TEACHING LATE INTERMEDIATE-LEVEL TECHNICAL SKILLS THROUGH THE STUDY OF
LESCHETIZKY, VENGEROVA, AND NEUHAUS: EXERCISES OR REPERTOIRE?

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To be successful and be effective in teaching, one must be familiar with a variety of methods in instruction and teaching strategies. This also includes becoming aware of any challenges that student and teachers might confront at all levels. Advanced-level piano students, such as those who are at the collegiate level, study the masterpieces of the great composers. However, they may still be in need of developing certain technical and musical skills which should have been covered at the late intermediate level.

This study focuses both on exercises and on late intermediate-level repertoire. This study examined the methodical approaches of Russian technical school primarily through the exercises of Theodor Leschetizky, Isabelle Vengerova, and Heinrich Neuhaus and compared these exercises with passages from appropriate great literature suitable for late intermediate-level students. This may not only in preparing for more advanced piano repertoire but also broadening general piano techniques. All together, this may further promote in prevention of musical problems that might occur at a more advanced-level of piano study.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Many exercises have been written through the centuries, including some which are very accepted without question such as those of Muzio Clementi and Carl Czerny, as well as others such as Pischna and Hanon, which can be controversial. Prestigious pianist and teacher, Ferruccio Busoni, for example, preferred to use excerpts from the literature a student was working on in order to build technique at the advanced level. But what about at the late intermediate level, which is about the time that a serious student of the piano begins to need a well-organized plan? Advanced-level piano students, such as those who are at the collegiate level, study the masterpieces of the great composers. However, they may still be in need of developing certain technical and musical skills which should have been covered at the late intermediate level. Successful teaching requires familiarity with a broad range of methods of instruction and teaching strategies, as well as an awareness of the challenges that confront students and teachers at all levels. A number of articles and dissertations have been written on piano pedagogy. They describe successful teaching strategies and put forward suggestions for learning materials and methods. However, there is not much offered that includes study guides specifically discussing technical development for late intermediate students.

Since the intermediate area covers a wide range, both the exercises and the repertoire must be divided into three levels: early intermediate, intermediate, and late intermediate. It is critically important that at each stage the repertoire is selected with a view towards systematic technical and musical growth.

This study focuses both on exercises and on late intermediate-level repertoire which can be used for pedagogical purpose not only in preparing for more advanced
piano repertoire but also for broadening general piano techniques and preventing musical problems that might occur at a more advanced-level of piano study. This study will examine the approaches from the school of Russian piano technique primarily through the exercises of Theodor Leschetizky, Isabelle Vengerova, and Heinrich Neuhaus. It will compare these exercises with passages from appropriate great literature suitable for late intermediate-level students in order to assist teachers to more fully develop their students’ technique. The pieces were chosen based on skills that the exercises begin to train the young pianist for, trying to stay within the level expected of a serious late intermediate student, and covering some, but obviously not all, of the composers from the Baroque through the nineteenth century. An Appendix of further choices is provided at the end of the dissertation. Clearly, not every piece that might be suitable can be included in this dissertation or in this Appendix, so the choices are meant as examples only. A dedicated teacher should be able to use these as jumping-off points for further selections of their own.

There are plenty of method books available for beginning students, and certainly advanced students do not lack for the widest possible range of great music. While there is plenty of great music suitable for the development of an intermediate student, there appears to be less focused awareness of this music or perhaps also less awareness of the pedagogical purposes that can and should be served by the literature available.

The pianist and pedagogue Scott McBride Smith, in his book The Well-Tempered Keyboard Teacher, defines intermediate-level as the transitional stage between the beginning-level and advanced study. The designation of intermediate-level quantifies

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skills, not age or length of study. It is a teacher's responsibility to choose repertoire which can meet the particular needs of the individual student. Selecting compositions for students is one of the most daunting tasks for teachers, and this is especially true for intermediate students. At the intermediate stage students begin to learn longer, more difficult pieces which require more sophisticated techniques. Smith offers a list of technical and compositional characteristics commonly found in intermediate repertoire:

- Melodies become more complicated. There is more frequent use of scale and arpeggio figures requiring finger crossings and more hand-position changes.
- Rhythm becomes more complex with diverse patterns introduced.
- Accompaniments also become more elaborate through the use of more chord inversions, different styles, and bigger leaps.
- Two or more independent voices are presented, sometimes in the same hand or between the hands with increased use of intricate articulations, contrasting dynamics and note values. Better balance and voicing skills are required with the requisite increased variety of tone.
- Richer and more intricate harmony and texture are presented. Double notes are introduced, as well as more challenging pedal work.
- Technical practice becomes more involved as pieces become more difficult. This necessitates more drills of scales, arpeggios, exercises, and etudes.²

At the Second National Conference on Piano Pedagogy, Rita Fuszek presented a paper entitled “The Black Hole,” emphasizing “the importance of exploring the world of intermediate piano literature - an area that is often avoided in college piano students’ backgrounds.”³

We must thank our colleagues in the science domain for the discovery of the "black hole" for we in music have one also. This black hole in music becomes acute in the piano pedagogy courses. Something incredible happens between the beginning material and the collegiate repertoire. The leap between John Thompson, Book Three, and the first Beethoven Sonata creates a mind-boggling

²Ibid., 82.
situation. This is the "black hole" into which too many pianists seem to disappear... It is a phenomenon that has not changed over the thirteen years of developing the piano pedagogy courses in applied teaching.4

Josef Lhévinne, one of the greatest Russian pianists emphasized the importance of learning step-by-step:

In Russia, teachers lay great stress upon careful grading. Many teachers of note have prepared carefully graded lists of pieces, suitable to each stage of advancement. I understand that this same purpose is accomplished in America... I have had numerous American pupils and most of them seem to have the fault of wanting to advance to a higher step long before they are really able. This is very wrong, and the pupil who insists upon such a course will surely realize some day that instead of advancing rapidly he is really throwing many annoying obstacles directly in his own path.5

He also said, “The teacher often makes the mistake of living up in the clouds with Beethoven, Bach, Chopin, and Brahms, never realizing that the pupil is very much upon the earth, and that no matter how grandly the teacher may play, the pupil must have practical assistance within his grasp.”6

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6 Ibid., 174.
CHAPTER 2

RUSSIAN PIANO SCHOOL

Christopher Barnes’ The Russian Piano School: Russian Pianists and Moscow Conservatoire Professors on the Art of the Piano offers insights into the school of Russian pianism. He wrote in his book, “The artistry of Richter, Gilels, Ashkenazy, or recently emergent masters clearly transcends any process of formal teaching, the perennial ability of Russian pianists to take leading prizes in international competitions, and of their mentors to attract pupils and disciples from around the world, has inevitably led to the Russian piano school.” He added that in some of the most prestigious music schools in the United States such as the Juilliard School or Curtis Institute, some of the 20th century’s most compelling teachers such as Josef and Rosina Lhévinne, Isabelle Vengerova, and Josef Hofmann, originally trained in Russia, were prominent members of the faculty.7

The Russian piano tradition traces back to the late eighteenth century when Western European musicians visiting Russia began to influence musical life there. Great pianists such as John Field and Adolph von Henselt visited Russia and had perhaps the earliest influence on Russian piano pedagogy. John Field, a pupil of Muzio Clementi, enjoyed particular popularity. The Russian audience especially admired his delicate and precise touch, smooth phrasing, and extraordinary technique. The singing quality of Cantabile style made a great impression on pianists there and became one of the important characteristics of Russian pianism.8

The school of Russian pianism began to achieve international recognition

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7 Christopher J. Barnes, ed. The Russian Piano School: Russian Pianists and Moscow Conservatoire Professors on the Art of the Piano (London: Kahn & Averill, 2007), ix.
beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1862, Anton Rubinstein (1829-1894) founded the St. Petersburg Conservatory which was the first conservatory in Russia. Nationalistic traits became evident and a distinct style of piano playing and teaching arose.\(^9\) According to Harold Schonberg in *The Great Pianists*,

Russian pianism reflected a tradition stemming largely from Anton Rubinstein even though individual artists had their own style. However, certainly there are common characteristics that Russian pianists have: a warm sound, an extroverted quality, a good deal of controlled freedom, a generosity in interpretation, an ability to vary rhythms without ever losing the basic meter. Contrasted to the German school, [Russian school] characterized as more severe and intellectualized, or the French school, characterized as clear, logical, fast in tempos, on top of the keys with less color and sonority of the Germans and Russian.\(^10\)

Rubinstein’s piano playing was distinguished by a powerful sound, full or orchestral color, and by the singing quality of his tone. Ossovskii described his performance as “mighty, poetic, well-thought out, and heartfelt conception of the whole and the titanic embodiment of it in sounds.”\(^11\) Rachmaninov recalled his memory of Rubinstein’s playing:

> In my opinion, none of the contemporary pianists could even come close to the greatest, Anton Rubinstein, whom I had a privilege of hearing many times... There is a huge goal for all of us. It is to be compared with Rubinstein.\(^12\)

Rubinstein put a strong emphasis on expression of human emotion through the piano which he deemed the principal purpose of musical interpretation. The Russian school thus evolved to feature not only aspects of sound and singing line, but also expressions

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\(^10\) Ibid., 293.
of emotion and intuition rather than intellectual analysis and impersonal rationality.\textsuperscript{13} This romantic approach became an essential attribute of the Russian Piano School. Naturally, in order to achieve the aforementioned, a well-trained technique was indispensable.

Another influential figure at the St. Peters burg Conservatory was Theodor Leschetizky (1830-1915). Rubinstein and Leschetizky shared many ideas on piano pedagogical methods. If a student wanted theoretical instruction he went to Leschetizky; in turn Leschetizky told his students to observe Rubinstein’s tone, his pedaling, his breathing and relaxation. Leschetizky’s piano playing is described as featuring arched hands, flexible wrists for octave and chord passages, skillful fingers, and use of arm weight.\textsuperscript{14} He was Polish by birth and studied with Czerny in Vienna where Leschetizky began developing many famous pianists. Leschetizky eventually settled in Russia and taught at the St. Petersburg Conservatory from 1852 to 1877, where he developed a significant piano pedagogical school.\textsuperscript{15} Following Franz Liszt, the mantle of most eminent teacher and pianist of the Romantic tradition was passed to Theodor Leschetitzky.\textsuperscript{16} His students included many world famous pianists and teachers such as Vasily Safonov, Annette Essipova, Ignacy Paderewski, Artur Schnabel, Ignaz Friedman, and many others. Ironically, none of these successful students sounded or played alike. This is testimony to his stated belief that “I have no method and I will have no method.” Leschetitzky’s students passed on the tradition of Russian school to

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., In one of Kofman’s footnotes, she mentioned that “in the last decade of the twentieth century, intellectual and analytical playing became fashionable in certain circles of Russian musicians.”

\textsuperscript{14} Thomas Lee Fritz, “The Development of Russian Piano Music as Seen in the Literature of Mussorgsky, Rachmaninov, Scriabin, and Prokojiev” (DMA diss., University of Southern California, 1959), 82.

\textsuperscript{15} Reginald R. Gerig, Famous Pianists and Their Technique (New York: Robert B. Luce, 1974), 294.

\textsuperscript{16} Patricia Hammond, Three Hundred Years at the Keyboard: A Piano Source Book from Bach to the Moderns: Historical Background, Composers, Styles, Compositions, National Schools (Berkeley, Calif.: Ross Books, 1984), 280.
later generations.

Nikolai Rubinstein (1835-1881), Anton Rubinstein’s brother, founded the Moscow Conservatory in 1864. Many of the piano faculty members at the Moscow Conservatory were brought from St. Petersburg. The preeminent pedagogues there consisted of Taneyev, Pabst, Safonov, and Zverev. They were recognized as pillars of the Russian Piano School around 1900 and made enormous contributions to piano pedagogy. They also produced great pianists and composers such as Sergei Rachmaninov, Alexander Scriabin, and Nikolai Medtner.

Sergei Taneyev (1856-1915) was a composer and great pianist who was known to have a flawless piano technique. He was a close friend of Tchaikovsky and he also premiered the solo part of all Tchaikovsky’s works for piano and orchestra in Russia. As a pedagogue, he followed the pedagogical methods of his teacher, Nikolai Rubinstein, both in conceptualizing and understanding music. He imparted Rubinstein’s pedagogical principles to his students and founded an organization called “Rubinstein lunches,” to continue the tradition of Nikolai Rubinstein. In accordance with his belief that the contemporary Russian repertoire should be supported by performers in order to establish a more desirable national performance school, he incessantly exposed his students to the Russian music of Anton Rubinstein and Tchaikovsky.

Paul Pabst (1854-1897) was a composer and piano virtuoso whose pianism was acclaimed by Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov and many others. He taught at the Moscow Conservatory from 1878 until his death, gaining a great reputation as a teacher. He placed special emphasis on interpreting music according to the study of the aesthetics of various composers and different eras. He also emphasized developing artistry rather than

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17 Rego, 74.
18 Ibid., 77.
than working on students’ technical deficiencies.\textsuperscript{19}

Vasili Safonov (1852-1917), an outstanding student of Leschetizky, was a great pianist and a pedagogue and was a worthy successor to the best traditions of the Moscow and St. Petersburg Conservatories. He was a piano professor at the St. Petersburg Conservatory until 1885, and in 1889 moved to the Moscow Conservatory. In his teaching, he emphasized technical development as well as musical mastery. His pedagogical ideas combined Russian pianistic tradition with ideas from western European pedagogy. One of Safonov’s most valuable contributions to piano pedagogy was the creation of his own technical method. He substituted musical literature in place of mechanical exercises, yet he did not totally avoid the use of technical exercises. He insisted that technical practice should not be worked mechanically, but rather with consideration of tone, rhythm, and dynamics.\textsuperscript{20} His new method inspired students to discover both technical and artistic notions in a particular work. In 1916, he published a book on piano technique titled \textit{Novaya formula} (new formula).

Nicholas Zverev (1832-1893) was one of the foremost piano teachers at the Moscow Conservatory. He focused on training young students who lived in his home and studied under his guidance. These students included Sergei Rachmaninov, Leonid Maximov, Matvei Pressman, and many others. After the lower level of study with Zverev, the students would proceed to the upper level of study with Siloti, Safonov, and Pabst.\textsuperscript{21} Much of Zverev’s pedagogy was focused on hand placement. His basic principle of physical movement was that the hands should not be stiff and excessive arm motion

\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., 78.
\textsuperscript{21} Wallace, 30, 32.
should be restricted.22

Isabelle Vengerova (1877-1956), also a student of Leschetizky, was a renowned pianist and piano pedagogue who taught Lukas Foss, Samuel Barber, Leonard Bernstein, and Gary Graffman. She taught at the St. Petersburg Conservatory beginning in 1906, moved to the United States in 1923 and taught at the Curtis Institute of Philadelphia and Mannes College of Music in New York. A Soviet pianist and music scholar Vitaly Neuman wrote, “She creatively elaborated the pedagogical principles of her own teachers Leschetizky and Annette Essipova, but introduced also her individual characteristics.”23

Both the St. Petersburg and Moscow Conservatories played a vital role in the growth of Russian music. A prominent Russian critic, Boris Asafiev, talked about this period from the end of 1880 to the Russian Revolution of 1917, calling it “a time of high emotional temperature.” Similarly, Kofman said it was “the golden age of Russian piano.”24 The piano training at both conservatories during this time was exacting, as Thomas Fritz describes in his dissertation about the training during the last decade of the nineteenth century:

As described by Josef Lhévinne, the normal course continued for eight or nine years. The first five of these were devoted largely to the development of technical facility through the practice of exercises, scales and arpeggios. Only students who mastered this stage successfully were permitted to enter the final three years course, which was devoted to the advanced materials of the artist. The necessity of having to play without music during lessons forced the development of a prodigious memory... Originality as a quality of performance was not discouraged, but eccentric or highly mannered styles were considered poor taste and signs of immaturity.25

In the late nineteenth century Russian pianism reinforced the pedagogical

22 Fritz, 84.
23 Geric, 313.
24 Kofman, 23.
25 Fritz, 84.
methods of strict training. This practice was continued by Essipov in St. Petersburg and Medtner in Moscow in the twentieth century. The concept that an artist should aim to address and master all musical and technical problems was also developed. Also, a pianist’s ability to interpret music of different periods in a stylistically correct manner while still preserving one’s artistic individuality was advanced.26

During the early twentieth century, the government took a profound interest in the conservatories and supported them for the purpose of producing marvelous musicians at the same time as they controlled educational policy and curriculum.27 The conservatories had a strict systematical approach for training musicians. On the other hand, the teachers strived for faithful interpretation of music and a freedom of artistic expression.

Following the revolution of 1917, most of the Moscow Conservatory piano faculty stayed in Russia. The most illustrious piano pedagogues in twentieth century Russia include Blumenfeld, Igumnov, Goldenweiser, Nikolayev, and Neuhaus. They continued the legacy of Russian pianism and reconciled it with the individuality of their performance style. Most notable among their students were Emil Gilels, Sviatoslav Richter, Vera Gornostaeva, Yevgeny Malinin, Lev Naumov, Boris Berezovsky, and many others.

Despite the differences in their approach to piano pedagogy, they had a common view of the art of piano playing. Elena Nazarova summarized the common traits of the pedagogical methods in twentieth century Russia:

- Perception of the duty as an artist
- Broad knowledge of music and wide culture, artistic taste, love of music

26 Rego, 73.
27 Fritz, 86.
- High expectations on both the teacher and the student
- Refining students, both as a musician and a person, through the formation of their attitudes, spiritualities, and personalities, and artistic independence
- On the score, analysis of the composer’s intention which eventually lead to one’s own interpretation
- A constant attention on tone production
- Technique was aimed at insightful interpretation, projecting the right sound, with the natural movement of the hands
- A commitment of repertoire

Konstantin Igumnov (1873-1948) taught at the Moscow Conservatory from 1899 until his death. His musical interpretation is described as deep lyricism combined with a spiritual identification with virtuosity. As a renowned pianist, Igumnov premiered Rachmaninov’s Sonata in D minor and Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini in Russia. As a teacher, he placed great emphasis on singing quality for phrasing and tone production. He also stressed freedom of the arm and hand, well-cultivated fingers, and use of weight which linked all of the hand, upper arm, shoulder, and torso. He stated that,

... as regards sonority, and economy of movement, a sense of weight plays an enormous role..." His advice on cultivating the most subtle nuances was to possess a perfect control of a performance led by sensitive inner ear. He called this “the approach from within.

Alexander Goldenweiser (1875-1961) was a respected pianist, composer, editor, and teacher who taught more than two hundred students. He was a true inheritor of the original Russian pianism of Safonov, and Siloti. He believed that the main task of the performer was to study the score thoroughly, understanding the composer and his history, and memorize by heart. In terms of technique, he wrote that,

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28 Rego, 87.
29 Barnes, 81.
30 Ibid.
31 Kofman, 102.
I do not think anyone would ever suggest that the process of physical movement should actually impede a pianist’s artistic intentions or the sound images he tries to project. But there is no doubt that bodily movements play a primary role in the realization of our artistic aims.\textsuperscript{32}

Goldenweiser was a serious musician and teacher who treated everything very gravely with an intellectual approach which was often criticized by his colleagues.\textsuperscript{33}

Leonid Nikolayev (1904-1934) was a prestigious pianist, composer, historian, and professor of the St. Petersburg Conservatory from 1909 until 1942. Among his famous students were Sofronitsky, Shostakovich, Yudina, Serebryakov, and Bogdanov-Berezovsky. Nikolayev’s piano teaching methods were based around the goal of achieving beauty of sound. His method of achieving this was to focus on the natural movements from shoulders to the fingers.

Heinrich Neuhaus (1888-1964) is recognized as one of the most influential figures in Russian piano pedagogy, and his book \textit{Ob iskusstve fortepiannoy igri} (The Art of Piano Playing)\textsuperscript{34} is invaluable to serious pianists and their teachers.\textsuperscript{35} His teaching activity at the Moscow Conservatory began in 1922 and continued there until 1964. Neuhaus claimed in his book that the technical aspect of piano playing has to be absolutely at the service of the artistic demands of the music and this holds true from the early stage of learning.\textsuperscript{36} In terms of technique, he opposed the use of technical exercises or studies. He stated, “When a child plays an exercise or study, a piece which is purely instructive and devoid of artistic content, he may, at will, play faster or slower, louder or more softly, with or without nuances; in other words, there is in his

\textsuperscript{32}Barnes, 61.
\textsuperscript{33}Kofman, 107.
\textsuperscript{34}Heinrich Neuhaus, \textit{The Art of Piano Playing} (London: Kahn & Averill, 1993).
\textsuperscript{35}Gerig, 293.
\textsuperscript{36}Neuhaus, 2.
performance an inevitable element of uncertainty, an arbitrary quality; it will be “playing as it comes” (and very often it doesn’t “come”). 37 In his teaching, the technique itself had less priority than musical interpretation. Nevertheless, he demanded solid technique from his students. He produced many world-renowned pianists including Sviatoslav Richter, Emil Gilels, Stanislav Neuhaus, Eliso Virsaladze and Radu Lupu.

37 Ibid., 11.
CHAPTER 3
EXERCISES

In order to examine the implications of the Leschetizky, Vengerova, and Neuhaus methods, it is important to understand broad principles of their artistic and pedagogical philosophy, as well as how those qualities apply to the way they taught students.

3.1 Leschetizky

3.1.1 Leschetizky as a Teacher

Two of Leschetizky’s pupils wrote books about his teaching. Annette Hullah wrote *Theodor Leschetizky*, and Ethel Newcomb wrote *Leschetizky as I Knew Him*. Both books are memoirs of their years as his pupils, teaching assistants, and friends. In their books, they described Leschetizky as a pianist, composer, teacher, and a man. According to their books, Leschetizky regarded his students as his family and wanted to know about students’ lives, such as their personalities, moral maturity, their manner of dress, and the relationships they surrounded themselves with that would influence their individual musical growth. He believed that one’s artistry is inextricably associated with one’s life experiences. Accordingly, he rarely gave great repertoire to those whom he felt to be still young and untried. He thought an immature nature cannot understand or draw sincere expression from certain great works unless they have learned at least some life lessons.

In Leschetizky’s piano lessons, he took pleasure in experimenting with his

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40 Hullah, 46.
students, inventing unique fingerings or particular exercises for unusual cases.\footnote{Ibid., 58.} He frequently used good similes to make appropriate suggestions for each student. He rarely theorized; rather, he spoke to the point in a practical way which was intelligible and permanent in their minds. Leschetizky told his students, for instance, “Your fingers are like capering horses, spirited and willing, but ignorant of where to go without a guide. Put on your bridle and curb them in till they learn to obey you, or they will not serve you well.”\footnote{Ibid., 62.}

Leschetizky trusted that a considerable amount of time would be spent studying each piece thoroughly in every detail from the beginning stages of learning. After a work had been studied, he expected that a student would practice measure by measure at a slow tempo and play every part accurately. After this process was done, they were expected to visualize the music without the score. Leschetizky also insisted that long hours of mindless practice would diminish one’s concentration. Habitual repetition of a phrase without thinking before each repetition was discouraged.\footnote{Newbomb, 18.}

Leschetizky thought that good sound production begins with deliberate listening to oneself. Once Leschetizky talked to Newcomb about “a threefold process of mind, eye, and ear” in which, “the lack of one of those essentials of talent was a serious matter in the development of an artist...”\footnote{Ibid., 11.} And he added, “Listening to the inward singing of a phrase was of far more value than playing it a dozen times.”\footnote{Ibid., 18.} Moreover, according to Newcomb, Leschetizky recommended to his students that after every hour of practice they spend another hour in thought away from the piano. Leschetizky said

\footnote{Ibid., 58.}
\footnote{Ibid., 62.}
\footnote{Newbomb, 18.}
\footnote{Ibid., 11.}
\footnote{Ibid., 18.}
“one’s best study could be done away from the piano... one could more easily imagine the beauties of music, than one could reveal them in actual playing”

He also stressed that a piece should be fully memorized by the brain. Brée described the process of practice and study:

After the fingers have been properly governed by thought for some weeks... Then the mental effort may be more fully concentrated on the study of pieces... Thought is indispensable in the study of pieces, as they are learned first by the brain, and from that by the fingers. Memorizing is important... it is permanently mastered by the brain without creating any faulty habits of fingerling... analyze the harmonies and decide upon the fingering and pedaling. Play the leading sections louder, and the subordinate parts softer; but do not put in great expression before the music is learned. Next read the practiced measures through carefully with the eye... the music will be made to stand out clearly in mental vision... If a note is forgotten, it should not be groped for by the fingers, nor should the passage be continued by ear. The student should stop and try to think of the note mentally, looking at the page as a last resort.

According to Hullah, Leschetizky was very broad minded with regard to his method. He considered each student’s individuality and asserted that there was no one method that could be applicable for all students. In other words, his teaching approach was to recognize a student’s individual qualities and cultivate the student’s own special gift. Any method which helped a student to achieve mastery would be embraced by him. Leschetizky said, “I have thought over these things all my life, but if you can find better ways than mine I will adopt them – yes, and I will take two lessons of you and give you a thousand gulden a lesson.” In Leschetizky’s writing to Carl Stasny of the New England Conservatory of Music in June 1915, he maintained that “I have no method and I will have no method.”

46 Ibid.
48 Hullah, 34.
49 Newcomb, 107.
I am personally against any fixed principle in instruction. Every pupil must, in my opinion, be treated differently according to circumstances... My motto is that with a good, yes a very good teacher, no printed method will be effective, and only he is a good teacher who can practically demonstrate every possibility to his pupils.\textsuperscript{50}

In addition, Hullah states that his method was not a technical system, “including advice on musical matters, but a system which makes its primary aim the study of music written for the piano; its second, that of the effects to be obtained from the instrument; its third, that of the development of the hand.”\textsuperscript{51}

Even though Leschetizky avowed that he had no special method, it is obvious that he recognized the importance of technique. Also, like his teacher Czerny, he specialized in the art of technical virtuosity and believed firmly that it was indispensable to achieve an adequate interpretation. Leschetizky noted that, “Technique was very little valued in itself, and was useful only as a means of expressing beauty.”\textsuperscript{52}

3.1.2 Leschetizky Exercises

Leschetizky never published his own exercises or method; however, his student and assistant, Malwine Brée wrote a book, The Groundwork of the Leschetizky Method,\textsuperscript{53} and dedicated it to him. She collected and organized the exercises and etudes that were used in lessons to train preparatory-level students for eventual lessons with the master. Leschetizky wrote to her:

My best thanks for the dedication of your book, which I of course, accept most gladly. As you know, I am from principle no friend of theoretical Piano-methods;

\textsuperscript{50}William Leslie Sumner, The Pianoforte (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1966), 186.
\textsuperscript{51}Newcomb, 40.
\textsuperscript{52}Ibid., 11.
but your excellent work, which I have carefully examined, is such a brilliant exposition of my personal views that I subscribe, word for word, to everything you advance therein... I declare your book to be the sole authorized publication explanatory of my method, and wish it all success and popularity.54

In her book, Brée demonstrated several exercises recommended by Leschetizky. He assigned many exercises to his students to build strength of the hands, but each practice was in accordance with the students’ individual hands. Leschetizky’s preparatory exercises are innovative and effective. The exercises are short and simple, concentrating on both fingers and the wrist and not discussing arm movement.

Leschetizky taught his students to have good posture at the piano, which would be the basis for a clear and easy execution. He hated any manner of histrionic signs or motions in piano playing which diminished simplicity and efficiency of movement.55 Position of the hand was of primary importance to Leschetizky. Brée defined a well-trained hand as “broad, flexible in the wrist, equipped with wide finger-tips, and muscular.”56 The hand should be in an arched shape in order to get full strength in the finger stroke, and the fingers should be a little lower than the knuckles but the thumb should strike the key with its tip side edge.

54 Ibid., 4.
56 Ibid., 5.
3.1.2.1 Finger Exercises

Brée presents some general rules for the finger exercises. First, the exercises should be played with a light touch, evenly, with equal quality of tone. Second, in order to avoid injury, it is prohibited to repeat the exercises to the point of physical exhaustion. Third, while playing, lower and raise the wrist between repetitions to prevent hand stiffness. Fourth, the fingers should keep a curved shape when raised from the keys. Fifth, pay attention to finger-tips to ensure that they strike the keys accurately. Lastly, the black keys should be struck with outstretched fingers rather than rounded.57

The simplest exercises are shown in example 1. Press down all five keys, raise one finger and exercise it while holding down the other four fingers. To exercise fingers, the quarter notes should be played with a tone that is warm but not harsh. After practicing through these exercises legato, practice them staccato.58

Example 1. Exercises for one finger

![Example 1](image)

After completing the exercises for one finger, the student should progress to exercises for two fingers, then three, then four, then five. (See Example 2.) The same approach is suggested as Example 1.

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57 Ibid., 7.
58 Ibid., 9.
Example 2. Exercises for two fingers

Exercises for three fingers

Exercises for four fingers

Exercises for five fingers

The following example illustrates a finger exercise with one tone held and Example 4 is one without held notes. The same approach is suggested as Example 1.

Example 3. Exercises with one tone held
3.1.2.2 Scales

Leschetizky suggested the following exercises for scale practice. The main purpose of these exercises is to acquire freedom of the thumb when moving it under the other fingers. Example 5 is the preparatory exercise for scales. Brée pointed out that the most difficult part of scale playing was “passing the thumb under after three or four notes.”

As shown in example 6, the thumb is passing under the fingers and moves back to its normal position as soon as it has released the key. The forearm should not follow the changing hand shapes when the thumb turns under, and instead should move along smoothly and steadily. The wrist should not move up or down but be held comfortably, while the fingers are curved. Brée stated that these exercises would help to “minimize the unconscious tendency to start with emphasis when the thumb is turned under or

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59 Ibid., 12.
the fingers swung over it.”

Example 6. Exercises for scales

Brée recommended practicing scales slowly with a firm and even touch without any accents. One can gradually increase the speed and change dynamics later on. (See Example 7.) In faster tempi, it should be played with quasi-detached fingers in order to make a pearly sound. The scales can be practiced in contrary motion and parallel motion in every key.

Example 7. Scales with dynamic changes

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60 Ibid., 13.
3.1.2.3 Arpeggios

The following exercises (Example 8) are for broken chord playing with and without held notes. The hands should be kept arched and fingers remain curved. The wrist should move up and down while continuing to play. The arm should move steadily without jerking and follow the direction of the notes.

Example 8. Preparation exercises for broken chords

Example 9. Preparation exercises for broken triads without held notes

Example 10 is a series of exercises for broken triads. These exercises should be practiced in fundamental position and inversions of C major at first, then must be done in every key.

Example 10. Exercises for broken triads
3.1.2.4 Articulations

Leschetizky placed the utmost emphasis on tone, saying “it is the tone which makes music.” In Chapter XIV, “Varieties of Touch,” Brée explains the purpose of the finger exercises, which is to develop the varieties of touch and warm fullness of tone. In discussing Leschetizky’s approach to varieties of touch, Brée wrote about how to play legato, finger staccato, and wrist staccato. For legato, each finger must remain in the key until the next finger is played. In order to produce a full singing tone, and when the finger strength is not sufficient, wrist pressure must support in the following way,

The key-surface is touched lightly and the finger then forced down by a movement of the wrist that brings the latter upward. Wrist and the finger joints being held firm, the wrist tends to swing the hand down, but is moved up by the resistance of the key. The weight of the forearm is thus brought into play... Immediately after striking, the wrist must return to its normal position, and the finger holds the key down lightly.  

For staccato, fingers strike above the key instead of pressing down and release immediately. The finger staccato is considered as non-legato. The fingers should be raised high, the wrist may be bent back a little, and power is provided from the knuckles. The wrist staccato is played with bent fingers striking the keys and a throwing back motion of the wrist.

3.1.2.5 Octaves

Brée described an exercise for octaves in which octaves should be played with the rebounding wrist staccato. When playing forte or fortissimo octaves, one must play with a firm forearm and the wrist held high but firmly while the fingers move not far above the keys. The same idea works on legato octaves; the fingers must be close to the

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61 Brée, 26.  
62 Ibid.
keys and the wrist must not be stiff. See example 11.

Example 11. Exercises for octaves

3.1.2.6 Chords

In practicing chords, the keys should be pressed rather than struck in order to carry the sound well and avoid harsh tones. One should try to arch the hand as far as the interval permits, make fingers curved, and maintain the firmness of the wrist and the fingertips. The approach is the same as legato playing described above.
Example 12. Exercises for chords

3.1.2.7 Double Notes

The following exercises (Example 13) are for paired notes playing with and without held notes. Brée suggested that it should be done with a loose wrist. The moving notes do not have to be played legato.

Example 13. Exercises for paired notes
3.2 Vengerova

3.2.1 Vengerova as a Teacher

Isabelle Vengerova was a leading piano pedagogue of her time. The qualities and characteristics of Vengerova’s method are very similar to the traits that Leschetizky exhibited in his lessons. She extended the pedagogical principle of her own teacher Leschetizky, and creatively restructured it with her individual traits.63 One of her students, Gary Graffman, explained that her teaching tradition was a combination of the nineteenth century romantic tradition which was derived from her own study with Leschetizky and the twentieth century tradition which demands respect for a composer’s intention.64

In addition to possessing brilliant piano skills, she was notorious for her irascible temper. Shouting, stomping, scolding, sarcasms, treats, curses, and furniture crashing frequently happened in Vengerova’s lessons.65 Samuel Barber, a former student, recollected his studies with Vengerova,

... as I grew older, I could appreciate her loyal friendship, her warm wit and irony. But the first lessons were not easy. With what affection and sadness I remember them: "Sit still! That piano stool is not a garden swing." And "Are you lazy or conceited or just stupid?"66

Her former students agreed that she had a great enthusiasm for teaching. Barber said,

... I often think that she taught me – through the piano – more about singing than my singing teacher, or more about the construction of a phrase or a movement than my composition teacher...67

63 Gerig, 313.
66 Schick, 101.
67 Ibid.
Vengerova was a formidable pianist who would frequently play the piano to demonstrate what she meant and could show her ideas clearly.\textsuperscript{68} According to Neuman, she was prepared to teach any work and could play the entire repertoire by memory.\textsuperscript{69} She was capable of great concentration which could last for the length of a seven or eight hour lesson. Abba Bogin recalled an incident in which one of her students was unaware of how much pedal he was using, but Vengerova stopped him and said “Is it possible that I am forty years older than you and have better hearing?”\textsuperscript{70}

Vengerova took an individual approach to each student, much as her teacher, Leschetizky, did with his students. Thomas Scherman, another former student, said that “she had a distinct teaching method that could be applied to each student differently.” At the same time, she was “a tremendous disciplinarian, so much so that a great many potential students couldn’t take the rules she insisted on.”\textsuperscript{71}

She encouraged her students to enlarge their knowledge in general as well as their musical culture. Once she said,

... when you play a Beethoven sonata, you must also form an idea of all other Beethoven sonatas. While playing a work of a certain composer, you must become familiar with the historical era of his time, his biography, his ideas and the musicians who influenced his creative imagination. You must also study scholarly and literary works devoted to this composer.\textsuperscript{72}

In the beginning stage of learning a new piece, Vengerova insisted that one’s musical interpretation such as “nuances, articulations, phrasing, and other particulars should derive from a deep emotional feeling and understanding of the style, and should

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\textsuperscript{68} Ibid., 102.  
\textsuperscript{70} Schick, 102.  
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{72} Rezits, 19.
not be mechanically attached to the notes, following a teacher's instruction or the editor's indications in the music.\textsuperscript{73}

In terms of her method, she considered tone production to be of fundamental importance, both in illuminating the music's significance and in enlightening the pianist's musicianship. She was really interested in “how to coax the largest range of beautiful, subtle, dazzling, dramatic, velvety and singing sonorities”\textsuperscript{74} from the piano. Leonard Bernstein said that the goal of her teaching with him was to make him produce a singing tone.\textsuperscript{75} Vengerova was known to believe that good hand position was a primary requisite in terms of one's ability to project beautiful sound and legato. Graffman wrote that “She was interested primarily in sound – she had an obsession with beautiful sound and legato. To achieve this, she was quite dogmatic in her teaching about hand positions, and extremely slow practicing, hands separately, with accents every so many notes.”\textsuperscript{76} She was very strict about her ideas of hand and wrist action.

Regarding technique, Schick said that Vengerova endorsed the collections of exercises by Pischna and Tausig. She assigned a new exercise at each lesson and insisted that it be practiced within the framework of her own system, using a flexible wrist.\textsuperscript{77} According to Bernstein, Vengerova never made any separation between technique and musical expression. And he said, “When she taught piano technique she taught it as a part of the interpretive quality of music.”\textsuperscript{78} While there are undoubtedly technical aspects in Vengerova's teaching, it is perhaps more correct, as Bernstein noted, that the primary intent of her method was to train her students in the most efficient way to

\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{74} Gary Graffman, I Really Should Be Practicing (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1981), 44.
\textsuperscript{75} Mender, 154.
\textsuperscript{76} Graffman, 43.
\textsuperscript{77} Schick, 30.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., 101.
interpret music.

3.2.2 Vengerova Exercises

Like her mentor Leschetizky, she never claimed to have a particular method; however, she clearly had a technical system which she imparted to her students. Robert D. Schick wrote a book called *The Vengerova System of Piano Playing* demonstrating several exercises recommended by Vengerova.

The facet of piano technique which Vengerova emphasized the most was the position of the hands which is characterized by the following:

1) the elbows should be kept away from the torso.
2) the wrists should be held with complete freedom.
3) the fingers should maintain a curved position, with strength and precision.
4) the fingers should be removed from the key immediately after striking, and shifted to the next playing position.

In order to have a proper hand position, Vengerova suggested that the hand position be such that “… the back is down and the palm is up, as if holding a ball, and then to place the hand on the keyboard, maintaining the same shape.”

According to Schick, the basis of Vengerova’s technique was proper tone production, in order to provide the basis for the formation of speed, flexibility, and power. The following descriptions are the basic rules, formulated in regard to achieving a beautiful tone:

1) Non-percussive touch. The fingers are to be close to the keys except when playing a hand staccato.

2) Flexible wrist. The flexibility and power of the wrist must be developed.

3) Accents. The wrist is raised and the fingertip prepared on the key. The

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79 Gerig, 313.
80 Rezits, 19.
81 Schick, 22.
82 Ibid., 12.
hand is held firmly from the fingertips through the knuckles to the wrist, though without unnecessary tension. The wrist is pushed sharply downward with its energy going into the fingertip and then into the key and then relax immediately afterward.

4) Quiet upper arm. At no time is the upper arm used directly in the production of an accent. When playing an accent the power comes from the pressure from the finger and wrist. The elbow stays in a relatively fixed position, and the upper arm remains quiet.

5) Relaxation. All muscles must be relaxed while playing except for those directly involved in tone production.

6) Weight. The fingers direct a greater amount of weight into a key for loud sounds, and less weight for softer sounds.

7) Application to music. The hand must follow the fingers in whatever pattern they play. When combined with a “close to the keys,” non-percussive touch, these principles help to produce a good legato.83

3.2.2.1 Basic Exercises

Vengerova’s exercises approach different technical issues in piano playing, such as scales, arpeggios, double notes, staccato. The exercises are based on a series of systematic accents. The first step in Vengerova’s technique is learning how to play an accent on every note of a one-octave scale. As a general rule, the wrist should be raised as high as possible with curved fingers. The fingertip must be prepared on the key beforehand. One must feel the weight going into the fingertip and press with a good tone, not a percussive one. After firmly pressing the key, the wrist drops down sharply and quickly. Then it will be lower than the position when it began. The elbow should be kept almost motionless to prevent the energy from being lost and to direct it to the fingertip and the keyboard. The upper arm is not directly involved when playing an accent, even when playing loud chords.

83 Ibid.
Example 14. Accent on every note

Once the scale has been played for one octave with an accent on each note, it can be repeated with accents every two, three, four, and eight notes. By practicing these exercises and eliminating all unnecessary arm movements, students will master the transfer of weight from fingertip to fingertip, producing a consistent tone quality.

Example 15. Accent on every two, three, four, and eight notes

Vengerova insisted on slow practice in order to build a good foundation for fast playing later on. Schick suggested work on these exercises in octaves as well, hands separately and together.
3.2.2.2 Scales

Vengerova’s students practiced scales in the major, harmonic minor, and melodic minor with standard fingerings, also practicing hands separately at the intervals of the octave, third, sixth, and tenth. Schick suggested additional exercises mainly to help with thumb crossings. See Example 16. These exercises can be practiced in all keys. Vengerova demanded that the arm move freely following the pattern of the scale when playing scales with or without accents.

Example 16. Exercises for passing the thumb under, or with the other fingers over the thumb
3.2.2.3 Arpeggios

Vengerova's students practiced arpeggios in major and minor triads, dominant seventh, and diminished seventh patterns. As a rule, when playing ascending arpeggios, the right hand thumb should play as soon as possible, and as late as possible for the left hand thumb. The forearm and wrist should be kept at the same angle to the keyboard throughout a long arpeggio in order to prevent loss of speed.

Example 17. Exercises for arpeggios

The following example illustrates arpeggio exercises without accents. Since the notes played by the thumb can be accented readily, the thumb should be prepared on the key beforehand.

Example 18. Exercises for arpeggios without accents
3.2.2.4 Articulations

Schick defined Vengerova’s staccato technique as a combination of dropping down and raising up wrist motions. This helps to avoid stiffness, as well as making it easier to phrase and add shadings to the music. Vengerova differentiated between staccatos using a non-percussive touch and using a percussive one. A non-percussive touch is played with fingers that are in contact with the key before playing then: 1) depress the key and lift fingers quickly, 2) pluck the key “as if snapping a rubber band.” A percussive touch is played with a relatively fixed and firm finger. The key should be struck from above and the hand moved “as a unit from the wrist.” Schick’s view on this touch was that it is useful for fast staccato passages with many notes and that it aids in achieving even sounds more easily through the transmission of the same amount of weight from the hand into the fingertip.

In discussing Vengerova’s approach to legato playing, Schick did not offer any exercises of his own. However, he discussed “the way of playing single line melody with a lyric nocturne-like sound.” Schick wrote that the most important principle is that of transferring weight from the arm to the fingertip. The weight must flows from one tone to the next in order to facilitate the evenness of passagework.

3.2.2.5 Octaves

According to Schick, even though Vengerova made many helpful comments on how to play staccato octaves she did not systematize any teaching method regarding
octaves. Instead Vengerova recommended Döring exercises (Example 19) for improving the flexibility of the wrist.


3.2.2.6 Trills

According to Schick, Vengerova’s students were assigned many trill exercises, especially those which required pressing one or more fingers down while the rest of the fingers trilled. These exercises are also useful for strengthening fingers not only for trills but also for many other passages.

Example 20. Exercises for trills

3.2.2.7 Double Notes

Exercises for double third scales were to be practiced in major and minor, hands separately and then together afterwards. The supplementary exercises for double notes

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89 Ibid., 68.
90 Ibid., 69.
suggested by Vengerova were a collection of technical exercises by Moritz Moskowski. She was fond of the collection which includes useful double notes exercises not only for thirds but various other intervals.⁹¹

Example 21. Exercises for thirds

Example 22. Moszkowski, *School of Scales and Double Notes for the Piano*, Book III

Exercise A. 1, mm. 1-3

3.3 Neuhaus

3.3.1 Neuhaus as a Teacher

Neuhaus was one of the most prominent figures in Russian piano pedagogy and his teaching philosophy was creative and unique in Russia for his time. While many of his colleagues were using older, more traditional methods he synthesized best musical pedagogies of the different national schools such as Russian, Polish, Austrian, German, French, and Italian.⁹²

Neuhaus was born into a prominent musical family. Both his mother and father

⁹¹Ibid., 59.
⁹²Galina I. Crothers, “*Heinrich Neuhaus Life, Philosophy and Pedagogy.*” (Ph.D diss., Birmingham City University, 2010), 222.
were pianists. His mother was a sister of Felix Blumenfeld, who taught Horowitz, and his grandmother was related to Karol Szymanowski. Young Neuhaus learned and gained experience from his family and from traveling to western Europe. He absorbed influences from the Austro-Germanic tradition of pianism through his teachers Karl Barth and Leopold Godowsky, and was exposed to other pedagogical principles from Blumenfeld. These were the sources which inspired him as a pianist and later on as a teacher.93

Neuhaus wrote a book, *The Art of Piano Playing*,94 which focuses on both broad and specific technical and musical aspects of piano playing and performance, as well as on the teacher and pupil interaction. The 'Teacher and Pupil', amongst other chapters, regards teaching music as an art rather than simply the transmission of pianistic skills. He wrote that a teacher is responsible for giving students the music's poetic image, as well as a detailed analysis of the form and the structure, harmony, melody, polyphony, and pianistic texture of a piece.95

Neuhaus asserted that a teacher should be mainly concerned about raising a student; first as a person, second as an artist, third as a musician, and after that a pianist.96 He wrote that the real task of teachers is to nurture students not only to teach them to play piano well but also to make them more intelligent, sensitive, honest, equitable, and steadfast.97 And he added, “worthless is the teacher who sees only the piano playing, piano technique, and has but a vague idea of music, its sense and its

93 Ibid., 54.
94 Neuhaus, 173.
95 Ibid., 173.
97 Neuhaus, 23.
Neuhaus stressed the foremost importance of “the artistic image of a musical composition” and that it should begin at the very first stage of learning. When working on the artistic image, one should develop one’s ear, a broad knowledge of music and of the composer. And a teacher should make a student memorize music by reading the score without playing the piano in order to develop one’s imagination and ear. He added “develop student's imagination by the use of apt metaphor, poetic similes, by analogy with natural phenomena or events in life.”

Regarding technique, Neuhaus did not advocate the use of technical exercises or study because he believed that artistic piano technique cannot be developed outside the context of music. He suggested acquiring technique through the use of a real musical composition and highlighted the advantages of that,

First, his emotional state will be quite different; it will be heightened compared to when he is practicing “useful” exercises or dry-as-dust studies. Secondly, it will be much easier to show him – since his own intuition will tend that way – the tone quality, the tempo, nuances, acceleration, etc. and consequently the ways of playing that are required for performing the composition so as to make it clear, meaningful and expressive, i. e. in a manner adequate to its content.

Neuhaus pointed out that “the best position of the hand on the keyboard is one which can be altered with the maximum of ease and speed.” He wrote that the main technical fault is caused by stiffness, a complete absence of freedom. He suggested relaxation exercises and repeat it many times with each finger,

with the wrist raised and the hand hanging loosely down play a note on the keyboard from above, gradually lowering the wrist as far down as possible, in

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98 Ibid., 25.
99 Neuhaus, 10.
100 Ibid., 21.
101 Ibid., 11.
a quick, measured movement, then raise it again above the keyboard until the finger can naturally no longer hold down the key and is carried away quickly and smoothly, together with the hand and wrist.

3.3.2 Neuhaus Exercises

Since Neuhaus refrained from using technical exercises or gymnastics, it might be counterintuitive to present one in this essay. In his book, however, Neuhaus displayed useful examples of short exercises for an additional explanation of his thoughts on certain techniques.

3.3.2.1 Tone Production

Neuhaus wrote that when speaking of technique it is impossible not to mention tone, as he said “work on tone is work on technique and work on technique is work on tone.”102 He said that the mastery of tone is the most significant aspect of all the component parts of piano technique the pianist must deal with, and it is the pianist's duty to work on tone production. His main concern is possessing a deep, full, and rich tone which facilitates the production of any nuance vertically and horizontally.103 He suggested that a note be played with the softest possible tone and then gradually increase the dynamic level. Example 23 is an exercise he recommended to his students to develop their ear and for getting to know the keyboard.

Example 23. Exercise for tone production

\[\text{Example 23. Exercise for tone production}\]

102 Ibid., 79.
103 Ibid., 67.
Neuhaus states that good tone can be achieved by complete freedom and relaxation of the weight from the back, shoulder, arm, and wrist to the fingertips touching the keys. For acquiring variety of tone, Neuhaus suggested the following exercises. See how he uses dynamic markings in Example 24. The first exercise in Example 24 can be modified to four-part and five-part chords. These should be exercised in different tonalities, slowly, then with an increase in tempo, alternately playing one part legato and the other staccato.

Example 24. Exercise for variety of tone

3.3.2.2 Legato

In terms of legato playing, Neuhaus agreed with Busoni’s opinion that “legato on the piano was only imaginary due to the impermanent quality of the piano’s tone,” and stressed that the basis of the legato is flexibility. Unlike other instruments since the piano does not have a lasting tone, it needs much richer and more flexible shading of the melodic parts as well as other parts in order to render clearly the intonation of the music.

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104 Ibid., 101.
105 Ibid., 71.
3.3.2.3 Scales and Arpeggios

Neuhaus presents the following exercises for scales (Example 25, 26) and arpeggios (Example 26). In a way similar to Leschetizky and Vengerova, Neuhaus pointed out that the difficulty of playing scales lies mainly in the thumb movement. The main focus of these exercises is ‘turning the thumb under the hand,’ and he recommended changing the conception to ‘bringing hand over the thumb.’ Neuhaus suggested that in the process of playing this exercise, the thumb should be placed on the key which must strike next (indicated with grace notes in Example 26). And he also wrote that when playing scales and arpeggios the pianist should keep in mind the ideals of flexibility, foresight, and evenness of movement.

Example 25. Exercises for scales A

Example 26. Exercises for scales B

Example 27. Exercises for arpeggios

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106 Ibid., 103.
3.3.2.4 Double Notes

The following exercises are suggested by Neuhaus for double notes covering intervals from the second to the octave and up to ninths and tenths. He considered double notes as two parts which must be played differently from each other. When playing octaves, Neuhaus insisted that the palm and fingers form “a rounded hollow.”\textsuperscript{107} And the highest point of a dome is not the wrist but the hand.

Example 28. Exercises for double notes

\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., 125.
CHAPTER 4

REPERTOIRE

This chapter will present categorized piano techniques from the exercises discussed in the previous chapter and compare these exercises with passages from appropriate great literature suitable for late intermediate-level students. The repertoire covers the wide array of compositions ranging from the Baroque era to the late Romantic period.

4.1 Tone Production

Leschetizky’s finger exercises and Vengerova’s accent exercises are mainly aimed at good hand position and finger strength, as those are the basis of proper tone production. Like so many of his colleagues, Neuhaus also emphasized the importance of developing a fine tone.

J. S. Bach’s short compositions such as Preludes, Fugues, and two or three parts Inventions are suitable for helping a student develop variety of tone. These are good preparation pieces for fugal playing and voicing in different parts and are challenging for intermediate students. A piece such as Sinfonia No. 11 is written in a way that introduces the concept of playing different tone colors by making noticeable distinctions between the voices. This piece contains three part voices flowing independently. The longer held notes need a rich singing tone while playing shorter sixteenth notes within one hand which requires skilled voicing. Finger substitution and quick finger changes are required. This expressive music requires the ability to listen carefully, as well as finger independence in order to shape the phrases well.
Beethoven Bagatelles Op. 119 are good pieces for learning the concept of clear articulation which requires firm fingertips supported by a firm wrist and arm weight. Alternating staccato and slur in the right hand is achieved by the wrist and by making gentle accents. Pianists can easily conceptualize different tone colors by making noticeable distinctions between melody and accompaniment. Pianists need to be careful not to raise and lower their wrists too much on the staccato and the first slurred notes while the fingertips remain firm.
No. 6 of Grieg's Lyric Pieces Op. 54 is a good example of creating a variety of tone colors in wide dynamic ranges. Pianists need to play from the softest pianissimo and gradually increase the dynamic level to fortissimo. This piece can aid in the development of listening skills through the gradual change in the intensity of the sound. It should be played with good tone which is achieved by complete relaxation of the arms and effective use of arm weight.

Example 31. E. Grieg, Lyric Pieces Op.54, No. 6 Bell ringing, mm. 30-64
4.2 Scales/Arpeggios

All three pedagogues pointed out that the difficulty of playing scales and arpeggios lies mainly in the freedom of the thumb movement when moving under the other fingers.

Rameau’s La Triomphante from Nouvelles Suites de Pièces de Clavecin helps pianists to develop the faster moving thumb movement that is integral for playing scales. This music presents fast scales alternating between both hands; it is suitable for late intermediate students and should be used to introduce the concept of avoiding stiffness and undesired hand fatigue. This piece allows the pianist to develop a sense of transferring weight from one fingertip to another with a good legato.

Example 32. J. Rameau Nouvelles suites de pièces de clavecin, La Triomphante, mm. 1-12

A piece such as Kuhlau’s Sonatina Op. 55 No.2, 1st movement offers a very good exercise for fast thumb movements. The right hand thumb plays alternately in a normal and a passing position. In scale playing, the arm should be relaxed and finger movement is aided by wrist rotation, especially at the turning point of the scale (indicated with boxes in Example 33).
Chopin’s Prelude Op. 28 No. 23, which contains repeated sixteenth arpeggios in a moderate tempo is suitable for late intermediate-level students. The fast moving notes require an even legato sound. This piece could be very effective for improving the use of fingers in different positions, supported by flexible wrist movements. In measures 1-2, the pianist should make sure that the scale acts as the accompaniment which needs to be played light and smoothly.
4.3 Legato/Staccato

In legato playing, it is important that the weight flows from one tone to the next in order to facilitate the evenness of the notes.

A piece such as Domenico Scarlatti’s Sonata K. 9 (L. 413) can be a good study for legato and cantabile playing. The right hand eighth notes and sixteenth notes passage require differentiation of melody and accompaniment and work on shaping melody lines.

Example 35. D. Scarlatti Sonata in D Minor, K. 9, L. 413, mm. 1-9

Mozart’s Viennese Sonatina No. 6 is very effective to study for several different concepts of legato, staccato, and double notes playing. The first movement (Example 36) demands fine control of several different articulations. The slurred notes in the left and right hands move separately which requires careful control of both hands as well as technical clarity. The second movement (Example 37) requires singing legato playing in the right hand.
Example 36. W. A. Mozart Viennese Sonatina No. 6 in C Major, 1st movement, mm. 1-11

Example 37. W. A. Mozart Viennese Sonatina No. 6 in C Major, 2nd movement, mm. 1-6

Chopin's Nocturnes, Preludes, and Waltzes are excellent for developing legato playing. A piece such as Nocturne Op. Posth in c minor is good for learning singing legato playing. The left hand eighth notes passages need a flexible wrist. This piece also requires the performer to use some rubato when playing twelve notes against four.

Example 38. F. Chopin Nocturne in C Minor, Op. Posth, mm. 4-6
4.4 Octaves/Double Notes/Chords

The first movement of Mozart Viennese Sonata No. 4 can aid in the development of fine legato playing especially in the double third passages. All three movements include double third passages with a variety of note values.

Example 39. W. A. Mozart Viennese Sonata No. 4 in B-flat Major, 1st movement, mm. 1-5

Beethoven's Ecossaise WoO. 83 is a simple and delightful work. Primary technical considerations involve the left hand octave leaps and the voicing of the right hand. The third movement is the most challenging with a double third melody in the right hand.

Example 40. L. v. Beethoven *Ecossaise*, WoO. 83, 3rd movement, mm. 1-17

A piece such as Mendelssohn's Song without words Op. 19 No. 3 provides a very good study in chords and octave playing. This energetic piece requires firm fingertips
and quick hand movements for fast moving repeated chords.

Example 41. Mendelssohn Song Without Words, Op. 19, No. 3 “Hunting Song”, mm. 23-29

Schumann’s Scenes from Childhood Op. 15 No. 6 is appropriate for studying octave playing. The performer needs strong fingers for the tempestuous chords, and octave passages.

Example 42. Schumann Scenes from Childhood, Op. 15, No. 6 “Important Event”, mm. 9-16
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Many pianists and pedagogues have contributed to the various aspects of teaching piano technique. However, it is true that there is no one method that could be applied to all students. Regardless of the approach, the aim of technique is to facilitate a performer’s interpretation of the music.

This paper offers options that can help a teacher to decide whether to teach piano technique separately or as part of the repertoire. Successful teaching requires a working knowledge of how repertoire and technique work together. There is a lot of repertoire which can aid in the development of technical and musical skills for late intermediate-level students. By studying technical exercises from the repertoire, students learn how to address technical difficulties step by step and gradually build an effective piano technique while learning effective means of practicing. Also, late intermediate piano students can build both technique and repertoire simultaneously. While there are differing opinions on teaching technique, it is not the intention of this essay to argue that technical exercises are worthless or should be neglected. The primary intent of this paper is to assert that technique should never be taught separately from music. Even a simple scale exercise should be played in the best possible musical manner.
APPENDIX

REPERTOIRE FOR THE LATE INTERMEDIATE-LEVEL PIANISTS
Some repertoire suggestions for late intermediate-level students, incorporating the technical issues discussed in this study.

A - Arpeggio  
D - Double notes  
L - Legato  
O - Octave  
R - Repeated notes  
SC - Scale  
ST - Staccato

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<tr>
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| Albeniz  | España Op.165, No. 1 “Prelude”  
            España Op.165, No. 2 “Tango”  
            Suite Española Op. 47, No. 2 “Cataluna”  
            Suite Española Op. 47, No. 5 “Asturias”  
            Suite Española Op. 47, No. 8 “Cuba” | A, D, L  
            D, L  
            C, D, L, O  
            C, L, O, R, ST  
            A, C, D, L, O |
| Arensky  | 24 Character Pieces Op. 36, No. 1 “Prelude”  
            3 Pieces Op. 42, No. 2 “Romance”  
            12 Prelude Op. 63, No. 4  
            12 Prelude Op. 63, No. 9 | A, C, L, O  
            D, L  
            D, C, L  
            A, L |
| Bach     | Prelude BWV. 928  
            Prelude BWV. 925  
            Prelude BWV. 936  
            Fugue BWV. 953  
            Prelude and Fugue BWV. 900  
            Invention No. 12, BWV. 783  
            Sinfonia No. 10, BWV. 796  
            Sinfonia No. 11, BWV. 797  
            Sinfonia No. 15, BWV. 801 | D, SC  
            D, SC  
            D, SC  
            D, SC  
            D, SC  
            A, SC  
            D, SC  
            D, L  
            A, D, L |
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A, L, SC, ST
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D, SC, ST
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| **Kabalevsky** | Prelude Op. 38, No. 2 | C, ST |
| **Kuhlau** | 3 Sonatinas Op. 60 | A, C, D, L, SC, ST |
| **Liszt**  | Consolations S. 172, No. 1
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6 Fancies Op. 7
4 Little Poems Op. 32
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| **Mendelssohn** | Song Without Words Op. 19 No. 1
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C, D, L |
| **Moszkowski** | 10 Pieces mignonnes,
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