2004

Teaching intermediate -level technical and musical skills through the study and performance of selected piano duets

Hooi Yin Boey
West Virginia University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/etd>

Recommended Citation

Boey, Hooi Yin, "Teaching intermediate -level technical and musical skills through the study and performance of selected piano duets" (2004). *Graduate Theses, Dissertations, and Problem Reports*. 2550.

<https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/etd/2550>

This Dissertation is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by the The Research Repository @ WVU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Dissertation in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you must obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/ or on the work itself. This Dissertation has been accepted for inclusion in WVU Graduate Theses, Dissertations, and Problem Reports collection by an authorized administrator of The Research Repository @ WVU. For more information, please contact researchrepository@mail.wvu.edu.

**TEACHING INTERMEDIATE-LEVEL
TECHNICAL AND MUSICAL SKILLS THROUGH
THE STUDY AND PERFORMANCE OF SELECTED PIANO DUETS.**

Hooi Yin Boey

**A Doctoral Research Project submitted to
The College of Creative Arts
at
West Virginia University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts
in
Piano Performance**

**James Miltenberger, D.M.A., Chair
Mary Ferer, Ph.D.
John Hall, Ph.D.
William Haller, D.M.A.
Connie Arrau Sturm, Ph.D.**

Division of Music

**Morgantown, West Virginia
2004**

Keywords: Intermediate Piano Duets, Piano Pedagogy

Copyright 2004 Hooi Yin Boey

ABSTRACT

Teaching Intermediate-Level Technical and Musical Skills Through the Study and Performance of Selected Piano Duets.

Hooi Yin Boey

Piano duet playing is a unique type of performing because it is the only musical experience where two people play music written for a single instrument. Duet playing offers not only joy and fun in music making with a partner, but also provides substantial instructional benefits at all levels. Duet playing is especially valuable for young pianists because it helps them develop basic musicianship and ensemble skills at an earlier level. Teachers should recognize the importance of teaching piano duets to elementary and intermediate piano students.

The present study investigates ways to help late-elementary and intermediate students master intermediate-level technical and musical skills through the study and performance of piano duets. This study provides a pedagogical guide that presents suggestions for teaching specific intermediate-level technical and musical skills through the study of selected late-elementary and intermediate duet pieces and passages. Specific technical and musical skills such as rhythm, ensemble, articulation, dynamics, style, balance, pedaling, signaling, hand and body positions, and sight-reading are discussed from a pedagogical point of view. Specific duet pieces and passages are chosen and discussed in order to exemplify how to teach these skills. In addition, suggestions for proper pairing of students are discussed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION	1
Rationale for the Study	2
Definition of Terms	3
Limitations of the Study	4
Research Design	4
II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	6
Surveys of Literature	6
Historical Overviews	13
Performance Guides	14
III. GUIDELINES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING SPECIFIC INTERMEDIATE-LEVEL TECHNICAL AND MUSICAL SKILLS THROUGH THE STUDY OF SELECTED LATE-ELEMENTARY AND INTERMEDIATE-LEVEL PIANO DUETS.	17
Rhythm	18
Ensemble	29
Interpretation	38
Articulation	38
Dynamics	44
Style	49
Balance	53
Pedaling	61
Signaling	66
Body Position and Hand Position	71
Sight-Reading	77
Pairing of Partners	82

IV. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH.....	84
APPENDIX: A List of Selected Pieces and Collections for Piano Duet	88
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	92

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Four-hand piano playing has continued to grow in popularity since the late eighteenth century. Composers such as J.C. Bach, Haydn, Mozart and others contributed to the piano four-hand literature. During the nineteenth century, the expansion of the range of the keyboard and the rise of *Hausmusik* encouraged the growth in popularity of four-hand playing. Franz Schubert, certainly one of the most prolific piano duet composers, composed a large quantity of four-hand compositions. In the twentieth century, composers such as Debussy, Ravel, Satie, Stravinsky, and others also wrote four-hand piano music.

Piano duets encompass a wide range of difficulty, and can be classified into three broad categories: (1) music for concert performance (usually requiring advanced-level performance skills); (2) music for entertainment in an informal setting or *Hausmusik* (usually requiring intermediate-level performance skills); and (3) instructional pieces for pedagogical purposes (usually intended for beginning pianists).

Duet playing can not only offer joy and fun in music making with a partner, but can also provide substantial instructional benefits at all levels. Playing piano duets is a valuable way for young pianists to learn ensemble skills, which will serve as a solid foundation for accompanying singers and choirs, and for performing chamber music at a more advanced level. In addition, learning four-hand music is an enjoyable way for

young pianists to develop the musicianship skills used in both solo and ensemble performance. For example, young pianists must study the music to figure out which part has the melody; and to determine appropriate dynamics, tempo, pedaling, articulation, and other elements of performance. Furthermore, sight reading duets is especially effective in improving sight-reading skills, since playing with a partner encourages steady rhythm and discourages stopping, pausing, or going back to correct errors. And, perhaps most of all, playing duets is an enjoyable form of entertainment for pianists of all ages and skill levels in a variety of social situations outside the piano lesson environment.

Rationale for the Study

Young pianists can learn and improve many intermediate-level technical and musical skills through the study and performance of piano duets. A pedagogical guide identifying specific intermediate-level technical and musical skills, and relating each skill to specific duet repertoire that can be used to hone that skill would be quite valuable to piano teachers. However, a review of the professional literature on piano duets revealed that most of this related literature consists of historical overviews and theoretical analyses. Moreover, many studies deal with the advanced repertoire. Sources that focus exclusively on the pedagogical or instructional aspects of intermediate piano duet playing could not be found.

The purpose of this study is to investigate ways to help late-elementary and intermediate students master intermediate-level technical and musical skills through the study and performance of piano duets. Piano duets that can be especially useful in teaching the following aspects of technique and musicianship are discussed from a pedagogical point of view:

1. Rhythm
2. Ensemble
3. Interpretation:
 - a) Articulation
 - b) Dynamics
 - c) Style
4. Balance
5. Pedaling
6. Signaling
7. Hand and body positions
8. Sight-reading

Specific duet pieces and passages are chosen and discussed in order to illustrate how to teach the technical and musical skills listed above. In addition, guidelines for proper pairing of students are to be offered on page 82.

Definition of Terms

1. Piano duet / piano four-hand repertoire: This refers to compositions for two people at one piano
2. Duo-piano repertoire: This refers to compositions for two people at two pianos
3. Late-elementary and intermediate-level piano repertoire: These terms are used to describe the level of performance difficulty. For example, the difficulty level of the *Miniatures* by Leopold Godowsky, and the “Pavane” from the *Ma Mère l’oye* by Maurice Ravel are considered late elementary; the difficulty level of

“Pagodes” from the *Ma Mère l’oye* and *Dolly Suite*, Op. 56 by Gabriel Fauré are considered intermediate.

4. Teacher / student duets: Duets in which one part is considerably more difficult than the other part and is intended to be played by the teacher, while the easier part is intended to be played by the student.
5. Student / student duets: Duets in which the parts are relatively equal in difficulty level, and both parts can be played by students.
6. Inside hands: The primo player’s left hand and the secondo player’s right hand.

Limitations of the Study

The scope of this study was limited in the following ways:

1. Only original four-hand music is included.
2. Only piano duets (four-hand music at one piano) are discussed.
3. Only late-elementary to intermediate levels of repertoire are included.
4. Only piano duets published in the United States are included.
5. At least one duet was selected to illustrate the teaching of each musical / technical skill outlined on pages 2 and 3. Teacher /student duets and student / student duets are both represented.

Research Design

This study consists of four chapters. Chapter II presents a summary of selected books, theses and dissertations, and periodical literature related to piano duets. Chapter III provides guidelines and suggestions for teaching specific intermediate-level technical and musical skills through the study of late-elementary to intermediate-level duets.

Chapter IV offers a summary of this study, conclusions, and recommendations for future research. Appendix A provides complete citations for all of the selected pieces and collections that are discussed in this study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A review of the literature related to four-hand piano music revealed that relatively few studies deal with the pedagogical aspects of duet playing in an extensive way. The research reviewed in this chapter is organized into three categories: (1) surveys of literature; (2) historical overviews; (3) performance guides. The research reviewed includes books, dissertations, and articles.

Surveys of Literature

In 1977, Marcella May Poppen conducted a study that involves historical surveys and analyses of selected original piano duets.¹ In her historical survey chapter, the author discussed the earliest duets and the development of the duet from the eighteenth century to the twentieth century. Following the discussion of major composers and their major compositions, Poppen commented on general style characteristics, including social function and performance practices of the duets from each period.

Poppen listed some of the benefits of playing four-hand literature, and some suggestions for using duets as resource materials in orchestration classes, in college conducting classes, and in high school. The author also offered some advice relating to pedagogical and performance practices such as physical adaptations, fingering, page-

¹ Marcella May Poppen, "A Survey and Analysis of Selected Four-hand, One Keyboard, Piano Literature" (Mus.Ed.D. diss., Indiana University, 1977).

turning, pedaling, analysis of texture, tonal and ensemble balance, dynamics, articulation, rhythm and tempo.

The author selected some duet pieces of various difficulty levels from the Baroque period through the twentieth century, and analyzed them in terms of their style and performance requirements. She also graded each piece according to difficulty level.

In 1957, John Elliot Webb studied a selected list of original duet pieces from the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries.² The selected literature was chosen to represent the various styles and concepts of duet writing. The composers of the selected pieces were J.C. Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms, Fauré, Debussy, Poulenc, Casella, Hindemith, and Lambert.

The author analyzed the selected duet literature according to compositional features such as texture, sonority, formal structure, doubling, imitation, sequence, repetition, and rhythm. Webb also discussed performance considerations such as specific ensemble problems in certain pieces, and methods of hand-crossing between players.

In 1953, Donald Sonnedecker studied the earliest-known pieces for keyboard duet.³ He examined four-hand compositions by Mozart and other Viennese composers, and four-hand compositions by as many as seventy-eight other composers in the eighteenth century. The author categorized selected four-hand pieces according to country of origin, including Germany, France, England, and the United States. Sonnedecker classified the German duets into three categories: instructional duet compositions, duets composed before 1790, and duets composed between 1790 and 1800.

² John Elliott Webb, "Compositional Features of Original Music for One Piano, Four Hands" (Ph.D. diss., Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester, 1957), 223.

³ Donald I. Sonnedecker, "Cultivation and Concepts of Duets for Four Hands, One Keyboard, in the Eighteenth Century" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1953).

He also discussed compositions by five composers whose origins were not easily determined.

Sonnedecker focused on three aspects in this study: the historical development of duet compositions, the function of duets in the eighteenth century, and formal and theoretical analyses of duets. He also graded the duet pieces according to difficulty level.

The performance of duet pieces in the early nineteenth century was the focus of a thesis by Faith Wenger in 1992.⁴ The author provided an historical survey and comments on performance practices of four-hand music in the first part of the study. She discussed the purposes of performing duets, the choice of duet partner, and some fundamental performance matters such as communication, analysis of the score for both parts, the problems of tempo and signaling, the sharing of physical space, and pedaling.

Wenger provided in-depth analyses of the *Fantasy in F minor*, Op. 103 by Schubert and the *Allegro Brillante*, Op. 92 by Felix Mendelssohn in the second part of the study. Her analyses include historical background of the pieces, and information on form and structure, tempo, dynamics, phrasing, articulation, and ornamentation. The author also discussed some special performance problems in several passages in both pieces. She identified problems such as both players sharing the same note, the sharing of physical space, and the use of the pedal, and she offered possible solutions for those problems.

In 1995, Howard Ferguson examined keyboard duets from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries in his book entitled *Keyboard Duets: from the 16th to the 20th century*:

⁴ Faith Wenger, "Performing The Early Nineteenth Century Four-Hand Piano Duet" (M.A. Thesis, California State University, 1992), 123.

for one piano and two pianos.⁵ He discussed the development of duet music chronologically from the Renaissance period, through the Classical period, the Romantic period, and into the Modern period.

In the second chapter, the author studied piano-duet technique as well as two-piano technique. Ferguson discussed several challenges one will encounter in performance, such as hand position, fingering, dynamics, tonal balance, and redistribution of parts.

The third chapter features an alphabetical list of selected repertoire for piano duet and two pianos, including two brief discussions of works for master and pupil, and works with other instruments, including orchestra.

Dallas Alfred Weekley's 1968 dissertation presents a detailed survey of Schubert's four-hand compositions.⁶ This study includes information on the development of duet compositions, historical facts associated with the compositions, and analyses of individual compositions.

In discussing the development of Schubert's compositions, Weekley examined the influences of earlier composers upon Schubert's writing, the composer's compositional techniques, and his innovative writing style. This study provides historical facts that are related to the compositions, including the place and time of composition, dedication and publication, and information regarding Schubert's friends who played the duets with the composer.

⁵ Howard Ferguson, *Keyboard Duets: from 16th to the 20th century: for One Piano and Two Pianos* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955).

⁶ Dallas Alfred Weekley, "The One-Piano, Four-Hand Compositions of Franz Schubert: An Historical and Interpretive Analysis" (Mus.Ed.D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1968), 134.

The examination of individual pieces features theoretical and performance analyses. When commenting on interpretive analysis, Weekley included his personal suggestions for effective performance. The performance factors that are discussed include tempo, phrasing, pedaling, dynamics, balance, and so forth.

Weekley also discussed pedagogical aspects of the compositions. He outlined the reasons for teaching duets, and some general performance considerations. He included two appendices at the end of the study: a list of works in progressive order of difficulty, and a list of available recordings.

Dallas Weekley and Nancy Arganbright Weekley surveyed Schubert's piano duets in an article entitled "Schubert: Master of the Piano Duet."⁷ According to the authors, the duets of Schubert represent various levels of difficulty because the composer was motivated to compose for different purposes including instructional purposes, social purposes, and concert performances.⁸ These duets were classified into five periods of Schubert's life. The authors provided detailed theoretical analyses for certain pieces, as well as some interpretive suggestions for performance practice.

Walden Hughes discussed Schubert's piano works in an article entitled "Franz Schubert's Piano Music: Celebrating the Composer's Bicentennial Year."⁹ The author provided some general information about the scope of Schubert's solo and duet compositions which range from teaching pieces to advanced performance pieces. He examined the differences between Beethoven's and Schubert's compositional styles, and

⁷ Dallas Weekley, and Nancy Arganbright Weekley, "Schubert: Master of the Piano Duet," *Piano Quarterly* 27 (Jan. 1978-79): 41-48.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Walden Hughes, "Franz Schubert's Piano Music: Celebrating the Composer's Bicentennial Year," *Clavier* 36 (Jan. 1997): 10-13.

specifically the differences between their piano sonatas. The author briefly discussed Schubert's duet compositions, which range from easy works to large-scale duets.

In 1918, Leopold Godowsky composed a series of *Miniatures* for piano four hands. These pieces were intended as teacher/student duets, where the student's part was quite easy, limited to a range of five notes. In 1934, Godowsky produced a revised edition. The following year, Maurice Aronson wrote a small performance guide for teachers of these pieces.¹⁰ He discussed the styles of all pieces in this collection, which included *Modern Dances* and *Ancient Dances* as well as other miscellaneous pieces. He also offered some formal analyses, and graded the pieces according to difficulty level.¹¹

Cameron McGraw compiled a list of piano duets in his book entitled *Piano Duet Repertoire: Music Originally Written for One Piano, Four Hands*.¹² This book presents only music originally written for one piano, four hands and excludes arrangements and adaptations from other media (except in certain cases where the composers themselves have made the transcription or where the adaptations have been considered as standard four-hand repertoire).¹³ This list of duets in this book is arranged alphabetically by composer. For each piece or collection, McGraw included data such as the full title of the composition followed in parentheses by titles of movements included; key signature; opus number and date of composition; place and date of publication; publisher's name; location of an item if in manuscript or no longer in print; descriptive comments and critical evaluations; and approximate graded difficulty level(s). The author also provided

¹⁰ Maurice Aronson, *A key to the Miniatures of Leopold Godowsky: Analytical essays on the forty-six "Miniatures" for piano-four hands* (New York: C. Fischer, 1935).

¹¹ Ibid., 21.

¹² Cameron McGraw, *Piano Duet Repertoire: Music Originally Written for One Piano, Four Hands* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001).

¹³ Ibid., xvii.

two appendices listing collections of four-hand music (including those that have been out of print) and listing compositions for piano, four-hands with voice(s) and/or other instrument(s).

In 2001, Priscilla Robinson Jefcoat compiled annotated listings of selected intermediate piano duets by American composers.¹⁴ This study focuses on original four-hand compositions published between 1960 and 2000, and teacher-student works are excluded.

In Chapter I, Jefcoat briefly discussed the historical development of four-hand music and the benefits that intermediate piano students would gain by studying four-hand music. The selected pieces are arranged according to specific technical or musical goals, such as articulation, block chords, broken chords, alternating hands, double notes, ornamentation, pedal, repeated notes, rubato, tempo changes, and voicing.

The annotations are arranged from lower-intermediate to intermediate to upper-intermediate. For each piece, the author included details such as composer, title, publisher, date, collection (if applicable), commission or dedication (if available), difficulty level, and timing. A separate musical list includes information on style, interpretative markings, meter, key, form, harmonic language, pedal, and the largest hand span needed in each part. Finally, a brief description of each piece is provided, including some comments on the greatest challenge(s) of the piece.

¹⁴ Priscilla Jefcoat, "Intermediate Piano Duets by American Composers Published Between 1960 and 2000: A Selected Annotated Bibliography" (DMA.diss., University of Georgia, 2001), 216.

Historical Overviews

Ernest Lubin's book entitled *The Piano Duet: A Guide for Pianists* surveys piano duet music written from the end of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century.¹⁵ It contains chapters on the music of J. C. Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms, Schubert, Grieg, Dvorak, Chopin, Liszt, French composers from Bizet to Poulenc, and Russian composers from Glinka to Stravinsky. These chapters feature theoretical and stylistic analyses of the music.

Lubin also included a discussion of duet literature by contemporary composers from the twentieth century such as Max Reger, Paul Hindemith, Edward MacDowell, Samuel Barber, Vincent Persichetti, and Norman Dello Joio. The author offered some practical performance suggestions in the epilogue. A condensed discussion of two-piano literature is included in an appendix. The author also included a list of duet materials for beginners at the end of the book.

Sondra Bianca wrote a short review of duet literature in an article entitled "Two People One Piano."¹⁶ She listed some duet pieces representing every level of difficulty by composers such as Clementi, Mozart, Schumann, Brahms, Bizet, Debussy, Ravel, Tchaikovsky, and Stravinsky. The author also identified some American composers who contributed to the duet literature such as MacDowell, Persichetti, Riegger, Hovhaness, Dello Joio, Barber, and Starer.

Cameron McGraw wrote an overview of the historical development of the duet in his article entitled "An Introductory Guide to Piano Duet Literature: A Selected List of

¹⁵ Ernest Lubin, *The Piano Duet: A Guide for Pianists* (New York: Da Capo Press, Inc., 1976).

¹⁶ Sondra Bianca, "Two People One Piano," *Piano Quarterly* 91 (Fall 1975): 30-31.

Four-Hand Music.”¹⁷ The author discussed the growth of duet playing on one piano as popular music-making by the middle class during the later part of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He also quoted the entire preface from Charles Burney’s 1777 publication entitled *Two Sonatas or Duets for Two Performers on One Piano-forte or Harpsichord*; this preface gives interpretive approaches to duet playing. The selected list of duet pieces contains descriptive comments of works from the two earliest-known duets (by Nicholas Carlton and Thomas Tomkins) from the early seventeenth century to duets from the twentieth century, including approximate graded difficulty levels for each work. The author also provided a list of eighteen duet collections and anthologies.

Performance Guides

In a book entitled *The Piano Duet: A Learning Guide*, Dallas Weekley and Nancy Arganbright Weekley provided some specific guidelines for performing one-piano, four-hand music.¹⁸ In the first chapter, the authors presented a brief history of four-hand music, as well as the benefits of playing duets. They addressed several guidelines and offered some suggestions to overcome technical difficulties. They also provided specific guidelines for pedaling, choosing a partner, fingering, selecting repertoire, dynamics, togetherness/synchronization, balance, and memorizing.

Based on her research and personal performance experiences, Joy Innis set up guidelines intended to help students meet technical challenges found in duet playing.¹⁹

¹⁷ Cameron McGraw, “An Introductory Guide to Piano Duet Literature: A Selected List of Four-Hand Music,” *Piano Quarterly* 91 (Fall 1975): 13-27.

¹⁸ Dallas Weekley, and Nancy Arganbright Weekley, *The Piano Duet: A Learning Guide* (California: Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 1996).

¹⁹ Joy Innis, “Technical Factors Involved in Playing Piano Duet” (M.M. thesis, Muncie, Indiana: Ball State University, 1993).

She outlined the following seven areas of technical difficulty: balance, rhythm and tempo, technique, signal system, body positions, hand positions, and pedaling.

Hans Moldenhauer's book entitled *Duo-Pianism* is a comprehensive study of two-piano performance.²⁰ He began his discussion with the historical development of two-piano playing. He discussed the benefits of two-piano playing and the applications of duo-pianism. He believed that one can discuss duo-pianism from three points of view: 1) as an artistic medium, 2) as a creative medium, and 3) as an educational medium. The author discussed each of these three areas. In the area he called artistic medium, he discussed issues of partnership, practicing, mechanics and aesthetics, program building, and performing. In discussing duo-pianism as a creative medium, the author noted that composing two-piano music is a creative challenge for the composer and he discussed special problems and techniques of composition for two pianos. Finally, he presented pedagogic applications and pedagogic materials in his discussion of duo-pianism as an educational medium. In the last section of this study, he presented a list of original two-piano repertoire, a list of recorded two-piano music, and an annotated bibliography.

In 1975, JoAnn Smith examined various problems of four-hand playing in her article entitled "The Technique of Duet Playing."²¹ The problems that the author outlined include the use of space, cooperation between duet partners, hand position, attack and release, distribution of notes, rhythmic problems, and balance. She observed that numerous aspects of duet playing, such as rubato, articulation, and matching sound, are

²⁰ Hans Moldenhauer, *Duo-Pianism* (Chicago: Chicago Musical College Press, 1950).

²¹ JoAnn Smith, "The Technique of Duet Playing," *Piano Quarterly* 23 (Fall 1975): 28-29.

related to rhythmic problems. The author also suggested possible solutions to these problems.

In her article entitled “Introducing Students to the Joys of Duets”, Kim Nagy commented on several major aspects regarding duet playing.²² She stated that student-teacher pairing works best for beginners. The author listed examples of duet repertoire suitable for elementary- and intermediate-level pianists, and she provided brief descriptions for each piece. The article includes discussions of difficulties and problems that one will encounter in duet playing, such as strong rhythmic sense, texture, balance, distribution of notes, hand-crossing, cueing, and pedaling. The author offered some suggestions for solving those problems.

After surveying the related literature, one may observe that most of the studies supply useful information, but tend to focus on historical and theoretical discussion. Not many studies concentrate on pedagogy, and those that do offer some pedagogical information tend to focus on the pedagogy of advanced repertoire. Only a few sources (such as those by Poppen, Weekley and Arganbright, Jefcoat, and Aronson) include extensive pedagogical discussion at the elementary and intermediate levels. However, these sources do not relate the teaching of specific musical and technical skills to passages in the duet literature. Although Weekly and Arganbright occasionally used musical illustrations to explain specific skills, their discussion of late-elementary and intermediate pedagogical issues is sporadic and not at all comprehensive. Overall, most of the literature focuses on theoretical and historical analyses of advanced duets.

²² Kim Nagy, “Introducing Students to the Joys of Duets,” *Clavier* 34 (Oct. 1995): 12-14.

CHAPTER III

**GUIDELINES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING SPECIFIC
INTERMEDIATE-LEVEL
TECHNICAL AND MUSICAL SKILLS THROUGH
THE STUDY OF SELECTED LATE-ELEMENTARY AND
INTERMEDIATE-LEVEL PIANO DUETS**

The benefits of learning and performing piano duets are considerable for piano students of all ages and all levels of advancement. Duet playing is especially valuable for young pianists because it helps them develop basic musicianship and ensemble skills at an earlier level. Teachers should recognize the importance of teaching piano duets to elementary and intermediate piano students. This chapter will highlight some of the intermediate-level technical and musical skills that can be taught through the study of duets.

The following pedagogical guide presents guidelines and suggestions for teaching specific intermediate-level technical and musical skills. These specific technical and musical skills are discussed in the following order:

1. Rhythm
2. Ensemble
3. Interpretation:
 - a) Articulation
 - b) Dynamics
 - c) Style

4. Balance
5. Pedaling
6. Signaling
7. Hand and body positions
8. Sight-reading

Each skill is examined from a pedagogical point of view through the discussion of selected duet pieces and passages. Complete citations for the entire selected duet pieces and collections are provided in the Appendix on page 88.

Rhythm

One of the most significant challenges in the performance of any kind of ensemble playing is to maintain accurate rhythm among the performers. However, maintaining accurate rhythm is even more difficult in piano duet playing than in other kinds of ensemble playing. In her thesis entitled *Technical Factors Involved In Playing Piano Duet*, Joy Innis commented:

The question of perfection of ensemble in the case of two pianists performing together is somewhat more critical than that of piano with strings, winds, or brass. The point of attack at which the hammer hits the string is very precise, and there is essentially no room for error. Simply put, either the key is up or it is down, and the slightest discrepancy between the two performers will result in ragged ensemble.¹

Hence, rhythmic precision is crucial in piano duet performance. Duet playing can be an effective means of developing an accurate rhythmic sense, especially for intermediate students. Students who are still developing rhythmic security will have a chance to

¹ Innis, 7.

improve their ability to maintain a steady pulse and accurate rhythm throughout the performance. Besides, duet playing (just like solo playing) helps students to acquire skills such as correct performance of rhythmic values and precise counting.

In this paper, specific rhythmic problems such as syncopation, triple rhythm against duple rhythm, and meter changes will be discussed in relation to selected duet pieces. Pedagogical suggestions relating to technical and musical performance will be offered.

Playing syncopated rhythms is still challenging for the late-elementary student, especially when playing with another person. Cornelius Gurlitt's *Allegretto in C minor* offers the elementary student a good introductory example for working on syncopation. This piece features straightforward and easy syncopated rhythms in the primo part while the secondo part provides steady eighth-note beats throughout the entire piece (see Example 1).

Example 1

Primo

Secondo

A very effective way to practice this piece would be for the secondo player to play only the left-hand bass line together with primo player's off-beat melody. The teacher should

point out to the students that the primo player plays the melody with the secondo player's right-hand chords. For a musical performance, the primo player's melody should be played lightly since it is off the beat.

Peter Tchaikovsky's *Fifty Russian Folk Songs* No. 8 offers good practice for syncopation in both primo and secondo parts. In the first eight measures, secondo plays the melody in unison while primo plays an accompaniment in unison that involves some syncopation. This situation is reversed in the second half of the piece. Careful counting for both parts is necessary (see Example 2).

Example 2

Умеренно, связано

The musical score is for a piece in 2/4 time, B-flat major, with a tempo/mood of 'Умеренно, связано' (Moderately, connected). It consists of two systems of staves. The first system shows measures 1-5, and the second system shows measures 6-8. The primo part is on the top staff (treble clef) and the secondo part is on the bottom staff (bass clef). The dynamics are marked 'p' (piano) for the primo part and 'f' (forte) for the secondo part. The primo part plays a syncopated accompaniment, while the secondo part plays the melody in unison. The roles are reversed in the second system.

To achieve an accurate performance of the syncopated rhythms, the player who has these rhythms in both hands should practice only one hand alone with the other player's melody during the early stages of rehearsal. Also during the beginning stages of rehearsal, the player with the syncopated rhythms should count out loud. When practicing in both of these ways, other distractions such as notes and fingerings are temporarily removed, allowing the player to concentrate on counting and playing the rhythms accurately. Moreover, the syncopated rhythms should be played lightly and softly, since the syncopated passages occur within accompaniment figuration.

One of the passages from Tchaikovsky's *Fifty Russian Folk Songs* No. 6 provides an excellent example for introducing late elementary-level students to triplets in ensemble playing. From measures 17 – 24, the primo part has constant octave triplets while the secondo part has a simple cantabile melody that moves primarily in quarter notes (see Example 3).

Example 3

The image displays a musical score for two parts, primo and secondo, from Tchaikovsky's *Fifty Russian Folk Songs* No. 6. The score is written for piano and includes measures 13 through 24. The primo part (top staff) begins at measure 13 and features a melody of quarter notes. At measure 17, it transitions into a series of octave triplets, indicated by a bracket with the number '3' and the dynamic marking 'pp' (pianissimo). The secondo part (bottom staff) also begins at measure 13 and features a melody of quarter notes. At measure 17, it transitions into a series of quarter notes, indicated by a bracket with the number '3' and the dynamic marking 'cantabile'.

The image shows a musical score for two parts, primo and secondo, from Schubert's *Children's March*. The score is for measures 23 and 24. The primo part (top) is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat. It features a triplet of eighth notes in measure 23, followed by a series of eighth notes in measure 24. The secondo part (bottom) is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat. It features a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note in measure 23, and a series of eighth notes in measure 24. A piano (p) dynamic marking is present in measure 24 for both parts.

However, two challenging spots occur in measure 19 and 23. In both measures, the secondo part has dotted-quarter notes followed by an eighth note. The challenge is for the secondo performer to fit that dotted rhythm accurately into the primo's recurring octave triplets. The secondo performer needs to understand that he should play the eighth note immediately after the middle note of primo's triplets. The primo performer should begin counting triplet rhythms four measures before measure 17 so that his triplet playing is accurate and smooth.

The Trio in Schubert's *Children's March* is an excellent passage to train intermediate students to play duple rhythms against the partner's triple rhythms. This Trio features triplets in the primo part and eighth-note beats in the secondo part (see Example 4).

Example 4

The image shows a musical score for a Trio section, labeled 'TRIO' at the top. It consists of two staves: the top staff is for the 'primo' performer and the bottom staff is for the 'secondo' performer. Both staves begin with a measure number '25' and a dynamic marking 'p' (piano). The primo staff contains a series of triplets, with some notes marked with fingerings (4, 8, 3, 5, 3, 3, 3, 3). The secondo staff contains a series of chords, with some notes marked with fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12). The score is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 3/4 time signature.

Correct performance of this piece demands steady triplets played by the primo performer and accurate placing of the second eighth note against the triplet by the secondo performer.

Another rhythmic challenge occurs at the end of the Trio. On the first beat of measure 47, the primo performer has both a triplet and a dotted-eighth/sixteenth rhythm to play simultaneously. On the second beat, the primo performer plays a triplet against a dotted-eighth/sixteenth passage in the secondo part. This calls for precise placing of the sixteenth notes with the triplet figures (see Example 5).

Example 5

The image displays a musical score for two performers, labeled 'primo' and 'secondo'. The 'primo' part is written on two staves with treble clefs, and the 'secondo' part is written on two staves with bass clefs. Both parts begin at measure 45 and end at measure 47. The 'primo' part features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and duplets, while the 'secondo' part features a simpler rhythmic pattern. Both parts conclude with a double bar line and the instruction 'D. C. al Fine'.

Another good piece for intermediate-level students to use to practice performing triple rhythms against duple rhythms is “Hymne” from Soulima Stravinsky’s *Music Alphabet* Volume I. Both primo and secondo performers will encounter the challenge of playing three-against-two within their respective parts during most of the piece. Furthermore, the challenge increases when both performers encounter the three-against-two rhythms divided differently between hands (in other words, the right-hand duple rhythm appears in the left hand and the left-hand triplets appear in the right hand). In addition to the three-against-two rhythms, the recurring tied notes require careful counting (see Example 6).

Example 6

The image shows the first system of a musical score for two pianos, labeled 'primo' and 'secondo'. The tempo is 'Moderato' and the time signature is 3/4. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The primo part is in the treble clef and the secondo part is in the bass clef. Both parts are marked 'p' (piano) and 'sempre legato'. The primo part starts with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a series of eighth notes. The secondo part starts with a half note F#3, followed by a quarter note G3, and then a series of eighth notes. The score includes first and second endings for both parts, indicated by '1' and '2' above the notes.

Both primo and secondo performers need to maintain the steady counting of triple rhythms. It is useful to practice various combinations of two out of the four possible parts (i.e., primo right-hand, primo left-hand, secondo right-hand, and secondo left-hand parts).

Performing music with meter changes is one of the rhythmic challenges that face young duet teams. In duet playing, such performance requires both players to count as accurately and precisely as possible. Tchaikovsky's *Fifty Russian Folk Songs* No. 47 is a good piece for young duet teams. In this piece, the meter alternates between 4/4 and 5/4 (see Example 7).

Example 7

The musical score for Example 7 consists of two staves, labeled 'primo' and 'secondo'. Both staves are in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'p' (piano). The primo staff begins with a first ending bracket over the first two measures. The secondo staff also begins with a first ending bracket over the first two measures. The score is divided into four measures. The first measure is in 6/8 time, the second measure is in 5/4 time, and the third and fourth measures are in 6/8 time. The primo part features a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, while the secondo part features a more complex melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, including a first ending bracket over the first two measures.

An effective way for the teacher to help the young team is to have them use the metronome in their early rehearsals. Playing with the metronome will help ensure that both players count precise quarter-note beats despite the meter changes in this piece. The teacher should suggest that the young team count in two-bar units since this piece consists of four two-bar phrases. Maintaining a steady quarter-note beat throughout the entire two-bar phrases, and thinking of the fifth beat of the 5/4 measures as extra-long cadences will help the students perform these phrases (and the meter changes) accurately.

Hemiola is another rhythmic challenge that the young pianists should encounter, either in solo or duet playing. The third piece from *On the Green Meadow* by Alexander Gretchaninoff offers a chance for late-elementary and early-intermediate students to play simple hemiola. The time signature is 6/8 and the hemiola occurs in measures 5 – 6 for the left hand of both primo and secondo parts. The hemiola rhythm for both parts is alike. Both players should feel two large pulses per measure until measure 6, when the left hand

must perform three large beats. Measures 5-6 are repeated exactly in measures 22-23 (see Example 8 and Example 9).

Example 8

Example 8 shows the first six measures of a piece for two players, primo and secondo. The tempo is marked *Moderato* for measures 1-2 and *a tempo* for measures 3-6. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The primo part (top staff) begins with a half note G4 in measure 1, followed by a half note A4 in measure 2, and then a half note B4 in measure 3. The secondo part (bottom staff) begins with a half note F4 in measure 1, followed by a half note G4 in measure 2, and then a half note A4 in measure 3. Measures 5 and 6 are repeated in measures 22 and 23.

Example 9

Example 9 shows measures 21-23 of the piece, which are repeats of measures 5-7. The tempo is marked *Moderato* for measures 21-22 and *a tempo* for measure 23. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The primo part (top staff) begins with a half note G4 in measure 21, followed by a half note A4 in measure 22, and then a half note B4 in measure 23. The secondo part (bottom staff) begins with a half note F4 in measure 21, followed by a half note G4 in measure 22, and then a half note A4 in measure 23. Measures 5 and 6 are repeated in measures 22 and 23.

Both players should practice the left-hand alone from measures 5-8 and count out loud in eighth-note beats. When rehearsing hands together, it will be helpful for the young team if the teacher claps two beats per measure, except in measures 5 and 23, where she should clap three beats per measure.

In order to achieve rhythmic accuracy, the student should practice the piece with eighth-note beats. The Friss, which is the second part of the piece, highlights syncopations and rapid sixteenth notes (see Example 11).

Example 11
Allegro (♩ = 116-126)

The musical score for Example 11 is for two parts: primo and secondo. The tempo is marked Allegro with a quarter note equal to 116-126 beats per minute. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The primo part starts at measure 19 and features rapid sixteenth-note runs with fingerings 1-2-3, 3-3-4-5, and 5-4. The secondo part also starts at measure 19 and features rapid sixteenth-note runs with fingerings 4-1, 5-2-1, 4-2, 5-2-1, and 4-1-2. Both parts include dynamic markings *p*, *cresc.*, and *f*. The primo part has a crescendo leading to a forte section. The secondo part has a crescendo leading to a forte section.

As in the first part of the piece, the student will attain more precise rhythm playing by practicing with eighth-note beats at the beginning stage. Another effective way to achieve accuracy of syncopations and running sixteenth notes is to practice them from slow to fast tempi with a metronome.

Ensemble

One of the most important goals for chamber music performers is to create (as closely as possible) a perfect ensemble. Young pianists should be encouraged to work towards this goal at an early age, and duet playing offers a wonderful medium for a young team in preparing this goal. Nonetheless, there will be inevitable problems when two people work in an ensemble setting. In order to solve these ensemble problems, careful planning and practicing need to take place.

The biggest challenge for a young duet team is keeping the playing together when there are simultaneous rapid passages and tempo variability in the music. Playing rapid sixteenth notes or any kind of fast passages evenly and precisely together is rather difficult for any duet team, especially for a young team that lacks ensemble experience. Any indications for tempo changes in the music (such as a new tempo indication in the same piece, *ritardando* ... *a tempo*, and tempo rubato) are not easy to deal with when there is more than one person making music. However, playing piano duets is an excellent means of teaching young pianists how to work out specific ensemble problems, so that they will be ready to face more advanced ensemble challenges later on (such as playing advanced piano duets for one piano or two pianos, playing vocal accompaniments and/or playing in any other kind of ensemble that involves piano).

The following paragraphs will discuss several ensemble issues such as playing even sixteenth notes, dealing with a new tempo or tempo changes such as rubato, and counting complex rhythms in certain passages. Pedagogical suggestions for solving these specific problems will also be offered.

For two performers to play rapid sixteenth notes evenly and exactly together is quite demanding, especially for intermediate students who are just beginning to experience playing with others. Daniel Gottlob Türk's *The Storm* provides an appropriate example of this challenge. In the first part of the piece (*Allegro di molto*), there are several measures where both the primo player and the secondo player need to play the running sixteenth notes simultaneously (see Example 12).

Example 12

The musical score for Example 12 is written for two parts, primo and secondo, in 2/4 time. The primo part begins with a four-measure rest, followed by a series of sixteenth notes. The secondo part also begins with a four-measure rest, followed by a series of sixteenth notes. The score includes fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4) and a 2/4 time signature at the end.

To facilitate the even sixteenth notes, both primo and secondo players need to feel a strong pulse on the first sixteenth note of the four and incorporate it in their playing. Both players can practice these particular passages starting at a slow tempo and increasing to the desired tempo using a metronome.

The second part of this piece, marked *Allegretto grazioso*, consists of a sixteen-measure period to conclude the music. Here, the students will face the challenge of finding and setting a new tempo after the end of the first part (see Example 13).

Example 13

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano piece, labeled 'primo' and 'secondo'.

First System:

- Primo:** Treble clef, key signature of two flats (B-flat, E-flat). Measure 23 is marked. The music features a half-note chord in the first measure, followed by a half-note rest in the second measure.
- Secondo:** Bass clef, key signature of two flats. Measure 23 is marked. The music begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic, followed by a piano-piano (*pp*) dynamic. The first measure contains a half-note chord, and the second measure contains a half-note rest.

Second System:

- Tempo and Title:** The tempo is marked *Allegretto grazioso*. The title is *All of a sudden the sky is clear*.
- Primo:** Treble clef, key signature of two flats. The music begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The first measure contains a half-note chord, followed by a half-note rest in the second measure. The tempo is indicated by a 4/8 time signature.
- Secondo:** Bass clef, key signature of two flats. The music begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The first measure contains a half-note chord, followed by a half-note rest in the second measure. The tempo is indicated by a 4/8 time signature.

An effective way to set a new tempo is to keep the same duple pulse per measure from the first part to the second part of the piece. In other words, the half-note value in the first part can equal the dotted quarter note value in the second part. The teacher should help both players practice changing to the new tempo using a metronome set to beat twice per measure. After both players are capable of setting the new tempo, the teacher

can suggest that the students take a slightly more relaxed and slower tempo in the second part, as it is marked *Allegretto grazioso*.

Tempo rubato is one of the biggest challenges in ensemble playing. For two players to slow down the tempo at exactly the same rate is quite demanding. However, it is not impossible for two players to perform tempo rubato well if they listen to each other carefully. Anton Diabelli's *Melodious Pieces*, Op. 149 #20, entitled *Hungroise*, is an excellent piece to use for introducing rubato playing to intermediate students. The relatively short length of this piece (sixteen measures) and the clear four-bar phrases make this a good piece for young players to use when experimenting with rubato. The primo part has a melody with syncopations and sixteenth-note figuration, while the secondo part contains eighth-note beats that articulate a steady pulse throughout most of this piece. As the first attempt to play rubato in this piece, the students should try to ritard together at the end of both sections (measures 7 – 8, 15 – 16) (see Example 14 and 15).

Example 14

The image displays a musical score for two parts, labeled 'primo' and 'secondo'. The 'primo' part is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It features a melody with syncopations and sixteenth-note patterns. The 'secondo' part is written on a single staff with a bass clef and the same key signature. It provides a steady pulse using eighth-note beats. Both parts are shown for measures 7 and 8, with a double bar line indicating the end of the section. The tempo is marked 'Allegretto grazioso'.

Example 15

The image shows a musical score for two parts, 'primo' and 'secondo', starting at measure 15. The 'primo' part is written in 12/8 time and features a dotted quarter note followed by eighth notes. The 'secondo' part is written in common time and features a quarter note followed by eighth notes. The two parts are written in a way that they can be played together, with the primo part leading the rubato and the secondo part following.

Once the players are comfortable with this, they can try slight rubatos in other four-bar phrases. The primo player should lead the rubato while the secondo player listens carefully and fits his eighth-note beats into the tempo accordingly.

“Arabian Chant (Orientale)” from Godowsky’s *Miniatures* offers some interesting ensemble challenges for young pianists. Since the difficulty levels of both parts clearly indicate that these pieces are intended for teacher-student duos,² performing with an experienced pianist can help the student handle some of the rhythmic difficulties. This duet is written in mixed meter where the primo is in 12/8 and the secondo is in common time. Thus, the dotted-quarter note value in the primo is equal to the quarter note value in the secondo (see Example 16).

² The one part that is considerably more difficult than the other part is intended to be played by the teacher, while the easier part is intended to be played by the student. In *Miniatures*, the primo part is to be played by the student and the secondo part is for the teacher.

Example 16

Placido (♩ = 76 - 88)

primo

p espressivo

Placido (♩ = 76 - 88)

secondo

p espressivo

Some of the challenges are for both players to keep the same tempo, and for the primo player to play the triplet-melody against the secondo player's eighth-note beats. Despite the complex duality of rhythm between the primo and secondo, the teacher should encourage the primo player to hear and count four beats per bar (with the dotted quarter note receiving one beat).

There are several passages marked *rallentando....a tempo* in the "Arabian Chant." The first such passage occurs at the end of measure 11, and it is immediately followed by another such passage at the end of measure 13 (see Example 17) (a similar situation occurs at measures 23 and 25).

Example 17

The musical score for Example 17 is divided into two systems, each with a *primo* and *secondo* part.

First System (Measures 10-12):

- Measures 10-11:** The *primo* part features a rapid sixteenth-note scale. The *secondo* part provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines. Both parts are marked *rall.* (ritardando).
- Measure 12:** Both parts transition to *a tempo*. The *primo* part continues with a scale, while the *secondo* part includes a *dim.* (diminuendo) marking.

Second System (Measures 13-15):

- Measure 13:** Both parts are marked *poco rall.* (a little ritardando).
- Measure 14:** Both parts transition to *p a tempo* (piano, at tempo). The *primo* part begins a new scale, and the *secondo* part provides accompaniment.
- Measure 15:** The *primo* part continues its scale, and the *secondo* part maintains its accompaniment.

Here, the challenge is how to plan and perform those rubatos, so the players can stay together. The primo player, who has the fastest-moving part, should lead the rubato that

begins on the third beat of measure 11 and try to slow down at a regular pace without being distracted by the other part. Rallentandos are frequently tricky for ensembles to negotiate in performance, but this one is complicated by the rhythmic interference of two against three. Since the teacher or another experienced player is probably performing the secondo part, the simplest way to handle the rallentando is just to ask the primo player to lead the ritard by playing each eighth note gradually slower. The experienced secondo player should easily be able to follow and keep the ensemble together. The second rubato, at measure 13, is much simpler since only the secondo has a moving part (the primo simply holds the same note throughout the ritard). After those two rubatos (at the beginning of measures 13 and 14), the secondo should lead the *a tempo* since he has to play the eighth notes on the first two beats while the primo has to play longer note values (dotted-half notes).

Igor Stravinsky's "Balalaika" from *Five Easy Pieces* has some interesting elements that contribute to the ensemble difficulty. First, the melody in the primo part consists of irregular phrases. In addition to that, each phrase ends with long tied notes of different lengths which make the counting complicated. The secondo's accompaniment in repeated figuration adds to the confusion in counting (see Example 18).

Example 18

The image shows a musical score for a piano duet. The top system is for the 'primo' (first) player, marked 'Allegro' and 'mf'. It features a melody with several tied notes. Below the first three measures, the numbers '1', '2', and '3' are written in bold print, indicating the count for the tied notes. The bottom system is for the 'secondo' (second) player, also marked 'Allegro'. It features a repeated accompaning figuration in the left hand, starting with a 'mf' dynamic. The right hand has a similar pattern with dynamic markings 'f p f p p' and the instruction 'sempre simile'.

Ensemble will be a problem if the primo player counts the tied notes incorrectly. When the students begin to practice this piece, the primo player's counting should reflect not only the beat, but also the number of measures that the tied notes last (See example 18: the numbers in bold print). This will help the primo player to count the tied notes precisely and to keep track of his place in the score. Writing down the counting numbers in the score will help the student to count more accurately. The secondo player is encouraged to identify the beginnings and endings of phrases in his score to give structure to the repeated accompanying figuration, to help in counting, and to encourage musical playing.

Interpretation

Articulation

Since every pianist naturally develops his own approach to technique, there may likely be differences in the performance of articulation between two new duet partners.

In order to produce a unified performance, the attack and release of certain notes need to be worked out carefully between the two players. For instance, both players should play staccato notes of the same rhythmic value for the same duration. Discussions and decisions will have to be made regarding the most appropriate articulation touch for the ensemble. Therefore, playing duets can not only introduce young pianists to musical teamwork, but can also help them think about musical nuances that they have not had to think about when performing solo.

The second piece from Norman Dello Joio's *Family Album* entitled "Play Time" offers intermediate students several great opportunities to develop their abilities to play different articulations. Staccato, which is the highlight of this piece, creates a playful mood and occurs throughout almost the entire piece. According to the tempo marking, this piece is to be played very lightly at the metronome marking of $\text{♩} = 72$. Thus, the students ought to play those staccato notes lightly and most of the time softly (only one staccato passage from measures 47 – 54 is marked *mf*).

The most difficult challenge in this piece is for both the primo and secondo players to play staccato notes of the same duration. For example, at the opening of the piece, the primo player and secondo player take turns playing three repeated staccato notes in alternate measures for the first four measures (see Example 19).

Example 19

1 Very lightly, ♩ = 72

primo

2

1 Very lightly, ♩ = 72

secondo

Both players ought to work out how they articulate those staccato notes so that they sound almost exactly the same with regard to attack, release, tempo and dynamic level. In this case, the primo player needs to listen carefully to how the secondo player plays the opening staccato notes so that he can try to articulate these notes in a similar style and with the same duration.

There is only one passage, from mm. 39 – 46 in the primo part that requires legato playing. During these eight measures, the primo part presents a lyrical melody while the secondo part has staccato notes in the right hand and portato notes in the left hand (see Example 20).

The best way to achieve a good ensemble is for both players to lift the first note exactly on beat 2 and play the second note lightly and definitely softer. However, due to the dynamic marking in measure 6 (a crescendo beginning on beat 1), the students should play the second note louder this time. The secondo player faces an interesting articulation challenge in measures 13 – 16; his right-hand part has the same articulation as in measures 2, 4, and 6, but the left-hand part must now be played legato (see Example 22).

Example 22

The best approach to introduce such simultaneous staccato-versus-legato playing to a young student is to have him close the fallboard over the keys and tap (with the fingers) the rhythm of that passage on this surface with correct articulation.

The fifteenth piece from the collection of sixteen easy duets entitled *First Steps*, Op. 29 by Samuel Maykapar is a wonderful piece for introducing marcato playing to late-elementary and early-intermediate ensemble performers. At that level, the young pianist has probably not encountered marcato playing frequently, or at all. This piece by

Maykapar offers an excellent chance for a young pianist to learn this articulation.

According to the composer's tempo marking, *Allegro. Molto marcato*, and the accents notated on almost every note, this piece is to be played marcato from beginning to end (see Example 23).

Example 23

Typically, young students begin to learn staccato by playing lightly and softly; however, in this piece, where the staccato notes are also marcato, forte, and accented, the teacher should explain to the students that they need to produce the opposite sound. Both students need to match their marcato notes by listening very carefully to each other and trying to articulate the marcato notes in the same way.

One of the passages in Czerny's Op. 824, No. 18 entitled *Allegretto* offers young pianists an opportunity to work on a rather difficult technical challenge. From mm. 9 – 16, three out of the four hands performing this ensemble must play different articulations. The primo performer must not only play legato in the right hand while playing staccato in

the left hand, but must also match the staccato notes the secondo plays as the second notes of his two-note slurs (see Example 24).

Example 24

Furthermore, playing repeated notes and repetitive figuration can be taxing, especially in a faster tempo. To solve this technical difficulty and simplify the articulation challenges, both primo and secondo's left hands should stay close to the keys when playing those repeated, staccato figurations. In addition, both players should focus on the right-hand melody by bringing out and shaping the melody line. Concentrating on the right-hand melody is an effective way to help both players play the left-hand figuration softly and the passage musically.

Dynamics

Every pianist learns to play *forte* and *piano* at the beginning stage of piano lessons. In addition to studying dynamics in the solo repertoire, the student should encounter the concept of different dynamic levels in duet playing as well. Unlike in solo playing, both players need to coordinate the dynamic levels with each other in performing four-hand

music. For instance, both players should perform a *crescendo* or *diminuendo* at a similar pace in order to produce a unified interpretation.

Duet playing is one of the best ways for a teacher to encourage young pianists to pay attention to dynamic markings. If the beginner is paired with the teacher or a more advanced student, he has a chance to hear (and be inspired by) more musical playing. This will encourage him to focus more on the dynamic markings in the music, and try to get closer to his partner's musical playing.

Samuel Maykapar's *First Steps*, Op. 29 should be on every teacher's list of repertoire to assign in teaching young pianists to coordinate dynamic contrasts. The sixteen pieces in this set all contain clear and precise dynamic markings for both primo and secondo parts. The primo parts, in five-finger positions, are intended for late-elementary students, whereas the secondo parts, which provide colorful harmonies and more difficult rhythmic patterns, should be played by the teacher or a more advanced student. The third piece in this collection is an excellent piece for teaching the students how to pace *crescendo* and *diminuendo* appropriately. Both parts have identical dynamic markings, and those markings parallel each other most of the time. Both players need to plan which note or notes are to be played the loudest within a *crescendo* – *diminuendo*. For example, from measures 13 – 20, the notes which are to be played the loudest are in measure 16 for both parts (see Example 25).

Example 25

The image shows a musical score for two parts, 'primo' and 'secondo'. The 'primo' part is on the top staff and the 'secondo' part is on the bottom staff. Both staves show measures 12, 16, and 17. The 'primo' part has a melody with staccato eighth notes and a crescendo. The 'secondo' part has a counter melody with staccato eighth notes and a crescendo. The score is written in G major and 2/4 time.

Once that is decided, both players will have a better idea of how they want to build the intensity; having both players pace the *crescendo* in a similar way helps avoid the embarrassment of having two different climaxes in the performance.

Young pianists will encounter challenging dynamic playing when they move on to the intermediate level. Anton Arensky's "Cuckoo" from the collection entitled *Six Children's Pieces*, Op. 34 offers interesting dynamic display to intermediate students. Already in the first eleven measures, one can find several dynamic changes. The secondo part introduces the "cuckoo" theme at a *forte* dynamic level at the beginning, and then the primo part begins answering in quiet staccato eighth-notes at the end of measure 3. However, the frequent dynamic changes become rather complicated for both primo and secondo from the end of measure 7 to measure 11. The primo player will play the "cuckoo" theme loudly with the left hand while the right hand answers with staccato eighth-notes at a *piano* dynamic level on the second beat for in measures 8 and 9; then both hands will end the phrase with a *crescendo* in measures 10 and 11. For the secondo player, his left-hand part has a little counter melody which is marked *forte* with three consecutive *crescendo* – *diminuendo* markings within the counter melody. His right-

hand part includes double-notes in the same rhythm as the “cuckoo” theme (see Example 26).

Example 26

The musical score for Example 26 consists of two staves, labeled 'primo' and 'secondo'. Both staves are in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The primo staff has a treble clef and a right-hand part with a melody of eighth and quarter notes, and a left-hand part with double notes. The secondo staff has a bass clef and a right-hand part with a melody of eighth and quarter notes, and a left-hand part with double notes. Dynamics include p (piano) and f (forte). Fingering numbers are provided for many notes.

Here, both primo and secondo players face the challenge of bringing out both the theme and the counter melody in the left hand while keeping the right-hand parts softer. This is an interesting problem, especially for early intermediate students, as usually they come upon playing the same dynamics with both hands or play louder in the right hand (since the melody often occurs in the right-hand part). The challenge becomes even harder for the secondo player as he needs to play three successive *crescendo – diminuendo* passages with the left hand. An excellent practice procedure for both players during the rehearsal would be to have one player play one part (one hand) together with the other player's part (one hand), i.e. primo's left-hand with secondo's left-hand. In this way, they will get to practice hand-alone while listening to the partner's part. Since it is easier to listen to the level of dynamic contrasts in two-parts, this procedure can help both players decide how loudly or how softly they want to play the passage.

A musical example which features echo effects can help teach a young duet team to coordinate their treatment of dynamics. In Joseph Haydn's "Minuet and Trio" in *Partita*, Hob.XVIIa,2, echo effects occur throughout the entire trio section. The primo player begins the statement and the secondo player answers it in echo style, each time with a dynamic marking one level softer than the primo's statement (see Example 27).

Example 27

The image shows a musical score for a piano duet. The top staff is the Primo part, and the bottom staff is the Secondo part. The key signature has two flats (B-flat major), and the time signature is 3/4. The Primo part starts with a piano (p) dynamic, followed by a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The Secondo part starts with a pianissimo (pp) dynamic, followed by a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as trills (tr), triplets (3), and dynamic markings (p, mf, pp). The word "TRIO" is written above the Primo staff at the beginning of the section. The word "Echo" is written above the Secondo staff at the beginning of the section.

Another wonderful example in which students can experience playing at different dynamic levels is the first movement of Haydn's *Il maestro e lo scolare*. In the form of theme and seven variations, the primo part imitates exactly the materials that are introduced by the secondo part. Since there are no specific dynamic markings in this piece, both teacher and student have plenty of room for interesting dynamic interpretations. For example, the secondo player can play *forte* and the primo player can imitate by playing *piano*, or *fortissimo*, or at the same dynamic level (see Example 28).

Example 28

The image shows a musical score for a piano duet, labeled 'Example 28'. It consists of two systems of music. The first system is for the 'primo' part and the second system is for the 'secondo' part. Both systems are in 2/4 time and marked 'Andante.'. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The primo part starts with a piano (p) dynamic, while the secondo part starts with a forte (f) dynamic. The score includes fingerings (1, 2, 3) and articulation marks (accents).

Although the title suggests that the secondo part is played by the teacher and the primo part is played by the student, the teacher may assign another student to play the secondo part. Thus, both students will have an opportunity to experience teamwork by designing and coordinating the dynamic scheme.

Style

Teachers should utilize both solo literature and duet repertoire in introducing and reinforcing both technical and musical characteristics of various style periods (e.g., Renaissance and Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Contemporary) to intermediate students. Many aspects of duet playing, such as articulation, dynamics, pedal, balance, and texture, are in part determined by the style of the composition and the period that it was composed. When playing duets, students not only need to interpret technical and musical characteristics of a composition according to its appropriate style, they should also work together to develop a unified stylistic approach in order to provide a cohesive performance. For example, if both primo and secondo parts have the same melody or

theme (simultaneously or at different times), they should play that melody with the same articulations unless it is marked differently by the composer.

Students who are in their intermediate level of piano playing find themselves facing new challenges. They begin to encounter repertoire from various style periods and repertoire that is more difficult in terms of technique and musicality. In order to perform this repertoire effectively, students need to recognize some basic style characteristics from various periods. Teachers also face the challenge of finding and assigning appropriate pieces for intermediate students. To be capable of working with a wide variety of repertoire and thoughtfully preparing students for more advanced repertoire, teachers need to be acquainted with a wide range of intermediate-level teaching materials.

This section provides reference information that can be useful for students as well as teachers. Tables 1, 3, 5, and 7 list selected technical and musical characteristics (by style period) that are appropriate to teach to intermediate piano students³. These tables outline several basic areas of technique and performance practice with which intermediate students should be familiar. This information can be used when studying both solo and duet literature. Tables 2, 4, 6, and 8 list selections of intermediate piano duets that may be used to teach these technical and musical characteristics to intermediate piano students. These tables list suggested duet pieces and collections which are appropriate representations of each style period. All pieces listed in these tables are original compositions except for a collection of J.S. Bach's chorales arranged for piano

³ The technical and musical characteristics in these tables were selected from a larger list of characteristics developed by Cathy Albergo and Reid Alexander in their book, *Intermediate Piano Repertoire: A Guide for Teaching*, 3d ed. (Canada: Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited, 1993).

duet; these pieces are included as suggested repertoire due to their pedagogical value, and due to the lack of original keyboard duets composed during the Baroque period.

Renaissance and Baroque Periods

Table 1. Selected Technical and Musical Characteristics to Teach to Intermediate Pianists

Articulations: (1) Different types of articulation: legato, non-legato (detached), and portato, and (2) Where to use these types of articulation: faster notes (shorter note-values) – legato; slower notes (longer note-values) – non-legato
Contrapuntal voicing and polyphonic texture
Technique: Hand and finger independence
Terraced dynamics
Absence of phrase, dynamic, and expression markings
Ornamentation

Table 2. Repertoire

Composer	Composition
Thomas Tomkins (1573-1656)	<i>A Fancy for Two to Play</i>
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)	<i>Chorales for Piano Duets</i> (Bovert arr.) A collection of teacher-student duets that consists of two parts: Part 1 - Student plays the melody with alternating hands while teacher plays the harmonization. Part 2 - Student plays the bass.

Classical Period

Table 3. Selected Technical and Musical Characteristics to Teach to Intermediate Pianists

Articulations: two-note slurs, legato, and staccato
Homophonic texture with stronger tonal centers
Melody and accompaniment that requires balance between hands
Melodic figuration: scales and arpeggios
Accompaniment patterns, e.g. Alberti bass
Dynamic contrasts, including sudden changes of dynamics
Tempo changes within a piece or a movement
The use of silences
Forms: Sonata Allegro, Minuet and Trio, Dances

Table 4. Repertoire

Composer	Composition
Muzio Clementi (1752-1832)	Sonatina: <i>Sonatinas</i> Op. 14, No. 1 and 2
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)	<i>Leichte Sonatinen</i> (Two easy sonatinas) <i>Weiner Sonatinen</i> (Six Viennese Sonatinas)
Anton Diabelli (1781-1858)	<i>Pleasures for the Youth</i> Op. 163 (Teacher/student) Excellent pieces for introducing Sonatina style. Student part limited to five-finger positions. <i>Five Sonatinas</i> Opp. 24, 54, 58, 60
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)	Sonata: <i>Sonata in C K.</i> 19d
Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)	<i>Sonata in D Major</i> Op. 6
Anton Diabelli (1781-1858)	<i>Three Sonatas</i> Opp. 32, 33, 37
Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)	Dances: <i>March and Gavotte</i> Op. 45
Franz Schubert (1797-1828)	<i>Four Ländler</i> D. 814 <i>German Dances and Ecossaises</i> Op. 33 <i>Children's March</i> D.928
Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)	Theme and Variations <i>Il maestro a lo scolare</i> ("Teacher and Student")

Romantic Period

Table 5. Selected Technical and Musical Characteristics to Teach to Intermediate Pianists

Thick texture: featuring full chords and inner voicing
Technique: full chords that requires expansion and contraction of the hand; inner voicing that requires finger independence
Sudden dynamic changes and variety of dynamic markings
Variety of tempo changes
Phrasing, including irregular phrasing
Complex rhythms
Many chromatic passages
Emphasis on expressive playing and singing <i>cantabile</i>
Forms: character pieces, descriptive pieces, sonata

Table 6. Repertoire

Composer	Composition
Robert Schumann (1810-1856)	<i>Twelve Pieces</i> Op. 85 <i>Children's Ball</i> Op. 130
Anton Bruckner (1824-1896)	<i>Three Little Pieces</i>
Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)	<i>Waltzes</i> Op. 39
Joseph Löw (1834-1886)	<i>Teacher and Pupil, A Practical Course of Four-Hand Piano Playing</i>
Georges Bizet (1838-1875)	<i>Jeux d'Enfants</i> Op. 22
Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)	<i>Fifty Russian Folk Songs</i>
Anton Arensky (1861-1906)	<i>Six Children Pieces</i> Op. 34

Contemporary Period

Table 7. Selected Technical and Musical Characteristics to Teach to Intermediate Pianists

Technique: wide leaps, clusters, pedal effects, percussive playing
Polyrhythms and complex meter changes
Use of extensive dynamic, phrasing, and tempo markings
Use of new notations
Use of dissonance
Polytonality; Atonality; Twelve-tone music

Table 8. Repertoire

Composer	Composition
Alexander Gretchaninoff (1864-1956)	<i>Ten Easy Pieces for Children</i> , Op. 9
Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)	<i>Ma mere l'Oye</i> (Mother Goose Suite)
Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)	<i>Five Easy Pieces</i> : easy primo <i>Three Easy Pieces</i> : easy secondo
Soulima Stravinsky (1910-)	<i>Music Alphabet</i> Vols. I and II
Norman Dello Joio (1913-)	<i>Family Album</i> <i>Five Images</i>
Vincent Persichetti (1915-1987)	<i>Serenade</i> No.8

Balance

One of the objectives in duet playing is to try to produce a unified performance of the many layers of musical texture played between two performers. However, in order to

achieve a good ensemble in a duet playing, both players must examine the score to discover what roles they play. The player who has the main melody always needs to bring out a clear and projected line and the other player, who has the accompaniment figures, should not let his playing overpower the melody line. One of the earliest discussions of this issue is the following quotation from the Preface to Dr. Charles Burney's 1777 work, *Two Sonatas or Duets for Two Performers on one Piano-forte or Harpsichord*:⁴

... each performer should try to discover when he has the *Principle Melody* given to him, or when he has only to *accompany* that melody; in order; either to make it more conspicuous, or merely to enrich its harmony. There is no fault in accompanying, so destructive of good melody, taste and expression, as the vanity with which young and ignorant performers are too frequently possessed, of becoming *Principals* when they are only *Subalterns*; and of being heard, when they have nothing to say that merits particular attention.⁵

Helping young performers recognize the relative importance of their part is critical to fine duet performance. Heinrich Wohlfahrt's *Waltz* is an excellent piece for the teacher to use in addressing the issue of balance with inexperienced young duet teams. In this piece it is very clear that the primo part has the melody and the secondo part has the accompaniment (see Example 29).

⁴ Charles Burney, Preface to *Two Sonatas or Duets for Two Performers on one Piano-forte or Harpsichord*, (1777), quoted in Cameron McGraw, "An Introductory Guide to Piano Duet Literature: A Selected List of Four-Hand Music," *Piano Quarterly* 91 (Fall 1975): 14.

⁵ McGraw, *An Introductory Guide to Piano Duet Literature*, 14.

Example 29

The musical score for Example 29, titled "Moderato", is written for two piano parts, primo and secondo, in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked "Moderato". The primo part (top staff) begins with a melodic line marked *p* (piano). The secondo part (bottom staff) begins with a rhythmic accompaniment marked *p*. Both parts are marked *p* at the beginning, but the primo part is intended to be played *mf* (mezzo-forte) to project the melody, while the secondo part remains *p* to provide a softer accompaniment.

It is very obvious that the primo player needs to bring out the melody and the secondo player needs to play softer. However, both players ought to coordinate the balance within the dynamic markings. For instance, the dynamic marking at the beginning of the piece is *piano* for both parts. Nonetheless, the teacher should suggest that the primo player need to project the melody by playing one dynamic level louder than the secondo's accompaniment; for example, even though both parts are marked *p*, the primo should play *mf* and the secondo should play *p*.

In this piece, maintaining good balance sometimes requires one person to play his part a bit louder and other times requires one person to play his part a bit softer. For example, in measure 18, rather than having the primo play the melody *ff* (and risk a harsh tone), it is preferable to have the secondo play his accompaniment softer (*mf* instead of *f*) (see Example 30).

Example 30

The image shows a musical score for two parts, 'primo' and 'secondo'. The 'primo' part is on the top staff and the 'secondo' part is on the bottom staff. Both staves are in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The 'primo' staff has measures 15-18, with a forte (f) dynamic starting at measure 18. The 'secondo' staff also has measures 15-18, with a forte (f) dynamic starting at measure 18. Both parts feature triplets and slurs. The 'primo' part has a fermata over measure 18, while the 'secondo' part continues with a triplet in measure 18.

In passages marked *cresc.* or *dim.*, both performers should increase and decrease their dynamic levels at the same rate.

Norman Dello Joio's "Prayer Time," the fourth piece from the collection entitled *Family Album*, presents an interesting layout of texture that calls attention to aspects of balance. The main hymn-like melody that occurs throughout the piece is sometimes performed *marcato* and sometimes performed *legato* (this is a good piece for learning articulation). From measures 5 – 8, the secondo part plays the melody, harmonized in a four-voice hymn texture, while the primo part answers one measure later with an unaccompanied version of the hymn-like melody (see Example 31).

Example 31

The musical score for Example 31 is divided into two systems. The first system (measures 1-8) is titled "Like an organ, ♩ = 44". The primo part begins with a melody in the right hand, marked *f marcato*, while the left hand plays a steady bass line. The secondo part also begins with a melody in the right hand, marked *f marcato*, and a bass line. The tempo is marked "Like an organ, ♩ = 44". The second system (measures 9-17) continues the piece. The primo part has a more active melody, marked *f marcato*, while the secondo part plays a more sustained melody, marked *p legato*. The tempo remains "Like an organ, ♩ = 44". The score includes various dynamic markings such as *f marcato*, *p cantabile*, *p legato*, and *mf*, as well as articulation marks like accents and slurs.

Although the dynamic marking of this passage is *piano*, the teacher should advise both primo and secondo players to play their right-hand main melodies (secondo's top voice) *mezzo forte* in order to project them.

Another example can be seen in measures 9 – 12 (also in measures 13 – 16 and 25 – 32). The secondo part repeats the four-voice hymn while the primo part introduces a

“bells” theme in the right hand (see Example 31). Marked *mezzo forte*, the main melody (top voice of secondo part) and the “bells” theme should both be played louder than the other voices.

In measures 17 – 18, the secondo part has a counter-melody in the left hand, while his right hand and both hands of the primo part have half-note values. Both primo and secondo parts join in and complete the counter-melody in the following two measures (see Example 31). Since this passage is marked *forte*, not only does the secondo player need to play his left-hand counter-melody louder (measures 17 – 18), he should also emphasize the *marcato* with forceful accents so that this melody can be heard.

Léon d’Ourville’s “The Lake” from *Soirées Musicales* presents other challenges related to balance. Throughout almost the entire piece, both parts have their distinctive roles as melody provider and bass supporter. The primo part features right-hand melody and left-hand sixteenth-note accompaniment figuration, whereas the secondo part presents right-hand sixteenth-note accompaniment figuration and left-hand bass line (see Example 32).

Example 32

The image shows a musical score for two parts, primo and secondo, in 6/8 time. The tempo is marked "Tranquillo ed espressivo". The primo part (top) has a right-hand melody and a left-hand sixteenth-note accompaniment. The secondo part (bottom) has a right-hand sixteenth-note accompaniment and a left-hand bass line. The primo part starts with a piano (p) dynamic and a "cantabile" marking. The secondo part starts with a piano (p) dynamic and a "marcato" marking.

The most important difficulty in this piece is the projection of both the primo's right-hand melody and the secondo's left-hand bass over the very active accompaniment figuration in both parts. In order to bring out both melodies and bass lines, both players should always play the sixteenth-note figuration one dynamic level softer than those two principal lines, e.g. *mezzo piano* for the sixteenth-note figuration in the beginning of the piece (the dynamic marking indicated is *piano*). Another good way to approach this balance issue is to pair different combinations of voices during the rehearsal. For instance, practicing primo's melody and secondo's bass can clarify the appropriate balance between those two principal parts; playing only the sixteenth-note accompaniment figuration in both parts allows the young team to check on whether their running sixteenth notes are played exactly together and on how softly they would like to play those passages.

Two different balance problems occur later in this piece that require both players' rapid changing of roles. From measures 18 – 21 (and also measures 48 – 51), the secondo part has a right-hand melody and left-hand bass line, while the primo part has a sixteenth-note accompaniment figuration in both hands (see Example 33).

Example 33

The image displays a musical score for two parts, primo and secondo, covering measures 17 through 21. The primo part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). In measures 17-21, the right hand plays a melodic line with slurs and fingerings (e.g., 2, 4, 3, 4, 2, 4, 1, 2, 3, 5), while the left hand plays a continuous sixteenth-note accompaniment pattern. The dynamic marking *p dolce* is present. The secondo part is also on a grand staff. In measures 17-21, the left hand plays a continuous sixteenth-note accompaniment pattern, and the right hand plays a melodic line with slurs and fingerings (e.g., 1, 5, 2, 1, 1, 5, 2, 1). The dynamic marking *p* is present, and the word *marcato* appears in measure 20. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4.

This temporary role reversal (regarding balance) calls for the secondo player to be dominant and project the melody by playing *marcato*, and for the primo player to play *piano* and *dolce* in the background. The second balance problem involves the projection of rather chromatic top voices in the right hand parts of both primo and secondo in measures 28 – 31 (see Example 34).

Example 34

The musical score for Example 34, measures 28-31, is presented for two players: primo and secondo. The primo part (top) is written in treble and bass clef with a key signature of one flat. It features a melodic line in the right hand and a supporting line in the left hand. The secondo part (bottom) is also written in treble and bass clef with a key signature of one flat. It features a more technically demanding melodic line in the right hand, characterized by double-stemmed eighth notes, and a supporting line in the left hand. The tempo is marked 'calmato' and the dynamics include 'p' (piano).

The secondo player has a more challenging part technically than his partner; he needs to voice out the top melody line (the double-stemmed eighth notes in the right hand) and distinguish it from the sixteenth-note figuration underneath. He also needs to project the bass line in measures 30-31. Meanwhile, his partner only has to play a single line in each hand. One excellent practice procedure that can help solve the technical problem for the secondo player is to “block” the notes, that is to play the alto note (the sixteenth note that comes after the top eighth note) and the soprano note simultaneously. This practice procedure also allows the secondo player to practice voicing out the top notes. Since this

passage is to be played *fortissimo* (*diminuendo* towards the end of the passage), both players should play *forte* (and the *diminuendo* accordingly) in the less important voices.

Pedaling

Every duet team will need to make the important decision regarding who should pedal for the ensemble. Traditionally, this duty is given to the secondo player as the secondo part usually features harmonic changes that determine pedal changes. Another reason is that the sitting position allows the secondo player to apply the pedal easily and naturally. In his book entitled *Keyboard Duets: From the 16th to the 20th century: for One and Two Pianos*, Howard Ferguson argued strongly in favor of pedaling by the secondo player:

Another perennial dispute concerns the use of the pedals. Should they be operated by primo or secondo? The answer becomes clear as soon as it is remembered that pedalling is to a large extent conditioned by harmony, and that harmonic changes are most easily observed from the bass. It therefore follows that the pedals should be controlled by the player of the bass, i.e. secondo.⁶

Nevertheless, Weekley and Arganbright believed that the primo should pedal for the ensemble. They commented:

Contrary to opinions of a number of noted pianists, editors, and publishers, we advocate that the primo player should pedal in the great majority of the repertoire. In view of the fact that there are generally more melodic lines (phrasing to be shaped and breathed) in the primo part, and since these lines dominate the thematic material, the primo players will need to be in control of the pedal. Not only will this enable him to delineate the breaths between the phrases, but also to give a richer tone to those lines by lifting the dampers from the strings. This assumes that the primo player will also listen acutely for the needs of the secondo part,

⁶ Ferguson, 27.

because the harmonic changes normally emanate from the lower range.⁷

There is no definite answer to this argument. The duet team needs to examine both parts carefully and then decide who should pedal for the ensemble in each specific piece. For the intermediate duet team, both teacher and students should participate in this decision-making. Once the decision is made, the player who is designated to control the pedal should do so for the entire movement (in a multi-movement work) or piece. It is better, especially for the inexperienced intermediate duet team, not to transfer the pedaling between players within a piece. Sharing control of the pedal is cumbersome and can cause confusion during the performance.

Another challenge regarding pedaling is that the player who is handling the task should not only pedal for himself, but also pedal for his partner, for the overall ensemble, and for the composition itself. In other words, he needs to study both parts thoroughly in order to determine how to pedal most effectively. Following this study, he needs to rehearse with his partner to check out this pedaling. Furthermore, teachers should encourage the students to write down the pedal markings in the score.

Samuel Maykapar's *First Steps*,⁸ which contains special annotations by editor Alfred Mirovitch, can serve as an outstanding reference for pedaling (see Appendix). In the preface of that edition, Mirovitch indicated that the composer had supplied the work with pedal markings in the secondo parts, and that all of the original markings had been retained in this edition. Intended for either teacher or more advanced student, the secondo part in this collection is of an intermediate level of difficulty. Therefore, this

⁷ Weekly and Arganbright, 8.

⁸ Samuel Maykapar, *First Steps*, Op. 29, (New York: Leeds Music Corporation, 1948).

particular edition is a wonderful collection for intermediate students to use in learning good and effective pedaling. Another excellent edition that includes the composer's original pedal markings is Leopold Godowsky's *Miniatures*⁹ (see Appendix). Similar to the *First Steps*, the secondo part has the pedal markings. Although *Miniatures* is intended to be a teacher (secondo) – student (primo) duet collection, teachers can assign intermediate students to play those secondo parts from this collection that are of an intermediate level of difficulty. For example, secondo parts from the three suites of pieces in the first volume can be assigned to intermediate students. Teachers may also use the successive order of difficulty that was compiled by Maurice Aronson in his book entitled *A Key to the Miniatures of Leopold Godowsky* for reference.¹⁰ Aronson stated that this order was made with a view to progressiveness and with the approval of the composer. He also mentioned that the difficulty of the secondo parts was decisive in the arrangement of the order.

Besides harmonic changes, the choice of pedal is also related to articulation. Teachers should emphasize finger-legato in their teaching of four-hand music, as sometimes the pedal might not be appropriate to use for connecting the notes. For example, in the first measure of “Lullaby,” the third piece from the first suite in *Miniatures*, there is no pedal marking in between the third beat and the fourth beat (see Example 35).

⁹ Leopold Godowsky, *Miniatures*, Three Volumes, (Belwin-Mills Publishing Corporation, 2001), v.

¹⁰ Aronson, 21.

Example 35

Andante ($\text{♩} = 112 - 120$)

primo

p dolce

secondo

p dolce una corda

Thus, both primo and secondo players need to use finger-legato to connect the notes between the third and fourth beats.

In measure 11 (also in measure 15) of Anton Diabelli's *Melodious Piece* Op. 149 No. 8, the primo part has staccato notes in both hands, whereas the secondo part has a legato line in the right hand (see Example 36).

Example 36

primo

f

p

secondo

f

p

The secondo player should not use pedal in this measure so that the primo player can effectively articulate these staccato notes. That means the secondo player definitely needs to use finger-legato to play his right-hand legato lines.

Nonetheless, sometime the pedal should be used to add color for certain articulation. For instance, both players should plan on using pedal on each of the accented chords at the end of Diabelli's *Melodious Piece* Op. 149 No. 8 (see Example 37).

Example 37

Using the pedal in measure 35 will effectively provide added resonance to these accented notes. The proper use of pedal in this case is for the secondo player to release the pedal exactly when he lifts his fingers at the end of each accented chord.

Norman Dello Joio's "Bed Time" (from the collection entitled *Family Album*) raises the controversial issue of who should pedal. The first six measures feature the primo player beginning with a half-note chord followed by the secondo player playing a half-note chord on the third beat (see Example 38).

Example 38

Slow and quiet, ♩ = 50

If the pedal is assigned to the secondo player, both players need to work out a form of signaling so that the secondo player can pedal accurately and exactly with the primo player's chords on the first beat of the first six measures. The performance will be less confusing and moderately easier if the primo player handles the pedal. Regardless of the difficulties, teachers should let both players try to control the pedal, and then make a decision as to which way is more comfortable and effective for the team.

Signaling

Two of the many benefits that a student will gain from playing duets are to learn how to give a signal to his partner and how to read a signal from his partner. A good signal is usually necessary when starting a piece, when starting a new phrase or a section after a fermata or a pause, and/or when ending a piece. Both players need to figure out an effective signal in order to begin and finish the piece together. The decision as to who should give the signal must be reached in the early stage of rehearsals. In most cases, the player who has the main melody or theme or the more important part will do the

signaling. Another interesting suggestion by Kim Nagy in her article entitled *Introducing Students to the Joys of Duets* is that the player with the fastest note values should give the cue.¹¹

After making this decision, both players need to establish a way (or many ways) of signaling that works for them. During the beginning stage of rehearsals, counting out loud a measure ahead before starting a piece is a good way to find a common tempo. Once a desired tempo is set, the duet team should work on a nonverbal signal(s) that allows better stage presence. Following are a few signals that can be effective:

- (1) an in-breath on an upbeat or a beat ahead,
- (2) a lifting of the head on an upbeat and a nod on the downbeat,
- (3) a lift of the wrist or finger on an upbeat and a drop of the wrist or finger on the downbeat.

Ferguson suggested a noteworthy signal system:

A good plan is for one player to get into the habit of resting his hands on the keyboard for a moment before the beginning of a piece. He can then give a preliminary beat in the correct tempo by means of a tiny upward movement of one hand, or even an index finger. It need be no more than an inch or so provided it is precise. This will be quite enough for the other player to follow; particularly if he looks at the reflection of the movement in the polished wood behind the keyboard, rather than at the end itself, for a front view is clearer than the view from above.¹²

Mozart's "Rondo" from *Sonata in C Major*, K. 19d offers a good opportunity for the young duet team to work on effective signaling. This last movement begins *Allegretto* in 2/4 time. At measure 140, there is a dramatic pause, during which both

¹¹ Nagy, 13.

¹² Ferguson, 28.

parts are silent for a full measure with a fermata. This is followed by a new section with a slower tempo (*Adagio*) in 3/4 time (see Example 39).

Example 39

The image displays a musical score for two players, primo and secondo, starting at measure 139. The tempo changes to *Adagio* and the time signature is 3/4. Both parts begin with a fermata in the first measure of the new section. The primo part (top) starts with a melody in the right hand, marked *mp*, featuring fingerings 4, 2, 4, 2, 4, 3, 1. The secondo part (bottom) also starts with a melody in the right hand, marked *mp*, with fingerings 4, 2, 4, 2, 4, 3, 1. Both parts have a corresponding bass line. The score is written for two staves per player, with the right hand on the top staff and the left hand on the bottom staff.

Although both players begin the new section with the melody in the right hand, it is better to let the primo player lead the signaling since his melody is in a higher register and since he probably gave the signal in the beginning of the piece (the primo part has the main theme while the secondo part has the accompaniment). The deciding factor is that the person who leads the signal must be able to give a clear and precise cue for his partner so that they can start the new section together and at the same tempo. One of many good ways to signal is to tap three quarter notes with a finger to establish the new tempo and include an in-breath or a lift of the head on the third quarter note to signal the start of the new section on the next beat.

At measure 155 in the *Adagio* section, both players have a fermata on a half-note followed by a quarter rest (see Example 40).

Example 40

The image displays a musical score for two parts, primo and secondo, spanning measures 154 to 156. The primo part is written in treble clef, and the secondo part is in bass clef. Both parts begin in measure 154 with a half-note chord (F#4 and C#5 for primo, F#3 and C#4 for secondo) marked with a fermata and a *mf* dynamic. In measure 155, the chords are sustained. In measure 156, the primo part plays a sixteenth-note scale (D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5) marked with a *p* dynamic and a '4' fingering. The secondo part plays a sixteenth-note scale (F#3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4) marked with a *p* dynamic and a '5' fingering. The score includes dynamic markings (*mf*, *p*) and fingering numbers (4, 5).

In this case, perhaps the best arrangement is for both players to plan ahead exactly how long they want to hold that chord with the fermata in order to begin measure 156 exactly together. Another option could be to have both players hold the chords for five beats and count the quarter rest as a sixth beat. The player who handles the signaling should give an in-breath or a lift of the head on that quarter rest to indicate that the downbeat of measure 156 is the next beat.

The signaling challenges continue in this last movement of Mozart's sonata with another pause at measure 159 which is followed by the return of the beginning theme at measure 160 with a new tempo marking *Allegro* (see Example 41).

Example 41

The image displays a musical score for two parts, primo and secondo, spanning measures 156 to 160. The tempo changes from Adagio to Allegro at measure 160. The primo part (top staff) features a series of sixteenth-note runs in measures 156-159, ending with a fermata on a half note F# in measure 159. The secondo part (bottom staff) provides harmonic support with chords and single notes. Dynamics include piano (p), decrescendo (dim.), pianissimo (pp), and mezzo-forte (mf). The key signature changes from one flat to two flats at measure 160.

Since the primo player has to play three sixteenth notes on the last beat in measure 159 after the fermata (secondo part has a quarter rest on that last beat), he should give the signal to start this new section. As in measure 155, a good plan is for both players to agree on a length for holding that fermata. After releasing the fermata, an effective way to make a smooth transition from the end of the *Adagio* into the *Allegro* is for the primo player to *ritard* on the three sixteenth notes at the end of measure 159. This allows the primo to give his partner a clear and precise signal after the F# in order to begin that *Allegro* section together.

The player who is in charge of signaling in starting a piece should also be the one who gives the signal to release the last notes of a piece (if both parts end together). Eye contact is especially crucial in this case where the other partner has to look closely at the player who is giving the cue. If the piece ends with a fermata, it will be wise to plan the length of that fermata ahead of time so that they can release the notes together.

Body Position and Hand Position

In addition to signaling, duet playing brings another challenge that one will not experience in solo playing: the partners need to share a limited amount of space at the keyboard. This problem can cause the players to bump into each other. Each duet team must find a sitting position that allows them to share the keyboard comfortably. Weekley and Arganbright provided excellent suggestions regarding body position:

It seems logical and practical to consider middle C as the dividing line between the two players' territories. Since the use of one long bench is too physically restricting, two benches or chairs should be placed accordingly (meeting at middle C), at a slight angle facing toward the pedals.¹³

Weekley and Arganbright believe that this seating position creates some space between players' elbows. While they strongly recommended that the primo player should handle the pedaling, they also believed that this seating position allows both players to have equal access to the pedals (see "Pedaling," page 60). Furthermore, they suggested that the two players may use different chair heights in order to avoid friction which can be caused by the players' arms at the same level.

If duet performers sit as described above, both their body position and hand position in four-hand playing will be different from these positions in solo playing. During private practice of the four-hand music, each student should sit in the same position as he would if he were playing with his partner. Practicing this way will help students work out appropriate body and hand positions, including fingering, and get used to those positions. Such practice will definitely help the rehearsals go more smoothly when both students practice together.

¹³ Weekley and Arganbright, 13.

When performing certain passages where the primo's left hand and the secondo's right hand play close to each other, both players may need to adjust their hand positions. Generally, one player needs to move his hand inwards towards the black keys whereas the other player should play near the outside edge of the white keys in order to avoid a collision between these inside hands. This position requires the former player to play above (a higher position of hand and elbow) the other player who plays near the outside edge of the white keys.

The following examples illustrate challenges regarding close and crossing hand positions that the duet team will encounter during the course of four-hand study. The following discussion also includes several suggestions on marking the score that can help the students to prepare the inside hands for the close position.

The second piece from César Cui's *Ten Pieces for Five Keys* Op. 74 features a crossed hand position in measures 21 and 22 (see Example 42).

Example 42

The image shows a musical score for two parts, primo and secondo, from César Cui's *Ten Pieces for Five Keys* Op. 74. The score is divided into two systems, each starting at measure 19. The primo part is in the upper system, and the secondo part is in the lower system. Both parts have a key signature of one flat. The primo part is written in treble clef, and the secondo part is written in bass clef. The music features a crossed hand position in measures 21 and 22, where the primo's right hand plays over the secondo's left hand. Dynamic markings include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *(under Secondo)* for the primo, and *(over Primo)* for the secondo.

Since the secondo's right-hand part has some black notes whereas the primo's left-hand part has mostly white notes (only a B^b in measure 21), the appropriate position for these

inside hands is secondo's right hand over primo's left hand. This means that the secondo player must raise his right hand and right elbow to a higher playing position, and that the primo player must play close to the keys and near the outside edge of the white keys in a lower hand position. During the first rehearsals, the teacher should make sure that both players practice the crossed-hand passage with only the inside hands to help the players focus on adjusting to the new position. Some composers and editors provide markings on the score to indicate which part should be played over and which part should be played under (e.g. Example 42). However, if the students are using a score without any such markings, they should mark "over" and "under" in their parts when the inside hands are playing in the same area. This crossed hand position also occurs at the end of the piece (see Example 43).

Example 43

The image displays a musical score for two players, primo and secondo, in a piano arrangement. The score is divided into two systems, each starting at measure 25. The primo part is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The secondo part is also written on a grand staff. In the primo system, the right hand plays a melodic line with slurs and ties, while the left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment. In the secondo system, the right hand plays a melodic line with slurs and ties, while the left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment. The score includes dynamic markings such as *f* (forte) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The final measure of the secondo system is marked with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The score is annotated with "(under Secondo)" and "(over Primo)" to indicate the hand positions during the crossed-hand passage.

In Mozart's *Rondo* (third movement) from *Sonata in C major* K.19d, the crossed hand position is different from that in the previous example; instead of the inside hands playing passages of similar difficulty and one person playing in-between his partner's fingers (as was the case in the Cui excerpt), this example features inside hands playing

passages of unequal difficulty where playing between a partner's fingers is not necessary. From measures 17 – 24, as well as measures 29 – 32, the primo player needs to raise his left hand to a higher position so that he can play over the secondo player's right hand (see Example 43).

Example 43

The primo player must keep his left arm in a rather straight position when playing this crossed-hand passage to allow more space for the secondo player's right hand. This primo-over-secondo position is a better position than the secondo-over-primo because in the latter position, it is difficult for the secondo to play the running sixteenth-notes effectively with the raised and straight right hand position. It is much easier technically for the primo player's left hand to be above since his left-hand part has slower note values.

The movement from the crossed hand position back to the normal hand position should be practiced carefully. Measures 24 – 25 (also measures 32 – 33) in Mozart's *Rondo* from *Sonata in C major* K.19d is an excellent passage to illustrate how partners must accommodate each other in this situation (see Example 44).

Example 44

The image displays a musical score for two players, primo and secondo, across two systems. The first system is labeled 'primo' and the second 'secondo'. Both systems show measures 24 and 25. Measure 24 begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The primo part features a melodic line with fingerings 1, 2, 4, and 5, and a bass line with a dotted quarter note (F) and an eighth note (G). The secondo part features a melodic line with fingerings 1, 2, 4, and 5, and a bass line with a dotted quarter note (F) and an eighth note (G). Measure 25 begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The primo part features a melodic line with fingerings 5, 3, and 2, and a bass line with a dotted quarter note (F) and an eighth note (G). The secondo part features a melodic line with fingerings 1, 2, and 3, and a bass line with a dotted quarter note (F) and an eighth note (G). The dynamic marking 'mf' is present in both systems for measure 25.

At the end of measure 24, the primo player needs to raise his left hand vertically after releasing the last note and the secondo player needs to move his right hand horizontally and as close to the white keys as possible.

Sometimes, one player needs to alter the rhythm or articulation of certain notes in order to preserve his partner's more important phrase. For example, in measure 24 of the second piece from Cui's *Ten Pieces for Five Keys* Op. 74, the primo player needs to release the dotted quarter note (F) in the left hand ahead of time (release on the third eighth-note beat) to allow the secondo player to reach that same F with his right hand on the fourth eighth-note beat without breaking his legato line (see Example 45).

Example 45

The image shows a musical score for two players, primo and secondo. The primo part is on the top staff, and the secondo part is on the bottom staff. Both staves show measures 19 to 24. The primo staff has a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic marking and the instruction '(under Secondo)'. The secondo staff has a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic marking and the instruction '(over Primo)'. Both staves show complex rhythmic patterns with many beamed notes and slurs.

A similar challenge occurs in the same measure where the secondo player must release that F very quickly (staccato) so that the same note can be restruck by the primo player's left hand. Both players should mark the notes that have to be released quickly with a symbol such as a slash (/)¹⁴ or a small circle (°)¹⁵ after the note.

Both players need to decide what to do when they share the same note at the same time. They need to examine the score carefully in order to decide whether the shared note is more important to the primo part or to the secondo part. The player for whom the shared note is more important to the primo part or to the secondo part. The player for whom the shared note is more important should play that note. The other player should omit the shared note from his part. Weekley and Arganbright proposed that the partner for whom the shared note is less important should either lightly touch the note or omit it.¹⁶ It will be technically easier for both players if one of the players omits the note instead of playing it lightly. Omitting the note will make certain that one player's finger does not get in the way when the other player plays that shared note. For example, in measure 22

¹⁴ Ibid., 18.

¹⁵ Ferguson, 29.

¹⁶ Weekley and Arganbright, 18.

level students can all gain many benefits from sight-reading exercises. Leonhard Deutsch gave an excellent description of the benefits of sight-reading training:

.... sight-reading program helped every one of them to extend steadily his musical and technical abilities, his knowledge of the master works of music, and his power of discrimination. It deepened the student's love of serious music and quickened his enthusiasm for the piano.¹⁸

Piano duets make wonderful sight-reading material. In addition to the pleasure of reading with a partner, the nature of ensemble playing requires that each member of the team keep going, rather than stopping for each mistake. Also, in order to keep the ensemble together, partners must maintain a steady tempo while sight reading. Thus, teachers should recognize the importance of piano duets in developing sight-reading skills.

The following annotated list presents selected intermediate piano duet pieces and collections that are intended for teaching purposes and that feature one part which is limited to a five-note range. These pieces represent some of the best teacher / student duets. These duets with one part (mostly the primo part) confined to a five note range are excellent sight-reading material for elementary and lower-intermediate level students. Although the secondo parts from these collections are generally more difficult (mostly intended for a teacher), teachers may give those parts to their intermediate students as sight-reading exercises. Complete citations for all of the following pieces/collections are provided in the Appendix.

¹⁸ Leonhard Deutsch, *Piano: Guided Sight-Reading*, 2d ed. (Chicago: Nelson-Hall Inc., 1959), xiii.

1. Anton Diabelli (1781-1858) – *Melodious Pieces on Five Notes*, Op. 149

In this set of twenty-eight pieces, the primo parts are limited to a five-note range.

These pieces can provide a wonderful introduction to four-hand playing and

Classical style. The difficulty in the secondo parts ranges from lower

intermediate to upper intermediate, and thus those parts may be used as sight-reading materials for intermediate students.

2. Anton Diabelli (1781-1858) – *Pleasures of Youth, Six Sonatinas on Five Notes*, Op. 163

This collection includes six sonatinas limited to five-finger positions in the primo parts. These are excellent teaching pieces to use for introducing the concepts of sonatina and sonata to intermediate students. Both primo and secondo parts are generally more difficult than in the composer's Op. 149.

3. Arthur Foote (1853-1937) – *Twelve Duets on Five Notes* (published in 1891)

This set of twelve short pieces also features descriptive titles. Primo parts provide easy sight-reading material for late-elementary students. These pieces are simple and tonal in traditional Romantic style.

4. César Cui (1835-1918) – *Ten Pieces for Five Keys*, Op. 74 (1906)

These ten pieces are short, and feature primo parts limited to a five-note range.

Each descriptive title suggests an imaginative mood. Both primo and secondo parts are useful for the development of elementary and intermediate sight-reading skills.

5. Leopold Godowsky (1870-1938) – *Miniatures* in eight volumes/sets (1918)

This set of forty-six charming pieces features five-finger positions in the primo parts and more complex but colorful writing in the secondo parts. This collection is generally progressive in difficulty. The pieces are tonal with rich harmonies in the secondo parts and represent neo-classic style.

6. Ettore Pozzoli (1873-1957) – *Smiles of Childhood, Little Pieces on Five Notes* (published in 1948)

This collection consists of twenty-three short and melodious pieces written in Romantic style. All primo parts are limited to a five-finger position and feature simple textures (hands in unison or in parallel motion, or occasionally hands alone). All pieces have descriptive titles that suggest a variety of moods. Each piece focuses on a certain technique such as the two-note slur in No. 4 and staccato playing in No. 5.

The following is a list of selected piano duet repertoire and collections in which the primo part is easier than the secondo part, but not limited to a five-note range. The primo parts in this duet repertoire are among the most outstanding sight-reading material available for late-elementary and intermediate level teaching. Although most of these pieces are teacher / student duets, teachers can incorporate the secondo parts in their teaching as sight-reading material for intermediate students.

1. Joseph Löw (1834-1886) – *Teacher and Pupil, A Practical Course of Four-Hand Piano Playing*

This set of sixty-five pieces includes folk songs, excerpts from operas, and national songs which were arranged by the composer in order of progressive difficulty. These are character pieces in Romantic style.

2. Peter Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) – *Fifty Russian Folk Songs*

This collection of short Russian folk melodies was arranged by the composer for piano duet. All pieces have descriptive titles and feature a variety of styles, meters, and keys.

3. Norman Dello Joio (1913-) – (a) *Family Album* (published in 1962), and (b) *Five Images* (published in 1967)

Each set consists of five short pieces with descriptive titles. These duets are written in a conservative contemporary style.

The following selected piano duet repertoire and collections are relatively equal in difficulty level for both primo and secondo parts. These student / student duets can be used effectively as sight-reading materials for two intermediate students as well as for teacher and student.

1. Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) – *Il maestro a lo scolare* (“Teacher and Student”)

Written in 1778, this piece is one of the earliest piano duets. It consists of a theme and seven variations, with the primo part for student and the secondo part for teacher. In the theme and each variation, the teacher begins with a phrase which is immediately imitated two octaves higher by the dutiful student. This

unique and humorous piece makes great sight-reading and study material for intermediate students.

2. Franz Schubert (1797-1828) – *Four Ländler*, D. 814 (1824)

These four short pieces are excellent material for sight-reading as well as for introducing Schubert's four-hand music.

3. Heinrich Wohlfahrt (1797-1883) – *The Children's Musical Friend*

This collection of fifty melodious pieces is arranged in progressive order, ranging from a late-elementary to an intermediate level of difficulty. These instructional pieces display traditional Romantic-style writing.

4. Anton Bruckner (1824-1896) – *Three Little Pieces* (1852-54)

These short and simple pieces are good sight-reading material for late-elementary students.

5. Alexander Gretchaninoff (1864-1956) – *Ten Easy Pieces for Children*, Op. 99

This collection of ten pieces with descriptive titles is useful for sight-reading at the intermediate level of study.

Other Suggestions

Pairing of Partners

In order to properly pair the students, teachers need to recognize their different abilities. There are numerous ways to create effective partnerships. Teachers can pair a student with a weak rhythmic sense with another student who has stronger rhythmic sense. In this case, the student who is weak in rhythm will have an opportunity to improve his rhythmic playing whereas another student who is stronger in that aspect will have an opportunity to maintain good rhythmic playing as well as to help his partner in

that aspect. Pairing students according to their abilities can benefit students at the same level or at different levels; late-elementary students can be paired with early-intermediate students, early-intermediate students can be paired with late-intermediate students, and intermediate students can be paired with early-advanced students. Teachers may assign certain teacher-student duets to the students at different levels. For instance, when performing Godowsky's *Miniatures*, a more advanced student can play the secondo part and a beginning student can play the primo part. Teachers can assign the secondo part to the more advanced student so that he can learn the pedaling.

Conclusion

Many composers have written numerous brilliant and worthwhile intermediate pieces for the piano duet medium. This extensive body of intermediate piano duet repertoire provides an excellent and varied resource of teaching and study material. Through the study of intermediate duet repertoire, intermediate students can learn how to deal with a wide range of pianistic challenges. Such experience will definitely help them in developing musicianship, technical proficiency, and ensemble playing skills, and will prepare them to become better pianists.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Piano duet playing is a special type of performing because it is the only musical experience where two people play music written for a single instrument. Duet playing is challenging, yet it is one of the most rewarding ways of music making. Because of the many challenges in playing piano duets, this type of performance provides excellent training in ensemble playing as well as in developing both technical and musical skills at all levels.

The purpose of this study is to help both teachers and intermediate students recognize the importance of piano duet performance in developing basic musicianship at the early level of piano study. Besides solo repertoire, the teacher should help late-elementary and intermediate students master intermediate-level technical and musical skills through the study and performance of piano duets.

Chapter I presents an introduction to duet playing, a rationale for the study, definitions of terms, limitations of the study, and a general outline of the research design.

Chapter II presents a summary of selected books, theses and dissertations, and periodical literature related to four-hand piano music.

Chapter III offers guidelines and suggestions for teaching specific intermediate-level technical and musical skills through the study of selected late-elementary and intermediate-level piano duets.

Chapter IV summarizes the study, draws conclusions, and offers suggestions for further research.

Complete citations for all of the selected pieces/collections that are discussed in this study are provided in Appendix A.

Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn from this study:

1. There is a great wealth of intermediate duet repertoire by major and lesser-known composers that is of high quality.
2. Duet playing provides some of the same challenges as solo playing, e.g. interpretation of articulation, dynamics, and style; balance; and pedaling.
3. Duet playing offers some unique challenges that are not present in solo playing, e.g. signaling, and sharing a limited amount of space at the keyboard.
4. Duet repertoire presents more difficult and unique rhythmic challenges than does solo repertoire. The need to maintain a steady pulse and accurate rhythm is more critical when performing with a partner.
5. In certain areas such as balance and pedaling, the challenges are greater in duet playing than in solo playing because parts for four hands rather than just two hands must be considered.
6. It is much more demanding to deal with the issue of hand and body positions in duet playing than in solo playing because the difficulties of finding comfortable hand and body positions are greater when a performer must accommodate not only himself, but his partner as well.

7. Performance of intermediate piano duets provides wonderful ensemble experiences for elementary and intermediate piano students.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the literature reviewed in Chapter II and on the findings from the analyses in Chapter III, the following recommendations are offered for future researchers:

1. Future researchers should investigate the benefits of using piano duets in teaching elementary-level students. Most elementary-level piano duets are written for pedagogical purposes, and are not composed by master composers. However, many of the compositions recommended as sight reading material in Chapter III (especially the teacher/student compositions) would make excellent repertoire choices for elementary students.
2. Future researchers should investigate the benefits of using elementary and intermediate piano duets in group teaching or in piano class settings. The effects of having each part performed by multiple students (as in a piano class setting) should be studied.
3. Future researchers should focus their analysis and study on a specific duet collection such as *Miniatures* by Godowsky, *Fifty Russian Folk Songs* by Tchaikovsky, and *Ten Pieces for Five Keys*, Op. 74 by Cui. Not only do all the pieces in these high-quality collections deserve to be studied and performed, but analyzing the relationships among the pieces within a collection can often provide more insight into their performance.

4. Future researchers should investigate contemporary intermediate piano duets dating from 1980 to the present. These may help intermediate students master more contemporary performance techniques not found in earlier compositions.
5. This study only considered duets published in the United States, but future researchers should also investigate duets published elsewhere.
6. This study only considered music originally written in duet form, but future researchers should investigate the benefits of teaching music originally composed in other genres and subsequently arranged in duet form.
7. Future researchers should investigate the benefits of having students perform other forms of intermediate-level chamber music.

APPENDIX

A List of Selected Pieces and Collections for Piano Duet

- Arensky, Anton. "Cuckoo," *Six Children's Pieces*, Op. 34. Edited by Isidor Philipp. New York: International Music Company, 1956, 8-11.
- Bach, Johann Sebastian. *Chorales for Piano Duets: A Selection of Chorale Harmonizations Adapted as Duets for the Elementary Student of Piano and the Teacher*. Adapted by Jeanne Bovet. New York: Galaxy Music Corporation, 1965.
- Bruckner, Anton. *Three Little Pieces*. Selected and edited by Gayle Kowalchyk and E. L. Lancaster. Volume 1, Essential Keyboard Duets: 25 Intermediate and Late Intermediate Selections in Their Original Form. California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 2001, 82-89.
- Cui, César. *Ten Pieces for Five Keys* Op. 74, No.2. Edited by James Lyke and Geoffrey Haydon. Ensemble Music for Group Piano, 4th ed. Illinois: Stipes Publishing Company, 2002, 20-21.
- Czerny, Carl. *Allegretto*, Op. 824, No. 18. Selected and edited by Gayle Kowalchyk and E. L. Lancaster. Volume 1, Essential Keyboard Duets: 25 Intermediate and Late Intermediate Selections in Their Original Form. California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 2001, 46-47.
- Dello Joio, Norman. "Bed Time," *Family Album*. New York: Edward B. Music Company, 1962, 10-11.
- _____. "Play Time," *Family Album*. New York: Edward B. Music Company, 1962, 4-5.
- _____. "Prayer Time," *Family Album*. New York: Edward B. Music Company, 1962, 4-5.
- Diabelli, Anton. *Melodious Pieces*, No. 8. New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1894, 12-13.
- _____. *Melodious Pieces*, No. 20. New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1894, 30-31.
- _____. *Pleasures of Youth, Six Sonatinas on Five Notes*, Op. 163. New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1894.

d'Ourville, Léon. "The Lake," *Soirées Musicales*. Compiled and edited by Poldi Zeitlin and David Goldberger. Easy Original Piano Duets. New York: Amsco Publications, 1985, 108-115.

Foote, Arthur. *Twelve Duets on Five Notes*. Boston: A. P. Schmidt, 1891.

Godowsky, Leopold. "Arabian Chant (Orientale)," *Miniatures*, Volume III. Edited by Joseph Banowetz and Alton Chung Ming Chan. Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp., 2001, 50-55.

_____. "Czardas (Hungary)" from Modern Dances, *Miniatures*, Volume II. Edited by Joseph Banowetz and Alton Chung Ming Chan. Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp., 2001, 76-83.

_____. "Lullaby" from First Suite, *Miniatures*, Volume I. Edited by Joseph Banowetz and Alton Chung Ming Chan. Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp., 2001, 10-13.

Gretchaninoff, Alexander. *On the Green Meadow*, No. 3. Compiled and edited by Poldi Zeitlin and David Goldberger. Easy Original Piano Duets. New York: Amsco Publications, 1985, 152-153.

_____. *Ten Easy Pieces for Children*, Op. 99. New York: MCA, 1945.

Gurlitt, Cornelius. *Allegretto in C minor*. Compiled and edited by Poldi Zeitlin and David Goldberger. Easy Original Piano Duets. New York: Amsco Publications, 1985, 74-75.

Haydn, Joseph. "Minuet and Trio," *Partita*, Hob.XVIIa,2. Compiled and Edited by Walter Eckard.⁴⁴ Original Piano Duets: Haydn to Stravinsky. Pennsylvania: Theodore Presser Co., 1968, 10-13.

_____. "Theme and Variations," *Il maestro e lo scolare*, Hob.XVIIa,1. Classical Album: Twelve Original Pieces by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Clementi, Kuhlau, Weber. New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1895, 2-9.

Löw, Joseph. *Teacher and Pupil, A Practical Course of Four-Hand Piano Playing*. Florida: Edwin F. Kalmus & Co., n.d.

Maykapar, Samuel. *First Steps*, Op. 29, No. 15. Edited by Alfred Mirovitch. New York: Leeds Music Corporation, 1948, 4-5.

_____. *First Steps*, Op. 29, No. 15. Edited by Alfred Mirovitch. New York: Leeds Music Corporation, 1948, 16-17.

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus. *Leichte Sonatinen* (Two Easy Sonatinas). New York: C. F. Peters Corporation, 1939.

_____. "Rondo," *Sonata in C Major*, K. 19d. Selected and edited by Gayle Kowalchuk and E. L. Lancaster. Volume 1, Essential Keyboard Duets: 25 Intermediate and Late Intermediate Selections in Their Original Form. California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 2001., 14-25.

_____. "Sonate in C, KV19d," *Neue Ausgabe Sämtlicher Werke, Serie IX/ Werkgruppe 24: Werke Für 2 Klavier und Für Klavier zu 4 Händen*. Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag, 1955.

_____. *Weiner Sonatinen* (Six Viennese Sonatinas). New York: C. F. Peters Corporation, 1962.

Pozzoli, Ettore. *Smiles of Childhood, Little Pieces on Five Notes*. Milan: Ricordi, 1968.

Schubert, Franz. *Children March*. Compiled and edited by Poldi Zeitlin and David Goldberger. Easy Original Piano Duets. New York: Amsco Publications, 1985, 60-63.

_____. *Four Ländler* D. 814, No. 2. Selected and edited by Gayle Kowalchuk and E. L. Lancaster. Volume 1, Essential Keyboard Duets: 25 Intermediate and Late Intermediate Selections in Their Original Form. California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 2001., 50-51.

Stravinsky, Igor. "Balalaika," *Five Easy Pieces*. Compiled and Edited by Walter Eckard. 44 Original Piano Duets: Haydn to Stravinsky. Pennsylvania: Theodore Presser Co., 1968, 154-155.

Stravinsky, Soulima. "Hymne," *Music Alphabet*, Volume I. New York: C. F. Peters Corporation, 1973, 24-26.

Tchaikovsky, Peter. *Fifty Russian Folk Songs*, No. 6. Florida: Edwin F. Kalmus & Co., Inc., n.d., 9.

_____. *Fifty Russian Folk Songs*, No. 8. Florida: Edwin F. Kalmus & Co., Inc., n.d., 11.

_____. *Fifty Russian Folk Songs*, No. 47. Florida: Edwin F. Kalmus & Co., Inc., n.d., 53.

Türk, Daniel Gottlob. *The Storm*. Compiled and edited by Poldi Zeitlin and David Goldberger. Easy Original Piano Duets. New York: Amsco Publications, 1985, 8-11.

Wohlfahrt, Heinrich. *The Children's Musical Friend*. Milan: Carisch.

_____. *Waltz*. Compiled and edited by Poldi Zeitlin and David Goldberger. *Easy Original Piano Duets*. New York: Amsco Publications, 1985, 28-29.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Albergo, Cathy and Reid Alexander. *Intermediate Piano Repertoire: A Guide for Teaching*, 3d ed. Canada: Frederick Harris Music Co., Limited, 1993.
- Aronson, Maurice. *A key to the Miniatures of Leopold Godowsky: Analytical essays on the forty-six "Miniatures" for piano-four hands*. New York: C. Fischer, 1935.
- Deutsch, Leonhard. *Piano: Guided Sight-Reading*, 2d ed. Chicago: Nelson-Hall Inc., 1959.
- Ferguson, Howard. *Keyboard Duets: from 16th to the 20th century: for One Piano and Two Pianos*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1955.
- Lubin, Ernest. *The Piano Duet: A Guide for Pianists*. New York: Da Capo Press, Inc., 1976.
- McGraw, Cameron. *Piano Duet Repertoire: Music Originally Written for One Piano, Four Hands*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001.
- Moldenhauer, Hans. *Duo-Pianism*. Chicago: Chicago Musical College Press, 1950.
- Weekley, Dallas and Nancy Arganbright Weekley. *The Piano Duet: A Learning Guide*. California: Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 1996.

Theses and Dissertations

- Innis, Joy. "Technical Factors Involved in Playing Piano Duet." M.M. thesis, Muncie, Indiana: Ball State University, 1993.
- Jefcoat, Priscilla. "Intermediate Piano Duets by American Composers Published Between 1960 and 2000: A Selected Annotated Bibliography." D.M.A. diss., University of Georgia, 2001.
- Poppen, Marcella May. "A Survey and Analysis of Selected Four-Hand, One Keyboard, Piano Literature." Mus.Ed.D. diss., Indiana University, 1977.

- Sonnedecker, Donald I. "Cultivation and Concepts of Duets for Four Hands, One Keyboard, in the Eighteenth Century." Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1953.
- Webb, John Elliott. "Compositional Features of Original Music for One Piano, Four Hands." Ph.D. diss., Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester, 1957.
- Weekley, Dallas Alfred. "The One-Piano, Four-Hand Compositions of Franz Schubert: An Historical and Interpretive Analysis." Mus.Ed.D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1968.
- Wenger, Faith. "Performing The Early Nineteenth Century Four-Hand Piano Duet." M.A. Thesis, California State University, 1992.

Articles

- Bianca, Sondra. "Two People One Piano." *Piano Quarterly* 91 (Fall 1975): 30-31.
- Hughes, Walden. "Franz Schubert's Piano Music: Celebrating the Composer's Bicentennial Year." *Clavier* 36 (Jan. 1997): 10-13.
- McGraw, Cameron. "An Introductory Guide to Piano Duet Literature: A Selected List of Four-Hand Music." *Piano Quarterly* 91 (Fall 1975): 13-27.
- Nagy, Kim. "Introducing Students to the Joys of Duets." *Clavier* 34 (Oct. 1995): 12-14.
- Smith, JoAnn. "The Technique of Duet Playing." *Piano Quarterly* 23 (Fall 1975): 28-29.
- Weekley, Dallas, and Nancy Arganbright Weekley. "Schubert: Master of the Piano Duet." *Piano Quarterly* 27 (Jan. 1978-79): 41-48.