**STYLISTIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ERAS**

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In general:

Listening is the number one thing.

Be connected to the sound.

Introduce dynamics and pedaling right from the beginning. Make sure the piece is an appropriate level for student – don’t over shoot. GIVE THEM THE TOOLS.

What music fits their personality? Also present music that is “outside their box”.

Always use rubato but in a way that is appropriate for the era and composer.

Character and emotion reflected in playing.

Most important unwritten rule (Jean) do something different with repeats, even within sections.

Artistry and sensitivity must be present but with stylistic awareness

Melody always shines – no p – drop the sound of the non-melody notes

Classical style – Haydn is great for style without being too difficult Sonata #50 = first time pedal was notated

**Baroque**

Sound:

Harpsichord model: lean, light; not heavy or thick; stay close to the keys, basic attack is quick

Dynamic range: generally p – f; “drive to cadence” but also taper away at end of phrases

Dynamics usually NOT notated; performer must make informed decisions. Improvisatory style of the era means that dynamics and articulation were not notated.

Terraced dynamics are appropriate, echo effects; sequences and repetitions need awareness and dynamic changes

Crescendo/diminuendo can be used over longer phrases, but not over just a few notes (sea-sick sound!)

Articulation:

Often needs to reflect **dance-like character** (upward movement not down/heavy/stomp) found in much of this music. Feel a “floating arm” as opposed to heavy arm weight.

Usually NOT notated; performer at choice, as with dynamics:

* **steps: connect; skips: detach**
* faster texture (e.g., 16ths): connect; slower (8ths) detach
* some combination of the above rules

Motive/subject: pick an articulation and stick with it for subsequent statements

Rests: ALL must be observed

Rubato/Timing:

No rubato for perpetual motion pieces

Toccata-like sections can be quite free, quasi-improvisatory

Pedal:

“Touch” pedal to connect certain notes and warm up sound on longer notes. Generally sparse pedal use, but always appropriate to use pedal.

Must never blur step-wise motion with pedal!

Una corda for echo effects

Ornaments:

ALWAYS (start) ON BEAT!

Performer can change, add, or delete (trill style, not eighth note style)

*Gigue from French Suite No.6 - J.S. Bach* - Alexandria Johnston

Repetition – The only reason to do a repeat is to do something different, especially with ornamentation, dynamics or articulation. Add mordents on longer notes even if not notated.

Trill as long as comfortable/clear then stop. Maintain integrity of long line and pulse.

Pedal with two-note slur, touch pedal at end of phrase. Short staccato, bright sound, energized but not heavy, no accents. Stressed notes with arm lift is good.

Gigue = last movement of a suite; typical character is light, lively, jig, fun, earthy, joyous

Movements in a Bach dance suite: prelude, , , , minuet, gigue. Each one has its own character and articulation

*Prelude from English suite No. 5 – J.S. Bach -* Sam Conklin

Assaulted. Balance between bass line and melody

Use pedal to connect and soften the driving line – softer sections had a more lilting sound and the line was apparent. Loud sections need to be lighter without so much downward stroke - not so intense like Beethoven. When left hand active and low use a detached articulation to keep it light and relaxed. This style of piece invites tension.

Lift wrist and release the tension. Fingers remain firm.

Do not confuse energy with volume.

To avoid seasick feeling play longer lines/phrases – they just keep unwinding - “travel music” to get you to the next part of the piece.

**Classical**

Sound:

Fortepiano model: becoming fuller

Greater influence of orchestral instruments

New possibilities for resonance of piano – blending and layering of sounds

Dynamic range increasing: pp – ff

Melody is at least mf, shaped, and accompaniment is p

Dynamics more frequently notated

Homophonic texture (melody/accompaniment) – light, airy accompaniments are crucial (Alberti)

Leaner, lighter sound for most classical composers

Bigger, more sudden crescendo/diminuendo, especially in Beethoven – contrast is vital!

Articulation:

Basic principal: Speed of key attack dramatically affects the sound – that’s where artistry lies

Now notated: many slurs, staccato, etc. lots of details (micro). Micro must be integrated into macro: long line

Micro must support the macro

All rests observed

Careful not to over slur/clip, especially in Mozart: needs grace, charm, elegance

Focus on the long line of the melody – where is the phrase headed – direction (Gesme) – think about horizontal line, not just pushing down on the keys

Be in touch with the instrument, arm weight, be connected to the sound

Not all staccato is created equal – use variety of staccato touches to suit the melody and synamics

Rubato/Timing:

Starting to become freer, especially in Beethoven, but still fairly strict

General unity of tempo within a movement

Pedal:

Starts to be notated, especially in later Beethoven

Techniques:

- touch

- finger (Alberti bass) – finger pedal (finger legato)

- rhythmic (by beats – not by chords)

- always lift fingers and pedal for rests

- do not pedal adjacent notes

- pedal through at the end of a phrase – end of phrases and forte chords needs a touch of pedal

Una corda for color, especially in pp

Trills:

Start with upper note in Haydn, Mozart, early Beethoven; start principal note in middle Beethoven

Haydn - robust, earthy, charming, fun

Mozart – most challenging, genius but child-like, so many intricacies in addition to the notes, needs balance between Haydn style and Beethoven style

Sonata in F minor, Op.2, No. 1, 1st Movement – Beethoven – Grace Miedziak

Very committed! Do not stop no matter what.

Integrate accents into the musical line and the texture of the piece by using a connecting pedal by playing the next chord first then pedaling.

Be aware of the dynamic level that the accents occur in – not all are created equal.

Pedal the fortissimo chords. Pedal off on the rests for clarity of line and so it doesn’t end up sounding romantic/impressionistic.

Pedal on longer notes and on resolutions to give the conclusion a fuller sound.

Pedal is the piano’s vibrato.

Silence in this music is more important than the sound. Negative space.

Don’t clip off – round off instead.

Honor the rests even if the editor has indicated harmonic pedaling in that section.

Use weight not muscle to get big sound.

**Romantic**

Sound:

More powerful, responsive instrument – increased capabilities

Warmer, fuller, more weight, thicker, singing, orchestral

Dynamic range very great: ppp – fff

All dynamics notated

Can have very fast crescendo/diminuendo or very long

Accompaniments much more complex and wide-ranging; complex inner voices

Quality of sound – physical motions must be appropriate for an artistic sound – arm weight, fluid, flexible wrist

The shorter the staccato sound the “cuter” the sound

Articulation:

All notated

Wide variety

More emphasis on beauty of sonority rather than clarity of articulation

Rests: can pedal through them at times

Rubato/Timing:

Much greater flexibility

Tempi can change within a piece/movement

Ritards are usually marked, but can be appropriate even when not marked

Use your breathing to guide rubato

Must be able to control your sound – top still has to shine

Pedal:

Harmonic – can be extended/held when harmony doesn’t change

Much chromaticism – pedal must account for this to avoid blurs/clashes

Must change for chromatic shifts

Much wider range for the hand so pedal must assist

Can pedal through staccato, lifts and rests

Trills:

On principal note

**Impressionistic**

Sound:

Crystalline, strong top; floating bass NOT thick/heavy

“Diamond-tipped fingers” – 5th finger right hand needs precise weight

Many softer dynamics: mp –ppp

Levels of shadow with occasional notes brought into the light

Elasticity and flexibility with the steady pulse

French cool, objective (no heaving bosom – never an over reaction, as in Romantic era)

Get the layers under control for long-held pedal especially when the bass is an ostinato

Shifting, scintillating colors

Articulation:

Many varieties; blended often by pedal

Portato touch/brush stroke frequently used, with pedal

Rests are often pedaled through

Rubato:

Ritardandos generally not acceptable unless marked

Breathe between phrases/sections without ritardando

Pedal:

An art unto itself in this music!

Flutter, half, occasional use of sostenuto (middle pedal), touch pedal (for one beat)

Use fast flutter pedal to clear up sections where there is too much over-lapping of sound

Often very long, anchored by bass (ostinato)

Blending of sonorities/layers/textures

Una corda crucial

*Arabesque No. 1 – Debussy*  Michelle Ortman

Until you see a *tempo rubato* be straight but not inflexible with rhythm.

Voicing = Bell-like tone on top notes. All other notes are “fluff” so keep them very soft. Floating writ and elbow.

?Ritenuto (big sudden ritard and music comes to a stop) vs. ritardando (stretch out and pause at the end)

Arm needs to be super loose.

Use una corda pedal especially whenever there is a pp or ppp. Need color change. “All my color resides in my left foot.”) Use all the tools of the instrument.

?Stringendo?

Fingers firm but wrist is supple.

Subito piano – drop everything down in volume except the top/melody note

Rubato – in French music if no ritard mark don’t do it. Can insert a “breath” between phrases, but a tiny one.

French music is a reaction to the excesses of German music.

Una corda can be used with the same techniques as sustain pedal – flutter, half. If you are really listening the pedal takes care of itself.