

Ten Levels of Piano Arranging:

The Practical and Versatile Musical Art

Grant Kondo, NCTM | 2024 MTNA National Conference | Tue, March 19, 2024

Sneak Peek: What do you hear?

Why arranging?

- **Two Types of Freedoms**
 - Physical (technique)
 - Musical (creative)
- **Practical Applications**
 - Different scenarios
 - What about Classical music?

Traditional vs. Creativity Model: Best Suited for You

Improvisation, Arranging, Composition, Interpretation: A Spectrum?

Bloom's Taxonomy (aka Levels of Learning)

- How much do you *really* grasp a concept?
- Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, **Create**

Applying Arranging in All Musical Areas

For Warm-Up / Technique <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Warm up fingers AND mind!➤ Come up with your own exercises and etudes that specifically work on something you want to work on➤ Discovery of function of scales and chords, not just repetition➤ Be energized, not burnt out after warming up!	For Theory <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Combine repertoire as lead sheets (even Baroque!) with Roman numeral analysis➤ Improv + Arranging requires strong theoretical knowledge base, not just muscle memory➤ A much better insight into the composer's mind when you also create!
For Sight Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Chunking: being able to read sheet music as chunks rather than individual notes➤ Students fuse the functions between melody and harmony between the two hands➤ Not as intimidated by pages with "lots of ink" (aka lots of notes)	For Ear Training <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ By not focusing what is on the page, the ear is freer to listen to sounds being created➤ Create your own variations of exercises and explore subtle differences in sounds➤ Students can explore chords and cadences in context, rather than in abstract
For Repertoire & Performance <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Keeps practice fresh, avoids "over and over"➤ Keeps performers flexible, which reduces performance anxiety and memory slips➤ Braver students! Less afraid to make mistakes	For Creativity <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Every practice session is different➤ Not restricted by "instructions" on the page➤ Combination of spontaneity and critical thinking➤ A creative life is a colorful one!

Three Axes (and one)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Forrest Kinney's Three Techniques of Arranging

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Ten Levels of Piano Arranging

Level 1:

Level 2:

Level 3:

Level 4:

Level 5:

Level 6:

Level 7:

Level 8:

Level 9:

Level 10 and beyond:

Which concepts perplex you the most?

Arranging Resources

Method Books:

Theory / Supplementary Books:

Fake Books:

Online Resources:

Closing: Musical Longevity