot rhythm |
| **Theory** | • required: Advanced Rudiments exam  
• tenor and alto clef reading, modal scales, compound and enharmonic intervals  
• V₇/vii₇; chords, writing and labeling cadences,  
• instrumental transposition, open score reading, basic analysis and terms |

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Level 8</strong></th>
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| **Technic** | • keys of G-flat/e-flat, and f-sharp introduced  
• harmonic minor formula pattern  
• arpeggios extended to four octaves HT  
• cadences at the end of chords expanded to I-IV-V-I |
| **Ear Training** | • clapback removed from requirements  
• interval identification: all within an octave  
• chord identification: adds vii₇, chord  
• cadence identification: perfect and plagal  
• melody playbacks begin on any non-tonic chord note, and change direction of melodic contour at least three times |
| **Sight Reading** | • playing equal to a Level 5 piece, featuring frequent two-note slurs, detailed dynamic markings, large range, multi-voiced texture and finger substitutions  
• playing draws on a variety of styles the student must recognize at sight  
• clapping includes a variety of beat subdivisions and syncopations |
| **Theory** | • required: Advanced Rudiments exam  
• recommended: Introductory Harmony exam  
• preparatory studies for chordal analysis, introducing I, ii, IV, V and cadential 6/4’s in four-part writing while labeling non-chord tones |
## Level 9

| **Technic** | • six different formula pattern scales  
  • chromatic scales in octaves  
  • alternate note pattern four-note chords (C-G-E-C, E-C-G-C etc.)  
  • cadence formulas extended I-IV-I-V(-I) |
| **Ear Training** | • chord identification: first-inversion triads  
  • cadence identification: perfect, plagal and imperfect cadences  
  • melody playbacks are two-voices, and the student plays back the upper line |
| **Sight Reading** | • playing equal to a Level 6 piece  
  • includes challenging key signatures, chromaticism, large range, and technically challenging passagework in a variety of styles/articulations |
| **Theory** | • required: Basic Harmony exam, covers chord inversions, applied dominants, 7th chords, sequences, simple modulation and identification of basic musical forms  
  • required: History I exam, an overview of composers and styles from 1600-present |

## Level 10

| **Technic** | • extensive requirements in all keys  
  • scales in thirds, sixths and tenths  
  • solid octaves  
  • own choice technical exercise (ie scales in repeated-notes or cross-rhythms) |
| **Ear Training** | • chord identification: all inversions of four-note chords  
  • cadence identification: adds deceptive cadences  
  • melody playbacks are two voices, and student plays back lower line |
| **Sight Reading** | • playing equal to a Level 7 piece, in any time or key signature  
  • playing uses four-voiced texture, character markings, complex rhythms and detailed pedal indications  
  • clapping are intricate and include thirty-second notes, sixteenth note triplets and frequent changes between beat subdivisions |
| **Theory** | • required: Intermediate Harmony exam, including secondary dominant chords, tertiən chords, realizing figured bass notation, and comfort with modulation into a variety of close and distant related keys  
  • required: History 2 exam, spanning middle ages-Classical era in more detail |

## ARCT

| **Technic** | • no requirements |
| **Ear Training** | • no requirements |
| **Sight Reading** | • no requirements |
| **Theory** | • required examinations: Advanced Harmony, Counterpoint, Analysis and History 3 (19th century to present) |
## APPENDIX II Graded Works

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<tr>
<th>Composer</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Movement</th>
<th>Level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behrens, Jack</td>
<td>DW Music</td>
<td>Rag: Fur Elise</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Behrens, Jack</td>
<td>DW Music</td>
<td>Tango Waltz</td>
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<td>ARCT</td>
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<tr>
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<td>DW Music</td>
<td>A Chorus of Critters</td>
<td>Romping Rover</td>
<td>Prep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bouchard, Remi</td>
<td>DW Music</td>
<td>A Chorus of Critters</td>
<td>The Snapping Turtle</td>
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IIIa Debra Wanless Music/Mayfair Music

The following Appendix provides copyright permission for Debra Wanless Music and Mayfair Music

Jack Behrens: Rag Für Elise

Remi Bouchard: “A New Path” and “Mayfest from Mayfest
“Cracked Sound Board Blues” from Pianorama(Advanced)
“Shall We Dance” and “You Know” from Pianorama(Late Intermediate)
“The Bluebird” and “The Grey Wolf” from Chorus of Critters

Emily Doolittle: “Dancing,” “Floating,” “Rollicking” and “Scurrying” from Playing 2
“Turning” from Playing 1

Joyce Pickney: “Locrian Lament” from Modal Moods

Karen Rowell: “Paul E Tonality” from Cornucopia 3
“The Haunted Basement” and “Thunder Clusters” from Cornucopia 1

Debra Wanless: “Nightfall” from In the Mood For Modes
“Garter Snakes” in Country Characters

Debra Wanless [debrawanless@everus.ca]

Sent: Tuesday, September 02, 2014 10:10 AM
To: Tithecott, Christine E
Attachments: A Chorus of Critters.pdf (2 MB) ; Modal Moods_2014.pdf (5 MB) ; wan808countrycharacterspro~1.pdf (3 MB)

Good Afternoon Christine,

Please find attached A Chorus of Critters, Modal Moods and Country Characters.

All have contemporary elements.

Please print and retain this email:

DW Music grants Christine Tithecott permission to print one copy of each of the attached solos listed above to be used in the development of her ‘dissertation work on grading new compositions for the Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects.’

September 1st, 2014

Good Afternoon Christine,

Please find attached several advanced piano solos:

1. Rag Fur Elise
2. Tangoed Waltz
3. Mayfest
4. Shimmering Dewdrops
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September 1st, 2014

Debra Wanless
DW Music Owner

Good Morning Christine,

Please find attached Pianorama and new series of piano solos by Rémi Bouchard
1. Pianorama Intermediate
2. Pianorama Late Intermediate
3. Pianorama Early Advanced

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September 1st, 2014

Debra Wanless
DW Music Owner

Good Afternoon Christine,

Please find attached A Chorus of Critters, Modal Moods and Country Characters.

All have contemporary elements.

Please print and retain this email:

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September 1st, 2014

Debra Wanless
DW Music Owner

Good Afternoon Christine,
Please find attached In the Mood for Modes Books 1-4

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September 1st, 2014

Debra Wanless
DW Music Owner

______________________________

Good Afternoon Christine,

Please find attached several piano solos:

1. Playing 1 & 2 by Emily Doolittle
2. Blues at Dawn – Kevin Knelman
3. Lamby had a Little Mare - Knelman

All have contemporary elements.

Please print and retain this email:

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Anne Crosby: “Ocean Spray,” “Risser’s Romp” and “Sand Castles” from Fuzzy Beluga
“Robots” from Celebration Series Piano Repertoire 1

Clifford Poole: “Spooks” from Legacy Collection, Volume 1

Linda Niamith: “Autumn Leaves” from All Year Round
Christine Titaecott
2751 UCC
University of Iowa
Iowa City
IA. 52242

September 8, 2015

Dear Christine,

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<th>“Spooks” by Clifford Poole (as it appears in Legacy Collection, Volume 1), mm. 1–4</th>
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With best regards,

Jennifer Gilchrist
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jgilchrist@frederickharrismusic.com

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APPENDIX IIIc Red Leaf Pianoworks

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- Martha Hill Duncan: "Dry Spell" and "Zarzamora" from Zarzamora
- Susan Griesdale: “Arctic Voices” and “Glaciers” from Arctic Voices
- Beverly Porter: “Army of Ants” from Into The Woods

MHD's Music
Martha Hill Duncan [marthakaye2@gmail.com] on behalf of Martha Duncan [marthakaye@cogeco.ca]

Sent: Saturday, January 24, 2015 12:53 PM
To: Tithecott, Christine E
Attachments: Dolorosa.mus.pdf.pdf (93 KB); 5.Zarzamora to print.pdf (144 KB); 9Dryspell.pdf.pdf (89 KB)

Martha Hill Duncan grants Christine Tithecott permission to print one copy of the following works to be used in the development of her ‘dissertation work on grading new compositions for the Contemporary Showcase Syllabus.’ Dolores, Zarzamora and Dryspell
From: Beverly Porter [bevearl@kos.net]
Sent: Friday, January 23, 2015 9:40 AM
To: Tithecott, Christine E
Subject: Permission to use

Hi Christine,

I'm happy to oblige and you are quite welcome to use "An Army of Ants."
I took Debbie’s lead and copied her permission e-mail.

Good luck with your dissertation and I hope to read it when it's published.

Beverly
(let me know if there are any problems with this.)

--
www.beverlyportermusic.com
www.redleafpianoworks.com
APPENDIX III: Other Publications

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Nancy Telfer: “Fantasie” from Celebration Series Piano Repertoire 6

Heather Schmidt: Night Rainbow

Istvan Szelenyi: “Changing Bars”

Hi Nancy,
I am currently completing my dissertation for a DMA in piano pedagogy and performance. I would like to include measures 1-4 of Fantasie (level 6 rcm) as a musical figure, and would need your permission to do so. Permission via email is fine. If you prefer, you could also compose and scan a formal letter, though its not necessary.
Thanks for your help!
--
Christine Tithecott
D.M.A. Candidate, Piano TA
2751 UCC
University of Iowa
Iowa City, IA 52242
cell/voice/text: (319) 383-1820

Yes, you have my permission to include that excerpt. Best wishes for your work on your dissertation!

Nancy Telfer

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Thank you for your interest in my music!
Best wishes,
Heather

Re: Night Rainbow/Dissertation/copyright permission
Heather Schmidt [heatherschmidt12@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2015 8:35 PM
To: Tithecott, Christine E

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Heather
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CHRISTINE TITHECOTT
D.M.A. Candidate, Piano TA
2751 UCC
University of Iowa
Iowa City, IA 52242

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