Meaningful Memorization: A Holistic Approach to Secure Memory

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History of Memorization – Hayden Coie

History of Memorization Pedagogy

- Memorization not an accepted practice until mid-nineteenth century
- Researchers and teachers sought to understand and develop methods of memorization
 - Some historical documents that trace the journey from stage to studio:
 - 1886: Article published in *The Etude**, argued to be one of the first documents for systematic memorization
 - 1899: *Musical Memory and Its Cultivation* by Frederick Shinn*, an early comprehensive look at memorization. Promotes four modes of memory: aural, visual, kinesthetic, analytical.
 - 1958: *The Pianist's Art* by Powell Everhart* talks about memory as being a standard part of learning and playing piano.

Memorization Pedagogy Today

- Systematic approach and four memory modes still used in modern scholarship
- Music should be memorized to fully internalize it for performance

*For full citation, see bibliography

Science of Memorization – Serenity Fung

Memory Pathways: How your brain collects and stores outside stimuli to create different types of memory. These are not sequential and a combination is often employed to create strong memories.

- Procedural: muscle memory
 - Repeated motion at the keyboard
 - Semantic: words on the page and spoken word
 - Score study and instruction from the teacher
- Episodic: context and setting
 - Rehearsing in the performance venue and on actual instrument
- Automatic: conditioned responses
 - Mental rehearsal, practice performing and how to respond to mistakes
- Emotional: strength and type of emotion related to memory
 - Trace emotional relationship to the piece

Memory Recall: Utilizing Memorized Music – Blake Proehl

Performance cues

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- Structural cues: movements, sections, sub-sections, and other boundaries
- Basic cues: technical details requiring attention
- Interpretive cues: conceptual ideas applied to specific spots
- Expressive cues: feeling to be conveyed to the audience

Maintenance

- Detailed Reviewing: keep score details fresh in mind and search for new ideas
- Mental Rehearsal: keep vivid memories and cues
- Practice Performance
- Expanding Rehearsal: short, frequent sessions \rightarrow long, spread out sessions

Focus in Performance

- Pre-performance preparation: mindfulness, breathing techniques, positive thinking, visualization
- Stable intention creates secure concentration scripting, visualization, audiation
- Always push forward!

Teaching Strategies – Kristen Neel

Mindful Memorization: creative strategies to engage students' minds to memorize in different ways

Learning Modes – Application to Memorization:

- Visual: Puzzle Game
- Aural: Singing Recall
 - Three part: Phrasing, dynamics, and notes 0
 - Memorize melody by shorter, then longer segments 0
- Kinesthetic: Phrase by Phrase Choreography ٠
 - Observing hand movement and direction, meaningful choreography, mental picture
 - First at keyboard, then away (choreography and audiation)
- Analytical: One Finger Exercise
 - Play RH or ĽH part with one finger 0
 - Emphasizes intervallic relationships 0

Analysis – Clara Boyett

Using analysis can strengthen memory

- Analytical memory
- Analyze form, harmonies, scales, patterns, etc. •
- Mark starting places in the score •
- Streamlines memorization process and aids in memory recall and retrieval ٠
- Should begin early in musical training
- Helpful for young children to draw the phrase shapes, form, etc. in their pieces •

Sources and Further Reading

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Musical Examples

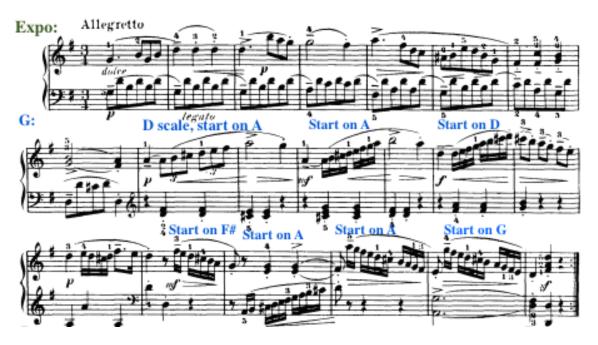
Early Elementary: Russian Folk Song, from Faber Piano Adventures Primer Level (not shown)

Early Intermediate: Arabesque, Op. 100 No. 2 by Friedrich Burgmüller



Edition Peters

89-94



Late Intermediate: Sonatina in G Major, Op. 55 No. 2 by Friedrich Kuhlau