Practical Hummel: a guide for pianists and piano teachers on how to use Johann Nepomuk Hummel's treatise today

Natalie Katherine Landowski
University of Iowa

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PRACTICAL HUMMEL:
A GUIDE FOR PIANISTS AND PIANO TEACHERS ON HOW TO USE
JOHANN NEPOMUK HUMMEL’S TREATISE TODAY

by

Natalie Katherine Landowski

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

May 2018

Essay Supervisor: Professor Alan Huckleberry
CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

D.M.A. ESSAY

This is to certify that the D.M.A. essay of

Natalie Katherine Landowski

has been approved by the Examining Committee for
the essay requirement for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree
in Music at the May 2018 graduation.

Essay Committee:

____________________________________________
Alan Huckleberry, Essay Supervisor

____________________________________________
Ksenia Nosikova

____________________________________________
Réne Lecuona

____________________________________________
Marian Wilson Kimber

____________________________________________
Gregory Hand
To Dr. Reid Alexander (May 27th, 1949 – November 18th, 2015), a one of a kind piano professor, and academic father figure. Without you, the start of my D.M.A. career would be non-existent. All that I have learned from these incredible six years, which have shaped me into the pianist and teacher I am today, would not have happened if you did not convince me to at least give the program a try. Thank you for all that you taught me, for the many times you went out of your way to help me, and for believing in me when I completely doubted myself and wanted to quit. You will always remain an inspiration and a role model teacher. Your pedagogical legacy lives on through several former students like myself, whose lives you have touched. I wish that I could tell you this in person, and I can only hope that this essay would make you proud. I dedicate this to you, in loving memory.
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Thank you to the Nancy Cree team, West Music, and the Nadiri family for providing me with special teaching opportunities, through which I have grown as a piano teacher. Thank you to all of my current and former students and their families as well, for being such a vital part of my life—I have learned so much from you, as you have shaped my teaching.

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me to give you your first and last piano lesson—all in the same day. I am amazed that you still remember how to play the one thing I taught you: the melody of the infamous, “Heart and Soul,” duet, which became our staple performance at family gatherings. To Grandma Tina, thank you for always cheering me on, and for gifting me with my very first piano, a beautiful upright Kawai. And last but most certainly not least, to my amazing parents, Teresa and Peter Landowski, I would like to give the most tremendous heartfelt appreciation to, as I owe everything to them. No amount of thank-you’s, or I-love-you’s will ever suffice all that you have done and continue to do for me. You are my idols. For your hearts of gold, love, wisdom, faith, bravery, and many sacrifices made in order to make sure that Robert and I can achieve our dreams, for absolutely everything, I thank you.

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PUBLIC ABSTRACT

Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778–1837), was an Austrian virtuoso pianist, composer, and pedagogue who was considered, in all three professions, to be among the leading figures in the early nineteenth-century. He influenced many pianists and composers with his music and his three-volume treatise, *A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course of Instructions on the Art of Playing the Piano Forte, Commencing with the Simplest Elementary Principles and Including Every Information Requisite to the Most Finished Style of Performance* (1828). However, this once highly sought after keyboard master, and his pedagogical contribution are overlooked today. A possible contributing factor to this decline, is the fact that no teacher or student would necessarily want to study Hummel’s treatise as it presents a strenuous task, because of its monumental size (approximately five-hundred pages). Why then, should Hummel’s work be studied, especially when there are piano method books available today, that are shorter in length?

The purpose of this essay is to answer that question, by explaining the many ways in which Hummel’s treatise should be revisited. He is a link between the end of one musical era, and the beginning of another. What his treatise offers is vital information on nineteenth-century pianism and performance, much of which stays true today. This essay presents two parts: first, a brief background about Hummel; and second, an introduction to his treatise, featuring selected highlights supplied with pedagogical commentary that explains their significance and how they can be used by pianists and piano teachers today.
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PREFACE:
REFLECTIONS ON MY MUSICAL JOURNEY WITH HUMMEL
(FALL 2012–SPRING 2018)

From the very start to the very end of my doctoral studies, Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778–1837) has been a great part of my academic and professional life. He is the core of my academic research and focus, through which I have made personal discoveries as both a pianist and teacher. This essay is a reflection of what I have learned about Hummel. It is also the start of my long-term mission to strive to continue exploring various aspects on the art of piano playing. Prior to attending the University of Iowa, I had never heard of Hummel. However, a series of events—all occurring within a relatively close time frame—seem to have directed me to this fascinating musical figure.

I became acquainted with Hummel during my first semester at the University of Iowa, in Dr. Marian Wilson Kimber’s, “Nineteenth-Century Performance Practices,” class. For one of the class assignments, I researched the 1823–1830 tour of the nineteenth-century pianist Maria Szymanowska (1789–1831), and found the frequent inclusion of Hummel’s works on her programs. A particular piece that especially caught my eye was his Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 85. Due to its popularity, it is no coincidence that this work appeared on several of her programs, as it was performed often back then. In fact, Hummel played the work himself when he went on extensive concert tours. Many piano virtuosi of the time performed it as well, Franz Liszt being one such example.

A year later, I was reunited with Hummel again in my advisor Dr. Alan Huckleberry’s piano pedagogy class. I randomly selected Hummel’s name from a hat, and had to then give a presentation on him and his monumental three volume treatise.
The only version of the treatise I could get a hold of at the time, was an actual copy of the French version (1829) in the Rita Benton Music Library’s Rare Book Room. I later found access to the English version (1828) online through the Eastman School of Music’s Sibley library: http://hdl.handle.net/1802/29059. This is the version that I will refer to in this essay. During this time, I was also introduced to a website called “The Hummel Project,” which is actively dedicated to bringing Hummel back into the limelight: http://www.jnhummel.info/en/. This website showcases living English concert pianists Stephen Hough (b. 1961) and Howard Shelly (b. 1950), and other artists who actively perform and record Hummel’s piano works.

The day after my presentation, I encountered the keyboard master yet again, but this time in own my teaching. A high school student was having her final lesson before a recital scheduled that same weekend, and unfortunately, her piece was not performance ready. I needed to find something that she could learn quickly, preferably a duet with me. We looked through her supplemental performance book from Nancy and Randall Faber’s *Piano Adventures* series, Level 4, and sight read through a short and lively duet entitled, “Polka.” Both of us were immediately drawn to this newfound entertaining gem, and could not get enough of playing it repeatedly. When I checked to see who the composer was, surely, it was none other than Hummel; he saved the day. Since then, this work has become a beloved little duet in my studio, and is a hit with students of all ages.

Preliminary research on Hummel and his treatise and learning about the mission of, “The Hummel Project,” inspired me to make Hummel half the focus of my piano pedagogy workshop, “Shining Light on Neglected Keyboard Masters: François Couperin and Johann Nepomuk Hummel” (Spring 2016). One of the ultimate goals of this
workshop was to raise a greater awareness of Hummel. Later that same year, I had the special opportunity of doing so, by presenting it at the University of California, Irvine; San Diego State University; and at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. At the last institution mentioned, I happened to present on the anniversaries of Hummel’s and Chopin’s deaths, October 17\textsuperscript{th}; they both died on the same day, but different years: Hummel in 1837, and Chopin in 1849.

Through my research, one of the greatest personal discoveries I made, was learning of the great influence Hummel had on Chopin. I was completely unaware of their strong connection prior to my workshop, but this is vital information that all pianists should know. Every time I studied a piece by Chopin, professors would often ask me to list factors that influenced Chopin’s musical style. I would always respond with: Polish folk music, Bellini operas, John Field nocturnes, Bach, and Mozart. While these are all typical and correct answers, Hummel should be mentioned in the forefront. He is the bridge between Mozart and Chopin, and this answer often fails to be included.

Realizing more and more, how truly great of a musical figure Hummel was during his time, I became stumped as to why he is not remembered this way. Unlike Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, Hummel’s name is not included in today’s recognized representatives of the Classical music era. His works are rarely performed, and he is seldom mentioned in piano literature courses. While his music may have not stood the test of time, as musical tastes do change, I believe that his name should not be overlooked, and that the treatise is key to resurrecting it. What Hummel’s treatise ultimately offers, is vital information on nineteenth-century pianism and performance practices, much of which still stays true to this day. The purpose of my essay will be to
explain the many ways in which Hummel’s treatise in particular, should be revisited by pianists, and piano teachers.

This essay is comprised of two parts. The first briefly introduces Hummel and his beginnings; his life as virtuoso pianist, composer and pedagogue; and a brief history of the treatise itself. The second part is my introductory version of highlights taken from his entire treatise, where each volume is represented by a chapter. The latter part is the bulk of this essay, and in it I will offer pedagogical commentary based on my own personal experience as a pianist and teacher. A big part of my life during the course of my doctoral studies was teaching a full studio of more than fifty students for four and a half years. Through this experience, I came to know a variety of students, and different kinds of American piano method books as well. Much of my pedagogical commentary will draw connections and make comparisons to Nancy and Randall Faber’s *Piano Adventures* series, the most popular method I have used in my teaching.

By exploring the life and background of this keyboard master, the history of his treatise, and presenting a modernized guide, I strive to bring his name back into the limelight through his monumental pedagogical contribution. I hope to make it accessible to modern day pianists and piano teachers alike, explaining how certain highlights from Hummel’s multi-volume work can be used as practical teaching tools.
Johann Nepomuk Hummel was born on November 14, 1778, in Pressburg, Kingdom of Hungary, and died in Weimar on October 17, 1837. He had a strong musical upbringing, as he began his musical studies at the age of four, taking violin and piano lessons from his father Johannes, a professional violinist. While he exhibited great potential on both instruments, the young Hummel longed to follow his father’s footsteps as a violinist. However, a traumatic childhood event crushed this dream. As told by his friend and biographer Max Johann Seidel, the young Hummel enjoyed giving impromptu outdoor performances on his violin for neighbors and any passersby. During one such performance, which happened to be his last, a local school boy started to mock and bully him. A scuffle ensued between the two, and Hummel ultimately ended the fight by hitting the attacker with his violin, destroying his instrument in the process. Shaken from this experience, Hummel stayed confined to his home, practicing piano for days. This incident changed Hummel’s life, and marks the point at which his budding career as a virtuoso pianist began.

After receiving preliminary piano instruction from his father, Hummel studied with noted music masters throughout his youth. His most influential teacher was

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3 Ibid.
4 Ibid., 20.
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who took him under his wing, as an adopted musical son.\textsuperscript{5} Hummel met Mozart in 1786, shortly after his family moved to Vienna, due to his father’s new appointment as conductor at Emanuel Schikaneder’s famous Theater an der Wien.\textsuperscript{6} Seeing as Mozart frequented this venue it is most likely that this is where Johannes befriended Mozart and asked him to audition his son.\textsuperscript{7} Initially, Mozart was reluctant, as he was notoriously unwilling to take new students, but nevertheless, agreed to arrange an audition. At his audition, Hummel played a few works by Johann Sebastian Bach and sight read a challenging piece that was placed before him.\textsuperscript{8} Mozart grew increasingly enthusiastic upon hearing the prodigy play, and his initial hesitance transitioned to sheer excitement.\textsuperscript{9}

Impressed with Hummel, Mozart immediately accepted him as a student, and refused to charge for lessons or any form of musical instruction that he provided.\textsuperscript{10} From ages seven to nine, Hummel lived and studied with Mozart in Vienna, and was considered one of his most prized pupils. Deemed the “house pianist,” he was often asked by Mozart to sight read his new compositions.\textsuperscript{11} Toward the end of his studies there, Hummel was told by Mozart, that he would soon surpass him as a pianist.\textsuperscript{12}

This two-year period with Mozart (1786–December 1788) was an incredibly crucial time for Hummel. Throughout his life, he would often state this fact, praising his

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{5} Ibid., 27.
\item \textsuperscript{6} Reginald R. Gerig, \textit{Famous Pianists and Their Technique} (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2007), 65.
\item \textsuperscript{7} Kroll, 27.
\item \textsuperscript{8} Gerig, 65. This is taken from biographical sketch made by Seidel.
\item \textsuperscript{9} Ibid. This very moment is described by Seidel: “[Mozart] became more and more attentive, his expression keener; his eyes lit up with delight … [nodding] his head in approval.”
\item \textsuperscript{10} Kroll, 27.
\item \textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 28.
\item \textsuperscript{12} Gerig, 66.
\end{itemize}
beloved teacher for the great impact he had on him. One account of Hummel attributing his success to Mozart comes from a letter of reflections written in 1826, where he states that, “the development of my talent began by my father, but [was] completed by instruction under Mozart.”

Following his studies with Mozart, Hummel briefly toured throughout Europe and received instruction from other famous musical figures as well. He studied with Muzio Clementi while residing in England in 1792 and later with Franz Joseph Haydn, Antonio Salieri, and Johann Georg Albrechtsberger, when he moved back to Vienna in 1793. It was during this time that Hummel met Ludwig van Beethoven, who was also taking lessons from Albrechtsberger, resulting with what would be a long-lasting friendship that spanned over thirty years. Beethoven and Hummel were considered two of the most prominent virtuosi of Vienna. While they were both successful composers and performers, Beethoven was often the public’s preferred composer, and Hummel, the preferred performer. Hummel’s playing was more elegant and graceful compared to that of Beethoven, whose playing style was described as powerful, yet harsh at times.

Despite differences in their musical performance and compositional styles, and a few brief falling out moments that included: their rivalry to win the affection of the same girl, singer Elisabeth Röckel (Hummel’s future wife), or the incident where Prince Esterházy and Hummel both teased Beethoven for the poorly received debut of his Mass

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13 Kroll, 26. Hummel wrote this autobiographical letter to his friend Johannes Sonnleithner.
14 Gerig, 67.
15 Kroll, 70.
16 Gerig, 68-69.
in C Major, Op. 86 (1807), they maintained a close relationship and had a high regard for each other. This long friendship lasted until Beethoven’s death in 1827: Hummel was a pallbearer at Beethoven’s funeral, and later performed at his memorial concert, fulfilling the promise he made to Beethoven on his deathbed.

During his lifetime Hummel maintained close relationships with major artistic figures, which molded him into becoming one of the great musicians of his time. These relationships helped him acquire the esteemed position of Kapellmeister of Esterházy from 1803 to 1811, where he succeeded his mentor and close friend Haydn. He later became Kapellmeister of Weimar in 1819, and held this position until his death in 1837. In the nineteenth-century, Hummel was considered to be among the best in all three areas as: pianist, composer, and pedagogue. He influenced the next generation and wave of keyboard players with his performances, compositional output, and monumental treatise, each of which will be addressed in subsequent chapters of this essay.

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19 Ibid., 325.
20 Kroll, 52. Haydn strongly recommended that Hummel be his successor.
21 Ibid., 202.
CHAPTER 2:
Virtuoso Pianist, Performer, and Improviser

Shortly after his studies with Mozart, Hummel began touring and concertizing throughout Europe, an ongoing practice he persisted until his death in 1837.22 His touring took him to various European countries, and he often visited England and France, and places such as St. Petersburg, Berlin, Vienna, and Warsaw. It is through his tours and travels that he met other notable figures in music, including Franz Schubert, and Frédéric Chopin.23 Hummel’s relationship with Chopin, who he met in Warsaw during his 1828 tour, was especially close as Chopin called him, “Hummel père.”24 To Chopin, Mozart was a God, but Hummel was a hero.25

Sometimes referred to as the, “modern Mozart of Germany,” an idolized pianist and performer, Hummel’s playing style was considered masterful by many.26 As described by his friend, Beethoven’s pupil, Carl Czerny, Hummel’s playing was, “a model of cleanness, [and] clarity of the most graceful elegance and tenderness.”27 Audience members attending Hummel’s performances would most likely hear rounds of cheering bravos and applause. For example, the Kurjei Warszawski’s review of Hummel’s concerts during his 1828 Warsaw tour, reported that, “every solo performed … was greeted by thundering applause [and] repeated expressions of approval.”28

23 Kroll, 95 and 325.
24 Ibid., 324. Translates to “Hummel father.” Chopin called Hummel this in a letter to his family.
26 “M. Hummel [From A Paris Journal],” *Harmonicon* 3:1, No. 33 (September 1825), 150.
27 Gerig, 69. This quote was taken from Carl Czerny’s, “Recollections From My Life,” *The Musical Quarterly* 42, No. 3 (July 1956): 309.
Hummel’s recitals mainly featured his own compositions, some works by contemporaries, and improvisation as well. As seen in Figure 1, which lists four programs from his Paris tour of 1825, Hummel’s concerts often began with one of his works, and concluded with an improvisation, a skill that was one of his most popular trademarks.\(^\text{29}\)

Figure 1. A List of Works Performed on Four Programs from Hummel's Paris Tour in 1825.\(^\text{30}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APRIL 8, 8:00PM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Concerto, [Op. 85], composed and played by Hummel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Solo for flute, composed and played by M. Tulou.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <em>Rondo brilliant</em> [probably Op. 98], composed and played by Hummel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Improvisation by Hummel.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APRIL 15, 8:00PM</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Quintette, [Op. 87], composed by Hummel, played by him with MM. Videil (violin), Sina (viola), Norblin (cello), Lami (double bass).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Air, unidentified, sung by Mme. Pasta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Solo for French horn, composed and played by M. Dauprat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Duo, composed by Rossini, sung by Mme. Pasta and M. Pellegrini.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Improvisation by Hummel.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APRIL 22, 8:00PM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Air, unidentified, sung by Mme. Marconi-Schonberger.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Variations for mandolin, composed [?] and played by M. Vimercati.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Trio [Op. 83], composed by Hummel, played by him with MM. Baillot (violin), and Norbin (cello).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Improvisation by Hummel.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{29}\) Joel Sachs, *Kapellmeister Hummel in England and France* (Detroit, Michigan: Information Coordinators, 1977), 20-22. These concert programs are taken from *La Gazette de Paris*. These concerts were a part of a, “subscription series: four Friday soirees, at the salon of the piano makers and publishers Erard, rue du Mail, no. 13.”

\(^{30}\) Ibid.
Hummel enchanted his audiences with virtuosic improvisations, so it was not unusual for him to highlight his extemporaneous playing in concerts, saving the best for last.\textsuperscript{31} Perhaps more poignant and meaningful than any of his other documented improvisations was the one he performed at Beethoven’s memorial concert on April 7, 1827 at the Josephstadt Theater.\textsuperscript{32} This tribute included themes from Beethoven’s second movement of the Symphony No. 7, Op. 92, and the “Prisoners’ Chorus” from his one and only opera, \textit{Fidelio}.\textsuperscript{33} More detail on Hummel’s improvisation will be elucidated in Part Two: Chapter Three, of this essay.

\textsuperscript{31} Kroll, 339. Endnote 3.
\textsuperscript{32} Schindler, 389-90.
CHAPTER 3:  
The Composer—Musical Style, Works, and Impact

Hummel’s compositional style and approach to the piano are products of his study with Mozart as his music has solid harmonic structure and evokes qualities of the cantabile melodic style.\[34\] While he maintained these particular traditional elements, his music also deviates from early classical tradition, with its increase in chromatic harmonies and incorporation of the newer brilliant style.\[35\] Progressive for its time, the brilliant style emphasized showcasing both musical and technical virtuosity, which became a staple part of the Romantic period. Common elements of bravura that are associated with this style and frequently found in Hummel’s works include: fioritura, or heavily elaborated melismatic lines comprised of irregular rhythmic groups in the right-hand;\[36\] rapid passages of doubled thirds, fourths, sixths and octaves typically in chromatic succession; powerful and thick chordal passages; and large leaps in both hands that utilize the full range of the keyboard.\[37\]

Hummel’s compositional output contains sixty-nine works for piano that include: eighteen pieces for piano and orchestra (eight of which are concerti), seven sonatas, several rondos, works based on themes and variations, fantasies, bagatelles, twenty-four preludes, and twelvenotated cadenzas for Mozart’s piano concerti.\[38\] Additionally, he

\[36\] This combines both vocal and improvisatory elements, reflecting a function similar to that of a cadenza.
\[37\] Kroll, 328-337.
\[38\] Gillespie, 251.
also composed piano duet and piano quartet arrangements of themes from Mozart’s
operas and Haydn’s symphonies.

While Hummel composed piano works in the same traditional genres as his
predecessors, he was known for gradually loosening their forms, as is evident in his piano
concerti.\textsuperscript{39} Hummel adhered to the overall traditional three-movement layout of the
classical concerto, however the form of the first movement, as well as the treatment of
the orchestra, are two differences that stand out. In contrast to Mozart’s piano concerto,
Hummel omits the cadenza, the crucial, anticipated moment where the performer gets a
chance to show off their virtuosic capabilities.\textsuperscript{40} Due to the abundance of bravura
elements, Hummel viewed the piano concerto’s first movement as one large cadenza,
therefore a specific cadenza indication was not necessary. For this very reason, the pianist
is the star for the entire duration of the concerto. Further emphasizing the soloist’s
leading role, Hummel steered away from Mozart’s equal treatment of the pianist and
orchestra, by having the soloist also introduce new material in unusual instances such as
in the coda of the first movement in the Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 85.\textsuperscript{41} This
particular example is just one of many that show how Hummel’s musical style and output
essentially bridged the gap between the later Classical era and early Romantic period.

Noted for their charming quality, Hummel’s piano pieces fulfilled his purpose of
entertainment, as they appealed to audiences. These works were very popular during his
lifetime and widely considered to be crowd pleasers. However, considered old fashioned

\textsuperscript{39} Mitchell, 1.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., 128.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., 122. This work is orchestrated for flute, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two
French horns, two trumpets, timpani and strings.
towards the end of his life, they gradually faded from the public eye, eventually disappearing from piano repertoire all together.\(^\text{42}\) One piece that did stand the test of time, however, and one for which Hummel is recognized today is his Trumpet Concerto in E-flat Major, S. 49. It is interesting to note that a composer who wrote mainly for the instrument that he was a master of, is best known for a trumpet piece instead.\(^\text{43}\)

Despite their disappearance from the piano world today, during his lifetime, Hummel’s works had influenced the next generation of keyboard masters in various ways. The compositional style of the earliest concerti of Felix Mendelssohn and Chopin, display many similarities to Hummel’s Piano Concerto in A Minor Op. 85.\(^\text{44}\) Several parallels between Chopin’s E Minor concerto, Op. 11, and Hummel’s concerto are especially evident in the opening themes of the soloist and structure of first movement, as Chopin’s also follows Hummel’s form by omitting a cadenza, incorporating elements of bravura, and treating the orchestra in a very similar fashion. The stylistic similarities between the two composers was recognized by their contemporary critics. The Gazette Musicale de Paris reported in its 1834 review of Chopin’s Rondo a la Krakowiak, Op. 14, that the work was “written entirely in the style of Hummel.”\(^\text{45}\) Additionally, like his musical hero, Chopin’s musical output is similar. For example, he also composed twenty-four preludes (Op. 28) that are similar in style to Hummel’s (Op. 67), and that also follow

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\(^{\text{42}}\) Gillespie, 251.  
\(^{\text{43}}\) Christians, The Hummel Project. This was composed during his time as Kapellmeister at Esterhazy, and the first work he debuted with there on New Year’s Day 1804.  
\(^{\text{44}}\) Mitchell, 119.  
\(^{\text{45}}\) Kroll, 343.
the same key scheme order as Hummel’s via the circle of fifths. Hummel’s concerti and preludes served as models for Chopin’s.

Popular during his time, Hummel’s piano works were performed by the greatest virtuosi throughout Europe. In fact, it was a requirement for any professional performer to have had experience playing one of Hummel’s concerti. The Piano Concerto A Minor, Op. 85, was the most popular choice for any up and coming piano virtuoso making their formal, professional debut. For example, on December 1st, 1822, Franz Liszt debuted with the piece at age nine in a concert at the Landstandischen Saale in Vienna. In a similar case, Clara Schumann also made her debut performance with this work at the age of nine.

Hummel’s pieces were also studied by the Romantic greats and taught throughout Europe. As he recalls in his diary entries of 1829, Schumann notes studying the following of Hummel’s works: the Concerto in A Minor, Op. 85, an unspecified piano sonata, and four-hand sonatina. Similarly, there are documented accounts of Chopin performing Hummel’s pieces as well, both during his time at the Warsaw Conservatory and shortly after, where he performed an unspecified rondo brilliant by Hummel at one concert, and an unspecified sonata by Hummel at another event.

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47 Mitchell, 123.
48 Kroll, 291.
51 Kroll, 296.
52 Kroll, 339. The first account listed, is taken from a program of a concert that took place at the Warsaw Conservatory on May 27, 1825; and the second is from a performance for Prince Anton Radziwill, in 1829 in Poznan, Poland.
In recognition of their pedagogical function, Hummel’s works were taught by Romantic greats like Chopin. Hummel’s *Rondo Brilliant sur un theme russe*, Op. 98; *La bella capricciosa*; Piano Sonata in F-sharp Minor, Op. 81; and Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 85, were all a part of Chopin’s student Camille O’Meara’s list of repertoire. Chopin is just one example of a leading musical figure who taught and required his students to play Hummel’s works. He believed that in addition to fugal works by J.S. Bach, and Muzio Clementi’s *Gradus ad Parnassum*, Hummel’s pieces were the key to successful piano playing, further showing evidence of Chopin’s deep admiration for the composer.\(^{53}\)\(^{54}\)

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\(^{54}\) Ibid.
CHAPTER 4:  
Superstar Pedagogue

While Hummel was masterful in performing and composing, Hummel the teacher matched or surpassed the previous two roles discussed. Hummel and other piano virtuosi were the era’s superstars. They were idolized and inspired a vast wave of people yearning to become musicians during the early nineteenth century, as it signified higher education and social status. The rise of the middle class started to occur around this time, and pianos became accessible and affordable to more people. The piano was the popular instrument of choice in homes, which resulted in a higher demand for piano teachers. The period of the early nineteenth century was the golden era for piano teachers, because it was essentially the first time that piano teaching was recognized as a full time profession. Vienna alone had over three hundred piano teachers.

The very first account of Hummel’s teaching is documented in one of his diary entries while living in Edinburgh with his father in 1791. They were both giving lessons there as a means for income. Specific names of Hummel’s students are unknown, but it is speculated that they were most likely typical piano students of the time, middle and upper-class young ladies, or wealthy amateurs of both genders. The likelihood of a twelve-year-old boy teaching piano to adults today, is unimaginable. However, the mere fact that he was teaching professionally at this young age must have meant that his talent as a teacher was already eminent and respected.

55 Gerig, 69.  
56 Kroll, 256.  
57 Ibid.  
58 Ibid., 257.  
59 Ibid.  
60 Ibid., 258.
Hummel’s teaching career began to grow significantly by the time he was fifteen, when he returned to Vienna in 1793 and embarked on establishing a large studio. His reputation as a rising piano virtuoso and close ties with his Viennese teachers helped catapult his successful teaching career. Again, Hummel’s specific students were not documented, but it is possible that Mozart’s son Franz Xaver Wolfgang Mozart was one of them.\(^\text{61}\) Even though the exact number of Hummel’s students during this period is unknown, the fact that his teaching schedule was very busy is absolutely certain. Hummel explains this fact in a letter written in 1826, reflecting on his early teaching days in Vienna:

> Since I was already then the best performer in Vienna, I was mainly occupied with teaching; and the number of my students was so large that I taught for ten years daily for nine to ten hours, and, in order to advance [my] compositions, I had to sit at my desk winter and summer at four in the morning, since I had no other time left over.\(^\text{62}\)

Hummel’s years as Kapellmeister at Weimar mark the culmination of his teaching career. He was widely recognized as one of the greatest pedagogues. While he was highly sought after, Hummel also happened to be one of the most expensive piano teachers.\(^\text{63}\) For this reason, Franz Liszt’s father refused to have this son study with him.\(^\text{64}\) Despite the price of lessons, the instruction students received from him was invaluable, and many aspiring students, including Robert Schumann, longed to study with him.

Several biographical sketches describing Hummel the teacher, are taken from his best well-known protégé, Ferdinand Hiller (1811–1885). He was to Hummel what

\(^{61}\) Ibid., 39.  
\(^{62}\) Ibid., 258.  
\(^{63}\) Ibid., 263.  
\(^{64}\) Ibid. Franz Liszt studied with Carl Czerny instead.
Hummel was to Mozart. Hiller lived with Hummel and his family for two years at Weimar (1825–1827) and maintained a close relationship with Hummel until his death in 1837. He has provided many detailed accounts of how the keyboard pedagogue was in lessons with his students, as is evident from the following description:

[Hummel] sat next to me at the piano and listened with a razor-sharp ear. He was gentle in his criticism, but with very clear words … he took me by the hand when he wanted me to make the subtleties of a passage absolutely clear, and to be sure, he used his left hand to help, since he sat on my right … He was very attentive to proper fingering, was very strict about maintaining clarity and purity and was nothing less than adamant about playing in a singing style.

Hummel was the epitome of a role model teacher. Joining Hiller, Hummel’s other notable students during his Weimar years include: Sigismund Thalberg (Liszt’s one-time rival), Adolph Henselt (a star pupil who was often called the “German Chopin”), Wenzel Hauck (a contemporary of Hiller’s, who assisted Hummel by adding fingering to many of the practical examples in Hummel’s treatise), Princess Maria Pawlowna (the sister of Tsar Nicholas I); briefly Felix Mendelssohn, and indirectly, Chopin as well. Hummel was a kind and caring pedagogue, who helped shape and guide so many successful pianists in the generations that followed.

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65 Sachs, 131.
66 Kroll, 265.
67 Ibid., 258-263, and Gerig, 69.
CHAPTER 5:  
The Treatise

Not only was Hummel’s time at Weimar a crucial period for him as a pedagogue, it also marked the completion of his monumental contribution to piano pedagogy, which he started writing in 1823. Published in 1828, Hummel’s treatise, A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course of Instructions on the Art of Playing the Piano Forte, Commencing with the Simplest Elementary Principles and Including Every Information Requisite to the Most Finished Style of Performance, is one of the most important works on technique and piano playing in the nineteenth century, and much of its content remains true today.

Made widely accessible, the treatise was published in three languages in the following order: German (1828), English (1828) and French (1829). While the content remained the same, the only change that occurred was Hummel’s choice of dedicatee for each edition. The dedicatee of the German version was Tsar Nicholas I; the English version, King of England, George IV; and the French version, King of France, Charles X. This treatise was purchased by students and teachers in almost every country in Europe. For my research I have been referring to the English version, the front page of which can be seen in Figure 2.

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69 Ibid.
70 Kroll, 269.
Figure 2. The Cover Page of Hummel’s English Edition of His Treatise.\textsuperscript{72}
Larger than any keyboard treatise that preceded it, Hummel’s is almost five-hundred pages long and contains approximately two-thousand two-hundred individual exercises covering everything that the fingers, the hand, and the performer will encounter in music. It begins with a preface and preliminary observations, and is organized into three parts, or volumes, which are further grouped into chapters. The table of contents for each volume is shown in Figures 3-5.

73 Gerig, 70.
Figure 3. Hummel’s Table of Contents for Volume One.  

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74 Hummel, Vol. 1, Table of Contents.
Figure 4. Hummel’s Table of Contents for Volume Two.\textsuperscript{75}

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\textsuperscript{75} Hummel, Vol. 2, Table of Contents.
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\textsuperscript{76} Hummel, Vol. 3, Table of Contents.
Often when being referred to, the lengthy treatise title is shortened to: *A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course of instruction, on the Art of Playing the Piano Forte*; or it is simply called Hummel’s Piano Method, or Hummel’s Piano School, as it has properties similar to that of a method book.\(^{77}\) This is especially apparent in the first volume, which deals with elementary piano instruction. The second volume contains combinations of technical exercises that are similar to those of Carl Czerny and Charles-Louis Hanon.\(^{78}\) The third volume is the most treatise-like, in that it elucidates Hummel’s stance and insight on topics associated with the art of playing piano, such as ornamentation and tempo rubato.

With the rise of people playing piano and taking lessons during the nineteenth-century came the development of piano methods in addition to treatises that were already available such as Muzio Clementi’s *Introduction to the Art of Playing on the Piano forte*, Op. 42 (1801), and C.P.E. Bach’s *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments* (Part 1, 1753, and Part 2, 1762). While reinforcing concepts from previous treatises that came before his, Hummel’s work became the most modernized of his time, specifically adhering to the instrument of his time. It was met with positive reviews, even after his death. For example, in 1838, *The Musical World* praised his treatise by saying that:

> [The] Pianoforte School of Hummel … contains everything necessary in order to acquire a thorough acquaintance with all the technicalities of performance … we recommend this invaluable book to the consideration of every teacher; to the study of every scholar.\(^{79}\)

\(^{77}\) Kroll, 266.  
\(^{78}\) For example, Czerny’s Op. 500 (1839), and Hanon’s *The Virtuoso Pianist in 60 Exercises* (1873).  
\(^{79}\) Kroll, 268.
The treatise rapidly became influential, as many of the Romantics studied it. Schumann’s diary entries of 1829 note that he practiced exercises from the treatise. The multi-volume work also paved the way for the piano treatises that followed, including Czerny’s *Complete Theoretical and Practical Pianoforte School*, Op. 500 (1839). Chopin was even in the process of writing his own treatise in the style of Hummel’s, but never managed to complete it.

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80 Gerig, 108. Czerny’s has a similar three-part layout to Hummel’s treatise.
81 Eigeldinger, 107. Endnote 64.
Despite receiving praise, one of the most common complaints about Hummel’s multi-volume treatise was its size. George Hogarth, one of his contemporary critics, compared the task of going through the treatise to that of a rigorous journey through the Arabian desert.\footnote{Kroll, 284. Endnote 74.} Perhaps an introduction to Hummel’s treatise would make it more appealing and do-able for the masses, a goal that the second part of my essay strives to achieve.\footnote{Gerig, 70. Gerig says that, “an abridged version [of Hummel’s treatise] would still be of value to today’s student.”} My condensed version follows Hummel’s layout; it is organized into three chapters, each representing the three corresponding volumes in Hummel’s treatise.\footnote{Note that Volume One in Part Two of this essay, will not include Hummel’s Preface, but it will address his Preliminary Observations to parents, music teachers, and students. For Hummel’s original layout of this section, refer to Figure 3.}

Hummel’s work is essentially a combination of both a method book and a treatise. Volume One, in particular, has properties of a method book as it presents elementary instruction in a similar fashion and succession to that of many modern day method books. For this reason, I will be making comparisons to the popular American piano method series, \textit{Piano Adventures}, by Nancy and Randall Faber. \textit{Piano Adventures} is comprised of a total of eight lesson books at the following levels: Primer, 1, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 4 and 5.\footnote{Nancy and Randall Faber, \textit{Piano Adventures: The Basic Piano Method}, 2nd ed. (Ann Arbor, MI: Dovetree, 2011). Series of eight lesson books at levels: primer, 1, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 4 and 5.} Upon completion, the student reaches the early intermediate level, which parallels what a student finishing the first volume of Hummel’s School, should be able to play. Hummel’s Volume Two consists entirely of technical drills and exercises aimed at achieving technical finesse for more advanced students. Volume Three is perhaps the most
beneficial for both pianists and piano teachers, as it clarifies challenges associated with advanced piano playing that include: ornamentation, tempo rubato, pedaling, and improvisation.

Within each given chapter, I will explain the importance and relevance of the concepts and provide exercises selected from the original document. For example, Hummel includes a total of two-thousand two hundred finger exercises, and six-hundred seventeen of these are five-finger patterns intended for the young beginner. I compare selected exercises to those found in current and popular pianos methods, and explain how Hummel’s are an important addition to the development of a student’s solid technique. How Hummel’s treatise can be used as a trustworthy reference in regard to understanding the execution of trills in Mozart’s piano sonatas or in applying tempo rubato in Chopin’s works will also be explained further. Additionally, I refer to Hummel’s musical examples in the treatise, and also include other repertoire from the Baroque, Classical, and Romantic periods, as well as works by modern day composers to which concepts from his treatise can be applied.

While part two of my essay has the same organizational structure as Hummel’s, I exclude generic topics that he merely mentions or covers briefly unless I am making a comparison to modern day method books. I also omit information that is not necessarily applicable to our modern day instrument, such as Hummel’s discussion of the pianoforte’s tuning system, and his description of the different keyboard action of German and English piano fortes, in the third volume, for example. Additionally, some illustrations of the same symbols and terms that we still use to this day are also be omitted or simply mentioned (e.g. slurs and tremolos), unless Hummel presents an
unconventional outlook on how to teach these principles. The second part of my essay, is
an introduction to Hummel’s treatise as it presents and explores the ways in which
Hummel’s important pedagogical contribution can be deemed both practical, relevant,
and applicable in today’s piano world. Hummel’s treatise itself is worth revisiting today
as it offers valuable information on nineteenth-century pianism and performance that
comes from one of the best keyboard masters in piano history. Ultimately, Hummel’s
name should be resurrected through his monumental contribution to piano pedagogy.
PART TWO:  
AN INTRODUCTION TO HUMMEL’S TREATISE

CHAPTER 1:  
Volume One—Elementary Instruction

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

Following the Preface and preceding the first section of Volume One, Hummel offers insights regarding early piano instruction in his, “Preliminary Observations addressed to Parents and to Teachers of Music.”86 His observations cover three components: first, the student’s starting age and requirements for lessons and practicing; second, guidelines for parents when selecting a piano instructor and the extent of involvement in their child’s studies; and third, vital reminders for piano teachers.

Students

When it comes to the ideal starting age for lessons, Hummel’s requirement is similar to that of today’s method books and the treatises that preceded his. He specifically says that girls should begin at age seven and boys at eight.87 However, in contrast to the modern-day student who receives a standard thirty-minute lesson per week, Hummel required one hour lessons every day of the week for the first six months of instruction.88

The idea of guided practice is crucial for a young pupil’s improvement and can be traced back to Baroque composer and master François Couperin (1668–1733). In the preface of his 1717 treatise, Couperin states that beginners should not practice without

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86 Hummel, Vol. 1, III-V. Hummel addresses to students in the masculine form, “he, his, etc.” Throughout this essay, I will use “he” or “she” or “them” interchangeably when referring to students.

87 François Couperin, L’Art de toucher le Clavecin (The Art of Playing the Harpsichord), French and English, ed. and trans. Margery Halford (Port Washington, NY: Alfred, 1974), 29. In his 1717 treatise, Couperin says the starting age should be six to seven; the range given in Faber’s Piano Adventures, Primer Level Lesson Book is anywhere from ages 6-11.

88 Hummel, III. He strongly encouraged to maintain this for the full year, if possible.
their teacher because it will ultimately cause more harm than good. Hummel strongly agreed with this, stressing that young students do not know how to practice independently. Stemming from his own musical upbringing with Mozart who provided daily instruction in this manner, Hummel simply followed suit. Nowadays, even though one lesson per week is most common, meeting with an instructor twice a week is not entirely rare. For example, some American pre-collegiate programs require students to receive both private and group instruction, meeting one day for a forty-five minute private lesson, and another, for a fifty minute group lesson that reinforces theory, keyboard skills, and ensemble experience.

Once students complete the first six months of piano instruction and are playing more challenging repertoire, they are then ready to practice on their own. Hummel vouches for no more than three solid hours of focused playing, an idea that Chopin agreed with as well. According to Hummel, the longtime preconceived notion that pianists have to practice six to seven hours to achieve excellence is faulty. He explains that over-practicing can cause injury both physically, and musically-speaking, the performer’s playing will sound mechanical lacking substance, depth, sensitivity, and beauty.

Parents

Hummel’s first guideline for parents is not one that has been mentioned in any modern method or earlier treatise. While a cheap price for lessons may seem ideal,
Hummel warns parents not to let this be the deciding factor of choosing a piano teacher. Instead, he insists that they first and foremost think about the quality of instruction by taking the teacher’s credentials into account.

When determining the extent of parental involvement in a child’s early piano education, modern methods strongly encourage it, claiming that it helps foster good practice habits. While Hummel agrees with this, one of his points makes the case against overly involved parents. His second guideline cautions parents not to play the teacher role and instead allow the master to do his work.\textsuperscript{94} He specifically makes the point that parents should not pressure children to play showy and flashy pieces too soon; the teacher knows what repertoire is suitable for the student, not the parent. Interfering with the teacher’s instruction is detrimental, as it hinders a student’s progress. This setback will ultimately cost parents more money because the student will need more lessons from the teacher to undo any bad habits.

*Teachers*

In addition to preventing a student’s development of bad habits such as playing in a heavy and lame manner, holding keys down for longer or shorter than written value, and being tense while playing, Hummel also stresses other important rules that every teacher should enforce in order to help students progress. His reminders are similar to Robert Schumann’s rules for students in, “House Rules and Maxims for Young Musicians,” from *Aphorisms* (1848), but are instead addressed to teachers. I have summarized the following eight points that Hummel says a good master should keep in mind while teaching:

\textsuperscript{94} Ibid.
1. **Be kind and patient, but stern when necessary.**

2. **Make sure the piano is tuned.**
   Ensuring that the pupil’s ears are not “spoiled, but rather improved and refined” will help develop good listening skills.

3. **Stress the importance of playing and practicing slowly.**
   “Slow is the way to go” is a motto I have used with students, especially when they learn new repertoire. As all teachers are aware, playing too fast, too soon, is a recipe for “unintelligible and incorrect style of performance.”

4. **Be very strict about the student’s ability to count rhythm correctly.**
   Hummel states that in order to accomplish this, students need to count out loud while they play. However, he does not provide details as to how students should count, leaving it up to the teacher to decide. Regardless of what counting method the teacher uses, be it simply saying quarter note beats (one, two, three, four), or using the Kodály method of rhythm syllables (saying “ta” for quarter notes), the idea of counting out loud while playing is one that has personally worked for my students. The pulse is naturally internalized this way.

5. **Reinforce good sight reading skills.**
   Teachers should make sure that students keep their eyes on the score. One way I remind them of this while they sight read, is by placing a folder over their hands with my left hand, and using another folder in my right hand to cover up half of the first measure, slowly moving it and revealing only a few notes at a time. This forces the student to look ahead.

6. **Demonstrate pieces or passages for a student.**
   This is not mentioned in method books today, as it may seem obvious to many teachers, but I have observed lessons that lacked teacher demonstration. Seeing the teacher play a piece can help initiate that spark of interest in the student, and motivate them to practice. Showing students how to practice passages within in a given work, especially technically challenging ones, is beneficial.

7. **Aim to develop a well-rounded musician.**
   Lessons should be interesting and appealing. They should include not only exercises or “dry examples,” but fun material as well, which Hummel refers to as

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95 Ibid., IV.
96 Ibid.
98 More information on the topic of counting while playing will be addressed later in Volume One: Section Two, under “Counting and Conducting.”
“short and pleasing pieces.” 99 With this balance, the student is more likely to remain engaged and amused for a longer time. This will naturally further their desire to learn. Many method books today provide supplemental popular repertoire and performance books that reflect this idea.100

8. **Encourage students to perform as much as possible.** Hummel stresses the importance of student performances from a young age, “for this will stimulate [their] industry and give [them] courage, [and] certainty.” 101 Nowadays, it is more common than not that students only get the chance to perform in one recital at the end of the school year. If the performance does not go well, the student could potentially become scarred from the experience and discouraged from playing piano altogether. Having students perform as much as possible, especially in informal settings will give them many chances to become more comfortable dealing with the pressure of a formal recital.102

Following these preliminary observations, the first volume of Hummel’s treatise deals with a course of elementary instructions that is further organized into three sections. Each one covers rudimentary concepts that students in Hummel’s Piano School would encounter in their first lesson, in a manner similar to that of a piano method book.

**SECTION ONE**

Section One covers how to sit at the piano; correct hand and body position; an introduction to staves, clefs, and notes on the keyboard and grand staff; and rhythmic time values (note-to-rest equivalents). Twenty-five preparatory exercises for the beginner, that reinforce the topics addressed conclude this section.

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99 Hummel, IV.
100 The Faber and Faber *Piano Adventures* series includes supplemental Performance and Popular Repertoire for each corresponding level, for example.
101 Hummel, III. While teaching for the Nancy Cree Keyboard Learning Centers, my students participated in a total of eight recitals per school year. Seven were informal ones that prepared them for the formal and final recital, at the Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, Coralville, IA.
In comparison to today’s method books, much of the information here is nothing unconventional. What Hummel offers is additional information, and slightly different approaches to these fundamental principles. Selected highlights will be summarized, and their relevance to modern day instruction, explained here.

**How to Sit**

Before students even play or touch the keyboard in their first lesson, their proper sitting position must be determined. Hummel’s take on the matter remains true to this day: one must sit neither too high or too low, centered in the middle range of the keyboard (Middle C or C4 area), six to ten inches from the board. Both hands should rest naturally on the keys, and the torso should be able to move slightly from side to side to reach the highest and lowest keys without altering the overall body position.

Like Couperin, Hummel also reminds teachers to provide younger students whose feet don’t reach the ground with some kind of support (e.g., a foot stool or box). While a seemingly obvious point, not all modern method books address this, *Piano Adventures* being one example. Seeing as the first lesson always begins with how to sit at the piano, not adapting to someone’s particular needs can be injurious. How can a smaller-sized student establish a sense of overall equilibrium, stability and security, if their legs are dangling? Their torsos will naturally fall forward towards the keys, as if their head is

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103 Couperin, 29; Hummel, Vol. 1, 2.
104 Willard A. Palmer, Morton Manus, and Amanda Vick Lethco, *Alfred’s Basic Piano Library All-in-One Course: Lesson, Theory, Solo*, Book One (Van Nuys, CA: Alfred), 2; Helen Marlais, *The All-In-One Approach to Succeeding at the Piano*, Book 2A, (Fort Lauderdale, FL: The FJH Music Company), 3. Both of these methods are exceptions to this, as they illustrate the foot stool option for smaller students in their prefaces.
about to hit the piano board. Regardless of what method teachers use today, it imperative that this not be overlooked.

**Body, Arms, Hands and Fingers**

The following summarized guidelines regarding the body, arms, hands and fingers are three preliminary points that Hummel addresses in this section, and they are in line with modern day piano instruction:

1. **The body needs to sit up straight and tall, with elbows loosely hanging.**
   Arms and elbows should not be too close to the ribcage, or too far out like chicken wings.

2. **Hands need to be in a rounded position, turned slightly outwards like feet.**

3. **Equal distribution of weight into the keys is crucial for creating a round, full, beautiful tone.**
   When playing, students should be aware of striking the keys forwards (into the keys) rather than backwards (sliding fingers away, towards their lap).

These basic elements are required in order to successfully play in a singing style. These particular trademarks of Hummel’s are deemed to be the most important component of beautiful playing and performance which is discussed in the third, and final volume of his treatise (Part Two: Chapter Three of this essay). Hummel warns that if these fundaments are neglected, the student’s playing will lack facility, gracefulness, neatness, expression and strength of performance.\(^{105}\)

**Preparation for Note Reading**

As do several current methods, when preparing students for note reading, Hummel presents the seven letters of the musical alphabet starting from C (C, D, E, F, G, A, B). He also uses groups of black keys as reference points to show the location of letter

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\(^{105}\) Hummel, 3.
names to their corresponding white keys. Hummel then defines and illustrates ledger lines (Figure 6), showing which ones pertain to higher and lower sounds.

Figure 6. Hummel’s Depiction of High and Low Sounds.

Middle C (C4), is the first first landmark note that students learn today and the first one Hummel introduces as well. However, unlike Hummel, the one bit of information often omitted in preliminary modern methods is that Middle C is a ledger line note. In fact, the term, “ledger line” does not appear in the Piano Adventures series until Lesson Book 2B, at which point students would already have received approximately two years of piano instruction. With Hummel’s approach, students are aware of this ledger line concept much sooner and will have attained a quicker recognition of notes, both on and off the staff.

Hummel’s Note Reading Methods

A common dilemma associated with note reading that many teachers face today was also prevalent earlier as Hummel states, “How difficult of a task it is to familiarize children with the keyboard and the notes, without exhausting their patience and

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107 Hummel, 4.
diminishing their desire for learning.”  

Hummel claims to have solved this problem by offering two note-reading methods he vows to be successful. Each one is suitable for certain types of students, and the instructor can choose which one to use depending on the “temperament of the pupil.”  

Perhaps piano teachers today can find these approaches useful.

Figure 7 shows the first method, Method A, which is a stepladder approach to learning notes on the staff, and intended for a student who, “is lively and not much disposed to reflection.” Both hands start on landmark note Middle C, which naturally restricts the hyper student who eagerly wants to play all over the piano and gives the teacher more control. Taking one hand at a time and starting from Middle C, the left hand descends by step to the lower notes to bass clef C (C3), while the right hand ascends to treble clef C (C2). This descending and ascending movement continues throughout the

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109 Hummel, 5.
110 Hummel, 6.
111 Ibid.
112 Hummel, Vol. 1, 6.
entire keyboard, as the teacher points to corresponding notes on the grand staff while the student plays them.\textsuperscript{113}

The second method, Method B (Figure 8), is an intervallic approach to reading, involving more landmark notes than the previous method. It is intended for a slightly older and mature beginner, and Hummel preferred this method over the first, claiming that students learn to read music faster this way.\textsuperscript{114} The first step involves locating all of the C’s on the piano starting from the lowest one, C1 (Figure 8 only shows two ledger lines below the bass clef and two ledger lines above the treble clef). The next step reveals four more landmark notes: the first and fifth line of each staff (G2 and A3 for bass clef, and E4 and F5 for treble clef). Being able to automatically identify these reference notes can help students determine any non-landmark note they are asked to name.

Figure 8. Method B—Hummel’s Second Approach to Note Reading.\textsuperscript{115}

In comparison to Hummel’s two approaches, modern methods also reinforce the idea of assigning landmark notes. Piano Adventures, in particular, uses bass clef F (F3), Middle C (C4), and treble clef G (G4) as landmarks on the grand staff. However unlike

\textsuperscript{113} Hummel does not give fingerings in the examples he provides, as he has not gone over fingerings yet (Hummel, 6-7).

\textsuperscript{114} Hummel, 7-8.

\textsuperscript{115} Hummel, Vol. 1, 7.

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Hummel’s approach, this limits the student to only recognizing a small range of notes all contained within the C five-finger position; one that spans from bass clef C (C3) to treble clef G (G4). Seeing as both of Hummel’s methods introduce and familiarize younger students with a wider range of notes, students are likely to learn more notes at a much faster pace than they would with a modern approach.

*The Basics: Rhythmic Values and Rests*

Hummel provides two tables that show the breakdown of rhythmic note values and their corresponding rests. The first, Figure 9, shows how everything is related and subdivided up to the sixty-fourth note, and the second, Figure 10, deals with triplet division. However, the way in which Hummel teaches rhythmic notes is not explained here. These two tables serve as reference guides, leaving it up to the teacher to decide how and when to introduce certain note values to students.\textsuperscript{116} Combinations of several rhythmic values are provided in the examples that conclude this section, so if they are ever confused by a rhythm in an exercise, students can refer to these tables for clarification.

\textsuperscript{116} I have changed the English note and rest value terms such as semibreves and minims that are used in the original document and replaced them with terms used in American method books such as, whole notes and half notes. Note that he does not provide dotted rhythms yet, as this will be explained in Volume One: Section Two.
Figure 9. Hummel’s First Table of Note and Rest Subdivisions.\textsuperscript{117}

Figure 10. Hummel’s Second Table of Note Subdivisions: Triplets.\textsuperscript{118}

\textsuperscript{117} Hummel, Vol. 1, 7.
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid., 8.
Twenty-Five Preparatory Exercises

Section One concludes with Hummel’s twenty-five preparatory exercises, which are mainly a culmination of concepts previously introduced. I believe these to be one of the most practical attributes in this section, as I have personally found them useful in lessons. The first eighteen exercises cover four five-finger pattern positions: C Major, G Major, D Minor, and A Minor. Here, Hummel offers a variety of ways to play the simple five-finger patterns (Examples 1-3, Nos. 1-9); some deal with specific practice goals such as triplet divisions (Example 5, Nos. 10-14), and trill preparation (Example 6, Nos. 15-18). The model of how one should play these can be seen in Example 1-3.

I have not seen any current method books present five-finger patterns this way; typically, students remain in the C Major five-finger position for a while. The idea of having hands start one octave apart for the first scale, C Major, and go outward in contrary motion two octaves apart for the next, G Major, then back down to D Minor (one octave apart) and outward to A Minor (two octaves apart), allows the student to explore the wider range of the keyboard. They will not stay “fixed” to one position in the center of the piano.

Not only are all four of Hummel’s selected five-finger scales comprised of white keys (which makes them visually easier for students), they also present two examples of

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119 Hummel, 9-16. Note, that Hummel’s finger numbering system is different from ours today. In his treatise, the following fingering system is used: + = finger 1, 1 = finger 2, 2 = finger 3, 3 = finger 4, and 4 = finger 5. However, I have written in modern fingering for all the examples included in this particular section.

120 Some exercises are only written in C Major, but they should also be transposed to the other three patterns.

121 This is the case of the Piano Adventures, Lesson Book Primer Level.
major sounds, and two examples of minor sounds. The concepts of major and minor are not usually introduced this early on in a student’s first lesson book.\textsuperscript{122}

Example 1. Hummel’s Preparatory Exercise No. 1, Vol. 1.\textsuperscript{123}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example1.png}
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{122} Major and minor five-finger scales are first introduced at the end of Piano Adventures Lesson Book 2A, in “Changing Moods” (Unit 7, 48-49). Students in this book, on average, are in their second year of lessons.

\textsuperscript{123} Hummel, Vol. 1, 9.
Example 2. Hummel’s Preparatory Exercise No. 2, Vol. 1.\textsuperscript{124}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example2.png}
\caption{Example 2. Hummel’s Preparatory Exercise No. 2, Vol. 1.\textsuperscript{124}}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example3.png}
\caption{Example 3. Hummel’s Preparatory Exercise No. 3, Vol. 1.\textsuperscript{125}}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{124} Hummel, Vol. 1, 10.  
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid.
Example 4. Hummel’s Preparatory Exercises Nos. 4-9, Vol. 1.\textsuperscript{126}

Example 5. Hummel’s Preparatory Exercises Nos. 10-14, Vol. 1.\textsuperscript{127}

\textsuperscript{126} Hummel, Vol. 1, 10-11.
\textsuperscript{127} Hummel, Vol. 1, 11.
Exercise No. 19 is a set of a theme and seventeen variations and differs from the previous exercises due to its change in hand position: the right hand stays in the C Major five-finger position, while the left hand moves up to G Major five-finger position (the

\[128\] Hummel, Vol. 1, 11-12.
second finger starts on Middle C). Example 7 shows the theme and variations 1-7; Example 8, variations 8-12; and Example 9, variations 13-19.129

Example 7. Hummel’s Preparatory Exercise No. 19, Theme and Variations 1-7.130

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129 Hummel does not indicate to transpose this exercise of the final ones as well.
Example 8. Hummel’s Preparatory Exercise No. 19, Variations 8-12.\textsuperscript{131}

\textsuperscript{131}Hummel, Vol. 1, 14.
The last five examples, Nos. 20-25 (Example 10), move away from the comfortable five-finger pattern range of the previous exercises. These test the student’s note-reading skills and present new concepts that Hummel has not addressed yet: scalar passages, arpeggiated chords, and hand crossing. As seen in Example 10, Nos. 20-23 are

\[\text{VAR: XIII.}\]

\[\text{VAR: XIV.}\]

\[\text{VAR: XV.}\]

\[\text{VAR: XVI.}\]

\[\text{VAR: XVII.}\]

\[\text{Hummel, Vol. 1, 15.}\]
scalar passages; No. 24 deals with one hand following the other, and No. 25 involves hand crossing. These examples are the most challenging because they combine techniques addressed thus far and new ones that will be explained later in the treatise.

Example 10. Hummel’s Preparatory Exercises Nos. 20-25.\textsuperscript{133}

\textsuperscript{133} Hummel, Vol. 1, 16.
Essentially, all twenty-five exercises serve many important practical functions for the young beginner, which include:

1. Reinforcing previously covered topics such as note reading, as well as general rhythmic values and their diminutions.
2. Facilitating finger strength and independence.
3. Providing a student’s first steps in transposition.
4. Foreshadowing material that will appear later in Hummel’s treatise. This is the case for the challenging examples (Example 10) and preparatory trill exercises (Example 6). These concepts are explained in the last two volumes of Hummel’s treatise (Volumes 2 and 3, respectively). New five-finger patterns are also presented in subsequent sections of Volume 1.

Conclusion–A Modern Approach vs. Hummel’s

Seeing as Hummel’s Preliminary Observations and first section of Volume One, are the very first steps involved in a student’s early piano instruction, they parallel the very first lesson book a student would complete, such as the Piano Adventures Primer level lesson book. Figure 11 displays a side-by-side comparison of the ten-unit plan presented in the Piano Adventures method and a summary of Hummel’s approach; I have referred to this section as “Hummel’s Piano School–Volume 1: Section 1, Primer Level.”
Figure 11. Comparing Primary Level Methods: Piano Adventures with Hummel’s Piano School.

| **Piano Adventures: Basic Piano Method** | **Hummel’s Piano School,**  
Lesson Book Primer Level | Volume 1: Section 1  
Primer Level |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO PLAYING</strong>&lt;sup&gt;134&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td><strong>UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO PLAYING</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| ▪ Sitting at the piano  
▪ Round hand position  
▪ Finger numbers  
▪ High and low sounds  
▪ Groups of two and three black keys | ▪ Sitting at the piano (support dangling feet)  
▪ Round hand position  
▪ Finger numbers  
▪ High and low sounds |
| **UNIT 2: BASIC RHYTHMS**<sup>135</sup> | **UNIT 2: BASIC RHYTHMS** |
| ▪ Rhythm: Quarter, Half and Whole notes  
▪ Terms: forte and piano (f and p) | ▪ Rhythm Tables (see Figures 8 and 9): Displays even subdivision of notes, and subdivision of triplets along with their corresponding rests (up to a sixty-fourth note and rest) |
| **UNIT 3: KEY NAMES: A-B-C-D-E-F-G**<sup>136</sup> | **UNIT 3: KEY NAMES:** |
| ▪ The musical alphabet  
▪ C-D-E, and F-G-A-B white key groups  
▪ C five-finger scale  
▪ Rhythm: Dotted Half note  
▪ Term: mezzo forte (mf) | ▪ The musical alphabet starting on C.  
▪ C-D-E, and F-G-A-B white key groups  
▪ Term: Octave |
| **UNIT 4: STAFF READING**<sup>137</sup> | **UNIT 4: STAFF READING** |
| ▪ The staff  
▪ The grand staff  
▪ Treble and Bass clefs (G and F clefs)  
▪ Notes: Bass clef F, Middle C and treble clef G (landmarks) | ▪ The staff  
▪ Ledger lines  
▪ The grand staff  
▪ Treble and Bass clefs  
▪ First landmark note: Middle C  
▪ Choose note reading method: A or B (Figures 8 and 9) |

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<sup>134</sup> Faber, Unit 1, 1.  
<sup>135</sup> Ibid., Unit 2, 14.  
<sup>136</sup> Ibid., Unit 3, 29.  
<sup>137</sup> Ibid., Unit 4, 34.
At first glance, it may seem that Hummel’s treatise offers less than *Piano Adventures* (since he has not introduced time signatures or dynamics yet, for example), and that a student would make slower progress as a result. However, this is not necessarily the case. Upon completing Hummel’s preliminary Piano School, not only will students be able to recognize notes faster through one of his note-reading approaches, but from the twenty-five preparatory examples alone they will obtain the following skills: recognition of four five-finger patterns, a solid technical foundation, stronger sight

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138 Ibid., Unit 5, 42.
139 Ibid., Unit 6, 46.
140 Ibid., Unit 7, 52.
141 Ibid., Unit 8, 56.
142 Ibid., Unit 9, 64.
143 *Piano Adventures*, Primer Level Lesson Book, only introduces one: the C Major five-finger position
reading and transposition skills, and a greater understanding of various rhythmic note values.\footnote{\textit{Piano Adventures}, Primer Level Lesson Book, only presents: whole, dotted half, half and quarter notes and the quarter rest.}

It is evident that Hummel’s exercises come with many benefits that help the beginner advance at a faster pace. They have practical value and can be incorporated into a modern day student’s lessons. In the hopes of making this a helpful reference for piano teachers, I have summarized and listed these examples in order of progressive level of difficulty (Figure 12). The first group includes the simplest exercises, which stay within a five-finger pattern and involve stepwise motion; the second group includes skips within the five-finger patterns; and lastly, the third, fourth, and fifth groups are all classified as “extra challenges.”

While useful note-reading practice, Hummel’s preparatory exercises can also be incorporated even before a student starts to read music on the staff. For example, when the C Major five-finger scale is introduced in Unit 3 of \textit{Piano Adventures} (see Figure 11), I introduce Hummel’s first exercise by rote. Students can even at this point begin to transpose pieces in the lesson book to G Major, D Minor, and A Minor five-finger scales. Additionally, when skips on the staff are introduced in Unit 7, students can refer to Hummel’s exercise No.5 for extra note reading practice as it uses both steps and skips.\footnote{As in the \textit{Piano Adventures}, Primer Level Lesson Book, Hummel’s “skip” specifically refers to an interval of a third.}
Figure 12. An Organization of Hummel’s Twenty-Five Preparatory Exercises in Order of Progressive Difficulty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order of Hummel’s Twenty-five Preparatory Exercises (easiest – hardest)</th>
<th>Description of what these examples entail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ex. 1-3</strong></td>
<td>Stepwise motion in a five-finger pattern range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ex. 4</strong></td>
<td>C Major, G Major, D Minor and A Minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ex. 10-12</strong> – in triplets</td>
<td>Skips within the five-finger pattern range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ex. 15-18</strong> – preparatory trill exercises</td>
<td>C Major, G Major, D Minor and A Minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ex. 5</strong></td>
<td>Skips and steps combined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ex. 9 and 13</strong> – in triplets</td>
<td>Both hands remain in a five-finger pattern range. However, the right hand is in C position, while the left hand is in G position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ex. 19: Theme and Variations</strong></td>
<td>Extra challenge:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples for a more active right hand: <strong>Var. 1-4, 6-8, 11, 12, 17</strong></td>
<td>Hand crossing exercise that outlines a descending one octave C Major scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples for a more active left hand: <strong>Var. 5, 9, 13-15</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples for equally active hands: <strong>Theme, Var. 10, and 16</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ex. 25</strong></td>
<td>Extra challenge:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ex. 24</strong></td>
<td>One hand follows the other, and involves finger extensions with a combination of skips and steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ex. 20-23</strong></td>
<td>Extra challenge:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ex. 20-23</strong></td>
<td>Combinations of scalar passages with finger extensions, instances of thumb crossing under, and arpeggios are included.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A beginner completing Hummel’s first section of elementary instruction will be ready to play more challenging pieces than those presented in the today’s preliminary method books. Hummel’s instruction prepares students for material in the ensuing chapters.

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SECTION TWO
Section Two further expands on concepts addressed in the previous section and centers around three areas of focus: the first deals with marks of transposition, the second introduces symbols associated with rhythm and addresses more subdivisions, and the third deals with finger independence and strength, presenting a total of six-hundred and twenty-one finger exercises. This section is intended for the progressing beginner.

*On The Marks of Transposition: Accidental vs. Essential*
Hummel begins this section by introducing half steps (semitones), and explaining the functions of: the sharp (♯), flat (♭), natural sign (♮), as well as the double sharp (𝄪), and double flat (𝄫). For the latter, he proposes a different symbol to replace the original. Instead of having two flats in a row, Hummel’s double-flat sign, like the double-sharp, is represented by one character: ♭. While it is not used today, Hummel strongly claimed that this sign is the better option, because it is visually easier to see double-flatted notes in the score. He compares these versions in the top two staves of Figure 13: the first uses the original double-flat symbol, and the second uses Hummel’s double flat symbol.

Figure 13. Comparing Double Flat Notation.147

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146 Hummel, Vol. 1, 17.
147 Ibid.
The term “accidentals” is often used today by teachers and music theory books, to identify symbols of the sharp, flat, natural, etc. However, Hummel classified these symbols in a different way calling them “marks of transposition.” Depending on where these markings appear in a score, they are then classified into one of two categories. If they occur throughout the piece, beside a note that does not belong to the key signature, they are called “accidentals.” If they appear in the key signature, they are called “essentials.”

Hummel’s accidental and essential classification stems from that of the first Viennese school tradition, as his predecessors had used this terminology. One of Hummel’s contemporaries like music theorist Gottfried Weber (1779–1839), claimed in his book, *Theory of Musical Composition* (1817–21), that making the distinction between these symbols was already considered too traditional and old fashioned. Weber argued that the term “essential” was in certain instances equivocal and debatable. Perhaps this is why the use of the term “essential” disappeared and “accidental” remained, becoming the term we use today.

In addition, the present day classification possibly occurred because everything is taught in relationship to C-Major, which has no sharps or flats. Therefore, if the key signature of C-Major always serves as a model, as is the case in many modern method

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148 Robert Gauldin, *Harmonic Practice in Tonal Music*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 2004), 43. This was the theory book I used in my undergraduate theory class, and Gauldin calls the sharps or flats in a key signature accidentals: “the key signature placed at the beginning of each staff in a composition indicates the accidentals necessary to form the diatonic scale on which the piece is based.”


149 Hummel, 19.

and theory books, any added sharp or flat in a key signature would be considered accidental. However, this is not the way I believe we should teach our students; each key should be treated as its own entity. Sharps or flats that occur in the key signature, for example, cannot be called accidental, as they are not, “accidents” of a given key. The term “essentials” is more accurate here. If one is to reach any conclusion from this, is that it is incorrect to call all sharps and flats accidentals. Bringing back the term “essentials” can help clarify the distinct purpose these marks of transposition have: an accidental or essential function.

For further explanation on the matter, Hummel provides fourteen review examples that present both accidental and essential transposition practice.\footnote{Hummel, Vol. 1, 20-23.} Based on the abundance of five-finger exercises that Hummel provided in Section One, he again stresses the importance of transposition for the young beginner in the first ten examples.\footnote{Ibid.} Here, students are introduced to accidental transposition exercises that are both major and minor, and are introduced to new five-finger patterns: D-Major, A-Major, E-Major, F-Major, B-flat Major, E-flat Major, G-minor, C-Minor, and F-Minor.

Similar to the previous section, the exercises that follow the five-finger positions examples steer away from the comfortable position and present more difficult challenges for students. Exercise No. 11 (Example 11), tests the student’s note reading skills in particular and awareness in recognizing any accidentals that appear.
Example 11. Hummel’s Exercise No. 11—Accidental Transposition.\textsuperscript{153}

![Example 11. Hummel’s Exercise No. 11—Accidental Transposition.](image)

The very final exercise, No. 14 (Example 12), shows instances of both essential and accidental transposition, and even includes modulation. The example starts in D-Major, modulates to G-Minor, and then returns to D-Major. Also a great sight reading exercise, this one in particular foreshadows a topic that Hummel addresses in the third section of this volume: identifying key signatures (both major and relative minor).

Example 12. Hummel’s Exercise No. 14—Accidental and Essential Transposition.\textsuperscript{154}

![Example 12. Hummel’s Exercise No. 14—Accidental and Essential Transposition.](image)

\textsuperscript{153} Hummel, Vol. 1, 22.
\textsuperscript{154} Ibid., 23
Rhythmic Focus

This section explains the following concepts that deal with rhythm: the dot, syncopation, polyrhythm, and various subdivisions. Hummel concludes this section with twenty practical examples that are a culmination of these topics.

1. The Dot

As most method books do today, Hummel also explains the function of the dot in the same way: it is equivalent to half the value of whatever note or rest it is placed next to. Compared to modern-day notation, Hummel’s dot is spaced further away from the note it belongs to, thus indicating precisely where the dot’s value actually occurs in the music. Seeing as young beginners at this stage may already be playing pieces that feature a dotted half note, dotted quarter note, and dotted eighth, the following three examples show how Hummel notates each dotted rhythm accordingly (Examples 13-15).

Example 13. Dotted Half Note. Hummel’s Exercise No. 1 from His Twenty Practical Examples, mm. 1-2.155

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Example 14. Dotted Quarter Note. Hummel’s Exercise No. 1, from His Twenty Practical Examples, mm. 3-4.\textsuperscript{156}

Example 15. Dotted Eighth Note. Hummel’s Exercise No. 2, from His Twenty Practical Examples, mm. 1-2.\textsuperscript{157}

All too often, the problem I encounter when teaching dotted rhythms is that students do not hold these notes for the correct, full value. While the dotted half note is not necessarily the trickiest problem, the dotted quarter note and dotted eighth-note rhythms are ones that students struggle with the most. I believe that the root of this problem stems from the fact that subdivisions smaller than the quarter note value are not

\textsuperscript{156} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{157} Ibid.
introduced sooner to students. The smallest note value that students learn from their first lesson book is usually the quarter note. The very first dotted note value typically introduced in modern methods is the dotted half note, as is the case in the *Piano Adventure* series.\(^{158}\) Eighth notes are presented in the first unit of Lesson Book 2A, and the dotted quarter note, at the end of next level, Lesson Book 2B.\(^{159}\) Sixteenth notes do not appear until Lesson book 3B, and the dotted eighth note discussion occurs in the second unit of Lesson Book 4.\(^{160}\)

Introducing subdivisions smaller than the quarter note sooner to students and applying the dot in the score further away from its corresponding note, can possibly help solve the problem of students playing these rhythms incorrectly. Hummel’s dot approach serves as a visual reminder to the student to keep holding on to a particular note or chord, I have applied this to a few passages of pieces I have taught and ones that I have found to be a bit challenging for students (Examples 16-22). These examples are grouped into dotted half note, dotted quarter note, and dotted eighth note categories, and the difficulty of selected works ranges from the earliest elementary, and early intermediate, to the intermediate levels.\(^{161}\)

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\(^{158}\) Faber, *Piano Adventure* Lesson Book, Primer Level, unit 3, 32.

\(^{159}\) Ibid., Lesson Book 2A, Unit 1, 10; Lesson Book 2B, Unit 8, 44.

\(^{160}\) Ibid., Lesson Book 3B, Unit 7; Lesson Book 4, Unit 2, 16.

\(^{161}\) The majority of these examples at the intermediate level are taken from Chopin’s works, particularly his mazurkas, as the mazurka rhythm itself starts with the dotted eighth note followed by a sixteenth. Additionally, mazurkas contain an abundance of various dotted rhythms, which based on my own teaching experience, frequently present challenges for students.
Passages with DOTTED HALF NOTES:

Example 16. Faber Piano Adventures, Primer Level Lesson Book, “Hey, Mr. Half Note Dot!”


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162 Faber, Piano Adventures, Lesson Book, Primer Level, 32.
Passages with DOTTED QUARTER NOTES:

Example 18. Clementi, Sonatina, Op. 37, No. 2, First Movement, mm. 17-18.\textsuperscript{164}

![Example 18. Clementi, Sonatina, Op. 37, No. 2, First Movement, mm. 17-18.]


\textsuperscript{164} Muzio Clementi, Sonatina in D Major, Op. 37, No. 2, First Movement, in \textit{Celebration Series: Piano Repertoire Album 8}, 2nd ed. (Ontario, Canada: Frederick Harris Music, 1994), 26-29. Please note that the top line for the right hand is in treble clef, and the bottom line for left hand is in bass clef.


Passages with DOTTED EIGHTH NOTES:

Example 21. Clementi, Sonatina Op. 37, No. 2, First Movement, mm. 5-7.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.
Combination of both DOTTED QUARTER NOTES and EIGHTH NOTES:


While I personally vouch for using Hummel’s dot approach, I understand that music theory books, and published scores will not change the placement of the dot. Nevertheless, I do encourage teachers to re-write dotted rhythm passages that a student struggles with, in this way.

2. Syncopation

Hummel introduces syncopation in this section and explains that, “notes are termed syncopated, when their rhythm sometimes precedes, and at other times, follows after that of those notes which mark the place of the natural and equal divisions of the bar.” He provides a brief but valuable introductory exercise in Example 23. I think that

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169 Ibid., 25.
not only playing-wise, but visually speaking, such an exercise can help clarify the concept of playing on the off beats to a young student.

Example 23. Hummel’s Introductory Syncopation Exercise.¹⁷⁰

The example first shows the hands playing a melody of four ascending quarter notes simultaneously (a). Then Hummel displays two common instances of syncopation. “A1” shows the syncopated right-hand starting together with the left-hand, but then preceding each left-hand quarter note beat. In “a2” the left hand starts on the first beat, while the right hand enters on the “and” of beat one and follows the steady left-hand by playing off beats. Hummel shows these two scenarios in the same respective order, but with a syncopated left-hand instead (b1 and b2).

3. An Introduction to Polyrhythm

Since the student was introduced to two basic subdivisions of the beat at the eighth note level in the previous section (duple and triple), Hummel combines the two divisions, presenting the student with the most basic polyrhythm: three against two, or two against three. This is one of the first complex rhythms a student will encounter. In addition to dotted rhythms, I have found this to be among the more difficult rhythmic

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.
concepts to teach students because of the coordination involved. Hummel’s approach to teaching this concept can be a helpful tool.

Acknowledging the difficulty young students may face when attempting to play this polyrhythm, Hummel shows the break down of how they should initially practice putting this polyrhythm with hands together in Example 24. He instructs the teacher to “allow [the student] to strike the second note of the one hand along with the the third note of the other.” He claims that once the student’s fingers gain more strength and independence, this correct three against two rhythm will occur naturally or “when the student becomes a better timeist.”

Example 24. Polyrhythm: Three Against Two, and Two Against Three.

While this approach is fine to use briefly, I would suggest only having the student do it once or twice, and then move on to trying to see if they can execute this correctly. Practicing this polyrhythm for too long in the way that Hummel instructs, can actually be more detrimental than beneficial in the long run. It may start a bad habit that will later be very difficult for the student to break. I do not think that Hummel intends to have the student drill Example 24 multiple times; the purpose of his specific instruction is to merely give a very basic, surface understanding of this topic. Hummel is not necessarily

172 Ibid.
173 Ibid.
expecting the average young beginner student to master polyrhythm quite yet. He realizes their capabilities, and is aware that they may not be able to do this; however, this is an important concept that nonetheless should be covered as it foreshadows what students may find in the supplemental pieces he provides in the third section of the volume.

In addition to what Hummel proposes, I have found two methods particularly helpful in teaching this polyrhythm to students. The first approach is to have them say “together-left-right-left” or “together-right-left-right,” out loud while simultaneously tapping the correct hand on the piano fallboard or in their lap. Once they drill this with me multiple times, I then have them try playing the given passage. The second method is identical to the first but involves using popular song associations instead of saying “together-left-right-left.” For example, I have students say the opening lyrics to Carol of the Bells, while they tap on the fallboard: “Hark (together) - How (right) - the (left) - Bells (right).” This second approach especially works for younger students, who may still have difficulty telling their right and left hand apart.

4. Various Subdivisions: “Capricious Rhythms”

Hummel discusses even more ways to subdivide the beat in this section by introducing the student to “capricious rhythms” or the groupings of an odd number of notes per beat. He specifically covers groups of five, seven, and nine, and observes that instances of these rhythms are particularly evident and most commonly found in “embellished” slower movements of works by many of his contemporaries. Hummel’s

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174 If a student is ready to play this rhythm, I would suggest having them try Hummel’s example no. 14 (right hand triplets, and left hand duple) and no. 15 (left hand triplets, right hand duple) from his twenty practical examples for extra reinforcement, 32.

175 Ibid., 27.
final three exercises from his twenty practical examples, Nos. 18-20 (Examples 25-27), offer practice for playing five note groupings, seven note groupings, and nine note groupings.

Example 25. Groups of Five Notes, Exercise No. 18 from Hummel’s Twenty Practical Examples. ¹⁷⁶

![Example 25](image1)

Example 26. Groups of Seven Notes, Exercise No. 19 from Hummel’s Twenty Practical Examples. ¹⁷⁷

![Example 26](image2)

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 33.
¹⁷⁷ Ibid.
Example 27. Groups of Nine Notes, Exercise No. 20 from Hummel’s Twenty Practical Examples.\textsuperscript{178}

These examples of irregular rhythms prepare students for the lengthy fiorituras that are to come later, a musical element that was so characteristic of Hummel’s musical style, as explained earlier in Part One. Hummel was aware that capricious rhythms with groupings of more notes than he had presented thus far, might be too difficult for the young student. So keeping the child’s age and abilities in mind, he left examples of longer capricious rhythms for later in his treatise. Again, as in the polyrhythm discussion, Hummel tailored certain topics based on the level and capabilities of the young student, presenting them with challenges that are tricky but do-able.

I believe that Hummel’s clarification of capricious rhythms here, can serve as a helpful guide to deciphering embellished melodic passages found in several of Chopin’s works. For example, the end of the first phrase of his Prelude in D-flat Major, Op. 28, No. 15, contains a capricious rhythm of seven notes (Example 28), and Example 29 shows two examples of how teachers can first mathematically explain its division (3+4, or 4+3).

\textsuperscript{178} Ibid.
Hummel explains however, that the student should not perform a group of seven notes in this manner, but rather:

The notes should be played ... so perfectly equal, rounded off, and connected, that not the least separation or pause shall be perceptible, and the performer must not finish the group sooner or later than the time required.  

His reasoning for avoiding groupings of 3+4 or 4+3 is that the composer would have written it one of those ways if that is what they intended. In order to make such a passage sound fluid as Hummel describes and not rigid or calculated, rubato is mandatory here. While I do agree with what Hummel has to say in terms of performing such passages—they should sound like one smooth vocal line—this is the final stage of polishing a


Example 29. Hummel’s Approach to Decipher Groups of Seven Notes.  

In order to make such a passage sound fluid as Hummel describes and not rigid or calculated, rubato is mandatory here. While I do agree with what Hummel has to say in terms of performing such passages—they should sound like one smooth vocal line—this is the final stage of polishing a

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180 Ibid., 27.

181 Ibid.
capricious rhythm. Breaking up the seven-note group as seen in Example 29, can initially help students successfully play these passages with hands together. As with Hummel’s polyrhythmic example, after the student is comfortable enough with this way of playing over time, the rigidness or “bumps” in the melodic line will be eliminated.

*Finger Independence and Strength*

Hummel places great emphasis on technique in his conclusion to Volume One, Section Two, by providing a total of six hundred twenty-one finger exercises. These are written in the key of C Major and organized into four units: one hundred seventy-one exercises span the range of a fifth; one hundred forty-five, a sixth; sixty, a seventh; and two hundred forty-one, an octave. They all serve the sole purpose of helping pupils develop stronger, independent fingers. Hummel’s requirement for all beginners is to complete the first unit that spans the interval of a fifth. Students can only move on to larger interval units if their hands are big enough to comfortably reach those intervals.

Usually one measure long, these exercises are written in treble clef with the right hand fingerings on top and left hand fingerings on the bottom, below the staff. All four units follow a very similar structure. They each present two blocked chords placed before the first exercise (typically dominant and tonic chords, as can be seen in Example 30) that show the range of all examples in a given section (see Figures 30-33).
Example 30. Unit One—Exercises that Reach a Fifth.\textsuperscript{182}

Example 31. Unit Two—Exercises that Reach a Sixth.\textsuperscript{183}

Example 32. Unit Three—Exercises that Reach a Seventh.\textsuperscript{184}

\textsuperscript{182} Ibid., 34.
\textsuperscript{183} Ibid., 40.
\textsuperscript{184} Ibid., 44.
Example 33. Unit Four—Exercises that Reach an Octave.\textsuperscript{185}

Additionally, the exercises occur mainly in triplet groupings of eighth notes or sixteenth notes, or in four sixteenth notes per beat. The first few examples always start on the tonic, while the next few begin on different scale degrees (Examples 34 and 35), and so on and so forth.

Example 34. Unit One, Exercise No. 22—Beginning with the Third Scale Degree.\textsuperscript{186}

Example 35. Unit One, Exercise No. 38—Beginning with the Fifth Scale Degree.\textsuperscript{187}

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{185} Ibid., 46.
\item \textsuperscript{186} Ibid., 35.
\item \textsuperscript{187} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
Students know that they are approaching the end of a unit when they reach the “in several parts section” (Example 36). I interpret this as Hummel’s form of reward for the students after they have gone through an extensive amount of five-finger pattern work. The “in several parts” sections feature two or more voices in each hand, and musically-speaking, sound more interesting than preceding exercises. These also provide some technical challenges, such as having to hold an inner voice in one hand while the other fingers play repeated notes, etc. (see Nos. 163-168 in Example 36).

Example 36. Unit One—“In Several Parts,” Exercise Nos. 157-171.\textsuperscript{188}

Hummel instructs students to practice exercises in each unit hands alone first, and then hands together until “they are played without effort and with the requisite roundness

\textsuperscript{188} Ibid., 39.
Additionally, he requires students to play these examples using a hand guide, specifically Johann Bernhard Logier’s chiroplast, which was a relatively new and popular device at the time (Figure 14). Logier’s chiroplast was a, “sliding wooden frame that [places] the wrist, thumb and fingers of a hand above five consecutive white keys.” Hummel claimed that using this device would keep the hands “perfectly still, [allowing fingers to move] with freedom and facility without being lifted up from the keys.”

Figure 14. A Chiroplast (Patented in 1814).

The use of the chiroplast to aid technical development has been a long debated and controversial topic. By using this device, the student omits the use of the arm and relies only on finger work and wrist action. This goes against modern day principles of piano playing, as it can cause serious tension and injury. While we do not have our

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189 Hummel, 34.
190 To see how this device works, please refer to pianist Natalia Strelchenko’s 2011 lecture recital series videos, “Evolution of Keyboard Technique,” on Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gmpDvTeSZ8I, February, 2014.
191 Hummel, 34.
students use the chiroplast as Hummel instructs, I still believe that these six hundred twenty-one examples hold pedagogical merit by themselves without the use of such a device. Even if the young student is only ready to complete the first unit because of their small hands, the benefits of playing these exercises include strengthening each finger independently, recognition of various five finger patterns (especially ones starting on any given scale degree), basic tonic and dominant chord recognition, and greater emphasis on intervallic reading, which will in turn help improve a student’s sight reading skills.

**Conclusion—Making Connections**

As with the first section, compared to modern methods, Hummel’s approach helps the students learn material at a faster pace. Hummel provides students with all the tools they need to work with in order to understand more challenging pieces (later elementary to intermediate levels). His Piano School allows students to learn both major and minor five finger patterns sooner, which is evident at the end of Section One. As taken from the concluding section of this area, in addition to the four five-finger patterns presented in Section One (C Major, G Major, D Minor, and A Minor), Section Two introduces the following new ones: D Major, A Major, E Major, F Major, B-flat Major, E-flat Major, G minor, C Minor, and F Minor. Since the student is familiar with a variety of five-finger patterns due to Hummel’s approach, learning five-finger pattern-oriented pieces such as Johann Friedrich Burgmüller’s *Arabesque* Op. 100, No. 2 (Example 37), and David Karp’s *Fire Dance* (Example 38) will be much easier, because they can recognize and identify these major and minor patterns from having already played them. This will
ultimately help the student gain a better theoretical and musical understanding of such passages, and learn these works relatively quickly. These are two pieces that I frequently teach, and prior to playing these works, I always ask students to identify however many patterns they can, as shown in Examples 37 and 38. The five-finger patterns in Arabesque are more easily recognizable than the ones in Fire Dance because they start on the first scale degree, with the exception of the left hand in section B, in mm. 12, 14 and 15, which starts on the third scale degree of each five-finger pattern. Additionally, transposing selected exercises from Hummel’s one hundred seventy-one five-finger pattern exercises that correspond to particular passages in given pieces, can aid young students in achieving strong independent fingers, and help them recognize any five-finger pattern, in any form, as some exercises begin on different scale degrees.\textsuperscript{194}

\textsuperscript{194} Faber, Piano Adventures, Lesson Book 1, 62-63.
Example 37. Burgmüller, Arabesque, Op. 100 No. 2, mm. 1-17.¹⁹⁵

Example 38. Example 44, David Karp, Fire Dance.  

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Hummel’s exercise No. 137 (Example 39) correlates to *Arabesque*, specifically the right-hand opening motif in the A section (see Example 37, m. 3).

Example 39. Exercise No. 137 from Hummel’s 171 Five-Finger Patterns.\(^{197}\)

I would suggest having the student transpose Hummel’s exercise No. 137 to the five-finger patterns outlined in the right hand alone for section A. In other words, the student would play No. 137 each time the right hand changes a five-finger pattern position, in the following order: No. 137 in A Minor (Example 38 corresponds to mm. 3-4); then the right hand moves up to D Minor, and student transposes No. 137 to D Minor (Example 43, m. 5); and finally, the right hand moves up to A minor (m. 6), and the student transposes the No. 137 pattern again in A minor. By doing this, students will be less likely to play the sixteenth-note motifs unevenly and will also be able to play transitions to each five finger pattern smoothly; in my experience, both are problem areas with which students tend to struggle.

The same approach used in *Arabesque* can be applied to *Fire Dance*. Hummel’s exercise Nos. 145, 146, and 147 (Examples 40 and 41), which start on the third scale degree three, can all be applied to *Fire Dance*, in the same way that was done in the previous work.

\(^{197}\) Ibid, 38.
Example 40. Exercise No. 145 from Hummel’s 171 Five-Finger Patterns.¹⁹⁸

Example 41. Exercise Nos. 146 and 147 from Hummel’s 171 Five-Finger Patterns.¹⁹⁹

Fire Dance is a popular piece that I have taught just as many times as I have Arabesque. In the key of D Minor, its main theme starts on the third scale degree of the D-Minor five-finger pattern (Example 42).

Example 42. Main Theme of David Karp’s Fire Dance, mm. 9-12.²⁰⁰

Hummel’s corresponding exercises will help students successfully play the abundance of five-finger pattern changes throughout, especially in one of the hardest passages at the end of section B (Example 43), which has both hands shifting positions in chromatic

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.
¹⁹⁹ Ibid.
²⁰⁰ Karp, Fire Dance, 2-3.
descending motion to the following positions: E-flat, D Major, D-flat Major, C Major, B Major, B-flat Major, A Major.

Example 43. David Karp, Fire Dance, Section B. mm. 29-32.²⁰¹

Because the hands move frequently in this particular passage, transposing Hummel’s exercises to the patterns outlined would be particularly beneficial in terms of executing smooth transitions and correct articulation. I have found this to be the most difficult passage for students, because it shifts hand positions so frequently, and in fear of losing their spot and missing notes, students use incorrect articulation and fingering here, often playing this passage as if it were under one long slur. I believe that transposing Hummel’s exercises will help students familiarize themselves with each new five-finger pattern and automatically lift the hands in between each little motif in the descending sequence.

Hummel’s exercises are effective in that they create a strong, solid foundation in a student’s technique from the very beginning of their piano studies. Exercises from Section Two specifically help students develop supported, independent fingers. They also help with sight-reading skills, as the various scale combinations serve as a kind of test of

²⁰¹ Ibid.
intervallic recognition. This theoretical understanding and experience of playing as many five-finger patterns and their variations as possible as outlined in Hummel’s exercises, will help the student understand, recognize and identify key signatures easily, and prepare them for the one octave scale. As five-finger patterns are the building blocks of a one octave scale and in many regards the building blocks of all pieces, the more quickly students can identify these, the faster they can learn a piece and expand their repertoire list.

SECTION THREE

Hummel’s third and final part of Volume One covers nine main components: introducing half-sept intervals; constructing one octave scales; key signatures; order of scales; time signatures (simple and compound meters); the basics of counting and conducting; a glossary of expressive musical and tempo terminology; sixty practical exercises; and a supplemental chapter that contains a graded list of repertoire for young students at the beginning, intermediate, and early advanced levels.

Introducing Intervals: The Half Step

Unlike authors of current method books, Hummel begins his discussion of intervals with the half step, which he calls a semitone. What I found unusual is that he offers two types of classifications of the half step, corresponding to how they appear on the staff. The two scenarios presented are: major or diatonic half step, and the minor or chromatic half step. The major (diatonic) half step occurs between two consecutive notes that are a step apart on the staff (an interval of a second) and may contain marks of transposition next to the notes (Example 44). The minor (chromatic) half step occurs
between two consecutive notes on the same line or space on the staff, where one of the
two has a marking of transposition next to it (Example 45).

Example 44. Major or Diatonic Half Step. \(^{202}\)

Example 45. Minor or Chromatic Half Step. \(^{203}\)

Hummel’s detailed explanation on this subject to demonstrate differences in how
half steps can appear on the staff. Hummel’s approach, if incorporated in students’
lessons, will introduce students to marks of transposition much sooner. I am not aware of
any other method book that introduces half steps in this way, but seeing as the half step is
the basis of building any type of scale, be it a pentachord, or one-octave scale, I would
argue that it may be worth re-evaluating how we teach this concept to students.

**Constructing One Octave Scales without Key Signature Knowledge**

Understanding the small interval of a half step in two ways with both chromatic
and diatonic function, perhaps explains the terms diatonic and chromatic when applied to
scales. Hummel’s detailed explanation in regards to the half-step distinction clarified for

\(^{202}\) Ibid., 53.
\(^{203}\) Ibid.
me how I can explain what the terms diatonic and chromatic really mean. I have tended to refer to half-steps solely as chromatic, and use chromatic and diatonic half-steps interchangeably. However, there should be a distinction here, because of the way these half steps appear on the staff.

This knowledge is important for students to understand how to construct both major and minor scales, without even knowing the key signatures yet. Hummel introduces a major scale, using C Major as the model, and its formula of whole-steps (W) and half-steps (H): W-W-H-W-W-W-H.

A practical exercise that Hummel instructs teachers to do is to write out a blank scale canvas (one-octave range) and have students add in appropriate marks of transposition. He claims that by doing this, students will “acquire a knowledge of the signature proper to any given key, and will abstain from employing a false succession of notes, through the use of their ears only.” I have experienced students trying to get by with playing scales just by using their ears. They think that this is acceptable, but the theoretical knowledge is important here. By simply relying on the ear, the student is uncertain of the scale they are playing and are merely guessing what comes next, which is a bad habit.

Doing this written activity is a great precursor to understanding what is in a given key signature, as the student has to figure it out (spell the scale) first based solely on their knowledge of half-steps and whole-steps. Upon constructing a major scale, the student will visually see each scale standing on its own (not everything will be in relationship to the C Major scale) and familiarize themselves with which marks of transposition should

204 Ibid
be attached to particular notes within each scale or key. I suggest applying this same approach to the minor scales and have the student write out all three versions.

Additionally, I also suggest adding one more step to Hummel’s activity to further strengthen a student’s understanding and recognition of scales; once a student writes out the scale of the key of their piece (with help from their teacher, as students at this point do not know key signatures yet), the teacher can test the student’s scalar knowledge by asking them to find any scalar passages of the home key in their music.

Identifying Key Signatures: Major and Minor

Hummel’s approach is very similar to what is in use today. All the major key signatures are taught first, then their relative minors. Hummel also suggests, as many modern methods do, to use the circle of fifths when teaching this concept. Similarly, when it comes to identifying the relative minors, Hummel would have his students start with the home note of the major key and go down a minor third below it to find the relative minor (Figure 15).

Figure 15. All Twenty-Four Major and Minor Key Signatures as They Appear in Hummel’s Treatise.205

205 Ibid., 57.
The Order of Teaching Scales to Students

In order to address in what order students should learn scales, fingerings are provided in Volume Two (Chapter 2 of this essay). In his concluding thoughts on this topic, Hummel suggests that the teacher should instruct the student to play the “easy” scales in the following order: first the major scales—C, G, D, A, F, B-flat, and E-flat—then their relative minors—A, E, F, D, G, and C. He does not even include B Major, or C-sharp Major, which I believe are the easiest scales because of mirrored fingering that occurs between the hands.

While I do not entirely agree with Hummel’s order of “easiest” scales, it is nonetheless interesting to see in what order he would teach scales. Many teachers find it difficult to discover the “right” order to teach scales, and what Hummel offers here is another approach that may be ideal for certain students.

Time Signatures: Simple and Compound Meters

According to Hummel, time is “[the] rhythmic and equal movement in music, [where] our feelings naturally resolve into short and equal measures or portions of duration.” Explaining the concept of time, specifically time signature, to a young beginner can be difficult, and Hummel’s quote beautifully summarizes and defines what time is.

Hummel further explains that time itself is comprised of three requisite parts: time signature, tempo marking, and metronome marking; here, he mentions Maelzel’s

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206 Ibid.
207 Chopin would have students start with this scale.
208 Ibid., Vol. 1, 58.
metronome. He briefly refers to the metronome again when tempo terms are introduced later in this section in his glossary; however, more detailed information regarding tempo and corresponding metronome markings is presented in Volume Three (Chapter 3).

In regard to time signatures, Hummel explains that there are three kinds of time: common (“even”), triple (“odd”), and compound. Common times (e.g., 4/4, 2/4, 2/2) and triple times (e.g., 3/4, 3/2, 3/8) are both classified as what many theory books today call “simple” meter, meaning that each beat in a measure can be divided into two parts; e.g., in 4/4 time, the quarter note is equivalent to one beat and is subdivided into two eighth notes, thus amounting to a total of four beats per measure. Compound times or meters (e.g., 6/8, 6/4, 9/8, 9/4, 12/8, etc.) have the beat divided into three parts; e.g., in 6/8 time, the dotted quarter note is equivalent to one beat.

I have found teaching compound meter to be confusing for the student to understand, especially if we explain compound meter similarly to the manner in which lesson books introduce simple meter. In simple meter, the rule is that top number indicates how many beats there are per measure, and the bottom number indicates what kind of note is equivalent to one beat. While this approach is not incorrect, there is also another layer to this that is missing, and not sufficiently clarified enough in contemporary method books today. When introducing 6/8 time in Lesson Book 3A, Piano Adventures does not call this compound meter, but it does present the idea of feeling this pulse in two larger beats, not in six individual parts (Figure 16). The only thing lacking here is an

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209 Hummel fully endorsed this relatively new device at the time, which was patented in 1816 by Johann Nepomuk Maelzel.
explanation clarifying why the student has to circle two groups of three eighth notes in the “Rhythm Patterns” exercise; the explanation that the dotted quarter note receives the pulse is missing. That explanation is not present, but referring to Hummel’s commentary on the subject can help fill in this missing definition.

Figure 16. Compound Duple Meter. Piano Adventures, Lesson Book 3A.\textsuperscript{210}
By definition, the word “compound” means to be comprised of several parts. In Figure 17, Hummel shows that compound meters are doubled, tripled, or quadrupled versions of simple triple meters. Therefore, explaining the concept of compound meter to our students will be comprised of more than one step.

Figure 17. Compound Meters Defined by Hummel. 211

There are two steps involved in defining compound meter: first is the smaller scale approach (this shows what Hummel calls “parts of the bar”), and the second is a larger scale approach or the final step that shows capital divisions in a measure. Both of these steps are found in Hummel’s diagrams of several compound meters which could be helpful reference points for piano teachers and students (See Figure 18-20.)

Figure 18. Compound Duple Meter: 6/4. 212

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211 Ibid., 60.  
212 Ibid., 61.
The first step used to explain compound meter is the same approach that was used to explain 4/4 time, where the top number tells us that there are four beats per measure, and the bottom number indicates that the quarter-note gets the beat. So for 6/8 time, this would suggest that there are six beats per measure and that the eighth note (8 on the bottom) receives the beat. This explanation for compound meters only shows the smallest scale or “mathematical layout” of parts per bar.

The final step clarifies why a particular meter is in fact compound, but it is often omitted in method books. However, the six eighth notes should not however be treated as the beat note. The eighth-note represents the subdivision of the beat, or “capital division”
as Hummel calls it. So knowing that the capital division in compound meters is subdivided into three parts, these six parts of the bar are therefore grouped into two groups of three eighth notes. This is why 6/8 is felt in a pulse of two, and the dotted quarter note (not eighth note) receives the beat. So rather than counting “1-2-3-4-5-6,” to truly understand compound meter, students should count, “1-and-a, 2-and-a.”

Additionally, Hummel’s diagrams of simple and compound meters also show where the strong and weak beats occur in each case, as seen in Figures 21, 22, and 23 (in which a = accented beat, u = unaccented beat). This notion can help students understand compound meter better, or any meter for that matter.

Figure 21. Simple Duple Meter: 2/4.\textsuperscript{215}

![Figure 21. Simple Duple Meter: 2/4.](image)

Figure 22. Simple Quadruple Meter: 4/4.\textsuperscript{216}

![Figure 22. Simple Quadruple Meter: 4/4.](image)

\textsuperscript{215} Ibid., 60.
\textsuperscript{216} Ibid., 61.
Counting and Conducting

In addition to teaching simple and compound time signatures theoretically, often today’s piano teachers find themselves in a dilemma about how to put this into practice and how to teach students to keep a steady pulse. Hummel provides two solutions: counting and conducting. Even prior to using the metronome, Hummel believes that counting and conducting are two key elements that will solidify a student’s rhythmic foundation. In order for students to fully understand the concept of time in music and apply this theoretical knowledge to their own pieces, they need to be able to count out loud while they play. This is a challenging task even for more experienced beginners.

When it comes to counting, Hummel suggests that students count the subdivisions of the beats, especially in slower movements of multi-movement works. For example, Hummel would have a young beginner count “1-2, 1-2” in a passage in 4/4 time that features eighth notes as the lowest subdivision.\footnote{\textsuperscript{218}}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{217} Ibid., 62.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{218} Using this same example of successive eighth notes (a common modern approach would be to count each beat as, “1-and, 2-and, etc,” I have used both of these approaches (mainly the latter), however I found that Hummel’s is well suited for the young beginner who may initially be struggling with the concept of counting the beat and its subdivision as “1- and.”}
Before having my students play and count out loud at the same time, I instruct them to give a two-bar count off in these subdivisions (be it “1-2” or “1 and”). What sometimes ends up happening while they are counting out loud and playing at the same time is that they equate the eighth-note value to the quarter note, so that there is no subdivision distinction (e.g. a student would incorrectly play two quarter notes for “1-and”). A count off will more likely ensure rhythmic stability and precision. Once students have successfully mastered counting subdivisions, they can then proceed to count in bigger pulses (1, 2, 3, etc.). At this moment they may be ready to try conducting.

Conducting will help clarify where and why certain beats are accented. Even though this idea of accented and unaccented beats is introduced to our students in principle, I have found that when requested to identify stronger beats or weaker beats in their pieces, students struggle to answer. This confusion seems to be mainly linked to common times, specifically those with four beats per measure. The general rule here, is that the first pulse is accented and subsequent ones unaccented. Referring to Hummel’s conducting diagrams shows us not only how to conduct, but again, where the accented and unaccented notes occur in a given time signature (see Figures 24, 25, and 26). When conducting in 4/4 time, the student move their arm in such a way that will accent the first beat the most, and the third beat slightly. This will help students understand simple and compound meters and the concept of accented and unaccented beats.
Figure 24. Conducting Meters in Two Beats.\textsuperscript{219}

![Figure 24](image)

Figure 25. Conducting Meters in Four Beats.\textsuperscript{220}

![Figure 25](image)

Figure 26. Conducting Meters in Three Beats.\textsuperscript{221}

![Figure 26](image)

\textsuperscript{219} Ibid., 63
\textsuperscript{220} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{221} Ibid. While Hummel includes $6/4$ and $6/8$ in the “times to be given out by four beats,” he clarifies in a foot note that these ought to be counted off in beats of two, rather than beats of four.
Music Symbols Defined

Here Hummel lists a variety of symbols found in music and defines them. In the beginning of this section, he introduces markings of articulation, specifically the slur and staccato. These markings are also introduced at the very beginning of Piano Adventures Lesson Book 1, Unit 1 (pp. 10 and 14 respectively).

While a stress has always been put from the beginning on how to play legato properly in many modern-day methods, the emphasis placed on how to correctly execute staccato articulation seems to be less. As in Hummel’s treatise, modern methods define staccato as a light, detached sound marked by the dot over or under a note head. Piano Adventures, Lesson Book 1, introduces the staccato articulation in a short study piece called, “Mexican Jumping Beans.” When teaching the concept of staccato playing to a student, I have used sayings such as “bouncing off the key like a jumping bean” and “lifting the finger off the key quickly” similar to what is presented in Lesson Book 1, in the hopes of effectively explaining this. However, upon further reflection, the “bouncing off” description does not always work in having the student play staccatos correctly. The notion of “jumping off the key” can cause the student to merely brush, pet, or stroke it (barely making a sound), because they are trying so hard to replicate a “jump” too high above the key. This results in the student’s arm making a quick and tense upward jolting motion, or an over exaggerated gesture that may lock the wrist, cause tension in the forearm, and ultimately lead to the start of a bad habit.

222 Faber, Lesson Book One,14.
When it comes to specifically explaining how to play staccato, Hummel’s approach is somewhat contrary to modern-day terminology as he emphasizes the “inward direction” of playing staccatos. He says that:

The keys are to be struck smartly by the fingers and [lifted] immediately, without lifting up the hand too far...[The fingers must be] hurried away from the keys, very lightly and in an inward direction.²²³

When teaching staccato to students, popular modern-day terms like “bouncing” and “jumping,” could be used but greater focus should be placed on emphasizing the inward motion (dropping down to the bottom of the key) that Hummel describes as well.

_Hummel’s Glossary of Musical Terms_

Hummel’s glossary of terms associated with tempo, character, dynamics and other instructional indications are what he believes to be required for the student to know, as they will encounter many of these terms in the final section of his volume in his sixty practical pieces. This is a useful reference guide for both teachers and students.²²⁴

Various tempi are described here, and Hummel places these terms in order from slowest to fastest. He also adds words that indicate the mood, character, or affect of a given term. Tempo and affect go hand in hand in Hummel’s case, yet we rarely see it in method books today when tempo terms are introduced. For example, “Grave” and “Largo,” two of the slowest tempi, are associated with words such as slow, solemn, serious, and measured (Figure 27).

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²²³ Hummel, 65.
²²⁴ Ibid., 68-72.
Included in this section is also “Andantino,” a tempo that has long been a topic of debate, and whether it signifies a tempo that is little faster or a little slower than “Andante.” Hummel associates it with, “gently moving onwards,” and in his term list, he places it in between “Adagio” and “Andante." He belonged to the group of composers who believed that “Andantino” is slower than “Andante.” This is also acknowledged in a footnote from his treatise, where he states that “many Authors assign a quicker degree of movement to the Andantino, than to the Andante; but this is incorrect, for it is evident that Andantino is the diminutive of the original word Andante, and therefore that it implies a less degree of movement than it.”

The only topics that Hummel does not define in this section that I think would be beneficial for both student and teacher are the terms of titles of works, especially dances, that one may encounter in his sixty practical pieces: air, minuet, jig, scherzo, etc. If I

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225 Ibid., 68.
226 Ibid, 69.
were to add anything to this glossary of terms, it would be various dances or dance movements, and perhaps different genres students may study in the future (e.g. sonatina and sonata; concerto; theme and variations; bagatelle, etc). He uses terminology in some of his sixty practical pieces that are not included, so their definitions should be provided.

_Sixty Practical Examples_

Hummel’s conclusion, the sixty practical pieces, encompass all topics covered thus far. Unlike examples in previous sections, each one has a key signature, that does not exceed six flats (No. 55 is in E-flat Minor) or six sharps (No. 44 is in F-sharp Major). The majority of the practical examples are, however, in the keys of what Hummel deems to be the easiest scales: C, G, D, A, F, B-flat and E-flat Major, and A, E, F, D, G, C Minor. Each example also includes a time signature; tempo and affect; and markings of articulation, dynamics, instructional markings (e.g., including repeat signs). Additionally, some even have titles. No. 5 is an _Air Russe_ (Example 46), No. 11 is based on _God Save the King_ (Example 47), No. 40, is a _Jig_ (Example 48), No. 54 is a set of Theme and three Variations called “Tyrolienne Grazioso,” (Example 49); No. 58 is a Chorale or German Psalm Tune (Example 50); and No. 59 is called “To Alexis” (Example 51).
Example 46. Hummel’s Example No. 5: Air Russe, from His Sixty Practical Pieces. 227

Example 47. Hummel’s Example No. 11: Arrangement of “God Save the King,” from His Sixty Practical Pieces. 228

227 Ibid., 74.
228 Ibid., 75.
Example 48. Hummel's Example No. 40: Jig, from His Sixty Practical Pieces.\textsuperscript{229}

Example 49. Hummel's Example No. 54: Theme and Three Variations, Tyrolienne Grazioso, from His Sixty Practical Pieces.\textsuperscript{230}

\textsuperscript{229} Ibid., 86.
\textsuperscript{230} Ibid., 99-101.
Example 50. Hummel’s Example No. 58: Chorale, from His Sixty Practical Pieces.\textsuperscript{231}

Example 51. Hummel’s Example No. 59: “To Alexis,” from His Sixty Practical Pieces.\textsuperscript{232}

These works are not grouped in any particular way or organized in a strict order. They are merely a potpourri of examples that reinforce various concepts addressed in Section three. Even though the first and last examples are in the same key, F Major, there

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{231} Ibid., 104.
\item \textsuperscript{232} Ibid., 105.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}

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is no consistent key relationship grouping or scheme such as ordering examples in the circle of fifths. Sometimes there will be pairs of successive examples that have a parallel or relative major/minor relationship (e.g., Example Nos. 33 and 34, which are in D Major and D Minor respectively, and Nos. 37 and 38, which are in E-flat Major, and C Minor). However, this is not consistent throughout.

Generally, the examples tend to get longer, and progressively harder, as Hummel adds more concepts to these (e.g., complex note values, rhythms, ties, dots, or dynamic range), especially starting around example No. 37, where the examples begin to sound more like pieces that can be performed. In fact, the majority of these works are included in a popular collection by the Editio Musica Budapesta (EMB) Musical Expeditions series, entitled, Hummel: Easy Piano Pieces, published in 2012. Works taken from Hummel’s sixty practical examples featured in this collection include Nos. 37, 40, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60.

Students can benefit from Hummel’s sixty pieces, especially in terms of strengthening their overall musical, technical, and theoretical understanding. In addition to treating these as sight-reading examples, the following discussion treats three other possible ways that teachers today can incorporate them into a student’s piano study.

1. **Treating Them as Challenge Pieces**

Teachers may have the student play all of these examples in order, presenting them as challenge pieces, perhaps focusing on one or two per week. These serve the purpose of helping a student master any random combination of concepts taken from Volume One, through encountering them in these examples.
Hummel’s sixty practical exercises can be thought of as little “analytical scavenger hunts” that both test and reinforce topics covered in the first Volume. Two steps can be involved in the process of learning each example. First, the student identifies the title (if there is one), key signature, time signature, tempo, and terms, dynamics, symbols, rhythmic note and rest values, the smallest rhythmic subdivision, and any other special characteristics of the piece. The second, and final step involves having the student take on the task of playing the challenge piece.

For example, a student who has just been presented with Hummel’s first practical piece (Example 52) should be able to identify and take note of the basic features: it is marked, “Allegro Moderato,” the example does not have a title, it is in the key of F Major and in common time (quadruple simple meter), and only includes quarter notes, quarter rests, and two-note slurs; there are no dynamic markings present.

Example 52. Hummel’s Example No. 1, from His Sixty Practical Pieces.233

![Example 52. Hummel’s Example No. 1](image)

Once ready to move on to the second piece (Example 53), the student will observe that like the first, it is also marked “Allegro Moderato,” lacks a title, is in the key of D Minor (the relative minor key of the previous example) and in common time, but contains more concepts from Volume One, including quarter rests, eighth notes and eighth rests, half

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233 Ibid., 73.
notes, dotted half note and a whole note, ties, slurs, accent markings, and dynamic markings (forte, piano and crescendo).

Example 53. Hummel’s Example No. 2, from His Sixty Practical Pieces.\textsuperscript{234}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example53.png}
\caption{Hummel’s Example No. 2, from His Sixty Practical Pieces.}
\end{figure}

This first step of analysis can be applied to each challenge piece the student learns. Additionally, certain examples can also be used as a means of reviewing particular concepts like: syncopation practice in No. 53 measures 3, and 6-7 (Example 54), and dotted rhythmic practice in No. 28 (Example 55).

\textsuperscript{234} Ibid.
Example 54. Syncopation Practice, Hummel’s Example No. 53.\textsuperscript{235}

Example 55. Dotted Rhythms, Hummel’s Example No. 28.\textsuperscript{236}

Seeing as the student’s first acquaintance with the piece is based on theoretical knowledge alone, it is required for the second step, because once a student begins learning how to play the example, they already have an awareness of what details and musical instructions are present. This awareness will therefore help students execute these details more naturally in their playing—the ultimate goal of polishing a piece.

\textsuperscript{235} Ibid. 97.
\textsuperscript{236} Ibid., 80.
Hummel addresses this very process and stresses the importance of identifying features in the score before the student starts learning a piece, because, “by doing so, his fingers will insensibly acquire the power of delicate and refined expression, combined with such a degree of strength [that] will greatly contribute towards forming a fine style of playing.”

In my teaching various pieces, be they from the lesson book, or a supplemental book, etc.), I find that students frequently omit or skim past details in their repertoire and simply strive to only play the notes correctly, more or less, and in the fastest tempo possible. Having student go through the process of both analyzing and playing Hummel’s practical pieces will enforce a good habit of naturally applying this approach to their current repertoire.

2. Warm-ups for Student’s Current Repertoire of Study

These examples could potentially function as warm-up exercises for a student’s repertoire that involve similar passages or concepts. This is especially the case for students at the late elementary or early intermediate levels, who are ready to play early Baroque works that contain imitation between the hands. Hummel’s example No. 25 in F-sharp Minor (Example 56) may serve not only as an appropriate introduction to explaining what a canon is to a student, but it can also be a good transposition exercise for any minor-key piece that has canon-like passages.

\[237\] Ibid., 68.
Example 56. Hummel’s Example No. 25 in F-sharp Minor.238

Going through the process of playing selected practical pieces as warm-ups for current repertoire of studied, and transposing them to the key of that repertoire, offers the student not only transposition practice, and a familiarization of Baroque imitation style as well, which will eventually prepare them for more difficult works such as Bach’s Two-Part Inventions.

3. “Fun” Supplemental Material

Hummel explains that there needs to be a balance in terms of the types of repertoire a student studies, especially for the young beginner. A well-rounded variety of repertoire is ideal, in order for the student to have an enjoyable experience in their piano studies and to prevent them from being bored.239 This balance entails incorporating popular works or melodies students would recognize, in addition to the staple works and exercises they are required to practice.

This idea is implemented in many method books today, which include arrangements of popular tunes not only in the lesson books themselves, but also in supplemental popular repertoire and performance books. For example, in the Piano

238 Ibid., 79.
Adventures series, the Premier lesson book features the main theme from Beethoven’s “Ode to Joy” and some traditional American folk tunes such as “Old Mac Donald” and “Mary Had a Little Lamb.” The Primer level supplemental performance book includes other popular folk tunes such as “Are you Sleeping,” and “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.”240 In his sixty practical examples, Hummel includes at least two recognizable tunes in Nos. 11, and 30, that students today are very likely to recognize.241 Arrangements of the melodies used in both Hummel’s examples also appear in the Piano Adventures series lesson books.

The first popular melody is included in No. 11; it is taken from the United Kingdom’s national anthem, “God Save the King” (see Example 47). This example is a precursor to Hummel’s Theme and Variations in D Major, Op. 10, which is based on this very tune and was published in Vienna in 1804. By the time Hummel composed his Op. 10, this was considered to be the English National Anthem (and it has been since c. 1745).242 It is not surprising that he chose to use this particular melody for his sixty practical pieces, as the English edition of this treatise is dedicated to King George IV, the king of England at the time.

In 1831, six years before Hummel’s death, the tune from “God Save the King,” was also used for a newly recognized American patriotic song, under a different title, “My Country ‘Tis of Thee,” with Samuel Francis Smith’s lyrics adapted for it.243 Like Hummel, the Piano Adventures series includes an arrangement of the song at the very

240 Faber, Piano Adventures, Primer Level Lesson and Performance books.
241 As a side note: students that I have taught works to, have recognized the original melodies.
243 Ibid.
end of Lesson Book 2B (Example 57). However, here the piece is called, “This Is My Planet Earth.” The first verse uses different lyrics, but the second verse quotes the opening of “My Country ‘Tis of Thee.” In the nineteenth-century, and now, this is a popular tune, like Beethoven’s “Ode to Joy,” that is widely recognized on a global scale, and students will be more prone to enjoy playing it because it is perhaps something they already know.

Example 57. “This is My Planet Earth,” Faber Piano Adventures, Lesson Book 2B.244

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244 Faber, Piano Adventures, Lesson Book 2B: Unit 8, 46-47.
The second practical piece, No. 30 (Example 58), is based on one of the oldest harmonic progressions, used since the Baroque period: the circle of fifths progression (i – iv – VII – III – VI – ii – V – i).

Example 58. Hummel’s Example No. 30: Circle of Fifths Progression.²⁴⁵

I believe students today would recognize this as it sounds like the famous jazz staple that uses the circle of fifths progression, “Autumn Leaves” (Example 59).²⁴⁶ Hummel’s example resembles this tune, not only because of the harmonic scheme, but also because the ascending melodic motive sounds quite similar to or is almost an exact the melody in “Autumn Leaves.”

²⁴⁵ Hummel, Vol. 1, 80.
In the final book of the *Piano Adventures* series, Lesson Book 5, a piece called, “Autumn Ballad,” is used to introduce the circle of fifths harmonic chord progression (Example 60). This piece is based on, “Autumn Leaves.”

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Example 60. “Autumn Ballad,” Faber Piano Adventures, Lesson Book 5.248

If students need a challenge with these fun pieces found in their lesson books, or just a different way of playing them, Hummel’s versions of “God Save the King” and “Autumn Leaves” would be particularly useful.

Be it serving the purpose of a simple etude-like challenge, a warm-up and transposition exercise for a two-part invention, or a challenging yet fun piece based on a recognizable tune, Hummel’s sixty examples do serve a practical purpose, one that

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248 Faber, Piano Adventures, Lesson Book 5, Unit 3, 24.
challenges students in various ways and instills strong fundamental theoretical, technical and musicianship skills, creating a well-rounded young musician.

**Conclusion—Supplemental Chapter**

Following the conclusion of Volume One, Hummel provides a supplemental chapter that features a list of graded pieces for three different levels: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. He includes works by contemporaries and keyboard composers that came slightly before him. Hummel suggests that teachers assign these pieces while students study the sixty practical exercises.

Upon completing Volume One, young beginners of Hummel’s Piano School, should be able to play the works listed in Figure 28. The level of these pieces correlates to those found in the final book of the *Piano Adventures* series, Lesson Book 5. For example, not only does *Piano Adventures* include the third movement of Muzio Clementi’s Sonatina Op. 36, No. 1—a piece that Hummel refers to in list—but it also features other works of similar difficulty. Therefore, any student completing either Hummel’s Volume One or a modern day method like *Piano Adventures* should be able to play the repertoire listed.
Figure 28. Hummel’s Graded List of Repertoire for the Beginner.\textsuperscript{249}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{Selection for the Beginner.}
\end{figure}

Since Hummel does not necessarily clarify what specific works should be referred to for certain composers, I have added a few suggestions in Figure 29 (the ‘‘*’’ is an indication of a work or composer mentioned in Hummel’s list and ‘‘***’’ means that it is included in the Piano Adventures series).\textsuperscript{250} For example, in the case of the Kuhlau’s Rondos, Hummel does not list specific works, but the Six Easy Rondos, Op. 40, can be considered.

\textsuperscript{249} Hummel, Vol. 1, 109-110.
\textsuperscript{250} Please note that I have excluded names of composers that do not appear in the IMTA syllabus, or Piano Repertoire Guide by Reid Alexander and Cathy Albergo, as their works are seldom played today. However, I do not discourage piano teachers from teaching works by these composers.
Figure 29. A Clarified Version of Hummel's Graded Repertoire List for Beginners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>A Clarified Version of Hummel’s Graded Repertoire list for the Beginner</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hummel, Johann Nepomuk</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ 6 Pieces faciles (Six Easy Pieces), Op. 42*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Selections from his 60 Practical Examples: Nos. 37, 40, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pleyel, Ignaz</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ 18 Easy Pieces*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dussek, Jan Ladislav</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ 6 Progressive Sonatines, Op. 20 Books 1 and 2*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kuhlau, Friedrich</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Little Rondos*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ 6 Easy Rondos Op. 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ 6 Sonatinas, Op. 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ 3 Sonatinas, Op. 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clementi, Muzio</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Sonatinas Op. 36**, 37, and 38**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Czerny, Carl</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Sonatas and Sonatinas*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ 6 Sonatinas, Op. 163</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To make Hummel’s supplemental guide perhaps more accessible and relevant to teachers today, I also proposed an updated version of a beginner’s repertoire list in Figure 30. Organized into principal genres, I have included additional composers and well-known works that I believe would go well with Hummel’s repertoire guide.

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251 The third movement from Op. 36, No. 1, is included in *Piano Adventures*, Lesson Book 5
Figure 30. A Suggested Updated Version of Hummel’s Repertoire List for Beginners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Updated Version of Hummel’s Repertoire List for Beginners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BAROQUE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bach, Johann Sebastian</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Selections from the Anna Magdalena Notebook (Aria, Meneut in G Major, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Short 18 Preludes (BWV 939, 927, 924, 999, 933)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Prelude in C Major, from WTC Book 1, BWV 846 *252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Couperin, François</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Selected works from his Pieces de Clavecin: The Benevolent Cuckoos, and Le Petite Rien,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scarlatti, Domenico</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Selected Sonatas: K. 73b, K. 88d, K. 83d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BAROQUE STYLE (Modern composers)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gillock, William</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Little Suite in Baroque Style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Karp, David</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lady Margaret’s Suite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sifford, Jason</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Suite in G Major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vandall, Robert</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lady Allyson’s Minuet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CLASSICAL</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beethoven, Ludwig van</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ecossaise in G Major, WoO 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Bagatelles, Op. 119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gurlitt, Cornelius</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Op. 82 (First Steps)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Op. 117 (First Lessons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Haydn, Franz Joseph</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sonata in F Major, Hob. XVI: 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Allegro in B-flat Major, K. 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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252 Included at the very end of Piano Adventures Lesson Book 4, 52-53.
253 Found in Piano Adventures Lesson Book 5, 8-9.
Figure 30. Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROMANTIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Burgmüller, Johann</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chopin, Frédéric</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Preludes Op. 28 (No. 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazurka selections (Op. 24, No. 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waltz in A Minor, Posth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Schumann, Robert</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Album for the Young, Op. 68 (Wild Horseman, Soldier’s March Happy Farmer, First Loss)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenes from Childhood, Op. 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tchaikovsky, Pyotr Illich</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Album for the Young, Op. 39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODERN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bartók, Béla</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Children, Vols. I, II, Sz. 42 (Kitty, Kitty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six Rumanian Folk Dances, Sz. 56 (nos. 2 and 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Debussy, Claude</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Children’s Corner Suite</em> (The Little Shepherd)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kabalevsky, Dmitri</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Pieces, Op. 27 (Toccata)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Pieces for Children, Op. 39 (A Little Joke, Clowns, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Karp, David</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Dance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Linn, Jennifer</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Les Petites Impressions</em> selections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mier, Martha</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just Imagine! Books 1 and 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jazz, Rags and Blues, Book 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Niamath, Linda</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Zoo For You (Penguins)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tansman, Alexandre</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Pour Les Enfants</em> Books 1-4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Hummel suggests that intermediate students study sonatas by Haydn (e.g., Hob XVI: 24), Mozart (e.g. K. 545), and Beethoven (e.g., Op. 49 No. 2). Once the student has progressed to a more advanced level, they are ready to play Clementi’s *Gradus ad Parnassum* and fugal works by Johann Sebastian Bach (e.g. Two-Part Inventions and fugues from the *Well Tempered Clavier*), and George Friederich Handel (e.g., Fuga “Sonatina” in G Major, HWV 582).

Hummel’s graded repertoire guide is perhaps one of the very first examples of a repertoire syllabus. It gives important insight as to what students of various levels might have been studying during the period, quite possibly showing what leading pianists Chopin and Schumann, played during their early piano studies. Some repertoire, such as one of Clementi’s Sonatinas, that was considered a staple part of piano literature in the nineteenth-century, and still remains true to this day. Hummel’s guide reveals the similarities between what beginner, intermediate, and early advanced students studied previously, and what students study today. With its three sections, Volume One covered all the technical and musical skills a student at the intermediate level should acquire; prepared students with the necessary skills for what is presented in the remaining two parts of his treatise. The next two volumes present more advanced concepts for the improving pianist, which can be used to refine their technique and performance style.

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CHAPTER 2: 
Volume Two—Technical Focus

WHOLE SYSTEM OF FINGERING

Unlike the first volume which is more like a method book, the main function of the second volume is solely that of technical focus that deals with fingering and exercises that contain everything the fingers may encounter in music. Hummel begins by addressing the importance of precise and consistent fingering. In a footnote he explains, “I consider this subject ... one of the most important of my treatise, and have endeavored to elucidate it in every possible case rather by numerous examples than by words.”256

When it comes to deciding which fingering to apply in a passage, Hummel considers two factors: convenience and elegance. Convenience is “the choice of those fingers by which all the notes of a given passage may be most easily got at and most intelligently performed,” and elegance “depends upon convenience, and forbids all unpleasant [distortion of the body].”257

This entire volume is dedicated to Hummel’s “whole system of fingering,” which features ten categories or cases related to the subject. Each case includes a series of practical exercises that reflect what Hummel thought to be every kind of possible technical combination known. The purpose of these exercises for each case is that they serve as a guide to help pupils figure out fingerings in similar passages in their repertoire; as further explained by Hummel, Volume Two offers the student, “[a] view to facilitate finding the method of fingering similar passages, when they occur in other

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256 Hummel, Volume 2, 1.
257 Ibid., 1-2.
compositions.\textsuperscript{258} He instructs that the exercises be practiced hands alone first and then hands together. Since Volume Two is mainly a reference guide, I will only briefly present the ten cases found here. Teachers and students can choose from whatever topic they consider to be most beneficial for their particular needs and practice examples within that category.

\textit{Case One: Sequential Patterns}

Hummel presents a total of 234 exercises involving sequential patterns as in Example 61. The largest interval span these exercises reach, is an interval of a tenth.

Example 61. Sequential Pattern Fingerings, Hummel.\textsuperscript{259}

\begin{center}
\textbf{Compass of a Third.} Nb. Fingerings for the right hand.

\textbf{Root of the Passage.} Diatonic succession of groups.

\textbf{Nb. Fingerings for the left hand, to be played an octave lower.}
\end{center}

\textit{Case Two: Thumb Under Other Fingers, or Other Fingers Over the Thumb.}

This includes a total of 286 exercises. Examples 62 and 63, show instances where the thumb is placed under other fingers and other fingers over the thumb. Modern fingerings for chromatic, major and minor scales are all included as seen in Examples 64 and 65. Throughout this section, Hummel shows various combinations of scales which include playing in contrary motion, and in doubled thirds, etc.

\textsuperscript{258} Ibid., 2.
\textsuperscript{259} Ibid., 4.
Example 62. Thumb Under.\textsuperscript{260}

Example 63. Other Finger Over Thumb.\textsuperscript{261}

Example 64. Chromatic Scale Fingering.\textsuperscript{262}

\textsuperscript{260} Ibid., 68.
\textsuperscript{261} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{262} Ibid., 79.
Example 65. Fingerings for the First Fourteen Major and Minor Scales.\textsuperscript{263}

\textsuperscript{263} Ibid., 86.
Case Three: Omitting One or More Fingers

There are 162 examples that omit one or more fingers as shown in Example 66. Hummel says that the omission of one or more fingers, “allows the hand [to] remain quieter, [and] less fatigued [as] the performance is rendered more certain.”

Example 66. Omitting a Finger.

Case Four: Finger Substitution on the Same Key

There are 104 examples dealing with finger substitution. This must be executed in a smooth, gentle manner, where the finger to be substituted takes the key left by the previous finger without any gap in the sound. The top staff of Example 67 illustrates this, as the right-hand plays the same note, using different fingers (e.g., in the first group: F-E-C-E, the right-hand third finger plays the first E, and then the second finger plays the E that follows).

\[\text{\textsuperscript{264} Ibid., 152.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{265} Ibid., 152.}\]
Case Five: Extensions and Skips

Hummel provides sixty examples of extensions and skips. He states that an extension is, “the stretching [of] the fingers and the expansion of the hand.” In relation to the thumb, the most comfortable and natural feeling of extending lies between the thumb and the second finger and then the second and third fingers; it is least comfortable between the fourth and fifth. A key technical reminder for students when playing extensions in order to avoid injury caused by hand tension, is to retract the hand to its natural starting position (resting position) as soon an extension is completed. An extension is often found in arpeggiated passages, and perhaps this would reaffirm modern-day fingering for arpeggios as well, as seen in Example 68 below.

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Example 67. Finger Substitution.

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266 Ibid., 186.
267 Hummel, Volume Two, 209.
268 Ibid., 210. Hummel explains that, “the hand remains so long only in its outstretched position, as the passage to be executed remains required,” as soon as this is finished, “[it] must be restored to its natural position, and the fingers re-assume their usual bent configuration.”
Example 68. Extensions in the Right Hand.\textsuperscript{269}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{example_68.png}
\caption{Example 68. Extensions in the Right Hand.}
\end{figure}

Skips are like extensions, but unlike extensions, which require a legato or smooth connection, notes are detached in Hummel’s definition (Example 69). As with the previous staccato discussion in Volume One, Section Three, the arm should not move too much or too far away from the keys when performing these leaps.

Example 69. The Skip.\textsuperscript{270}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{example_69.png}
\caption{Example 69. The Skip.}
\end{figure}

\textit{Case Six: Use of the Thumb and Pinky on Black Keys}

In a section totaling seventy examples, Hummel begins by stating the fact that in the Baroque period, the avoidance of the thumb was a common notion. However, this was not the case in the nineteenth-century, and he calls the thumb the most important finger because it is the “pivot or point of support” for when the hand contracts or

\textsuperscript{269} Ibid., 209.
\textsuperscript{270} Ibid., 216.
expands. Students should remember the rule that Hummel stresses here in regard to playing five-finger scales on the black keys, especially ones like D-flat, E-flat, G-flat and A-flat, that start and end on black keys: the hand position must be slightly more elevated and more forward into the keys, so that the white keys are struck in between the black keys producing more of an inward motion, into the keys.

**Case Seven: Crossing a Long Finger Over a Shorter One, and Passing a Short Finger Under a Longer One**

There are seventy-five exercises in this section. The third, fourth and fifth fingers are the best choice for the crossing a long finger over a shorter one, particularly in passages with successive octaves where the top notes need to be voiced and connected in the right hand. Finger legato is established with the following fingering for the right hand: 5-4-5-4, etc. Such exercises, like the one in Example 70, could assist in determining fingering for similar passages in Chopin’s and Liszt’s works for example.

Example 70. Crossing a Long Finger Over a Shorter One.

**Case Eight: Changing One or More Fingers on the Same Repeated Key**

Hummel presents a total of 176 examples similar to what is seen in Example 71; e.g., the right-hand uses 2-1 and 3-1 fingerings for repeated notes. He stresses the

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271 Ibid.
272 Ibid., 224.
273 Ibid., 249.
importance of changing the fingering on a repeated note with his many examples of various fingering combinations. This can be helpful in determining the fingering (3-1-3-1...)\textsuperscript{274} for the right hand in the opening of Domenico Scarlatti’s Sonata in D Major, K. 96 (Example 72) and Sonata in D Minor K. 141 (Example 73, fingering: 3-2-1).

Example 71. Changing Fingering on the Same Repeated Note.\textsuperscript{275}

Example 72. Repeated Notes in the Right Hand. Scarlatti Sonata in D Major, K. 96, mm. 33-39.\textsuperscript{276}


\textsuperscript{275} Hummel, Vol 2., 256.

Example 73. Repeated Notes in the Right Hand. Scarlatti, Sonata in D Minor, K. 141, mm. 1-4.\textsuperscript{277}

Case Nine: Placing Hands Over and Under Each Other

There are twenty-four examples that show several instances of hand crossings. One such example (Example 74), shows the left hand crossing over the right hand. This may be a good practice warm up for a student playing the Gigue of Bach’s Partita No.1, BWV 925, where the left hand crosses over the right hand in a similar fashion (Example 75).

Example 74. Hummel, Hand Crossing Exercise No. 20, mm. 1-5.\textsuperscript{278}

http://imslp.eu

\textsuperscript{278} Hummel, Vol. 2, 294.
Example 75. Bach, Gigue from Partita No. 1, BWV 925.279

Case Ten: Distributing Several Parts Between the Two Hands, and Licenses of Fingering in the Strict or Fugue Style

Hummel completes Volume Two with his thoughts on principles involved in playing fugal works, as they present the splitting of melodic subjects between the hands.280 Here he offers a brief discussion on the importance of maintaining “perfect” or correct fingering. Fugues serve as brutal reminders to students regarding the importance of correct fingering. It is worth investing the time to figure out good fingering and stick to it. In some works, students manage to “get by” without staying consistent to the fingering that is written in the score or one that teachers have assigned. However, this bad habit will backfire, especially in the case of complex fugal works.

Hummel includes three fugues as examples (see Examples 76-78), ones that could possibly have been included in Volume One’s supplemental chapter of graded pieces for the advanced student. These works are all in minor keys, and the first is Johann Sebastian Bach’s five-voice fugue in C-sharp Minor from the Well Tempered Clavier Book 1, BWV 849, one of the longer fugues featured. The second, is a four-voice fugue by George Frideric Handel in E Minor which opens his fourth keyboard suite in E Minor,

HW 429. The third and final example is a three-voice fugue in F-sharp Minor by Hummel himself, the last fugue from his Op. 7, Three Fugues. Hummel has provided what he deems to be correct fingering for each example, which will help ensure that the subject is clearly brought out at each entrance.

Example 76. Bach, Five-voice Fugue in C-sharp Minor, Well Tempered Clavier Book 1, BWV 849, mm. 1-13. 281

Example 77. Handel, Four-voice Fugue, Suite in E Minor, HW 429, mm. 1-6. 282

281 Ibid., Vol. 2, 298.
282 Ibid., 302.
Example 78. Hummel, Three-voice Fugue in F-sharp Minor, Op. 7, No. 3, mm. 1-12.\textsuperscript{283}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example.jpg}
\end{center}

\textit{Conclusion–Making Connections}

Even though modern day editions may contain fingerings Hummel has used for his selected fugues, he takes an extra step in actually writing out exactly where the right hand or left hand should take particular notes. This is especially helpful information, especially in passages where the texture is thicker. Trying to determine fingerings in such passages requires some time, and experimentation with various combination, which is one of the most difficult tasks to complete when learning a fugue. What Hummel has included here, is very useful for anyone studying these specific works as a reference model of possible fingering ideas for a new fugal work one is studying.

Seeing as Hummel ends his discussion of this section with three works intended for the more advanced student, the purpose of this Volume is to clearly present fingering scenarios that a student at the more advanced level may encounter in their repertoire. The wide variety of exercises from each of his ten categories can serve three purposes: first,\textsuperscript{283}

\textsuperscript{283} Ibid., 306.
they can function as preliminary introductions to particular finger cases that occur in a student’s repertoire; second, as warm-ups for similar passages found in their repertoire; and third, as reference guides for fingering help that both teacher and student can refer to for ideas as to what fingering to use for particular passages in their music, such as in fugal works, legato successive octave passages, repetition of a given key, and so forth.
CHAPTER 3:  
Volume Three  

THE BEAUTY OF PERFORMANCE

Volume three, the final volume of the Hummel treatise covers the finishing touches that will take a pianist’s performance and overall musical, and historical understanding, to the next level: beautiful performance. This volume includes the most practical and valuable tools for both advanced pianists and piano teachers. It offers the most treasure troves of information and unlike the first volume, follows a similar purpose as the second, in that it functions as a treatise, not necessarily a method book. Featured topics from this section included here are Hummel’s insights on how to execute embellishments, performance practice guidelines, tempo rubato, pedaling, the importance of using Maelzel’s metronome, and improvisation.

Ornamentation in General

Ornaments, Hummel believed were great contributing factors to expression and beauty of performance as they “assist greatly in connecting the notes of a melody.”\textsuperscript{284} He further elucidates this topic by defining selected ornaments and presenting their execution on the piano.

1. The Trill or “Shake”

From all the ornaments covered in this section, the main feature here is the trill, which is the most popular embellishment and also the hardest one to play according to

\textsuperscript{284} Hummel, Vol. 3, 1.
Hummel. Unlike many of his predecessors and contemporaries, Hummel says that the trill is to begin on the written note, not the one above (Example 79).

Example 79. Execution of Trill or Shake by Hummel.  

Hummel’s reasoning behind his trill rule is that it avoids a break in the melodic line that would often times occur when playing the trill on the auxiliary note. The written note, not its upper neighbor, is the one that should receive emphasis: “stress should naturally fall upon [the written note].” For example, in the opening of the first movement of Mozart’s Sonata in C Major, K. 545, some editions indicate to start the trill on the auxiliary note (Example 80). By starting on the auxiliary note, the hand needs to lift up to restrike the same key to start the trill that follows, this will break the lyrical line as a result.

285 Ibid., 3.
286 Ibid.
Example 80. Alfred Edition of Mozart’s Piano Sonata, K. 545, m. 4. 287

Example 80. Alfred Edition of Mozart’s Piano Sonata, K. 545, m. 4. 287

Hummel’s approach is more suitable here and appropriately applied in this case, as Mozart himself dictated a preliminary trill exercise to Hummel while he was living and studying with him in Vienna (Example 81). This exercise starts the trill on the written note, and Hummel features it in his treatise.

Example 81. Mozart’s Trill Exercises Dictated to the Young Hummel. 288

Not only does this show that Mozart also agreed with Hummel’s trill approach, but the exercise itself is a technical one that strengthens the first joints by means of finger substitution, which will ultimately prepare beginners to execute trills more easily. Hummel writes that because the trill is the most challenging embellishment to play, students need to start playing it as soon as possible, and they need to be able to trill with all five fingers. He states that Mozart’s exercise will help students achieve this. As seen in Example 82, students will trill on notes C and D, and apply finger substitution to ensure that each finger trills (e.g., in the right-hand fingers 1 and 2 trill first, then fingers 1 and 3 trill second, which prepares for a smooth transition to trilling on fingers 2 and 3, and so forth). This is a useful exercise that beginner students can do prior to their regular five-finger scale warm ups.

An exception to Hummel’s trill rule occurs when the composer indicates in the music that the upper note starts the trill (Example 82). Hummel states that this is usually marked by an upper grace note placed before the written note. Hummel also says that one should refer to treatises or essays of the “ancient masters” as a guide to play their embellishments properly (e.g., using Hummel as a source for trills in earlier music is not necessarily recommended).
Hummel’s General Thoughts on Beautiful Performance

Hummel states that correctness and expression are the two fundamental elements that constitute a beautiful performance. Correctness in performance is the precise execution of all the details in the musical notation. Beauty of performance takes that correctness to the next level through means of expression.  

Before explaining the factors that contribute to a beautiful performance, Hummel presents observations on what makes an ugly performance so that the performer remembers to avoid them. I have summarized the following three reminders Hummel addresses:

1. Do not distort the body or grimace while playing.  
2. Do not overindulge in pedal usage, or let the pedals “jingle” as a result of pressing down too hard on them.  
3. Do not drag the time excessively, as this creates an “untasteful” rubato, and creates a negative impact on the brilliancy, neatness and unity of the piece.  

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289 Ibid., 3.  
290 Ibid., 40.  
291 Couperin, 29. He says that placing a mirror in front of the student will help solve this problem.  
In contrast to the previous observations, which serve as warnings to the performer, I have also summarized three guidelines that Hummel claims will help the pianist achieve beauty within a performance:

1. Attending concerts and recitals where one will hear music performed by the best musicians, particularly singers, that are “gifted with great powers of expression.” Hummel’s wife was a singer, and he says that the best composers like his teachers Mozart and Haydn, were all singers in their youth. What singing itself does, is give a more “pure, correct and critical musical feeling.” He emphasizes how students who attend recitals of amazing singers, have singing experience themselves, and have accompanied singers, are the ones that tempo rubato will come most naturally to. Perhaps we should show videos of opera singers to students, or encourage them to attend operas. I would also advocate having students sing melodies and phrases in lessons, in order to help create this singing style that Hummel was so adamant about and recognized for.

2. Studying the character of the piece in order to, “awaken in his audience the same emotions, as the composer has endeavored to excite by his music.” Hummel explains that one should be especially aware of the differences in character between playing an Adagio or an Allegro for instance. An Allegro passage or piece, “requires brilliancy, power, precision in the delivery, and sparkling elasticity in the fingers” while an Adagio “requires expression, a singing style, tenderness, and repose … the notes must be much more sustained … connected, [and] rendered vocal.”

3. Application of tempo rubato.
   Tempo rubato, or the tapering (push and pull) of time, is the final point Hummel addresses in terms of what makes a performance beautiful.

   **Thoughts on Tempo Rubato**

   Hummel explains one of the most crucial factors required to establish a beautiful performance: tempo rubato. The term is often associated with Chopin’s music, and this section is particularly beneficial to pianists today, as it clarifies how to understand and

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293 Ibid., 40
294 Ibid.
295 Ibid., 41.
296 Ibid., 42.
approach rubato. Mozart, Hummel, and Chopin all shared the same stance on this topic: the left hand must keep strict time, even if right hand has flexible line (especially in fioritura-like passages). Liszt compared Chopin’s rubato to that of a tree, “look at the tree! The wind plays in the leaves, stirs up life among them, the tree remains the same.”

Example 83 shows this principle in a passage from the Adagio of Mozart’s Piano Sonata, K. 332. Even though it is not notated in the score, Mozart himself would play the way that is shown in the editorial marking in the top two lines where the left hand keeps straight in time, while the delayed right-hand comes slightly after it. This is clearly a written out rubato.

Example 83. Tempo Rubato Example. Mozart, Piano Sonata, K. 332. Second Movement, mm. 34-35.

Similarly, Example 84 presents another case in which rubato is evident in m. 31 of Chopin’s Mazurka, Op. 6, No. 2. The figure on the left shows how it appears in the score, yet the figure on the right shows how the original manuscript of this work actually indicated a written out rubato in the right-hand. Both examples showcase how Chopin

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297 Gerig, 161.
and Mozart employed this rubato practice of a freer right-hand over a left-hand that keeps strict time.

Example 84. Tempo Rubato Example. A Comparison of Chopin,’s Mazurka, Op. 6, No.2, m. 31-32, as it Appears in the Score vs. How it Should be Played.  

To explain the rubato concept even further, Hummel writes out the manipulation of time and rhythm, as well as dynamics and touch in three selected sections from his A Minor concerto Op. 85 (first and second movements) and an excerpt from the slow movement of his piano sonata, Op. 106. In the case of his Op. 85 concerto for example, Hummel instructs the player to move in forward direction from the very opening in the right-hand melodic line, “From here in a somewhat moderated degree of movement” (Example 85). Then later in the work, he indicates a slackening of time in the right hand melody in Example 86, “from here, still dragging in the time.” The right hand is much more free here, while the left hand accompanying eighth notes should remain steady.


This commentary can only be found in Hummel’s treatise and is not in published editions of his works. To hear a recording that executes the pushing and pulling of tempo, as

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300 Hummel, Vol. 3, 43.
301 Ibid., 47.
Hummel indicates, pianists should listen to Stephen Hough performing it with the English Chamber Orchestra.  

Based on the examples Hummel has provided in this section, I have summarized four of his tempo rubato reminders that pianists should consider when applying tempo rubato to a passage, especially in the case of right-hand fioritura passages that have capricious rhythms like Example 87.

1. Each hand must be independent; the student must know each hand alone very well.
2. The left hand must keep strict time, while the right hand is more flexible and free.
3. “The player must previously examine which bar, as compared with the rest, the greater or less number of notes of embellishment, as upon this is grounded the slower or quicker performance of them…. This is how we plan out our idea of where to incorporate rubato. Hummel specifically suggests in fioritura passages that the performer “play the first notes of the bar rather slower than those which succeed them, so that at the end of the bar he may [fit back into the pulse] in order to fill up the time remaining.”  
4. Begin piece with clear establishment of the pulse.

An engaging application of involving rubato that Hummel would have his students incorporate to a work they know fairly well, was to have them focus on one passage at a time (a four-bar phrase, for example), and explain where they would apply rubato and their reasoning for it. He gives the following instructions for this exercise:

[Students would explain] to me at each portion, which note as compared with the rest [requires] an emphasis, and in particular, at what point their natural internal feeling would place the chief expression of the whole period; [and thus, which] series of notes in passage of melody, required to be played with acceleration or remission as to time.

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303 Hummel, 53.
304 Ibid., 54.
This could be a useful activity in melismatic passages (Example 87).


For students who are talented, but perhaps need more guidance in the rubato principle, Hummel provides nineteen examples of rubato studies that have indicated where to push forward or slow down the time. He explains in the first exercise, Example 88, notes with “+” “must be placed [with] a slight degree of emphasis,” and ones with “^”, receive the greatest degree of emphasis, exaggerating the placement of the accented note and therefore, lingering a little bit longer here on these accented notes.  

Example 88. Hummel’s Tempo Rubato Exercise No. 1.  

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305 Ibid., 51.  
306 Ibid., 54.  
307 Ibid.
Hummel’s thoughts on tempo rubato offer ways that both pianists and piano teachers can find particularly beneficial in order to further understand the concept, and be able to explain it to students as well. All of the observations discussed here can be resourceful tools for pedagogy as they contribute to establishing a beautiful performance—the ultimate goal of piano playing.

**Pedaling**

Hummel is very cautious in regards to the pedal and stresses using it in moderation. His issue with pedaling is that performers and students cover up their mistakes with it, as he explains that only amateurish or in-experienced players can, “applaud such an abuse.” 308

According to Hummel, pedaling is more acceptable in slower movements, than in faster movements, and should be applied only where the harmony changes. He shows three such examples of pedaling. 309 These examples are ordered from slowest to faster tempi markings: Largo, Adagio, and Allegro (Example 89). The Adagio example incorporates the soft pedal sign, which is a triangle with a dot in the middle.

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308 Ibid., 62.
309 Note that the pedal markings occur above the passages, and are unlike modern notation. Depressing the damper pedal is indicated by the coda-like sign, (⁹), and the * means to clear the pedal. The symbol of a triangle with the dot in the middle is for the una corda pedal (△).
The most important highlight that teachers can take from this section is to avoid having students immediately apply the damper pedal to a new piece they are learning, that requires it. Students are always so eager to immediately add pedal because they love the sound. However, the first step involved in learning pieces with pedal, is to learn it without pedal and solely use finger legato. Students all too often fall into the trap of relying on poor pedaling to do the connecting for them. They need to be able to hear their piece with the utmost clarity and to make it beautiful and smooth where it needs to be. Once comfortable enough to do this, students can then apply the second step, which is to

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310 Ibid., 63.
add, “touches [of pedal] where the author indicates.”311 Today’s more advanced pianists can also benefit from this type of approach of pedal application as well.

When dealing with students who are particularly tempted to use the damper pedal too soon and questioning why they have to wait so long before they can use it, piano teachers can respond with Hummel’s argument, “Neither Mozart nor Clementi, required these helps [of the pedals] to obtain the highly deserved reputation of the greatest, and most expressive performers of their day.”312

*Maelzel’s Metronome*

Students can learn more about the history and importance of the metronome here. Hummel’s admiration for the metronome is evident when he says, “This modern invention is one of the most useful with respect to music.” 313 All too often today, there seems to be a negative relationship between students and the metronome. Part of the problem is that they do not know how to use it, or perhaps, understand why they should use it.

Hummel stressed the importance of using the metronome. He was a stickler for precise tempo and rhythm, and as quite the businessman, he endorsed the Maelzel metronome (patented in 1816 by Johann Nepomuk Maelzel).314 Although using it was relatively new during this time, Hummel made the case that every amateur and professional pianist should have it. The markings M.M. = BPM in scores today refers to Maelzel’s metronome. Hummel includes tables dealing with metronome markings. The

311 Ibid.
312 Ibid., 62.
313 Ibid., 65.
314 Kroll, 273.
first is drawn by Maelzel, and shows which note value should be chosen to indicate the degree of the metronome: for slow movement it is no smaller than a eighth note; in moderate tempi, no smaller than a quarter-note; and in faster tempi, nothing below a half note (Figure 31).

Figure 31. Maelzel’s Degrees of the Metronome.315

The second table (Figure 32), shows the discrepancies between tempo terms used by composers and what metronome markings would be put to their markings in particular; Hummel writes, “we may see how various and unsettled were formerly the ideas of authors, with regard to indicating the movements of their works by the very same

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words, and how often…they have contradicted themselves.” For example, Figure 32 displays two vastly different metronome degrees for Cherubini’s “Andantino” markings as one indication shows the dotted quarter-note = 76, and the other = 164.

Figure 32. Varying Tempo Degrees, Hummel.

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316 Ibid., 66.
317 Ibid., 68.
When students practice with the metronome, Hummel indicates that they not immediately start playing along with it:

The player must not begin at the same moment with the metronome; let him listen a while to its movements before he commences playing, that he may thoroughly comprehend the time of the piece for, at first, the ear is easily deceived by the beats of the metronome.  

Hummel states that maintaining the steady pulse that a metronome helps attain is important. However just as important, is making sure that students are not religiously (like robots) ignoring any details indicating a natural timing of slowing down in a phrase, due to strict metronomic playing. He says that:

Players and lovers of music will learn the true time [by using metronome] as determined by the Author; but they are by no means bound slavishly to follow its beats to the exclusion of occasional relaxations of acceleration of the time.  

What can be gathered from this section, is that the metronome benefits everyone, be they composers, performers, amateurs, teachers or students. Hummel’s commentary on this device provides historical information regarding the use of metronome back then, which teachers today can share with students, further explaining its significant use; for two centuries students have practiced with metronome, and it still remains an important tool to this day.

Improvisation

A master improviser, Hummel felt utmost comfort when improvising in front of an audience, as is evident in the following statement, “I have always felt less embarrassment in extemporizing before an audience of 2 or 2,000 persons, than in

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318 Ibid.  
319 Ibid.
executing any written composition to which I was slavishly tied down.”

Instances of Hummel improvising in recitals is apparent from several programs of his concerts.

Since he was a renowned master improviser, many sought to learn what his approach was for improvising. Seeing as improvising came naturally to Hummel, it was difficult for him to express his exact process of improvising. However, one suggestion he shares is his basic improvisation formula which is comprised of three parts: a fantasia, followed by themes from operas, and ending with variations on that theme. An account of a Hummel’s improvisation during his 1828 Warsaw tour is taken from the following description by the Kurjei Warszawski, explaining that the audience heard, “beloved arias of Mozart... between which [Hummel] played a comic Krakowiak in some varied settings.”

Another description of Hummel’s improvisation is taken from The Athenaeum’s comments during a concert from his 1830 England tour, which reported that, “the concluding performance was extemporaneous, introducing, ‘Là ci darem la mano,’ and ‘Fin ch’han dal vino,’ from Mozart’s Don Giovanni (1787).”

Knowing that Hummel had such an impact on Chopin, it is interesting to perhaps make a connection with his improvisation formula and the organization of one of Chopin’s first works, his Variations on “Là ci darem la mano” for piano and orchestra, Op. 2. It has a fantasia like introduction, theme from Mozart’s Don Giovanni, and five variations and a finale. Since Hummel would often improvise on these popular melodies by Mozart, it is quite possible that he used these themes during an improvised performance.

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320 Ibid., 73.
321 Kroll, 339.
322 Sachs, 29. It is very likely that the young Hummel heard this before its premier, as he was living with the Mozart family during this time.
performance during his 1828 Warsaw tour, that Chopin attended. This kind of improvisation style must have been popular during the time, because Chopin essentially provides a written out improvisation with his work. He composed it one year before he met Hummel, and heard him perform. However, Chopin’s example is perhaps a written out improvisation in the Hummel or popular style.

While improvisation was quite common back then, it is rarely incorporated enough in lessons today. Perhaps that is because many pedagogues, myself included, shy away from the idea. However, Dr. Reid Alexander’s black key improvisation (Example 90), is a useful way to teach basic improvisatory skills. This exercise is a duet improvisation for both teacher and student.

Example 90. Reid Alexander, Black Key Improvisation: Teacher’s Left Hand Ostinato.

The teacher plays a left-hand ostinato on the black keys, while the student can play whatever they want with one hand, or both hands, as long as they play only black keys. While playing with the student, this exercise can be as long or short as the teacher deems it appropriate, however long it takes for the student to become comfortable in exploring the piano. I also like to add an optional improvised right-hand to the bass pattern, which strives to mimic or respond to a students’ improvised ideas, creating “responses” or

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323 I was introduced to this exercise in Spring 2011 in Dr. Reid Alexander’s graduate keyboard skills class, at the University of Illinois, at Urbana-Champaign.
324 This was dictated to our Keyboard Skills class by Dr. Alexander (Spring 2011).
replies to whatever they just “noodled.” I always conclude a student’s very first lesson with this, leaving them with a positive impression and excitement for the study of the instrument. The beauty of this simple exercise, is that anyone, no matter what age, can do this; I have used this in undergraduate piano group classes, and pre-collegiate level piano group classes as well. Dr. Alexander’s exercise is enjoyed by so many, because it allows any student, from youngest to oldest, to not be intimidated by the instrument, and to let their creativity evolve while they play, as they cannot go wrong with only playing black keys.

While this black key improvisation would not be what Hummel would necessarily have in mind (Chopin’s Op. 2 is closer to what he explains when it comes to improvising), it most certainly is one way of including a little bit of improvisation into today’s lessons. In keeping with Hummel’s improvisation formula, one way to make this exercise more challenging and to tailor it to the improvisation formula is to begin with a free improvisation, then instruct the student to play a simple popular tune such as “Hot Cross Buns,” play a few variations on it, and conclude with a finale.\footnote{Example 92} Example 92 shows how “Hot Cross Buns” would fit with the teacher’s left-hand ostinato.

Example 91. “Hot Cross Buns” Improvisation, with Reid Alexander’s Black Key Ostinato.

\footnote{I plan to make a demonstration video in the near future, explaining how this can be put into effect.}
For the seven years that I have incorporated Dr. Alexander’s black key improvisation in lessons, there has never been an instance where I did not see a sparkle in someone’s eye, raised eyebrows, or a genuine smile resulting from this activity. This exercise truly allows the student to react to the sounds they are creating, organically and freely, in their own individual way; that initial spark of fascination with playing the instrument is such a special moment, and a crucial one that will hopefully remain with them forever. Dr. Alexander’s black key improvisation has never failed me in helping to create that initial spark of interest for all beginners in their very first lessons. Seeing what becomes of this journey (however long or short lived,) is in essence, each individual’s own desired goal. Whether or not students choose to pursue music professionally, or play piano for the sole purpose of pleasure and enjoyment, may they always keep Hummel’s final words of his treatise in mind, “Time, Patience, and Industry lead to the Desired End.”

Conclusion – Time, Patience, And Industry Lead To The Desired End

During the past six years of going through my doctoral studies and researching Hummel, I have found Hummel’s concluding words from treatise to be very true in many aspects of my life; in practicing, teaching, academic research, the writing process of this essay, and so much more. This is a strong and powerful statement that applies to everyone: teachers, performers, students, essentially, anyone from any field. Perhaps it is one of the greatest reminders to take away from Hummel’s treatise.

The overall purpose of my essay is to explain why Hummel’s treatise should be revisited by explaining many ways in which selected highlights can be used as practical

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tools by pianists and piano teachers today. Hummel’s monumental work opens a window onto a crucial period in the history of nineteenth-century pianism and performance, and also provides a picture of the artist, performer, teacher, businessman, composer and friend to the greatest musicians, something that Part One of my essay emphasizes. The very fact that Hummel was a tour-de-force during the golden era of pianists, and considered a musical great by many other famous and influential figures, is reason enough to stress the importance of looking into his treatise. He is a link between the end of one musical era, and the beginning of another, and his pedagogical contribution has a place in today’s piano world.

The details provided in Hummel’s treatise give a glimpse of nineteenth-century pianism and performance, much of which still stay true to this very day, and Part Two of this essay summarizes particular highlights. While I plan to write an abridged version is in the future, what my essay provides is an introduction to that abridged version, essentially, an introduction to Hummel’s three-part treatise. I narrowed the original document down from almost five-hundred pages to approximately 130 pages. Following Hummel’s organizational layout, each volume is represented by a chapter and selected points are summarized and explored further. My commentary offers suggestions of some possible ways pianists and piano teachers can use this treatise in their own practice, performance, and teaching.

Often called *Hummel’s Piano Method*, or *Piano School*, his work has properties similar to that of a method book. This is especially evident in Volume One which deals with elementary instruction. It has some parallels with the popular American method book series *Piano Adventures* by Nancy and Randall Faber. Upon completion of both
methods, students reach the intermediate level, and should be able to play works at the level of Clementi Sonatinas. Volume Two is intended for the advancing student and deals with the importance of determining fingering, and contains a vast amount of combinations of technical exercises that are similar to those of Czerny and Hanon.

Volume Three is the most treatise-like, in that it elucidates his stance and insight on topics associated with the art of playing piano, like ornamentation, tempo rubato, and improvisation.

Going through Hummel’s treatise, and writing this essay, have made me personally reflect on my own performance practice and teaching, helping me become a better pianist, teacher and even more of a Hummel advocate, as a result. Be it historical information, a technical exercise, or a different approach to basic concepts taught today, I think that pianists of all levels can benefit from this treatise, even if they take just one unique treasure trove away from it. Hummel’s work provides information that can enhance a student’s early piano instruction with modern day methods, and help more advanced pianists refine their understanding of particular topics on pianism. There are so many ways in which his treatise can be used, and as mentioned at the beginning, this essay is just the start of a long-term mission of mine: to raise a greater awareness of Hummel in the piano world.

I have already started doing this by incorporating certain highlights in my own practice and student lessons, and have had the wonderful opportunity to present my pedagogy workshop at various institutions in Illinois, and California. Additionally, my Hummel presentation proposal has been accepted by regional 2018 College Music Society conferences, affirming the fact that others also see the value and importance of
further looking into Hummel’s legacy. Other future projects to realize my mission include writing a pedagogical article with Dr. Huckleberry, making teaching demonstration videos of certain highlights presented in my essay, writing an in-depth abridged version of the treatise, giving a presentation on Hummel at the Illinois Summer Youth Musical Festival at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and learning Hummel’s Piano Concerto in A Minor.

Completing this essay is the start of my desired end, which is to finish my doctoral degree and to ultimately spread the word of Hummel, putting him in the limelight of the piano world with his treatise. My attempt to present an introduction to Hummel’s multivolume work as a modern day practical guide is in a way, striving to realize his ultimate goal that is taken from the preface of his treatise, “If, by any means of this treatise, I should succeed in rendering myself useful, not to the present time only, but also to posterity, I shall consider this as the best and brightest recompense of my endeavors.” 327

I hope that the highlights, comparisons, suggestions, and ideas I have addressed in my essay, are valuable in both historical context, and more importantly practical use, showing that Hummel’s contributions, thoughts and observations, all have a place in today’s piano performance and pedagogy—simply put, Hummel should not be neglected.

327 Hummel, Preface, II.
REFERENCES


